



Support to Migration and Border Management in Armenia (MIBMA)

Interim Narrative Report
July 10, 2017

REPORT COVER PAGE

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Support to Migration and Border Management in Armenia	Support to Migration and Border Management in Armenia
Title of the Action	Support to Migration and Border Management in Armenia (MIBMA)
Contract number	00097620
Start date and end date of the reporting period	1 October 2016 - 30 June 2017
Target country(ies) or region(s)	Armenia, Syunik region, Meghri BCP
Final beneficiaries	The final beneficiaries of the Action include the staff and management of the migration and border agencies, refugees and asylum seekers, travellers, the international trading and investment community, and the general public and citizens of Armenia

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List of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ATI	Accountability, Transparency, Integrity
BCP	Border Crossing Point
EU	European Union
EUD	European Union Delegation
GoA	Government of Armenia
IBM	Integrated Border Management
ICMPD	International Centre for Migration Policy Development
IT	Information Technology
IWG	Interagency Working Group
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MIBMA	"Support to Migration and Border Management in Armenia" Project
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoM	Minutes of Meeting
NSC	National Security Council
NSS	National Security Service
PPP	Power Point Presentation
RfP	Request for Proposals
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SRC	State Revenue Committee
SSFS	State Service for Food Safety
SW	Single Window
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank

1.1 Executive Summary of the Action

The specific objective of the Project is to strengthen inter-agency cooperation through further extension of the IBM concept, simplification and harmonisation of border management procedures, improvement of the service level for end users, to facilitate trade and to further develop transport corridors in Armenia. Despite the major changes in GoA and many relevant state agencies, the likeliness of reaching the targeted outcome of the Project is considered high, taking into account the established connections, and the results of the meetings with the relevant state agencies, as well as formulating Project Team recruited by UNDP (6 recruitments) and other conducted or planned activities described within the interim report.

The Project is grouped in two modules:

Module 7-Trade Facilitation

Activity # 7.1: Study on border management and transport corridors. This study was planned at the stage of project formulation; meanwhile, in view of the fact that in the second half of 2016, four ongoing studies on trade facilitation and transport corridors were launched by the EU, WB, ADB, SDC, it was agreed with the EUD and ICMPD, to replace the study with bilateral workshops (Armenia-Iran) focusing on development of bilateral relations in selected sectors (e.g., trade, tourism, agriculture, information technologies, etc.).

Activity # 7.2: Tender for Megrhi BCP

UNDP developed the ToR for "Consultancy Services for Preparation of Detailed Design and Bidding Documents for Modernization of the Meghri Border Crossing Point in the Republic of Armenia", and announced the tender in accordance with FIDIC Red Book on June 5, 2017. Deadline for submission of bids is July 3; results of selection process will be presented in the next report.

Module 8. Accountability, Transparency, Integrity

UNDP run series of consultation to identify areas for innovation for border agencies regarding accountability, transparency and integrity. By the time of reporting, UNDP expects final confirmation from the SRC and – upon receipt – will proceed with hiring a consultant to develop a software in line with the principles of single window for border management.

1.2 Results and Activities

MIBMA project, officially started with an Opening conference and a signed Project Cooperation Agreement between ICMPD and UNDP in October, 2016; in the reporting period there were some changes in the GoA, including a number of direct project partners and stakeholders. This changes affected project delivery and also triggered certain changes in the previously agreed project activities. More specifically, the SRC suggested to modify the activities under Module 8 (ATI) to align it with introduction of the principles of SW in border management systems. In parallel, modifications were also made for Activity 7.1 by replacing the planned study on "Border management and transport corridors" with bilateral workshops, as mentioned above, as well as in ATI related Project module. Nevertheless, the project has successfully progressed with implementing of the activities planned, has established a network of counterparts from the government, IT sector, independent experts, etc., has ensured high-level communication about the objectives and expected results which are aligned with the priorities of the GoA, outcomes of high-level meetings and discussions (please see minutes attached), as well as taking into account

that the full Project team and short-term consultants are on board, the projected delivery of the activities planned is more than realistic.

Activity # 7.1 Study on Border Management and Transport Corridor.

As mentioned above, in view of the fact that the EU, WB, ADB, SDC launched studies on trade facilitation and transport corridors the EUD, ICMPD and UNDP agreed to replace the study planned originally with bilateral (Armenia-Iran) workshops focusing on development of bilateral relations in selected sectors (e.g., trade, tourism, agriculture, information technologies, etc.) that will also contribute to the capacity development of border agencies.

