Country/Region/Global: Türkiye/RBEC Initiation Plan (IP)

Project Title:

Developing an Inclusive Model for Providing Social and Assistive Services Capacity to Persons with Disabilities

Expected UNSDCF Outcome(s):

Outcome #2.1: By 2025, public institutions and the private sector contribute to more inclusive, sustainable, and innovative industrial and agricultural development, and equal and decent work opportunities for all, in cooperation with the social partners.

Expected CPD Output(s):

Output 2.4: Disadvantaged groups, particularly the rural poor, women, and youth, gain access to financial and nonfinancial assets and skill formation to benefit from sustainable livelihoods and jobs.

Initiation Plan Start/End Dates:

16 October 2023- 15 March 2025

Implementing Partner:

UNDP

Programme Period:

2021-2025

Quantum Project Number:

01001363

Quantum Output Number:

Gender Marker:

Gen 2

Total Resources Required:

\$610,000

Total Allocated Resources:

\$610,000

Donor (Republic of Korea):

\$500,000

Donor (Gov. of Sweden):

\$110,000

Brief Description

Among the population groups affected by 2023 Kahramanmaraş earthquakes, those with intersecting inequalities especially persons with disabilities require special policies to ensure that the earthquake response in Türkiye "leaves no one behind".

Through the creation and execution of a model project, the aim is to provide persons with disabilities with the necessary tools, resources, and opportunities for self-sufficiency and inclusion within society. By adopting a holistic approach that includes needs assessment, data collection, facility enhancement, and the establishment of a specialized centre, the project aspire to empower individuals with disabilities, break the cycle of dependency, and foster a more equitable and accessible world for all.

The project is designed to achieve a single intended output: The creation and delivery of social services that are both accessible and responsive to gender-specific needs for individuals with disabilities residing in the earthquake-affected area.

Agreed by UNDP:

DocuSigned by:

Louisa Vinton

I. PURPOSE

A series of devastating earthquakes hit Türkiye and Syria on 6 February 2023. The scope and scale of the disaster are unprecedented, with reconstruction costs estimated as high as US\$100 billion.¹ Full recovery, reconstruction, and building back better will require vast resources and years to complete.

The earthquake-affected provinces exhibit multiple, overlapping socio-economic vulnerabilities. The per capita income levels of all the impacted provinces are significantly lower than the national average ranging from Gaziantep at 82% of the national average followed by Adana and Hatay roughly corresponding to 70% of the country average, with Adıyaman and Diyarbakır at the lower end, and Şanlıurfa with only 31% of the national average. This region is not only less wealthy than the rest of the country; it has also hosted roughly half of the 3.7 million displaced Syrians who have taken refuge in Türkiye over the past ten years.

The region hosts both population-dense urban settlements and remote rural ones. Vulnerabilities like poverty, unemployment, informal employment, discrimination, environmental threats, and other sources of insecurity were present in the region and had been exacerbated especially during the recent economic crisis and the pandemic.

Persons with disabilities and those who need tailored care, people with cognitive deficiencies like dementia, and other psychological disorders were hit hardest since available public resources for their basic needs were already very limited before the disaster. Along with the boarding centers established by the Umut Evleri (Homes of Hope) project, there are nine centers for persons with disabilities in the earthquake region. The ratio of Persons with Disabilities in the general population is 6.9%. If it is assumed that the ratio is the same for the earthquake region, the Persons with Disabilities population should be around 967,000. In addition, the private care services infrastructure was hit hard, and the outflux of the care staff after the disaster broke the supply chain in private caretaker services. On the demand side, more people have become disabled due to physical injuries, amputations and adverse psychological effects of the earthquake. According to the official data shared by the government, 60,000 people are amputees. The elderly and persons with disabilities need accessible and predictable safe spaces for socializing, care and support. The elderly especially depend on routines for a sense of security. Life-long learning opportunities and volunteer community actions prove to be successful measures to increase their functionality. People with severe health conditions, who need tailored care and cannot take care of themselves and are unattended in the post-disaster context should be provided with adequate services according to their underlying conditions.

With respect to the social protection system in Türkiye, the MoFSS and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS) are mainly responsible for social protection interventions while municipalities, private care facilities, and civil society are the key agents in terms of the actual delivery of social protection services to the affected population. Social protection systems, especially the social assistance and social services systems, bear a cross-cutting role for recovery as an indispensable part of public policies at local and national levels.

