

## United Nations Development Programme



### Country: Armenia Initiation Plan

**Project Title:** COVID-19 Response: Strengthening Security, Stability and Resilience of the Bordering Communities in Vayots Dzor, Gegharkunik and Syunik Regions

**Expected UNDAF/CP Outcome 1:** By 2020, Competitiveness is improved and population, including vulnerable groups, have greater access to sustainable economic opportunities

**Expected CPD Output 1.3:** Capacities of national and local institutions enhanced to collect, update, analyse and manage disaggregated socioeconomic data for evidence -based policy making

**Initiation Plan Start/End Dates:** 10.07.20 – 30.09.20

**Implementing Partner:** UNDP

#### Brief Description

The Project represents a joint UNDP-UNICEF effort to advance peace and stability in the bordering communities of Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor and Syunik regions (directly affected by the 30-year Nagorno Karabakh conflict), by targeting the root causes of instability and violence, and weathering the impacts of COVID-19.

The project main objective is to provide evidence-based intervention in the selected regions, attacking the root causes of the vulnerabilities and increasing the community resilience. Women and youth are tackled with specific attention, since they are both the most vulnerable, while at the same time are key actors in peace building.

The project is designed in two phases. The presented project will last for three months and based on the results may continue into the second phase.

Programme Period:	2016-2020	Total resources required	344,158 USD
Atlas Project Number:	00122496	Total allocated resources:	278,424 GBP
Atlas Output ID:	00128546	• Regular	_____
Gender Marker:	GEN2 (OECD-DAC GEM1)	• Other:	_____
		o Donor	FCO
		o Donor	_____
		o Government	_____
		Unfunded budget:	_____
		In-kind Contributions	_____

Agreed by UNDP: Dmitry Mariyasyn, UNDP RR

10-Ju1-2020

## I. PURPOSE AND EXPECTED OUTPUT

COVID-19 created new vulnerabilities in the Armenian society and amplified existing ones. For the border and conflict-affected regions, it amplified lingering vulnerabilities such as weak governance, socioeconomic vulnerabilities, lack of access to services on the ground, and exclusion of women and youth, who are in their turn important actors of development and peace building. All this, combined with absence of response mechanisms to disaster risks and shocks, undermines the community resilience and directly contributes to instability, domestic or gender-based violence in conflict affected communities and hinders prospects for long-lasting development opportunities and stability on the ground.

To ensure a systematic, risk resilient and sustainable effort, the project is looking at several tiers of activities. Considering the specific nature of the border and conflict-affected communities and their remoteness, the project will focus on establishing baselines and generating information for evidence-based strengthening of good governance and resilience in the communities of the selected regions, as well as establishing of relationships and confidence with the local population. This will be done through a thorough progressive vulnerability assessment in the context of COVID-19 which will help to gain quick access to gender disaggregated micro-level data, forecast and scenario design, as well as initial capacity building.

The proposed project is a joint endeavor of UNDP and UNICEF, and the full comprehensive document with an overall description of activities and total budget is annexed to this document. While total budget is 278,424 GBP (344,158 USD), UNDP share is 175,554 GBP (217,001 USD) and UNICEF- 102,870 GBP (127,157 USD).

**Output Increased resilience and socio-economic security of the bordering communities in Gegharkunik, Syunik and Vayots Dzor regions**

### UNDP Activities:

**Activity 1.:** The activity expands on the methodological framework and the initial results of Socioeconomic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 (SEIA) implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and partners on regional level covering all the regions of the country to further assess the current socioeconomic situation in a representative sample out of 62 bordering settlements in all the 9 consolidated bordering communities in Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor and Syunik Regions, meanwhile enhancing SEIA's gender, youth, security, income dimensions, accessibility and quality of public and social services in line with the project focus. The value added of this assessment next to SEIA is its community focus complementing results of the SEIA which are summarized on the regional level.

The assessment will yield vulnerability summaries for a representative sample of settlements (out of 62) in Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor and Syunik providing quick data access and analysis of COVID-19 socioeconomic impacts on community level to national, regional and local governments, MTAI, MES and MLSA for responsive and efficient decision-making towards COVID-19 recovery and will be accompanied by policy recommendations on the regional level. In addition, they will inform the overall mid- and long-term implementation of the Project. The results of the assessment, along with SEIA data, will be visualized through a Project supported online dashboard allowing quick data assess.

The main findings and the recommendations of the assessments done by UNDP and UNICEF will be summarised in a joint summary report. The report will allow to easily disseminate the highlights of the assessments, ensuring a wider accessibility and easy referencing. A joint virtual presentation of the report will be held by UNDP and UNICEF involving the main project stakeholders.