The first workshop in the row is planned to be organized by ICMPD in September 2017; it will involve the partners from relevant border agencies and address the principles, models and mechanisms of the joint use of border crossing points which the government plan to apply between Armenia-Georgia and Armenia-Iran. Building on the outcome of this first workshop, UNDP will finalize topics of the "follow-up" workshops and events between Armenia and Iran with possible engagement of Georgian counterparts.

On June 30, 2017, UNDP organized a bilateral meeting with Georgian counterparts to discuss possible future cross-border cooperation in the sphere of border management. During the meeting, the participants confirmed the importance of enhanced cross-border cooperation between Armenia, Georgia and Iran including in phyto-sanitary and data exchange sectors.

The results of the meeting and inputs received from the participants will be summarized in the final document to be then provided to the GoA, the EUD and ICMPD as recommendations for future support for border management and trade facilitation.

Activity # 7.2: Tender for Meghri BCP

The ToR for "Consultancy Services for Preparation of Detailed Design and Bidding Documents for Modernization of the Meghri Border Crossing Point in the Republic of Armenia" were developed by UNDP with technical support from two short-term national experts. In parallel, UNDP has requested the GoA to establish an Inter-Agency Working Group to coordinate the design processes and ensure synergy with other ongoing the government programmes, the IWG was established by the RA Prime Minister decree N 285-A dated 21.03.2017.

To ensure that the design process - and the upcoming construction - is in compliance with European standards, UNDP has prepared two draft versions of the ToRs for "Consultancy Services for the Preparation of Detailed Design and Tender Documentation for Modernization of the Meghri Border Crossing Point in the Republic of Armenia" in line with the construction standards of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC), for Yellow and Red Books; both were submitted for consideration of the IWG.

The pros and cons of FIDIC Yellow and Red Books for modernization of Meghri BCP were discussed during the IWG meeting on April 19, 2017. As a result of discussions, IWG recommended to proceed with FIDIC Red Book, IWG members also committed to provide comments and the data relevant for each agency. In a follow up, UNDP has amended the ToR in line with the recommendations and data received from the IWG members by the end of May.

According to ToR, the scope of the consultancy is divided into three stages:

Stage 1: Preparation of the Feasibility Study, Preliminary Design;

Stage 2: Development of the Design Package;

Stage 3: Preparation of Final Detailed Design Package, Full Set of Tender Documentation and Final Reporting.

The results to be achieved by the Consultant are the following:

- Feasibility Study conducted;
- Preliminary Design and Cost Estimates prepared;
- Final Detailed Design Package with Bill of Quantities and Final Cost Estimates developed;
- Full set of tender documentation prepared.

The results of each stage will be presented to IWG for discussion and approval before initiating the next stage.

The international tender was announced on June 5; the announcement was placed on UNDP web directory, local and international companies were informed about the tender via e-mail. The deadline for submission of proposals was July 3, 2017. Results of the selection will be presented in the next report. **Module 8. Accountability, Transparency, Integrity**

The activities of Module 8 were agreed between ICMPD and UNDP in mid-2016 and since then the government has advanced its IT systems in various sectors including border management. To align with the priorities of the government, UNDP is running series of consultation to identify areas for innovation for border agencies regarding to accountability, transparency and integrity. By the time of reporting, UNDP expects final confirmation from the SRC and – upon receipt – will proceed with hiring a consultant to develop a software aimed to enhance accountability, transparency and integrity of border agencies aligned with the single window systems. Initial agreement with the SRC stands for a software to capture processing time at the border for heavy trucks, vehicles and passengers, which will generate evidence and tools both to public and to the government to assess efficiency of border services, to increase accountability and transparency of their work as well as reduce corruption risks. The software will also provide opportunity to end-users to evaluate services.

1.3 Logframe Matrix Updated

Results chain		Indicators	Baseline	Current value	Targets (incl. reference year)		Sources and means of verification	Assumptions
			October 2016	June 2017	Y1	Y2		
Overall objective: Impact	Enhance the approximation of migration and border management in Armenia to the European standards of governance, in order to increase security, facilitate trade, and support a possible visa liberalization dialogue between the European Union and Armenia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased standards of governance • International stakeholders perceive the border management and migration system to be more effective and sustainable in the target countries • Policies and laws for the implementation of visa liberalization dialogue improved 	0	0		1	National legislation EU/UN and other international stakeholder's reports. Interview with relevant border agencies	Despite recent major changes in Government and many relevant state agencies, the likelihood of reaching the targeted objective of the Project is assumed to be high.
Specific objective(s): Outcome(s)	<p>Strengthened inter-agency cooperation through further extension of the IBM concept and its principles into Armenia's border management system</p> <p>Simplification and harmonization of procedures to improve the service level for end users, facilitate trade and further develop transport corridors</p>	<p>The establishment of the IWG ensure:</p> <p>1. High level understanding on IBM concept on strategic and operation level</p> <p>2. Increased inter-agency cooperation</p> <p>The Bilateral workshops (Armenia-Iran) focusing on development of trade, tourism, banking sector, agriculture, information</p>	0	2	2		Feedback from EU and national experts Interviews with relevant stakeholders MOUs drafted/ approved Relevant SOPs drafted/	<p>High level of commitment and willingness to cooperate among beneficiary authorities</p> <p>No major changes take place in the visa liberalization dialogue at a political level</p>