Operational capacities of the provincial social services were reduced either due to the infrastructural damage, loss/displacement of provincial personnel or simply because employees' families were directly affected by the earthquake. Some services are being temporarily compensated by the personnel of the neighboring provinces. As reported by the MoFSS, 533 people in elderly centers and 1,133 persons with disabilities in rehabilitation along with 206 old-aged persons and 546 persons with disabilities were identified in the region and were transferred to other provinces safely. Nonetheless, the earthquakes have increased the need for shelters and care services beyond what care facilities in neighboring regions can provide. Disruption of social and care services to elderly people and persons with disabilities impacts their lives more severely since in many cases this is their only opportunity to interact and participate in the public sphere. Furthermore, illiteracy and especially digital illiteracy are also noted to be barriers to access to information about available services and aid for some communities in the affected region where access to aid, especially for women and the elderly, was very limited after the disaster.

Due to a multitude of compelling reasons, the imperative to create and execute a model project catering to individuals with disabilities cannot be overstated. To achieve this goal, it is essential to adopt a comprehensive approach, encompassing several key components: conducting a thorough needs assessment, gathering pertinent data, refurbishing existing vocational training centers and repair service facilities, and establishing a dedicated center focused on assistive devices and prosthetic aids. These concerted efforts are aimed at alleviating the entanglements of dependency that individuals with disabilities often encounter.

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¹ Strategy and Budget Office, UNDP, UN, World Bank and European Union, Türkiye Earthquakes Recovery and Reconstruction Assessment, March 2023, https://www.sbb.gov.tr/turkiye-earthquakes-recovery-and-reconstruction-assessment/

II. STRATEGY AND THE EXPECTED OUTPUTS

UNDP is well positioned to support the early recovery efforts, drawing on its decades-long presence in Türkiye and its wealth of global experience in helping countries rebuild after earthquake disasters. In Southeast Anatolia, UNDP has been engaged in development work since the 1950s, and from the beginning of the Syrian refugee crisis, by providing support to communities hosting large numbers of refugees.² UNDP's long-established role in offering assistance provides a strong foundation for immediate and near-term contributions to recovery and reconstruction, with full respect for Government leadership and in coordination with local partners, civil society, and international organizations in all aspects of the earthquake response.

The core of UNDP's proposed interventions lies in supporting the affected people, communities and institutions to restore public services and livelihoods and provide income-generating opportunities, in line with the "leaving no one behind" principle. Drawing from its post-disaster experiences and its longstanding work with specific groups, including refugees, persons with disabilities, survivors of violence and the elderly, UNDP will support the inclusiveness of recovery efforts by ensuring their needs are addressed with a targeted approach. UNDP's approach will be participatory meaning community-based solutions will be designed through consultation with representatives not only of service providers but also the groups affected.

In a nutshell, the project aims to provide persons with disabilities with the necessary tools, resources, and opportunities for self-sufficiency and inclusion within society. By adopting a holistic approach that includes needs assessment, data collection, facility enhancement, and the establishment of a specialized center, the project aspires to empower individuals with disabilities, break the cycle of dependency, and foster a more equitable and accessible world for all. The project will support the local authorities to restore functional social care services with linkages to sustainable income generation. By promoting a strategic approach to community development, this project aims to build a model that are scalable, adaptable, and replicable in other contexts.

The project's proposed interventions are based on a strong understanding of needs and close partnership with key counterparts. As the lead UN agency supporting the Government in conducting the Türkiye Earthquakes Reconstruction and Recovery Assessment (TERRA – adapted from the Post Disaster Needs Assessment Methodology), UNDP Türkiye CO has been in close contact with all related government institutions since the early days of the disaster. The continuous contacts and flow of information enable UNDP to understand the disaster in a multifaceted manner embracing its impact on livelihoods, disadvantaged groups and the provision of public services. Also, the field presence of UNDP and its strong local networks in the region through municipalities, local chambers of industry and commerce and civil society capacitates UNDP to have a clearer and holistic picture supported with information directly from the disaster zone. UNDP Türkiye CO has been in close contact with the Municipalities of Malatya, Hatay, Kahramanmaraş, Adıyaman, Gaziantep and Kilis and the chambers in those provinces. In the Earthquake response coordination structure, UNDP is leading the coordination of the Early Recovery (ER) sector coordinating the UN system, and international and local NGOs' early recovery interventions. In the area, UNDP is working with 33 Organized Industrial zones, Chambers of Industry and Commerce, GAP Regional Development Administration (GAP RDA), and Development Agencies. The accumulated information from government and local actors has led UNDP to propose this action as an integrated solution addressing emergency needs and livelihoods.

