

Reporting Agency: UNDP
Country: Armenia

MONITORING ACTION AND STANDARD PROGRESS REPORT

No. and title: 00054966 - The GEF Small Grants Programme

Reporting period: January-June 2020

I. PURPOSE

- *Present project's goal, objectives, duration, theory of change (if available), implementing partner and responsible parties.*

Objective: *Support innovative and scalable initiatives through community-based approaches and actions, and foster multi stakeholder partnerships for addressing global environmental issues*

Duration: 2018-2020 (annual management)

Implementing Partner: UNDP

The UNDP-implemented Global Environment Facility's (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP) supports grassroots initiatives in the GEF focal areas of biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, protection of international waters, prevention of land degradation and safe management of POPs and other harmful chemicals. The SGP is implemented in decentralized, democratic, transparent and country-driven manner. The objective of SGP country programme in Armenia is to support innovative and scalable initiatives through community-based approaches and actions and foster multi-stakeholder partnerships for addressing global environmental issues. As a corporate programme of the GEF, the SGP is implemented by the UNDP and executed by the UNOPS.

The GEF SGP grants are awarded based on decisions made by the voluntary National Steering Committee (NSC) guided by the Country Programme Strategy paper developed on the basis of national environment and development priorities. The National Steering Committee (NSC), the central element of the programme, is composed of a national government representative, UNDP Country Office, donor partners and civil society members representing NGOs, academia and science, with a majority of them coming from non-governmental sector.

II. RESOURCES AND FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

- *Matrix showing project's total, annual and delivered resources and percentage by donor funds.*

	Total Project Budget	Current Year (2020)			All Years Delivery as of SPR date (USD)	All Years Delivery rate as of SPR date (%)
		Annual Budget	Delivery as of SPR date (USD)	Delivery rate as of SPR date (%)		
Donor 1 GEF (CORE)	0*					
Donor 3 UNDP (TRAC)	8,500	8,500	2,705	32	2,705	32
Total	8,500	8,500	2,705	32	2,705	32

*Allocation of the GEF CORE funds for the 7th Operational Phase of the GEF is expected in August 2020.

- *Indicate amount of leveraged resources, even if as a parallel funding.*

N/A

III. RESULTS, PROGRESS, INNOVATIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE ASPECTS

- **Programme results:** (1) Indicate the project's progress vis-à-vis **UNDAF/CPD outcomes, outputs, baselines, and targets**, as well as (2) **UNDP Strategic Plan (SP)** and (3) **Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)**.

In 2020, the SGP will continue contributing to the objectives related to poverty reduction and local empowerment as integral aspects of sustainable development and environmental protection. Conforming to the Country Programme Document strategic results and UNDAF Outcomes 7, the SGP focuses on introduction and application of SD principles and good practices for environmental sustainability resilience building, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and green economy.

The SGP projects are associated with and contribute to the SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 15 (the list of the projects is attached as Annex 1).

CPD output reporting: 2 SGP good practices are replicated and scaled-up; number of new jobs created will be available at yearend.

- **Project results:** (1) Present the **narrative of the project's progress vis-à-vis the planned deliverables of the Results and Resources Framework of Prodoc**, disaggregated by years. Present additional results with a separate subtitle. (2) **Update RRF of Prodoc**.

The SGP Country Programme Strategy for the GEF-7 cycle is officially endorsed, all sectoral comments are addressed and duly incorporated. Official announcement on the new GEF cycle is pending allocation of funds to the country programme.

Seven new projects were successfully launched, among them 2 strategic projects funded within the OP6 Innovation Programmes on Youth and Climate Change and Women-led enterprises.

During the reporting period, 2 of 21 ongoing projects were successfully completed:

1. Sun and warmth in Bari Tnak (USD 50,000), implemented by “Bari Mama” NGO (<https://sgp.undp.org/spacial-itemid-projects-landing-page/spacial-itemid-project-search-results/spacial-itemid-project-detailpage.html?view=projectdetail&id=27862>)
2. AirAid: Aerial Observation and Environmental Crowd-Mapping Platform (USD49,960), implemented by Aires Development Foundation (https://sgp.undp.org/hq/index.php?option=com_sgpprojects&view=projectdetail&id=24730&Itemid=272)

- **Innovative and transformative aspects:** Highlight innovative practices and any transformative changes so far.