**Activity 2:** Through integrating the results of Activity 1, online consultations with the expert groups and communities themselves with wide engagement and through institutional contracting of local CSOs, UNDP will support 2 out of 9 consolidated bordering communities to do corresponding assessment and design their development scenarios for the post-COVID-19 reality. Scenario building will add more prospective insights and enhance the qualitative dimension of the preceding assessments led by UNDP and UNICEF, while its main findings will be concluded in a white paper and will help to design policy recommendations. The methodology as well as each scenario will be validated by the communities. More specifically, "Scenario building" is a prospective analysis/assessment which: a) identifies plausible sustainable development directions for each community b) helps to design response strategies (including to COVID-like events) to prepare communities for the desired scenarios; c) identifies jobs and skills necessary for accelerating desired

community scenario; d) identifies vulnerabilities and gaps to achieve desired scenarios in reasonable timeframe.

**Activity 3.** In the conflict-affected communities where the disaster risks are disproportionately high, risk assessment is needed to inform the disaster response strategies on the local level. To address this need, gender-sensitive Local level Risk Management (LLRM) methodology will be applied by UNDP in partnership with civil society organization to comprehensively assess disaster (including conflict-related) risks in 21 bordering settlements (out of 62) in Vayots Dzor, Gegharkunik and Syunik. The assessment will help to design short, medium and long-term response strategies towards building resilience in these communities and will inform the scenario building exercise (Activity 2).

*UNICEF Activities:*

**Activity 1** An in-depth assessment of vulnerabilities created or aggravated as a result of the COVID-19 crises in a representative sample of communities from the three target regions will be conducted. The assessment will build off on the results of the rapid socioeconomic and the family/household vulnerability assessments (including analysis from a gender perspective) currently being rolled out by UNDP, UNICEF and partners, to improve understanding of the impact of the epidemic on the livelihoods of poor and vulnerable households nationwide. The results of the assessment will be analysed in partnership with civil society, and policy recommendations presented to inform decision-making on the national, regional and local level.

**Activity 2** Methodology, tools and instruments will be developed for a comprehensive assessment of the quality, range and coverage of regional and community-based support services and their capacity to respond to the needs during the COVID-19 situation. The assessment will encompass desk review and field work (key informant interviews, focus group discussions, case studies) and look into both existing mechanisms for provision of services both through state-run institutions and mechanisms of delegation of those services to civil society organisations, and into the quality, range and coverage of those services to identify the gaps in accessibility and effectiveness of the services for the most vulnerable population in need of those - families with children in difficult life circumstances (including parents or children with disabilities, mental health problems, families with high risk of domestic violence, families at risk of child abandonment, adolescent girls at risk of sexual violence, adolescent boys at risk of getting into conflict with the law and other groups). The methodology will be piloted in one of the target regions and finalized. The report on the comprehensive assessment of services in the region will be prepared to inform policy recommendations for that region.

**Activity 3** UNICEF will work on the enhancement of school disaster preparedness and response in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The School Disaster Risk Management Methodology will be applied to assess and enhance the crisis management capacities in the schools of 30 selected borderline communities (10 from each target region) and, in collaboration with the school and the community, School Disaster Risk Management Plans will be prepared and piloted in 5 schools based on armed conflict and COVID-19 scenarios. UNICEF's work will be based on the Government decrees on adoption of the School Disaster Management and Child Sensitive Local Level Risk Management Methodology, previously successfully tested and applied by UNICEF and UNDP in over 200 communities.

**Activity 4** Tools/guidelines/capacity building materials on provision of support services in the situation of COVID-19 will be developed for different groups of those professionals (social service workforce professionals, teachers), working directly with families and children most at risk and who are most exposed to the psychological shock of COVID-19, and any other disaster/security risks, such as the border conflict. These tools will be piloted through responsible partnering civil society organisations (subcontracting) during the capacity building for professionals engaged in state-run or state-supported organisations delivering mental health and psychosocial support services to the population of the 5 selected borderline communities (regional and community-based family and child support centres under MoLSA and MoESCS, social services, schools), which will be organised through a combination of online and face-to-face training, coaching and mentoring activities.

**Activity 5** In partnership with a civil society organisation, a helpline will be established, tailored to the needs of different groups of professionals, to provide further guidance and support to them to strengthen their capacity to respond to COVID-19 situation by delivering quality mental health and psychosocial support

(including tackling gender specific issues) to the most vulnerable population in the communities. This activity will be promoted through an outreach/communications campaign to increase access to support for the most vulnerable population in borderline communities.

**Activity 6** In partnership with a civil society organisation, UNICEF will support recruitment and training of foster families for emergency alternative care arrangements aimed at providing quick quality emergency alternative care to children and adolescents left without parental care due to COVID-19 (in 5 communities).

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## II. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The main stakeholders relevant to the project are the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure (MTAI), Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports (MoESCS), Ministry of Emergency Situations (MES), regional and local government of Syunik, Gegharkunik and Vayots Dzor, civil society organisations working in the target regions.