In line with the identification of needs, the activities will be implemented in close coordination with the Malatya Metropolitan Municipality, Kahramanmaraş Metropolitan Municipality, Adıyaman Municipality and relevant national and local NGOs, institutions, universities, etc. All activities in the local communities will be coordinated with local authorities through the Early Recovery coordination structure and the UNDP Regional Coordinator and field team based in Gaziantep.

The project is comprised of one output:

(i) The creation and delivery of social services that are both accessible and responsive to gender-specific needs for individuals with disabilities residing in the earthquake-affected area.

Output I. The creation and delivery of social services that are both accessible and responsive to gender-specific needs for individuals with disabilities residing in the earthquake-affected area.

²https://www.undp.org/turkiye/press-releases/undp-boosts-resilience-syrian-refugees-and-host-communities-turkiye

³ https://www.sbb.gov.tr/turkiye-earthquakes-recovery-and-reconstruction-assessment/

The overarching objective of this model project is to break the cycle of dependency that often entraps individuals with disabilities. By addressing their unique needs through comprehensive needs assessments, data-driven decision-making, facility upgrades, and the provision of assistive devices, we can pave the way for greater autonomy and inclusivity within society. This initiative embodies a commitment to social equity and represents a significant step towards realizing a more inclusive and accessible world for all.

The foundational step in this initiative is the needs assessment, which involves a meticulous examination of the specific requirements and challenges faced by individuals with disabilities within the targeted community or demographic. This assessment serves as the bedrock upon which subsequent actions are built, ensuring that resources and interventions are tailored to meet the unique needs of this population. The collection of data, both qualitative and quantitative, is equally pivotal. The feasibility study for production of prosthesis and assistive devices benefiting from existing partners of UNDP active in different initiatives (i.e. OIZ managements, micro-surgery foundation of TISK, Ministry of Health) will be incremental to identify medium to long term potential in the area.

Renovating and upgrading existing vocational training centers and repair service facilities is another crucial facet of this model project. These centers play an integral role in imparting skills and fostering self-sufficiency among individuals with disabilities. Ensuring that these facilities are equipped with state-of-the-art resources and are accessible to all is essential for enhancing the quality of training and support services offered.

Furthermore, with the establishment of wheelchair maintenance and repair workshops within municipalities, which have become even more essential after the earthquake, and the expansion of the capacity of existing workshops, services for individuals with disabilities will be diversified, and the quality and quantity of current services will be improved.

Activity 1. Conducting a Quick and Participatory Needs Analysis & Data Collection: Data collection and needs analysis covering the elderly and persons with disabilities (PwDs) in the earthquake zone, with a focus on vulnerable people living in temporary settlements (tents and container cities) The data collection will also cover the supply side of services such as service provision capacity of municipalities. The first data collection will be conducted in Malatya province to initiate Project activities.

Activity 2. Feasibility Analysis for Production of Assistive Devices: Benefiting from UNDP's initiatives with MoIT at national level and OIZ managements at local level a feasibility study will be conducted to strengthen the capacity of needs-based production capacity in Türkiye. UNDP is well placed to create synergies with international and national partners to build production capacity in Türkiye which could lead to establishment of long term sustainable capacity flourishing innovative solutions and services for the people in need while supporting the economic recovery in the Region.

Activity 3. Strengthening Capacity of Repairment Center: Capacity increase of repair and maintenance station in Malatya for assistive devices and provision of assistive devices and commodities in short supply (prosthetics, wheelchairs, crutches, walkers, diapers and other sanitary supplies).

Activity 4. Establishment of Wheelchair Repairment and Maintenance Centers: In cooperation with Kahramanmaraş Metropolitan Municipality and Adıyaman Municipality, centers will be established for PwDs who need to repair and maintain their wheelchairs. All equipment needed for the repair and maintenance centers will be provided through a responsible party agreement.

