Annual Project Progress Report

Project title:	**Assistance in the implementation of a pilot electronic data interchange system in Turkmenistan**
Award ID:	**1062009**
Project ID:	**01000304**
Implementing partner:	**UNDP**
National Partner:	**Agency „Turkmenaragatnashyk" of the Agency of Transport and Communications under the Cabinet of Ministers of Turkmenistan**
Period covered in this report:	**27.02.2023-31.12.2023**
Date of last Annual Report:	**N/A**
Date of the last Project Board meeting:	**30.11.2023**
Date of last Qaulity Assurance and rating:	**Q/A Design Stage/Satisfactory/ASM-00540**

1.Project Performance

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

Project Result 1: Consultation and support for the development and implementation of the pilot project of electronic data interchange system (EDI) (EDI system will consist of Interagency Electronic Data Interchange system and Interagency Document Workflow system), and the organization of the EDI system operator.

Output indicators: 1.1 The terms of reference for the implementation of the EDI system based on the X-Road solution have been prepared.

Output targets: 1

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

c) If no or partially, please explain why?

The project hired the International Consultant-Chief Technical Adviser (IC-CTA) to support the project staff with development of the terms of reference (ToR) for the implementation of the EDI system based on the X-Road solution. The IC-CTA in consultations with the specialists from the Agency "Turkmenaragatnashyk" and project staff elaborated the ToR which was further used in preparation of the RFP-UNDP-TKM-00060 announced on November 13, 2023 (the initial deadline of December 11, 2023, was extended by January 8, 2024 due to limited number of bids).

Output indicators: 1.1.1 International experience in building systems of interdepartmental electronic interaction and systems of interdepartmental document management was studied.

Output targets: 0

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

c) If no or partially, please explain why?

The second project activity- a Study Tour was postponed to the next year due to the late start of project activities. The activity was discussed at the Project Board meeting on November 30, 2023. It was agreed that the study tour to Kyrgyzstan will be arranged in May-June 2024. The reason behind choosing Kyrgyzstan was explained by the level of digital maturity and Internet penetration of the country as well as infrastructure development and features of the culture of interaction according to the basic principles of information exchange. The initial agreement with the respective entities of the Kyrgyzstan was reached. During the study visit, the technical team of the national partner will visit the Ministry of Digital Development of Kyrgyzstan and the State Enterprise "Tunduk", which is the operator of the EDI system in Kyrgyzstan to share experience in the following areas:

- organizational structure of the authorized body on digital transformation,

- competencies and powers of the authorized body on digital transformation,

- specific aspects of interaction with state bodies,

- legal and regulatory framework for the authorized body's activities;

- experience of integration with state bodies.

The second study tour will be further discussed with national partner and will be organized to one of the European countries with a high level of digitalization of public administration, such as Estonia, Finland, Moldova.

2.Progress Reporting

Please summarize the main achievements during the project cycle:

Project Result 1: Consultation and support for the development and implementation of the pilot project of EDI system (EDI system will consist of Interagency Electronic Data Interchange system and Interagency Document Workflow system), and the organization of the EDI system operator

The project was launched on February 27, 2023. Two Project Board meetings were held: the first meeting was conducted on February 27, 2023, and the second on November 30, 2023. The main achievements of the project in the initial year of implementation were around preparation of the ToR for the implementation of the EDI system based on the X-Road solution. The project team supported by IC-CTA analyzed the IT infrastructure and the national partner's readiness to implement the EDI system. As an outcome of the joint efforts a detailed technical specification with certain milestones and a schedule for their implementation was elaborated. Based on this technical specification, a tender process was launched to hire a consulting company to carry out works on the ground on development and implementation of the pilot project of EDI system.

The UNDP project team also participated in several events organized by the national partners to raise awareness of UNDP's work in the framework of digital transformation, such as the International Youth Forum "Dialogue is a Guarantee of Peace" held on October 2, 2023, International conference and exhibition "Turkmentel 2023" conducted on November 9-10, 2023, as well events dedicated to the celebration of the World Day for Sustainable Transport on November 24-25, 2023.

