

## **Annual Project Progress Report**

**Project title:** Developing a National Adaptation Planning Process in Turkmenistan

**Award ID:** 00102379

**Project ID:** 00104476

**Implementing partner:** UNDP

**Period covered in this report:** 1 January – 31 December 2023

**Date of last Annual Report:** 15 December 2022

**Date of the last Project Board meeting:** 14 July 2023

**Date of last Quality Assurance and rating:** December 2022. The exemption has been granted for 2023 QA by the management (04.12.2023)

### **1. Project Performance**

**Please state the expected Output of the Project, set indicators and corresponding CP Outcome (as per project document/AWP):**

**Project Output 1:** An Institutional framework to implement the Paris Agreement established

**CP Output 3.4.** Capacities of the GoT and other stakeholders are improved for climate analysis, assessment, monitoring, and reporting on climate change, environmental protection, and disaster risk reduction with focus on women, children and vulnerable groups

**CP Output indicators:**

Indicator 6: draft normative documents and methodologies developed to strengthen the institutional framework for implementation of the Paris Agreement

Indicator 7: raising awareness amongst GoT officials responsible for guiding the adaptation to climate change process and planning.

**Output targets:** Under Indicator 6:

1. Draft Regulation of the Working Group on International Agreements on Climate Change of the Interagency Commission for Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan.
2. Proposal for the national M&E framework for adaptation actions
3. Report with proposal for updating the adaptation component of NDC

Under Indicator 7:

b) Were the indicators and output achieved?    Yes             No             Partially **X**

c) If no or partially, please explain why?

All targets were achieved except target 3 under CP output indicator 6. Team comprised of international and national consultants have partially completed the assignment. Out of four integral parts of the report for updating the adaptation component of NDC, the first section on macro-climate trends, potential

impacts, and vulnerabilities was completed (<https://cutt.ly/BwA21D29>). The assignment is to be implemented through May 2024; implementation progress is on track.

As for the Target 1, with support of the NAP project and upon request of the project national partner, Project has developed three draft bylaws (<https://cutt.ly/owA2N2p5>) instead of one. Those are:

- Draft Regulation of the Working Group on International Agreements on Climate Change of the Interagency Commission for Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan
- Draft Regulation of the Working Group on Biodiversity of the Interagency Commission for Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan
- Draft Regulation on the Secretariat of the Interagency Commission for Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan

**Project Output 2:** The evidence base for adaptation planning in the water sector strengthened

**CP Output 3.1.** The GoT is equipped with technical capacity and tools to develop and effectively implement policies and strategies in the field of climate change, with a focus on reduction of CO2 emissions and adaptation

**CP Output indicators:**

Indicator 3: Evidence base for informed decisions making is in place to guide the adaptation to climate change process and planning.

**Output targets:**

Under Indicator 3: Climate risks assessment on the water resources in Ashgabat and Dashoguz (2 reports: one for each location); and ranking climate risks for action that consider economic, environmental and social costs and benefits (2 reports: one for each location)

b) Were the indicators and output achieved?    Yes             No             Partially

c) If no or partially, please explain why?

The targets were achieved partially. Service provider company for this assignment was contracted in July 2023. In the following months Climate Risks and Vulnerability Team (CRVA) could complete the scoping of the assignment. Comprehensive Inception Report with refined methodological approach was submitted in October 2023 (<https://cutt.ly/awA9tz2L>). From 27 November to 7 December CRVA team conducted numerous rounds of meetings with the national stakeholders, including government, private sector and civil society representatives in both pilot regions – Dashoguz velayat and Ashgabat (<https://cutt.ly/awA9tz2L>). However, CRVA reports will be produced in 2024. Service provider company (Hydrophil GmbH) is tasked to implement the assignemnt through June 2024.

**Project Output 3:** Capacity for adaptation planning strengthened

**CP Output 3.3.** Government institutions, private sector, and civil society, trade unions have increased capacities to apply innovations, digital technology and green solutions contributing to efficient use of energy, water, land and other natural resources, renewable energy and development of sustainable cities and green economy with active participation of women, children and vulnerable groups of population.