		technologies, construction and other relevant sectors will activate the trade between the two countries, creating important incentives for: 3. Incorporation of enhanced IBM principles into Armenian border management systems 4. Increased awareness on cross-border trade among civil society, national and international stakeholders. The enhanced software for effective measurement of process timing and the BCP will result to: 5. Increased operational capacities, accountability, transparency and integrity of border agency staff.					updated on inter-agency cooperation Successful awareness raising campaigns	between the EU and RA National institutions and agencies incorporate project initiatives in their national strategic and operational levels Continuous cooperation among relevant Armenian agencies on migration data management
Outputs	Op 7.1 Workshops (Armenia-Iran) will be conducted focusing on development of trade, tourism, banking sector, agriculture, information technologies, construction and other relevant sectors contributing to the border management capacity building Op 7.2 Detailed package of tender documentation and costing for reconstruction of border crossing point (BCP) in Meghri (at the Armenian-Iranian border), including assessment of possible sources of financing, is available Op 8. Development of software to capture processing time and/or evaluation at the border for heavy trucks, vehicles and passengers. This software will give evidence and tools both to the public and to the government to assess efficiency of border services, increase accountability and transparency of their work as well as reduce corruption risks.	Series of workshops are scheduled to be conducted in Oct-Dec. 2017. Interviews with stakeholders will be conducted. Recommendations from the Workshops will be formulated UNDP developed the ToR for "Consultancy Services for Preparation of Detailed Design and Bidding Documents for Modernization of the Meghri BCP" and announced the tender in accordance with FIDIC Red Book on June 5th. By January 2018, the process timing software is planned to be delivered.	0	2	2		Draft questionnaire Stakeholder interviews Study produced Tender package 2 ToRs Official link of the announcement Assessment of possible financing sources	Level of staff turn-over in Armenian border management agencies would not constitute a risk of not sufficient institutional memory Staff of the relevant agencies are receptive to the capacity building activities and make use of acquired skills
Activities	Opening conference has been carried out Project cooperation agreement has been signed between ICMPD and UNDP Staff recruitment is well in the process. 6 recruitments have been initiated. Terms of references in accordance with the FIDIC for "Yellow" and "Red" book standards have been prepared ToR prepared in accordance with FIDIC Red Book has been chosen by IWG	Opening conference facilities, materials and equipment. Office costs. 6 contracts signed Tender documentation costs International travel and per diem. Translations costs.	Press release, list of participants Signed agreement 6 contracts signed 2 ToRs					Expert on border management and cross border cooperation to be recruited in July 2017

<p>International tender has been announced in June 2017</p> <p>Meetings were organized with the national counterparts for enhancing IBM systems in Armenia</p> <p>Bilateral meeting between Georgian and Armenian counterparts took place in Bagratashen BCP in June 2017, aiming at initiation of cooperation including Iranian partners.</p>	<p>Official letter</p> <p>Official link of the announcement</p> <p>Reports and minutes on the meetings</p>
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1.4 Action plan¹

2017-201/8													
Activity	2017					2018					Half-year 1		Implementing body
	Mont	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3				
Activity 7.1 Study on border management and transport corridors (Instead of the study it is foreseen to conduct workshops)													UNDP IWG
P/A Finalization of the topics according to ICMPD workshop and EU study.													Border management agencies
E/A Series of workshops													Border management agencies
Activity 7.2 Tender for Meghri BCP													UNDP
P/A Evaluation process of the RfP and signing of the contract with the design company.													Border management agencies
E/A Preparation of the detailed design and package of bidding documents.													Border management agencies
Activity #8.1, Activity #8. 2, Activity 8.3 (Instead of these activities it is planned to formulate the software in line with SW principles.)													UNDP IWG
P/A ToR is being formulated,													Border management agencies
P/A Tender will be announced													Border management agencies

¹ This plan will cover the financial period between the interim report and the next report.