Activity 5. Capacity Building for Service Providers and Persons with Disabilities: Conducting vocational trainings and also organization of socialization and respite opportunities for PwDs and caregivers confined to tent/container cities or other situations where the risk of isolation/ghettoization is high.

Activity 6. Monitoring Mechanism for Service Provision and Supervision Services will be Provided: In cooperation with the Malatya Metropolitan Municipality M&E tool will be developed and followed.

Activity 7. Supporting the Prosthesis for Persons with Disabilities: Individuals selected under UNDP's Accelerator Lab Initiative will be supported by the prosthesis.

Applicable Outcome(s) from the UNDP Türkiye Country Programme Document:

Expected UNSDCF Outcome(s): Outcome #2.1: By 2025, public institutions and the private sector contribute to more inclusive, sustainable and innovative industrial and agricultural development, and equal and decent work opportunities for all, in cooperation with the social partners.

Expected CPD Outputs:

Output 2.4: Disadvantaged groups, particularly the rural poor, women, and youth, gain access to financial and nonfinancial assets and skill formation to benefit from sustainable livelihoods and jobs.

2.4.2 Number of people benefiting from skill formation and employment opportunities disaggregated by sex.

Baseline: 2,127,082 Target: 2,136,047 (at least 40% women)

	Project Title: Developing an Inclusive Model for Providing Social and Assistive Services Capacity to Persons with Disabilities								
Expected	Planned	Descriptions of	Budget	Budget Amount					
Outputs	Activities	Activities	Description						
Output 1 The creation and delivery of social services that are both accessible and responsive to gender-specific needs for individuals with disabilities residing in the earthquake-affected area.									
Indicator 1.1: Number of Repairment and Maintenance Centers Supported in Terms of Capacity	Analysis & Data Collection Activity 2. Feasibility Analysis for Production of Assistive Devices Activity 3. Strengthening Capacity of Repairment Center Activity 4. Establishment of Wheelchair Repairment and Maintenance Centers	1.2. The repairment and maintenance centers established, 1.3. Feasibility Study completed for production capacity,	71300 Local Consultants 71800 Contractual Services-Imp Partner 72100 Contractual Services-Companies 72200 Equipment and Furniture 75700 Training, Workshops and Confer 71600 Travel 71400 Contractual Services — Individual	estimates.					
Baseline: o, Target: 1 Indicator 1.2: Number of PwDs Received Capacity Building and Vocational Trainings:									
Baseline: o Target: 5.00 (At least 20% will be women) Indicator 1.3 Number of Reports/Feasibilities Conducted									
Baseline: o Target: 2 Indicator 1.4: Number of Wheelchair Repairment and Maintenance Centers Established	Activity 5. Capacity Building for Service Providers and Persons with Disabilities Activity 6. Monitoring Mechanism for Service Provision								
Baseline:o Target: 2 Indicator 1.5: Number of Individuals Received Prosthesis Baseline:o Target: 7									

III. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

UNDP Türkiye Country Office will be managing the Project in cooperation with the key national and local stakeholders. UNDP Türkiye Country Office will manage the multi-partnered project and relations with the local municipalities as well as public institutions and NGOs.

A Project Board (PB) with representation from the Presidency of Strategy and Budget, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNDP Türkiye CO will be set up to guide and oversee the implementation of the project. All stakeholders that are listed above may be invited to the Project Steering Committee, as needed.

The Project Board is the group responsible for consultation and consensus-based decision-making and management for a development project/ when guidance is required by the Portfolio Managers, including the recommendation for UNDP about approval of plans and revisions. The Project Board is chaired by the UNDP Türkiye CO. From the UNDP Türkiye CO side, the Deputy Resident Representative (DRR) chairs the PB meetings as the Head of the CO programme from UNDP.

To ensure UNDP's ultimate accountability, Project Board decisions should be made following standards that shall ensure the best value for money, fairness, integrity, transparency and effective international competition. Reviews by this group are made at designated decision points during the running of the development project/initiation plan, or as necessary when raised by the PM.