**CP Output indicators:**

Indicator 4: Number of government, public and private sector specialists, CSOs representatives and academia received training on climate change adaptation

**Output targets:**

Under Indicator 4: 19 trainings in Ashgabat and Dashoguz; up to 320 participants (in average 15-20 per training)

b) Were the indicators and output achieved?    Yes             No             Partially

c) If no or partially, please explain why?

Under the 3rd Output the project has conducted in total 12 workshops in 2023. There were one-day practical trainings for Turkmen Hydromet, 2-days and 3-days seminars on climate change adaptation in water sector for decision-makers and water specialists, and one-day quarterly dialogues between GoT, private sector, academia and civil society on climate change adaptation. It was planned that in 2023 the NAP project will also launch the series of 12 workshops for private sector, but the procurement process is still underway with the trainings to be delivered starting from February 2024.

**2. Progress Reporting**

**Please summarize the main achievements during the project cycle:**

**Project Output 1:**

Under the 1<sup>st</sup> output the project has advanced quite well. The main outcome of work implemented in 2022 was general agreement between all stakeholders that the role of a coordination mechanism for adaptation planning shall be attributed to the Interagency Commission for Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan, namely to its Working Group on International Agreements on Climate Change. In this regard, in 2023 the focus of the project was to strengthen the mandate of the Commission and to enhance the capacity of its Working Groups related to adaptation planning, monitoring and evaluation of adaptation measures and many more. Relevant draft regulations were developed, discussed during the workshop and submitted for further review and action to the Legal Department of the Ministry of Environment Protection. After approval, the project intends to support the regular meetings of the Commission till the end of project cycle.

The second project's accomplishment is the elaboration of the proposal for the national M&E framework for adaptation actions. The proposal was presented during the validation workshop on 23 November 2023, and received positive outcome. Recommendations will be incorporated into the final version of the document and submitted to the national counterparts.

Third, NAP project was very successful in delivering awareness raising workshops to the GoT officials responsible for guiding the adaptation to climate change process and planning. Thanks to initiative and creative approach of IC N.Yakusheva Jarlebring, the concept and agenda of every workshop was very interesting and unique (<https://cutt.ly/iwA9wC4U>). This helped the NAP project to build partnerships for organization of workshops with other development organizations, like IOM and GIZ. UNICEF, UNDP projects, WHO, government and public organizations were also actively involved in preparation and delivery of these seminars.

Lastly, the project has started the work on updating the adaptation component of NDC. The first section of the report on macro-climate trends, potential impacts, and vulnerabilities was elaborated and presented to the stakeholders as part of the dedicated round-table.

**Project Output 2:**

Under the 2<sup>nd</sup> output the project started conducting climate risks and vulnerability assessment on subnational level in the city of Ashgabat and Dashoguz province. Scoping was complete in September with Inception Report finalized in October 2023. From 27 November to 7 December CRVA team comprised of four key experts conducted numerous rounds of meetings with the national stakeholders, including government, private sector and civil society representatives in both pilot regions. The initial results of the study will be provided to the project team in February 2024.

**Project Output 3:**

Under the 3<sup>rd</sup> output project team with support of SIC ICWC developed the concept and conducted four 2-days capacity building workshops on climate change adaptation in water sector for decision-makers (<https://cutt.ly/DwA2517n>), two 3-days seminars for water specialists in Ashgabat and also in Dashoguz (<https://cutt.ly/JwA28ywp>). The next year it is planned to conduct TOT and two remaining workshops for decision-makers.

NAP project organized practical trainings on use of available hydrological equipment for the specialists of Turkmen Hydromet. One training was on data processing using OTT Qreview software by trainers of the German company OTT Hydromet GmbH (<https://cutt.ly/VwYKt9lc>). For this training were convened specialists from Ashgabat, Lebap, Mary and Balkan regions. The second training was on calibration and use of Seba-KLLQ (CHEKER) (<https://cutt.ly/owYZ0ULS>).