Among major achievements within the overall SGP implementation for 2020:

1. Renewed interest by the MoE to take up the adoption of the SGP-funded Ushadir platform for citizen reporting purposes as well as considering using the crowdsourced mapping capabilities for visualization of the ongoing “10 Million Tree Planting” initiative led by the Government. (SDG 13, 15)
2. Reducing CO2 emissions by 17 tons and ensuring annual saving of 50,000 kW of energy, equivalent to US\$3,000 as a result of installation of a grid-connected PV station with 20 kW capacity, energy-efficient doors and windows and gas boiler heating systems in “Bari Mama” Shelter for disabled children (SDG 7, 13).
3. Grant project story on “How COVID-19 affects women in Berd community” is posted on the UNDP website. <https://www.am.undp.org/content/armenia/en/home/stories/how-covid-19-affects-women-in-berd-community.html>

Most of the SGP ongoing projects are experiencing certain delays due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The projects' current status is discussed with the grantees, necessary adjustments, including no-cost extensions are done; possible COVID-19 response actions are considered within grant projects.

Performance and Results Assessment for 2019 was completed by the SGP National Coordinator and Assistant:

- respective feedback on contract extension was received from the SGP Headquarters;
- recommendation to align the grade for the SGP staff with the increased responsibilities and functions after the UNDP-CO restructuring last year and an increase to the respective step.

SGP National Coordinator is part of the CO's "Private Sector/SME Support/Skills" and "Green Recovery" COVID-19 Response Task Forces for knowledge exchange, complementarity and better mainstreaming of the SGP operations into the CO's response agenda.

- *Present in the below table a performance snapshot of the current year planned deliverables.*

Activity/Output	Expected Results	Amount (\$)	Current Year (2020)					
			Planned				Actual	
			Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Status	Comments
1. Availability of institutional and organizational set-up for Small Grants Programme.	The Country Programme Strategy for the 7th Operational Phase of the Global Environmental Finance 2018-2022 is operational			X			Completed	The Strategy is approved by the SGP Headquarters and the National Steering Committee
2. Number of environmental activities conducted by non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations.	4 projects commenced*				X	X		

*The projects are funded by the GEF. The allocation of funds is expected in August-September 2020.

IV. GENDER MAINSTREAMING, CROSSCUTTING RESULTS, TARGETING

- *Indicate the project's alignment with the corporate Gender Equality Strategy Outcomes and Strategic Entry Outputs (page 16 [GES](#)).*

As one of mandatory cross-cutting requirements in the SGP Armenia grant-making criteria, gender is mainstreamed throughout the SGP portfolio of projects and incorporated within the project cycle. As stated in the SGP Country Programme Strategy, 100% of SGP projects address gender equity issues as a mandatory cross-cutting requirement, which is verified by a designated gender focal point on the National Steering Committee. SGP has a specific focus on engagement and empowerment of women and strives to support projects benefitting both men and women within the same communities. A designated gender focal point on the NSC provided expertise on gender issues and facilitated review of any gender components of projects.

- *Indicate the project's gender marker (GEN0-3) and **gender-responsive and gender-transformative results** vis-à-vis the prodoc framework (N.B. UNDP Country Programme Documents requests that all projects be designed and implemented at GEN2-3 level).*

SGP Gender marker - GEN-2

Based on applications, SGP-Armenia was among the ten (10) country programmes globally selected to join the Innovation Programme on Women-led Enterprises within the 6th Operational Phase of the GEF, which allowed to launch a \$150,000 worth strategic project on "Open Source Nature-based Entrepreneurship" supporting women-led green start-ups in January 2020.

