

Joint Programme Stronger Services for Equal Participation and Inclusive Development
ANNUAL PROGRAMME NARRATIVE PROGRESS REPORT
REPORTING PERIOD: 1 JANUARY – 31 DECEMBER 2020

<p align="center">Programme Title & Project Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme Title: “Stronger Services for Equal Participation and Inclusive Development” • MPTF Office Project Reference Number:² 00121975 	<p align="center">Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results¹</p> <p><i>Country/Region: Armenia/ countrywide</i></p> <p><i>Priority area/ strategic results:</i> <i>UNDAF Programme Results and Resource Framework:</i> <i>Outcome 2: By 2020, people benefit from improved systems of democratic governance and strengthened protection of human rights, and</i> <i>Outcome 5: By 2020, vulnerable groups have improved access to basic education and social protection services and participate in their communities</i> <i>UNDP Strategic Plan Outcome 2</i> <i>UNICEF Country Programme Outcome 3: Children with disabilities</i></p>
<p align="center">Participating Organization(s)</p> <p>Organizations that have received direct funding from the MPTF Office under this programme</p> <p align="center"><i>UNDP and UNICEF</i></p>	<p align="center">Implementing Partners</p> <p>National counterparts (government, private, NGOs & others) and other International Organizations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs • Ministry of Health • Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport • Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure • Armenian State Medical University • Armenian State Pedagogical University • Yerevan State University (Dep of Sociology and Social Work) • American University of Armenia • Local NGOs and OPDs (Organization of persons with disabilities) providing services to persons/children with disabilities • UNFPA • WHO

¹ Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;

² The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is referred to as “Project ID” on the project’s factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

Programme/Project Cost (US\$)	
Total approved budget as per project document:	\$3,082,320
MPTF /JP Contribution ³ : by Agency (if applicable)	UNICEF: \$1,500,120 UNDP: \$1,582,200
Agency Contribution: by Agency (if applicable)	UNICEF: \$80,000
Government Contribution	N/A
Other Contributions (donors)	N/A
TOTAL:	\$3,162,320
Programme Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.	
Assessment/Review - if applicable <i>please attach</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i>	
Mid-Term Evaluation Report – <i>if applicable please attach</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i>	

Programme Duration	
Overall Duration (<i>months</i>);	36 months
Start Date ⁴	01 July 2020
Original End Date ⁵	31 December 2022
Current End date ⁶	N/A
Report Submitted By	
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³ The MPTF or JP Contribution, refers to the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

⁴ The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

⁵ As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

⁶ If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF / JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities.

List of abbreviations

AT	Assistive technologies
CWD	Children with disabilities
IEP	Individualized education plan
JP	Joint Programme
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Services
MoESCS	Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoLSA	Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
MoTAI	Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NK	Nagorno-Karabakh
OPD	Organizations of Persons with Disabilities
RPPC	Republican Pedagogical-Psychological Center
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEN	Special Education Needs
SER	Socio-economic response
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNDP and UNICEF joint project aims to strengthen the basic service provision system in Armenia, through a *life-cycle approach* and provision of continuous care and support to children and adults with disabilities. This includes habilitation and rehabilitation, health, social and developmental services, all of which are extremely weak or not available in most regions of Armenia. Persons with disabilities (including children with disabilities) have very limited choice when it comes to the needs-based services and support, especially in areas far from capital city. The project assists the Armenian Government in its efforts to reform the disability assessment and service provision system by enhancing equitable access to services and participation of persons with disabilities in public life.

The Project started in July 2020 and was in inception and re-planning process through September, when the military escalation of Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) conflict started. This situation created a new reality and caused a significant slowdown of all ongoing projects, including this one and requiring further re-adjustments closer to the year end. To provide timely response to the post-war challenges, the main target group was altered to include and focus on immediate support schemes for veterans for physical and/or psychosocial rehabilitation.

The preparations for major activities in the project were initiated, however, achievement of significant results in less than two months of actual implementation was a real challenge.

Given the circumstances and the very short period of reporting, this report will be more about the process and activities implemented through June-December, 2020, that laid basis for the results and impact to be visible in 2021 and beyond.