The team was also quite successful in preparation and delivery of four quarterly dialogues between the GoT, private sector, academia and civil society on topic of climate change adaptation (<https://cutt.ly/rwA29l62>). Relevant reports were produced and distributed to the participants. Global Water Partnership was co-organizing two of these workshops. In the next year it is planned in addition to quarterly forums deliver 12 one-day workshops for private sector, academia and CSOs in Dashoguz and Ashgabat.

**3. Project Risks and Issues**

**The project Risk Log is maintained throughout the project implementation to capture potential risks to the project and associated measures to mitigate risk. The Project Manager shall maintain and update the Risk Log and ensure that risks are identified, communicated and managed effectively.**

**A number of potential risks are listed below.**

Description of risk	Type and category	Risk management actions	Current situation
Potential for delays in implementation at start-up possibly from the procurement project staff, consultants and other elements. Other delays could arise from inadequate institutional coordination and or participation of stakeholders.	Political Organizational Operational	The procurement process will be carefully monitored by the project team through the conducting of internal meetings related to implementation of the project and regular meetings with operations unit and UNDP management. The project will have procurement plan which will be regularly updated upon changing circumstances. Where necessary, UNDP management interventions will be made in order to speed up the process.	The risk is still valid. There are certain delays in project implementation due to lengthy procurement procedures, limited pool of qualified national consultants/ service providers.  The risk is valid until the end of project cycle (August 2024)  Impact - medium

		Additionally, the UNDP Country Office will ensure that adequate allocation of staff from UNDP and the government are provided and in a timely manner. The CO has significant experience in successfully managing complex projects. As a precautionary measure, activities in the first quarter of the project are kept to a minimum	
A limited ability to collect data. This leads to an incomplete data collection could lead to delays / challenges in the completion of the outputs / activities.	Political Organizational	Clear commitment will be obtained from across government agencies to contribute to data collection and dissemination of data.	Consultants and consultancy teams relied on global and regional open access data as the first source of information. The gaps were filled during fact-finding missions (stakeholder consultation meetings, site visits, etc.) – e.g. for CRVA. Project requested data through official communication channels – e.g. development of M&E framework  The risk is valid until the end of project cycle (August 2024) Impact - moderate
Low institutional capacities lead to ineffective execution of the project that undermine the project.	Organizational	Enhancement of institutional capacity has been identified as critical to the success of the project and is the focus of Outcome 3. Involvement of the stakeholders through consultations, training and workshops during the assessments, planning and policy stage is envisaged to support capacity building.	NAP project conducted altogether 21 capacity building events targeting decision-makers of different line ministries and hyakimliks of Ashgabat and Dashoguz region; practical trainings for water specialists and staff of Turkmen Hydromet, etc. This also helped to build trustful relations with the key project partners and strengthened cooperation between NAP project and government authorities.  The risk is valid until the end of project cycle (August 2024) Impact - moderate
Conflicts emerge between stakeholders concerning roles in the NAP process leading to an uncoordinated approach to tackling climate change and a NAP process that is ineffective or suboptimal.	Political Organizational	Government stakeholder involvement is to be detailed early and clearly in stakeholder involvement plan. Support from central government will be engaged if needed. Consistent and active involvement of stakeholders is envisaged to support ownership of the project and minimize conflicts.	As per consultations with government representatives, joint agreement was reached that NAP process shall be led and coordinated by the Working Group on Climate Change of the Interagency Commission on Environmental Protection. The relevant Regulations