- *Indicate also the project's **crosscutting results** (e.g., **youth empowerment, risk-informed development schemes, integrated development schemes**), as well as the project's contribution for **Leaving No One Behind (LNOB)** indicating particular **target groups**.*

In the reporting period all 21 projects addressed gender equity issues, among them 9 projects (43%) are implemented by woman-led NGOs and 3 represent youth organizations.

SGP-Armenia was among the eight (8) country programmes globally selected to join the Innovation Programme on Youth and Climate Change within the 6th Operational Phase of the GEF, which allowed to launch a \$150,000 worth strategic project on “Establishing Low Carbon Energy Education Centers for Young Practitioners” and a \$50,000 worth project on “Green” skills for youth” in January 2020.

V. RISKS AND CHALLENGES

- *Present the project’s issues, challenges and bottlenecks along with the suggested solutions.*
- *(1) Update the Project Risk Log in this report (2) and in Atlas (see a sample of UNDP standard risk log attached). N.B. Risks that are no further relevant shall not be deleted from the Log but a respective statement to be made in Risk treatment/management. SESP risks to be monitored in Risk Log.*

Allocation of GEF-7 STAR funds to the SGP is still pending approval by the Government (GEF Political and Operational Focal Point), which puts at risk a number of pipelined projects that cannot be commenced and synchronized with other donor initiatives.

Risk mitigation: UNDP is discussing with the Government bottlenecks related to delays of GEF-7 STAR funds allocation to SGP. SGP demonstration projects and impact have been recognized nationally and globally.

<https://www.am.undp.org/content/armenia/en/home/stories/how-covid-19-affects-women-in-berd-community.html>

VI. PRODOC CHANGES, HORIZON SCANNING

- *Present the analysis in your project’s field (horizon scanning) regarding new opportunities, emerged stakeholders/donors, etc and hence the necessary changes recommended to the project document.*
- *State changes to the project document (both proposed and approved by Project Board). For substantive revision, a documented LPAC endorsement is to be presented to the Project Board. [N.B. Necessary actions regarding revised prodoc will follow].*

The SGP Country Programme Strategy (CPS) for the GEF 7th Operational Phase (2018-2022) is in place. Official announcement on the new GEF cycle is pending allocation of funds for grant-making to the country programme. The SGP Strategy is a dynamic document and, if need be, may be updated during the SGP Country Programme Annual Review.

VII. PARTNERSHIPS, COMMUNICATION, KNOWLEDGE MATERIALS

- *Present planned and already conducted international, cross-sectorial and inter-agency cooperation instances. Differentiate by categories e.g., “South-South Cooperation”, “Inter-agency cooperation”, etc.*

SGP National Coordinator held negotiations with donors (GIZ, WWF, Swiss Development Agency, USAID), state agencies and public organizations for potential complementarities and partnerships for SGP projects. The project applies a mechanism of regular consultations on grant proposal formulation with potential proponents jointly with the National Steering Committee (NSC) members. Negotiation with different donor organizations and local governments of Lori ensured co-financing of the SGP initiatives on use of subventions through revolving fund mechanism for community actions.

- *Present a summary of communication and visibility activities with evidences (in line with Communication plan). It is recommended to include a table presenting events and links.*

Global and national SGP websites were regularly updated. SGP ensured frequent knowledge sharing among the grantees, partners and other stakeholders.

- *Present the project’s analytical and knowledge products in a similar table as in the above bullet point.*

SGP Armenia website - www.sgp.am

Project story - <https://www.am.undp.org/content/armenia/en/home/stories/how-covid-19-affects-women-in-berd-community.html>

VIII. EVALUATIONS

- (1) *Inform about planned and implemented project evaluations.* (2) *Attach the updated Management Response table if applicable.*

In 2019, within the UNDP Armenia Independent Country Programme Evaluation the SGP performance was marked very positively, stating that the SGP “addressed key country priorities related to the environment with a focus on marginalized and underserved communities and testing innovative approaches and technologies (such as greenhouses, solar panels, intensive orchards)”. The SGP activities are considered to be “complementary and well-coordinated with the activities of other projects in the CO’s environmental and inclusive growth clusters”.