UNDP will be the main implementing partner and will transfer respective funds (102,870 GBP) to UNICEF through agency to agency agreement. UNICEF will provide report for its part to UNDP in accordance with the schedule for consolidation and final reporting to donor. The project teams will be based in Yerevan with outreach to regions/communities for programmatic activities.

Management of UNDP component of the Project will be ensured via supervision from the UNDP Socioeconomic Governance Portfolio, which will include quality assurance, oversight and technical support, with elements of Direct Project Cost (DPC) reflected in the budget.

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## III. MONITORING

In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the project will be monitored through the following monitoring and evaluation:

- Progress data against the results indicators in the RRF will be collected and analysed to assess the progress of the project in achieving the agreed outputs.
- Specific risks that may threaten achievement of intended results will be Identified and monitored through risk management actions using a risk log.
- Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the project.
- Internal review of data and evidence from all monitoring actions to inform decision making.
- On-going site visits will be conducted by both Project Team and Project Assurance to monitor implementation and address current issues.
- Final report will be developed at the end of the project to reflect on the achievements, results and lessons learned.

## IV. WORK PLAN

Period July-September 2020<sup>1</sup>:

EXPECTED OUTPUTS <i>And baseline, indicators including annual targets</i>	PLANNED ACTIVITIES <i>List activity results and associated actions</i>	TIMEFRAME			RESPONSIBLE PARTY	Funding Source	PLANNED BUDGET		
		Q3					Budget Description	Amount USD	Amount pound
<b>Output 1</b> <b>Increased resilience and socio-economic security of the bordering communities in Gegharkunik, Syunik and Vayots Dzor regions</b>  <i>Baseline:</i> 1. Pilot stage of SEIA completed 2. 0 3. 0 <i>Indicators:</i> 1. Availability of SEIA for three regions with deep analysis on the bordering communities with disaggregated data and analytical dashboard	1. Socioeconomic impact assessment of COVID-19 in the bordering communities of Gegharkunik, Syunik and Vayots Dzor regions conducted. -Institutional contract with 2 companies (consulting and CSO) for data collection, analysis and development of recommendations. -Institutional contract with IT company for development of data visibility dashboard. -Expert fee for drafting the final report -Translation and editing of the final report -Expert fee for drafting a joint UNDP-UNICEF summary report	X			UNDP	CSSF	72100 71300 74200 74500 75100	48,207.7 6,180.5 3,152 1,236.1 4,702.1	39,000 5,000 2,550 1,000 3,804
	2. Analysis of development trends under COVID-19 and design of development scenarios through scenario building exercise in 2 consolidated communities of Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor and Syunik conducted. -Institutional contract with local CSO for analysis and community development scenario design. -Institutional contract with company for priority employment needs assessment. -Expert fee (for 2 experts) for production of recommendations and white paper for the Government	X			UNDP	CSSF	72100 71300 74500 75100	6,1804.7 9,888.8 1,236.1 5,834.4	50,000 8,000 1,000 4,720

<sup>1</sup> Maximum 18 months

<p>2. Number of communities having development scenarios</p> <p>3. Availability of gender-based disaster risk management assessment in 21 selected most vulnerable settlements with disaggregated data</p> <p><i>2020 Targets:</i></p> <p>1. SEIA results and recommendations and incorporated into (or helped xxx) ...</p> <p>2. 2</p> <p>3. 21 gender-based disaster risk management assessment in 21 selected most vulnerable settlements will help what....</p> <p><i>Related CP outcome:</i></p> <p><b>By 2020, Competitiveness is improved and population, including vulnerable groups, have greater access to sustainable economic opportunities</b></p>	<p>3. Comprehensive assessment of disaster risks through Local level Risk Management (LLRM) methodology in 21 bordering settlements of Gegharkunik, Vayots Dzor and Syunik regions.- Action</p> <p>- Institutional contract with a local CSO to conduct LLRM assessment in 21 settlements.</p> <p>-Translation/editing</p> <p>-Design</p>	X			UNDP	CSSF	72100 74200 74500 75100	35,105.1 13,597 741.7 3,955.5	28,400 11,000 600 3,200
<p>1. SEIA results and recommendations and incorporated into (or helped xxx) ...</p> <p>2. 2</p> <p>3. 21 gender-based disaster risk management assessment in 21 selected most vulnerable settlements will help what....</p> <p><i>Related CP outcome:</i></p> <p><b>By 2020, Competitiveness is improved and population, including vulnerable groups, have greater access to sustainable economic opportunities</b></p>	4. Project management	X			UNDP	CSSF	64300 71400 71600 72400 74200 74500 75100	4,944.4 9,270.7 865.3 1,854.1 2,225 618 1,582.2	4,000 7,500 700 1,500 1,800 500 1,280
<b>TOTAL</b>								217,001.4	175,554