			<p>were revised in line with this decision; the draft bylaws transferred to the Ministry of Environmental Protection for further action.</p> <p>The risk is valid until the end of project cycle (August 2024)</p> <p>Impact - low</p>
<p>Lack of political will to support the project endangers the sustainability of the project.</p>	<p>Political Strategic</p>	<p>Awareness-raising among the key decision-makers of the near and long-term risks of climate impacts to national and sectoral development should help build support for the project and an ongoing NAP process.</p> <p>Support will be given to government to organize consultations on project progress at key stages to maintain government ownership and interest in the project.</p> <p>Collaboration with other cooperation projects which will help to maintain political visibility.</p>	<p>Project has conducted 4 rounds of CCA awareness-raising workshops for decision makers in 2023. Three of them were organized in partnership with other development agencies (IOM, GIZ) and with thematic input from other UNDP projects, UNICEF, GWP, etc. Project Board meeting was organized to inform the partners of progress and involve them in decision-making process.</p> <p>The risk is valid until the end of project cycle (August 2024)</p> <p>Impact - low</p>
<p>Insufficient focus/commitment to adaptation due to other immediate development pressures threatens the sustainability of a NAP process beyond the project.</p>	<p>Political Strategic</p>	<p>The development of the NAP process, and governance framework as well as integrating adaptation into water planning should ensure the sustainability of the project and the NAP process</p>	<p>There were certain drawbacks in establishing the governance framework caused by the government reform process that affected key ministries responsible for climate change issues – the Ministry of Environment Protection. NAP project will continue to follow up with the national partner and advocate for adoption of bylaws strengthening the mandate of the Interagency Commission on Environmental Protection – that shall become in charge of coordination of climate change adaptation efforts on national level.</p> <p>The risk is valid until the end of project cycle (August 2024)</p> <p>Impact - low</p>
<p>Certain stakeholder groups are excluded from fully participating in NAP</p>	<p>Political Operational</p>	<p>Special care will be taken to ensure that all stakeholder groups are informed and given the opportunity to</p>	<p>Project team ensures involvement of various groups of stakeholders in</p>

<p>processes and decisions that may affect them.</p> <p>This leads to a NAP process that does not reflect the vulnerabilities and needs of certain stakeholder groups. This is a particularly a risk in Dashoguz.</p>		<p>participate in the NAP process. This is especially true for communities in Dashoguz. Additionally, the project implementing team will conduct real-time monitoring and evaluation of each stakeholder engagement activity to ensure that these processes are fully inclusive.</p> <p>Management processes (e.g. budgets and work plans) will be adjusted should country circumstances prevent any affected stakeholder groups from engaging in the process</p>	<p>project activities: decision-makers, professionals, CSOs, private sector representatives, Youth and Women Unions, among others. To ensure that stakeholders are given equal opportunities, the events are organized both in Ashgabat and Dashoguz region.</p> <p>The risk is valid until the end of project cycle (August 2024)</p> <p>Impact - low</p>
<p>The COVID-19 pandemic may lead to a variety of impacts on the project including, but not limited to, delays in procurement, difficulty is conducting stakeholder consultations.</p>	<p>Operational</p>	<p>The number of COVID-19 infections in Turkmenistan has been comparatively low so far. Regardless, the project will be particularly vigilant about potential and actual impacts resulting from the pandemic and seek to factor in specific mitigation options in each case. The project will continue to monitor situation closely and take early actions and adjustments a needed.</p>	<p>In 2023 travel restrictions were lifted. NAP project international consultants could come for missions both to Ashgabat and Dashoguz region.</p> <p>The risk is not valid as of July 2023.</p> <p>Impact - high</p>

#### **4. Lessons learned and follow-up steps (if applicable)**

##### **a) Please provide the lessons learned and further steps after the project's closure.**

In 2023 NAP project enjoyed working with a full team of 4 staff members. The project has advanced in implementation of all three components. Under the 1<sup>st</sup> output as a follow-up of the Institutional analysis and long deliberations with the government counterparts it was agreed that the Working Group on International Agreements on Climate Change of the Interagency Commission for Environmental Protection of Turkmenistan will take on a role of the coordination mechanism for climate change adaptation. The project supported the development of the relevant by-laws. Their adoption was envisaged during the next meeting of the Commission. However, in July as a result of government reform process the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment Protection (MAEP) was divided into two ministries. Newly established Ministry of Environment (MEP) became the legal successor of MAEP, and the Minister of Environment assumed responsibilities of the Chairman of the Commission. The meeting of the Interagency Commission did not take place in 2023. NAP project transferred draft by-laws to the Legal Department of MEP and will follow up on this issue with MEP in 2024. After adoption the project intends to support regular meetings of the Commission or its Working Groups related to adaptation planning.