IX. DONOR REPORTS

- *Present the schedule of donor reports and requests for installments with the completion status.*

July 2020 – Annual Monitoring Record submitted to the SGP Central Programme Management Team

X. VALIDATION OF RESULTS (FIELD VISITS) AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

- *Validation of results (field visit) document is to be prepared during Q2 and Q4 (i.e., Annual) reports. Include in the report the last field visit document.*
- *Formulate **lessons learned** in highly strategic way.*
- *Update **quality assurance report** in the system for ongoing projects quarterly (to be cleared by programme manager and endorsed by portfolio manager (Assurer role). It is submitted and approved in the Corporate Planning System annually (Q4) for the approval of UNDP Programme Manager (RR/Approver role), with prior clearance by Assurer/Portfolio manager. For closing projects, **Project Closure quality assurance reports** to be prepared and approved in the system and presented to the last Project’s Board Meeting along with the Final Report of the Project.*

XI. FUTURE ACTIONS, WORK PLAN

- *Indicate key actions ahead and attach the multiyear AWP from Prodoc*
 - Disbursement of GEF-7 grant funds (~\$500,000)
 - Regular monitoring of ongoing projects and assessment of proposed project sites

Results Framework

	UNDAF Outcome 7/CPD Outcome 4 (13): By 2020 Sustainable Development principles and good practices for environmental sustainability resilience building, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and green economy are introduced and applied.						
	Outcome indicator 4.5: Number of people or enterprises benefitting from application of ‘green’ technologies and ‘green’ jobs						
	Output 4.5: New production and consumption patterns are introduced; New “green” jobs are created. Indicator 4.5.1 New patterns introduced. Number of ‘green’ jobs created.						
	Project title and Atlas Project Number: The GEF Small Grants Programme 00054966						
EXPECTED OUTPUTS	OUTPUT INDICATORS	DATA SOURCE	BASELINE		TARGETS (by frequency of data collection)		DATA COLLECTION METHODS & RISKS
					2020		
			Value	Year	Planned	Actual	
The GEF Small Grants Programme	1.1. Availability of institutional and organizational set-up for Small Grants Programme.	NSC meeting minutes; Annual Monitoring Records to SGP CPMT	Institutional and organizational set-up for Small Grants Programme needs revision for the new GEF Operational Phase	2018	The Country Programme Strategy for the 7th Operational Phase of the Global Environmental Finance 2018-2022 is developed.	The Country Programme Strategy for the 7th Operational Phase of the Global Environmental Finance 2018-2022 is operational.	Approved Country Programme Strategy by the SGP Headquarters and the National Steering Committee
	1.2 Number of environmental initiatives implemented by non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations.	NSC meeting minutes; Annual Monitoring Records to SGP CPMT; field visit reports	0	2018	4*	0	Monitoring visits

*The projects are funded by the GEF. The allocation of funds is expected in August-September 2020