Based on the approved annual work plan (AWP), the Project Board may review and approve the annual plans when required and authorize any major deviation from these agreed quarterly plans. It is the authority that signs off on the completion of the annual plan. It ensures that required resources are committed and arbitrates on any conflicts within the development project/initiation plan or negotiates a solution to any problems between the Project Management Unit (PMU) and external bodies. In addition, it approves the appointment and responsibilities of the PMU and any delegation of its Project Assurance responsibilities.

Specific responsibilities of the Project Board:

- Review and approve the Work Plan
- Agree on the Project Management Unit's responsibilities, as well as the responsibilities of the other members of the Project Management team;
- Delegate any Project Assurance function as appropriate;
- Review the Progress Report for the project;
- Review and appraise detailed AWP, including Atlas reports covering activity definition, quality criteria, issue log, updated risk log, M&E, and communication plan.
- Provide overall guidance and direction to the project implementation, ensuring it remains within any specified constraints;
- Address issues as raised by the Project Management Unit;
- Provide guidance and agree on possible countermeasures/management actions to address specific risks;
- Agree on Project Management Unit's tolerances in the Annual Work Plan when required;
- Conduct regular meetings and provide direction and recommendations to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily according to plans.
- Review Combined Delivery Reports (CDR) prior to certification by the Implementing Partner;
- Appraise the Project Annual Review Report, make recommendations for the next AWP and inform the Outcome Board about the results of the review.
- Review and approve end technical reports, make recommendations for follow-on actions;
- Provide ad-hoc direction and advice for exception situations when the project manager's tolerances are exceeded;
- Assure that all deliverables have been produced satisfactorily;
- Review and approve the Final Review Report, including Lessons-learned;

Senior Supplier (UNDP)

The Senior Supplier represents the interests of the parties that provide funding and/or technical expertise to the development project/initiation plan. The Senior Supplier's primary function within the Project Board is to guide the technical feasibility of the initiation plan. The Senior Supplier role must have the authority to commit to or acquire supplier resources required. If necessary, more than one person may be required for this role.

Specific Responsibilities (as part of the above responsibilities for the Project Board)

- Make sure that progress toward the outputs remains consistent from the supplier's perspective
- Promote and maintain focus on the expected output(s) from the point of view of supplier management
- Ensure that the supplier resources required for the initiation plan are made available
- Contribute supplier opinions on Project Board decisions on whether to implement recommendations on proposed changes
- Arbitrate on and ensure the resolution of any supplier priority or resource conflicts

Implementation Partners

At the local level, municipalities especially Malatya Metropolitan Municipality, Kahramanmaraş Metropolitan Municipality, Adıyaman Municipality, chambers of commerce and industries, and relevant NGOs will be key stakeholders to deliver the services.

Presidency of Republic of Türkiye Strategy and Budget Office & Ministry of Foreign Affairs

These two offices are natural members of each Project Board.

PSB is the Government coordinating agency of the UNDP in Türkiye and ensures that all UNDP programmes are designed/implemented in line with National priorities.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs gives final approval to all UNDP development projects and hence has an overall oversight function under each project.

Project Assurance

The Project Assurance role supports the Project Board by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed.

Project Assurance has to be independent of the Project Management Unit; therefore, the Project Board cannot delegate any of its assurance responsibilities to the Project Management Unit. At UNDP Project Assurance function belongs to DRR, Portfolio Manager and M&E Analyst with a clear mandate for oversight and monitoring functions.

Project assurance can also include key staff in Beneficiary institutions that have a stake in the quality execution of the project. However, the project assurance function cannot be assumed by the Senior Executive since the assurance function is to be carried out by an impartial party.

Project Management Unit

A Project Management Unit (PMU) will be established comprising permanent staff including the Project Coordinator, Field Coordinator(s) and Project Assistant with oversight responsibility of the Inclusive and Sustainable Growth Portfolio Manager and any other support staff appointed for the successful completion of this project i.e. Project Finance and Procurement Officer, Portfolio Administrator as well as Project Support Unit. The PMU will assist the Senior Executive in performing its role as an implementing partner. PMU also includes any technical expert/consultant hired for the successful implementation of the project. PMU will be responsible for close surveillance of the performance of technical experts if any.