2023 was marked by quite substantial number of awareness raising and capacity building workshops. Some of the trainings implemented by different service providers addressed the same audience. To avoid overburdening the participants it was decided to support joint work of NAP project consultants and consulting companies and organize back-to-back trainings. That also helped to optimize use of available resources (reduced travel costs for participants from velayats to Ashgabat, for example). Moreover, in 2023 NAP project continued looking for synergies and partnerships with other development projects. Several workshops were organized jointly with relevant IOM, GIZ, Global Water Partnership (GWP) projects and with active involvement of other UNDP projects (Aral and Cities), UNICEF and public organizations.

This year we have started conducting Climate Risks and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA) of water sector on subnational level in Ashgabat and Dashoguz. Data access remains a challenge in Turkmenistan. Being

aware of this, CRVA team relies on open access global and regional data and verifies hypothetical assumptions through the meetings with national stakeholders and site visits in the region. Interestingly, that during such a visit to the farm in Dashoguz region, experts noted table in the local museum with data on every crop produced in this area over the past 50 years. Farmers noted decrease in agricultural production and attribute it to the shortage of water, land degradation and impacts of climate change (increased periods of consequent hot days, more severe droughts, unexpected temperature drops, etc.). This example proved that sometimes useful data could be found in places where one would least expect it.

Since the project outputs are interrelated, project team ensures coordination of work between various service providers. For example, to improve the coherence of the final products close coordination was established between NDC, M&E and CRVA teams. Coordination calls and access to datasets will certainly contribute to the improvement of the final products. Likewise, CCA Awareness Building Consultant works closely with Scientific and Information Center of the Interstate Commission for Water Coordination (SIC ICWC) to ensure that there is no repetition of themes of the workshops, and where possible to organize back-to-back events to enrich the programme and enhance overall impact. Project team continues collecting feedback in verbal and in written forms. This helps to improve the content and format of the workshops.

### **3. Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment**

Analyse and report with the support of evidence concrete results achieved and/or unachieved towards gender equality and women's empowerment during the year.

Gender emerged as a cross-cutting topic since it is of utmost importance to include gender aspects in the NAP process at the very initial stage. Women's Union representative became a member of the Project Board in 2023 (<https://cutt.ly/dwACP09k>). Guided by the [Report on Gender Issues](#) project team ensured that gender equality component is mainstreamed in all project activities.

In 2023 the project conducted slightly over 20 capacity building events for about 370 participants from various target audiences including decision-makers, practitioners, private sector, academia and civil society organizations. At all times the project team ensured that there are equal opportunities for men and women to participate in the project events. Gender focused entity, like the Women's Union, were invited to most of the project events. During these seminars gender equality topic was included as a part or stand-alone expert presentation ("*Mainstreaming gender factors in agriculture and water management when adapting to climate change*" by G. Stulina, SIC ICWC - <https://cutt.ly/mwYKY9Mn>).

Gender perspective was considered at the stage of elaboration of proposal for Climate Change Adaptation M&E System (<https://cutt.ly/DwA2MM0y>)

Gender Specialist is a part of Climate Risks and Vulnerability Assessment (CRVA) team that conduct assessment for water sector in two pilot areas – Ashgabat and Dashoguz region. CRVA team developed a gender-differentiated approach that is a key to achieving effective, inclusive, and equitable climate risk management. As a part of mission to Ashgabat and field visits in Dashoguz, the team jointly with Global Water Partnership delivered "*Gender and water resources in adaptation to climate change*" workshop for government, private sector and civil society organizations (<https://cutt.ly/jwYZMg6G>). The findings will be included in CRVA Assessment.

### **5. Transfer of Assets or other related matter**

**a) Please state on any past or future transfer of assets made within the project cycle (Attach list of equipment, cooperation frameworks with beneficiaries, etc.).**

n/a



**6. Financial management**

Budget item	Total approved in 2023	Expenses + commitments	Budget utilization in % to planned
Component 1	187,506.78	195,658.31	104.34%
Component 2	91,117	145,654.67	159.85%
Component 3	226,777.41	145,801.10	64.29%
Project management	37,886.37	17,616.80	46.5%
<b>Total delivery in 2023</b>	<b>543,287.56</b>	<b>504,730.88</b>	<b>92.90%</b>

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