#		Description	Risk Category	Impact & Probability	Risk Treatment / Management Measures	Risk Owner
	GUIDANCE:	Enter a brief description of the risk. Risk description should include future event and cause. Risks identified through HACT, SES, Private Sector Due Diligence, and other assessments should be included.	Social and Environmental Financial Operational Organizational Political Regulatory Strategic Other Subcategories for each risk type should be consulted to understand each risk type (see Enterprise Risk Management Policy)	Describe the potential effect on the project if the future event were to occur. Enter probability based on 1-5 scale (1 = Not likely; 5 = Expected) Enter impact based on 1-5 scale (1 = Low; 5 = Critical)	What actions have been taken/will be taken to manage this risk.	The person or entity with the responsibility to manage the risk.
1		CSO applicants' capacities and expertise are insufficient for proposal development in line with GEF-SGP requirements	Social and Environmental Financial Operational Organizational Political Regulatory Strategic Other	Low participation of rural NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) in the SGP country programme for regular GEF funding P=3 I=3	Risk remains unchanged.	Hovhannes Ghazaryan
2		Reduction of UNDP TRAC funds allocated in support of the programme administration and projects co-financing may affect smooth operation of the SGP.	Social and Environmental Financial Operational Organizational Political Regulatory Strategic Other	1. Reduced support to the SGP country programme administration; 2. Limited support to the local initiatives in need of cash co-financing. P=3 I=3	Risk remains unchanged.	Hovhannes Ghazaryan
3		GEF-7 STAR funds are not allocated to the SGP country programme	Social and Environmental Financial Operational Organizational Political Regulatory Strategic Other	Number of pipelined projects cannot be commenced and synchronized with other donor initiatives. P=3 P=3	Risk remains unchanged. Involve UNDP in negotiating with the Government on possible GEF-7 STAR funds allocation to SGP while demonstrating best practices and the impact generated by the SGP which is recognized nationally and globally.	Hovhannes Ghazaryan
4		Grant projects are delayed and activities are re-considered as a result of COVID-19	Social and Environmental Financial Operational Organizational Political Regulatory Strategic Other	Grant projects cannot meet the set deadlines and have to re-consider project activities as a result of COVID-19	Risk remains unchanged. Hold consultations with individual projects to assess the impact caused by the pandemic and re-arrange the project activities	Hovhannes Ghazaryan

ANNUAL/MULTIYEAR WORK PLAN AND BUDGET FROM PRODOC

Activities		Y2020 Budget												
		Q I			QII			Q III			QIV			
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
Activity 1. The GEF Small Grants Programme														
1.1	Revision of the SGP Country Programme Strategy document in line with GEF-7 strategic priorities, national environmental and development plans													\$ 8,500
1.2	Supporting NGOs/ CBOs in new project concepts development and formulation													
1.3	Oversight and monitoring of the SGP projects with NSC involvement	708	708	708	708	708	708	708	708	708	708	708	708	
Total											\$ 8,500			

Output Verification Template

Date of visit: August 18, 2020

Subject and venue of visit: 00054966 - The GEF Small Grants Programme

Purpose of the field visit: Verification of mid-term results

Outcomes	Update on Outcomes	Outputs	Update on outputs	Reasons if progress below target	Update on partnership strategies	Recommendations and proposed action
By 2020 Sustainable Development principles and good practices for environmental sustainability resilience building, climate change adaptation and mitigation, and green economy are introduced and applied.	2 new technologies and practices introduced within the approved projects contribute to environmental sustainability at the local level	New production and consumption patterns are introduced; new “green” jobs are created	7 new projects commenced and are committed through MOAs; 2 SGP good practices are replicated and scaled-up	N/A	Serving as a delivery mechanism for GEF FS SLM/SFM project; resource mobilization from partner organizations and businesses to replicate and scale-up SGP successful initiatives through a range of strategic partnerships (GIZ, WWF, Lori regional administration)	The OP7 portfolio planning exercise should consider Climate Change, Chemicals and Land Degradation thematic areas of GEF STAR funds (avoiding Biodiversity Conservation FA). This is conditioned by the upcoming EUR 23 mln grant allocation for biodiversity conservation from KfW Bank to be utilized through an 8-year project.

PROJECT PERFORMANCE—IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

SGP field works are experiencing certain delays in 9 projects due to the COVID-19 outbreak, that however no reflection on the overall delivery. The projects' current status is discussed with the grantees, necessary adjustments, including no-cost extensions are done, possible COVID response actions are considered with individual project.

PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS

The SGP Country Programme Strategy is operational. The launch of the GEF 7th Operational Phase will be announced upon receipt of funds for grant-making. In the meantime, project pipeline is being developed for a quick start, once the funds are allocated.


LESSONS LEARNED

The practice of involving UNDP colleagues/experts, community heads/administration and partners proved to be very efficient for identifying and addressing project implementation issues and enhancing synergism with the UNDP implemented and pipelined projects.