The programme has contributed to a greater inter-sectoral collaboration on the issues of disability and served as catalyst for integration of disability issues in specific projects/programming, as well as for mobilizing additional resources from Government, the UN systems, the international community and other partners. Agreement was reached between three main counterparts – Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoH), Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (MoESCS), and Ministry of Health (MoH), on data exchange and data management for assessment and service provision. Roles and responsibilities of the Republican Pedagogical Psychological centre (RPPC), subdivision of the MoESCS and the Medical Social Expert Committees, subdivision of MoLSA were clarified in the disability assessment of children under 18 and mechanisms are setting up between two ministries to facilitate information exchange. It should be noted that COVID-19 and NK armed conflict had a significant impact on continuation of disability reform agenda as the focus was shifted to the emergency response. Given the comprehensive reform process affecting three sectors – social, health and education, it would take extra efforts to bring all partners onboard again and to re-agree the operationalization and possible implications of the reform process on each of the sectors.

I. Purpose

The project aims to deliver comprehensive support to advance the rights of persons and children with disabilities, to improve and strengthen the service provision and support the Government of Armenia in the implementation of the UNCRPD.

The overarching goal of the ongoing programme is to create a system of disability assessment and service provision that in addition to providing services to address issues identified by a medical diagnosis, includes the right of people with disabilities to participate fully in social and economic life.

The programme has four main objectives:

1. Improved access to services and programmes **for persons with disabilities (with special attention on children) at the/or close to the place of their residence** through modernized and strengthened service centers.
2. Establishment of **policy framework to support the modernized and strengthened multi-disciplinary service provision** in habilitation, rehabilitation, assistive technology, and assistance and support services at community level.
3. Strengthened **capacities at national and local levels for policy makers and service providers** to ensure quality and timely service provision to children and persons with disabilities.
4. Raise society's awareness of disability issues and **foster greater knowledge among children and adults with disabilities on their rights** and on how to exercise them.

The programme logic is built to a large extent in line with the Government reform agenda and support the implementation of measures that are designed to meet Armenia's commitments for the rights of persons with disabilities and the rights of the child as enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and will be strongly aligned with the Global Development Agenda 2030.

The activities of the programme directly target multiple articles of UNCRPD, those are: Articles 9 (Accessibility), 12 (Equal recognition before the law), 19 (Living independently and being included in the community), 20 (Personal mobility), 25 (Health), 26 (Habilitation and rehabilitation), 28 (Adequate standard of living and social protection), 31 (Statistics and data collection), 32 (International cooperation) and 33 (National implementation and monitoring). It also supports Articles 4 (General obligations), 5 (Equality and non-discrimination), 6 (Women with disabilities), 7 (Children with disabilities) and other articles indirectly. The disability reform road-map for transition period highlights an urgent need for improvement and strengthening of services provision system in Armenia to meet the needs of persons/children with disabilities. As such, the availability of accessible and affordable rehabilitation plays a fundamental role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), mainly SDG 3, "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages"⁷ and SDG 4 "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" at the same time paving way to achievement of other related SDGs.

The programme also fed into the overall Strategic UN Planning Framework, particularly United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) results:

- Outcome 2: By 2020, people benefit from improved systems of democratic governance and strengthened protection of human rights, and
- Outcome 5: By 2020, vulnerable groups have improved access to basic education and social protection services and participate in their communities.

The current program is also in line with the strategic directions of UNICEF Armenia Country Programme for 2016-2021, particularly with the Outcome 3: Children with disabilities, By 2021, children with disabilities progressively realize their rights to education, rehabilitation and social protection and to participate in community life.

⁷ United Nations. Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform. Sustainable Development Goals. Available from: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>

II. Results

i) Narrative reporting on results:

- Outcome

JP Outcome: By 2022, Institutions and systems strengthened to improve protection of human rights through enhancement of access to services and inclusive environment for participation of persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities.

The draft Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and draft Law on Functional Assessment have been submitted to the Government for endorsement. Preliminary agreement was reached between line ministries on data exchange and data management for the assessment and provision of services to ensure the broader coverage and comprehensive approach. The MoLSA prioritized the structural changes in disability assessment system with possible upgrading of medical social examination committees into the International Classification of Functioning assessment centres, and development of service packages for persons/CWD.

To define the baseline and targets for outcome's indicators the baseline survey was designed and initiated in communication with all line ministries.

- Outputs

Output 1. Access to services and programmes for persons with disabilities (with special attention on children) close to the place of their residence through modernized and strengthened service centers improved.