Below are links to media coverage and photos from events related to the project:

- ***UNDP project team participated in the the International Youth Forum "Dialogue is a Guarantee of Peace" held on October 2, 2023 in Arkadag city to share***

https://www.instagram.com/p/Cx7RanKMq8M/?igshid=MzRlODBiNWFlZA==

- ***UNDP project participated in the International conference and exhibition "Turkmentel 2023" conducted on November 9-10, 2023***

UNDP Turkmenistan (@undp_turkmenistan) · Instagram photos and videos

ПРООН в Туркменистане приняла участие в... - UNDP Turkmenistan | Facebook

https://twitter.com/UNDPTM/status/1722605897569177771

https://twitter.com/narine_sahakyan/status/1722611546181013738

- ***UNDP project team participated in the events dedicated to the celebration of the World Day for Sustainable Transport on November 24-25, 2023***

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
Insufficient commitment of partners and stakeholders in the implementation of the project.	Organizational and moderate level	The project team maintains close liaison with national partners to ensure their full commitment and contribution at every stage of implementation.	The risk is at the moderate level because in the reporting period national partner demonstrated genuine interest in the project progress and supported project activities.
Frequent personnel changes in national partner organizations.	Political and likely	The project team adapts flexibly to new realities and changes. The project team uses the most effective working methods such as communication and advocacy with the national partner to implement the project in the most effective way for the target group and partners.	Although in the reporting period there were not critical changes in the personnel of national partners, the likelihood of such changes and staff reshuffles remain high.
Temporary restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic for organizing study visits,	Regulatory and low level	Completed since the pandemic had passed and in 2023 the Ministry of Health and	This risk was discussed at the last PB meeting, and it was decided to exclude it from the project risks as the

field meetings and events in the velayats.		Medical Industry of Turkmenistan had released all temporary restrictions on international travel.	Ministry of Health and Medical Industry of Turkmenistan eliminated all temporary restrictions on international travel in 2023. COVID-19 related in-country restrictions were abolished even earlier so no obstacles for organizing events in the regions.
Delays in the procurement of required hardware, software and services, or procurement of hardware and software that does not meet minimum specifications, and delays in hiring national and international experts (taken from the Risks section of the Project Document. It was not originally included in Annex 2 OFFLINE Project Risk Register Template)	Operational and low level	The project team works very close with the UNDP Operations Unit to facilitate the procurement process by preparing all necessary documents and providing all required information that come up during the procurement/ recruitment process.	The project did not experience any significant delays in hiring international consultant and national staff as well as in preparation and announcement of the main tender in the end of 2023 that is why this risk in the Low category.
Lack of qualified technical and other specialists in the local market, and insufficient pace of training of national personnel. (taken from the Risks section of the Project Document. It was not originally included in Annex 2 OFFLINE Project Risk Register Template)	Organizational and low level	The project team liaises closely with national partners to prepare the relevant technical team for the training.	In the reporting period the project did not initiate any trainings for national experts, hence it is hard to evaluate the risk category at this point.

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

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

1. It is very important to start implementing the project as soon as the project approval is received.
2. It is necessary to determine the dates correctly and more precisely for the implementation of project activities.
3. An adequate number of project team and external expertise is needed for proper and timely implementation of the project.

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.

Although the project does not have specific Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GEWE) components, certain activities were carried out to promote GEWE and youth empowerment at country level in line with the global goals and commitments for GEWE. For instance, on October 2, 2023, the project manager moderated the session Digital diplomacy and peace making: Using technology and social media for positive peacebuilding efforts in the International Youth Forum "Dialogue is Guarantee of Peace", where UNDP experts shared their experience in using the X-Road platform for electronic data exchange. Young female IT specialists were invited to the event to share their success stories in computer science and IT in the context of a significant transformation in perceptions of the role of women and girls in STEM, which has been effectively supported by international organizations, incl. UNDP. Also, during the international exhibition «Turkmentel – 2023», the project team had orientation meetings and discussions with young girls and women, students studying in computer/information science degrees in national universities.

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 as the procurement, delivery and transfer of equipment is planned for 2024.

6. Financial management

Budget item	Total approved in 2022 (in USD)	Expenses + commitments	Budget utilization in % to planned
Result 1	201,588.00	188,303.90	93,41
Project management	24,025.53	2,560.69	10,65
Total delivery in 2023	225,613.53	190,864.59	84.60
In % to total project budget			

Prepared by: **Gulalek Volmammedova**   **Project Manager**

Date: 13.12.2023

Approved by: Akmyrat Danatarov   Programme Spesialist

Date: