

## Joint Programme Quarterly Check Portfolio on Integrated SP & LNOB Period: Q1/2021

**UNCT:** Turkmenistan

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**Estimated Financial Delivery Rate** until the end of March 2021 (= Total JP expenditures / transferred funds in 2020 x 100%): 77%

**Estimated Rate of Committed Funding** until the end of March 2021 (= Total JP commitments / transferred funds in 2020 x 100%): 88%

### A. PROGRESS & PLANS

#### 1. What was done in the last quarter?

##### **Maximum 1 page**

*- Brief overall description (max 1 paragraph), followed by the list of most important finalized/ongoing activities and delivered results in this quarter (in order of priority). For each activity, indicate estimated rate of completion (e.g. 50%). Emphasize innovations, and indicate if you leveraged partnerships, related initiatives and additional financial resources.*

In Q1 of 2021, the implementation of the Joint Program continued at an accelerated pace with all strategic national partners to ensure steady results for all three outputs, including introduction of the new models of inclusive community based social services; legislative review; and capacity building, including trainings and development of the bachelor programme curriculum. The results were presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Working Group meeting of the JP Steering Committee on 18 February, co-chaired by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of the Population of Turkmenistan (MoLSP) and UNICEF to discuss the JP implementation and outline the future steps.

**Social service workforce.** In the first quarter, 45 Social Work Specialists (SWs) continued to acquire theoretical and practical skills in the field. More than 500 initial and comprehensive assessments were carried out by them, which were analyzed by the Chief Technical Advisory Group (CTAG) and presented to the JP Working Group in February 2021. Coaching sessions were provided to the MoLSP Coordinator on SW supervision, that among others covered the guidance on needs assessment and strategies for analyzing the collected data. Regular monthly meetings of SWs and the Coordinator with the international experts, represented by CTAG, have been established to discuss cases arising from the individual needs' assessments of families in pilot etraps, practicing the case management tools.

**Piloting of Services.** Preparations for piloting of the 15 specialized social services were a major deliverable for the first quarter of the year. With the support of CTAG, clear service specifications have been developed to be used by the PUNO in contracting their respective service providers. The pilots are planned to be launched starting from April in five etraps representing two velayats (regions) and Ashgabat city. The pilots will provide additional evidence for development of laws and regulations, methodologies, SOPs, guidelines for the provision and financing of social services by state budget in 2022.

**Legislation review.** A series of amendments to the law necessary for establishing the inclusive community-based social services system in Turkmenistan was developed by a team of national and international consultants. All drafts developed are gender sensitive and rights-based and were presented to national partners.

**Training component.** In addition to the foundational sessions held in 2020, 45 SWs have advanced their competencies and knowledge in social work in the second round of intensive 15-day training. The programme also supported the training of 106 social work managers and 67 representatives of

governmental and non-governmental social service providers from five regions of Turkmenistan to improve their knowledge and basic social work skills through online and in-person training.

**Development of the bachelor programme curriculum.** In Q1 of 2021, UNICEF stepped up efforts to develop social work curricula and national educational standards. A series of working meetings of National Educators were held jointly with the Ministry of Education with participation of the international experts in this field. The position of Lead Education Expert for building curriculum on social work has been announced and commenced in April.

## 2. What is expected in the next quarter?

### **Max 0.5 page**

*- Brief overall description (max 1 paragraph), followed by the list of maximum 3 main expected results (in order of priority) and related activities for the next quarter, as per below.*

The 3<sup>rd</sup> High-Level JP Steering Committee meeting and the 4<sup>th</sup> Working Group meeting of the JP Steering Committee are planned for May, where the progress-to-date, challenges in the implementation of some activities will be discussed as well as the issues related to sustainability of the programme will be flagged. The request for no-cost extension of the JP for 2022 will be proposed for discussion. Additionally, a country-wide online information session for national stakeholders on JP progress is planned for June.

### **Expected results for the next quarter:**

- Prototype community based *specialized social services* in the selected regions and the capital by launching the pilots. Record the process of providing specialized social services to ensure development of the normative documents and SOPs, as a result, proposing the prototypes to be inserted into the state system of social service provision.
- Start generating evidence for discussion with the Ministry of Finance and Economy on investments for creating a fiscal space for the proposed community-based social services model.
- Submit the developed national education standards, curriculum and syllabi for bachelor's degree in Social Work programmes for further endorsement.

### **Planned activities:**

- Piloting of social services will begin in April. Preparation of necessary set of documents to ensure the process of providing specialized social services at the initial stage (Service Specifications, Term of References, Ethics Code, Staff training Plan).
- Based on pilot generated data, as well as a cost-effectiveness analysis of existing and new social services, planned for the second quarter, continue working on further strengthening of national legislation on social service provision. They will also serve as a basis and gather evidence for discussion with the Ministry of Finance to advance the case for investing in the new community-based system of social services.
- National education standards, curriculum and syllabi for bachelor's degree programmes will be developed in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education for launch from Fall 2021. The introduction of the social work program in the country's higher education institutions will be a long-term investment in the development of the social work profession in Turkmenistan. In addition, it is planned to engage Columbia University School of Social Work to strengthen interpersonal communication and community engagement competencies for SWs and other SSW professionals, which will also be included into the social work curricula.

## 3. Update on risks and challenges

### **Max 0.5 page**

*- Provide a brief update of maximum 3 main risks/challenges (in order of priority) and their impact on JP implementation and results. Indicate corrective and mitigation measures planned for each.*

- Domestic travel restrictions, introduced in July last year, affect the quality of program implementation. Therefore, trainings are conducted in a mixed format.
- Poor internet connection especially in the regions is also a serious issue. PUNO monitors the situation and adjusts its methods as needed.
- Another risk is the issue of including in the state budget of 2022 the costs associated with piloting social services. To this end, PUNO plans to gather a strong evidence base for discussion with the Ministry of Finance and Economy.

#### 4. Update on relevant strategic documents

- Provide the list of strategic documents produced in the last quarter, if any.
- Divide the list between a) Strategic documents produced by the JP and b) Strategic documents for which JP provided contribution.

Title of the document	Date when finalized (MM/YY)	Brief description of the document and the role of the JP in finalizing it
Finalised service specifications for specialized services and for community base social worker service	03.2021	Prepared by CTAG, PUNOs and agreed with MLSP and MHMI - outline of goals, expected results, indicators, basic and quality standards for 15 specialized services and for the community based social worker service.
Preliminary analysis of 500 assessments completed by Etrap social workers	02.2021	Prepared by UNICEF and CTAG jointly with MLSP and presented to WG by MLSP on 18 <sup>th</sup> February.
Legislation proposals approved by MLSP and Mejlis	03.2021	Prepared by the national consultants led by UNFPA, discussed with Mejlis and MLSP and finalized for presentation to the WG. Discussion is still ongoing on whether there should be amendments to the existing Code on Social Protection or a new law should be drafted on social work and social services
Briefing notes on social worker caseloads and supervision and guidance on case data entry and analysis for MLSP	02.2021	Drafted by CTAG and UNICEF and presented to MLSP for use in supervising practice and preparing case information for analysis.

#### 5. Update on strategic communications

- Provide the list of a) Human Interest Story/ies and/or Expert blog post/s and b) other communication content/materials - including photos and videography - that you prepared in the last quarter (for support contact Liz, [elizabeth.paturzo@un.org](mailto:elizabeth.paturzo@un.org)).

1. March 3, 2021 - Social media campaign was launched on UN Turkmenistan social media accounts [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) and re-posted by PUNO to raise awareness about [social work as a new profession in Turkmenistan](#), [celebration of the World Social Work Day](#) and [new approach to social service provision](#) during the month of March, 2021. Posts include [pictures](#), [videos](#) and congratulations to [new specialists in Turkmenistan](#) on World Social Work Day from national [trainers](#), [representatives of the NGOs](#) involved in social work, and JP Chief [technical advising group](#) and [international trainers and educators](#) in social work. World Social Work Day poster was shared in [Turkmen](#). It was also informed about celebration of the [37<sup>th</sup> Annual Social Work Day at the UN](#). This campaign was shared on the website of the [International Federation of Social Work](#) and their [social media accounts](#).
2. A Video was developed about social work specialists in Turkmen with Russian subtitles.
3. Blog on Joint SDG Fund website: [Strengthening social work capacity in Turkmenistan](#)
4. February 4, 2021 – Social inclusion animation was completed and shared on UN Turkmenistan [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) accounts and re-posted by PUNO to raise awareness about social inclusion and the role of community-based social services in improving social inclusion. Animation was developed in [Turkmen and Russian](#)
5. Press releases on UN and PUNO websites and articles on external news agencies about JP activities:
  - February 2, 2021 – Social work managers online training on [UN Turkmenistan](#), [Joint SDG Fund](#), [UNDP](#), and external news agencies such as [Turkmenportal](#), [AshgabatInnovative](#), [ArzuwNews](#) and on UN Turkmenistan [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) accounts.
  - February 18, 2021 - JP Steering Committee Working Group meeting on [UN Turkmenistan](#) and [JSDGF](#) websites.
  - February 22, 2021 - Social service providers' in-person trainings on [UN Turkmenistan](#), [UNDP](#), and external news agencies such as [Turkmenportal](#), [Ashgabat Innovative](#) . Also on UN Turkmenistan [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts.
6. Some social media posts about important JP activities:

- March 1, 2021 –Start of 15 day advanced TOT in social work on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#)
  - February 26, 2021 – UNFPA GBV meeting and seminar to social work specialists on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)
  - February 26, 2021 – Supervision session for social work specialists by CTAG on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)
  - February 16, 2021 –JP Working Group meeting with national partners on legislative component on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)
7. Article on local print newspaper:
- March 4, 2021 – “Bilelikdäki özara bähbitli işler –Mutually beneficial joint works” by Mammet Gylyjov, *Türkmen Gündogary*, regional newspaper in Lebap velayat, No 27 (17253) from March 4, 2021 – a short article about the JP work in Lebap region.

## B. SURVEY

### a) Progress on 2020 results

- Indicate when you expect to achieve ALL results planned for last year.

- Achieved in Q1 of 2021
- To be achieved by June 2021
- Will not be achieved by June 2021
- N/A – JP achieved all 2020 results by the end of 2020

Please, explain briefly:

Due to the fact that the recruitment of 45 SWs, as well as the training component was carried out with a five-month delay, the piloting of social services also had to be moved by 5 months and are planned to start from April. The cost-effectiveness analysis also shifted to start in June.

### b) Overall progress in JP implementation

- Provide a self-assessment on the progress in JP implementation towards achieving the main results by the end of the JP, according to the options below.

- On track in achieving results for the whole JP (until the end)
- Expected minor delays (1-3 months) in achieving results for the whole JP (until the end)
- Expected major delays (more than 3 months) in achieving results for the whole JP (until the end)

Please, explain briefly:

In order to obtain quality results and strong evidence of the effectiveness of the new model, it will be important to pilot specialized social services for at least 8 months. Therefore, the UNCT will discuss the possibility of no-cost extension of the JP for 3 more months of 2022 through the end of April 2022.

### c) 3 major, transformative results at scale expected by the JP

- In the process of approving your initial proposal (Concept note) in 2019, the RC and the JP team articulated up to 3 major, transformative results that will be achieved by Jan 2022. This was the basis for approval of funding, which then led to development of the full-fledged JP<sup>1</sup>. These results are the priority because the JP is accountable to the Joint SDG Fund for their achievement – even though the JP might have other expected results.

- Please, list maximum 3 such results below (if the JP has 1-2, list only those). If in doubt, focus on the short description of the JP in the JP document that should reflect those.

#### Result 1

Design a new model of inclusive community-based services for children at risk of separation from parents, children without parental care, children with disabilities, youth at risk, women facing gender-based violence, people with disabilities and older persons in need of support with basic everyday care by piloting a community-based social worker model engaged in identification, assessment and case management as well as piloting specialized social services to meet specific needs and support people to live independent lives in their communities.

<sup>1</sup>These 3 main results were presented in the short description of the full-fledged JP. They were further elaborated and assimilated for the programmatic Results framework

**Result 2**

To support drafting of legislative amendments and other institutional framework (standards, service specifications), develop a mechanism for social contracting, and improve a social work curriculum to ensure sustainability of the proposed model.

**Result 3**

To support establishment of a government inter-sectoral coordination mechanism, as well as support economic analysis and advocate for the new system of community-based social services to be incorporated into the state budget.