Participants in the field visit:

Prepared by (Project Coordinator):
(Hovhannes Ghazaryan)



Approved by: 
(Georgi Arzumanyan, Portfolio OIC)

Annex 1

List of Ongoing Projects

#	NGO	Project Title	Grant amount	Status
1.	Khazer NGO <i>(women-led NGO)</i> Yerevan	Implementation of <i>"Intended Nationally Determined Contributions"</i> of the Republic of Armenia in rural communities	\$150,000	Ongoing
2.	Vanand NGO Gyumri	Expanding production of solid bio-fuel and application of energy-efficient stoves in Akhuryan community of Shirak region	\$111,312	Ongoing
3.	Armenian Energy Agency Foundation Yerevan	PLUG.AM: Promotion of electric vehicles in Armenia	\$49,980	Ongoing
4.	"NGO Center" Civil Society Dev. NGO <i>(women-led NGO)</i> Vanadzor	Community-based ecotourism for sustainable livelihoods in Tumanyan district of Lori region	\$50,000	Ongoing
5.	My Step Charitable Foundation Yerevan	Plastic Free Armenia Behavioral Change and Awareness Raising Campaign	\$50,000	Ongoing
6.	Limen-Spitak Welfare NGO Spitak	Climate smart agriculture for sustainable landscapes and livelihoods	\$50,000	Ongoing
7.	Boo Mountain Bike Park Tourism Development NGO <i>(women-led NGO)</i> Vanadzor	Vanadzor Moves Green: better and cleaner mobility in the third largest city in Armenia	\$50,000	Ongoing
8.	Sustainable Water Environment NGO <i>(women-led NGO)</i> Yerevan	Conservation of "Trchkan Waterfall" natural monument through creating preconditions for community tourism development in Mets Parni	\$50,000	Ongoing
9.	EcoLab Foundation <i>(women-led NGO)</i> Vanadzor	Biodiversity watchdogs of Vanadzor Canyon	\$24,613	Ongoing
10.	"Bari Mama" Charitable NGO <i>(women-led NGO)</i> Yerevan	Sun and warmth in Bari Tnak	\$46,960	Completed
11.	Youth for Development Foundation <i>(women-led NGO)</i> Yerevan	Fostering Eco Friendly Thinking in Schools	\$24,540	Ongoing
12.	Martiros Charity Foundation Jermuk	Improving Energy Efficiency for conservation of forest ecosystems in Zaritap Community Conserved Area of South-Eastern Lesser Caucasus Ecological Corridor	\$50,000	Ongoing

13.	Fund for Biodiversity Conservation of Armenian Highland Yerevan	Improved wildlife habitat management in the Gndasar-West Community Conserved Area of the South-East Lesser Caucasus Ecological Corridor through introduction of sustainable farming practices and enhanced patrolling system	\$50,000	Ongoing
14.	Aires Development Foundation Yerevan	AirAid: Aerial Observation and Environmental Crowd-Mapping Platform (Phase 1)	\$49,960	Completed
15.	Ferti NGO Gyumri	Establishing Low Carbon Energy Education Centers for Young Practitioners	\$150,000	Ongoing
16.	Women in Climate and Energy NGO (women-led NGO) Yerevan	"Green" skills for youth	\$50,000	Ongoing
17.	SME Cooperation Association NGO Yerevan	Open Source Entrepreneurship: Building an ecosystem of women-led green startups	\$150,000	Ongoing
18.	Professional Education Reforms NGO Yerevan	Conservation of the fish stock through awareness raising of citizens and state policy reforms	\$26,847	Ongoing
19.	Green Shield NGO Yerevan	Conservation of Wildlife Corridors through Community-based Eco-tourism Development	\$49,979	Ongoing
20.	ASHD NGO (women-led NGO) Yerevan	Green Mrgashen: Towards alternative and clear energy	\$50,000	Ongoing
21.	Environmental Sustainability Assistance Center NGO Yerevan	Demonstration of firewood saving, energy efficiency and alternative energy options in rural communities of Lori, Shirak, and Aragatsotn regions	\$24,560	Ongoing