PMU will ensure the conceptualization, delivery, and monitoring of project activities, close coordination with institutional partners and other relevant actors, visibility of results, as well as knowledge management. The PMU with defined roles internally will support the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of UNDP and will be responsible for ensuring that it produces the required results that can achieve the benefits defined in this document.

In addition to PMU, the task force will be established within UNDP Türkiye CO. The task force consists of the Private Sector Partnerships Team, Gender Advisor and Accelerator Lab members to draw on relevant expertise and ensure cross-fertilization and better impact. The results and lessons learned of UNDP Türkiye CO programming on reducing inequalities and public policies will be utilized during the implementation.

IV. MONITORING

The monitoring requirements to assess the result of the initiation plan are detailed below.

Monitoring Requirements	Primary Responsibility	Indicative Budget	Time Frame	
Standard UNDP monitoring and reporting requirements as outlined in the UNDP POPP	ISG M&E Officer	N/A	End of Project	
✓ Regular Progress Report✓ Updated Risk Log				
Project Board Meetings	Project Board Committee	N/A	Semi-annual face to face or online updates with the donor and implementing partners are envisaged instead of a PB due to the rapid pace of the project.	
Lessons Learned and Knowledge Generation Doc.	Portfolio Managers	N/A	End of Project	
Supervision Missions	ISG M&E Officer and/or UNDP M&E Analyst, UNDP Gender Analyst	None	None	

The project monitoring will rely on the regular progress report and updated risk log of the project team, which will be based on the verification of data provided by partner institutions, namely the various municipal centers & municipal social service departments supported.

This will be complemented by usual monitoring activities, including supervision and field missions from both M&E and management staff of UNDP CO in Ankara, as well as monitoring visits of the donor. Semi-annual in-person or online updates with the donor and implementing partners will take place and a lessons-learned report will be produced at the end of the project.

V. Evaluation

N/A.

V. WORK PLAN

Period: 17 Months (until March 15st, 2025)

	PLANNED ACTIVITIES	TIMEFRAME					RESPONSIBLE	PLANNED BUDGET			
EXPECTED OUTPUTS	(and actions)	O ₁	Q2	2023 [.]	-2025 Q4	Q ₅	Q6	PARTY	Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount
Output 1: The creation and delivery of social services that are both accessible and responsive to gender-specific needs for individuals with disabilities residing in the earthquake-affected area. Indicator 1.1: Number of Repairment and Maintenance Centers Supported in Terms of Capacity Baseline: o, Target: 1 Indicator 1.2: Number of PwDs Received Capacity Building and Vocational Trainings: Baseline: o Target: 5.00 (At least 20% will be women) Indicator 1.3 Number of Reports/Feasibilities Conducted Baseline: o Target: 2 Indicator 1.4: Number of Wheelchair Repairment and Maintenance Centers Established Baseline: o Target: 2 Indicator 1.5: Number of Individuals Received Prosthesis Baseline: o Target: 7	Activity 1. Conducting a Quick and Participatory Needs Analysis & Data Collection Activity 2. Feasibility Analysis for Production of Assistive Devices Activity 3. Strengthening Capacity of Repairment Center Activity 4. Establishment of Wheelchair Repairment and Maintenance Centers Activity 5. Capacity Building for Service Providers and Persons with Disabilities Activity 6. Monitoring Mechanism for Service Provision and Supervision Services will be Provided Activity 7. Supporting the Prosthesis for Persons with Disabilities	X	X	X	X	X	X	UNDP	Gov. of Korea Gov. of Sweden	71300 Local Consultants 71800 Contractual Services-Imp Partner 72100 Contractual Services-Companies 72200 Equipment and Furniture 75700 Training, Workshops and Confer 71600 Travel 71400 Contractual Services – Individual 74596 Delivery Enabling Services	\$15,787 \$40,000 \$214,444 \$200,000 \$10,000 \$20,000 \$20,000
Total Direct Eligible Cost											US \$560,231
Indirect Cost - GMS (%8)											US \$44,819
Total Project Budget	US \$605,050										
Coordination Levy (%1 – for Gov Korea only)	,,										
Total Donor Contributions	US \$610,000										
Total Korea Contribution											US \$500.000
Total Sweden Contribution											US \$110,000

^{*}In line with Outputs with gender markers GEN2 or GEN3, it is recommended to allocate at least 15% of the funding to activities in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women.