Support development of regional modernized Centers of Excellence for Independent Living (including support for assistive technologies) to provide across the life-cycle continuum care to persons with disabilities (including children with moderate and severe disabilities) and include the establishment of the institute of personal assistants and provision of mobile services.

Discussions and preparation to identify strategically located service provision/rehabilitation centers to fully equip and strengthen them to serve as service provision hubs for the provided regions were initiated. This will allow to bring high quality services closer to people throughout Armenia. Depending on costs and available budget the centers range is discussed to be from 4 to 6. The initial list of regions is identified, and the actual capacity needs are under review in coordination with number of partners, including Government agencies, WHO, ICRC and others involved in strengthening similar capacities for rehab services.

The Concept of the Centers of Excellence for CWD was discussed in MoESCS and MoLSA. By 2020 within the reform on inclusive education the MoESCS transformed all special and bordering schools into regional pedagogical psychological centers, except seven special schools where enrolled 521 children with severe and complete disabilities. Even though all mainstream schools in the country are inclusive and 20 regional pedagogical-psychological support centers are established through the country, still the conditions in schools are not adequate and some specific types of services, such as sign language interpreter or typhlopedagogue (who teach children with visual impairments to read Braille) are not available in most of the schools due to the lack of specialists.

Case studies on CWD conducted after closing of their special schools, revealed some of them after several attempts to attend the mainstream inclusive schools eventually entered to another special schools where specific support and care are provided. Therefore, in order to ensure the rights of all children, including children with some types of severe disabilities, and to promote their smooth transition to mainstream schools, the MoESCS is considering the possibility of transforming some special schools into the Resources centers or in other words the Centers of Excellence. These centers will provide independent living skills and

support to children with moderate and severe disabilities through the country to facilitate their education in mainstream schools. The Concept of Resource centers was discussed with the parents of children with disabilities, service providers, special and mainstream inclusive schools, and line ministries. It is planned to finalize the draft Concept in 2021 in consultation with stakeholders, and with active meaningful participation of parents of children with disabilities and persons with disabilities.

Strengthen capacity of healthcare professionals in early identification and early intervention at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of health care system.

The modules on Early identification and intervention for the health professionals, and preschool educators have been drafted and will be finalized after testing in one consolidated community. It is also planned to develop the referral mechanisms to ensure timely referral to the corresponding next rehabilitation level within the health system, as well as to the other sectors, such as social protection and education, to promote social inclusion of children and provision of comprehensive support to CWD and to their families.

Modeling a system of provision of rapid psychological (posttraumatic) services for families (mothers, fathers and caregivers) in crisis due to birth of child with disability or newly diagnosed as child with disability or adult with disability.

Negotiation is initiated and agreed on development of the modeling a system of provision of rapid psychological services for families.

Support development of specialized units for integration of mental health identification into primary care at community level.

Negotiations and identification of potential regions for psychosocial support started in 2020 with number of partners involved. An initial agreement was made with one of the regions - Tavush Governor's Office to support the mental health and psychosocial services (MHPSS) in the region, to be then replicated to other regions. All activities to be implemented in close coordination with the MoH, MoLSA and other Governmental agencies.

To provide timely response to the post-war challenges, the main target group (adults) was altered to include and focus on immediate support schemes for veterans for physical and/or psychosocial rehabilitation. In this regard UNDP has established partnerships with leading physical and psycho-social rehabilitation centers in Armenia. For the purpose of identification of urgent and primary needs of war veterans, including health, assistive technology, social, living, psychological, educational, employment, etc., needs assessment has been initiated in cooperation with Yerevan State University psychosocial center and "Homeland Defender" rehabilitation center. The results will be available in the first quarter of 2021. Additionally, as part of post-war crisis response and recovery measures, UNDP has initiated support for procurement of prosthesis tools and materials.

Support needs assessment for Assistive Technology (AT) update the national list and build capacities for low-cost solutions.

Cooperation has been initiated with Tumo, Izmirlian Foundation, Aurora Foundation (IDEA) and other partners for building the partner network and the ecosystem for AT production, ideation, acceleration and research. This will apply firstly to war veterans as a post-war crisis response and then be scaled up to accommodate needs of people with disabilities. To facilitate partnership and synergies with international partners, as well as to foster exchange of knowledge and experience, the UNDP partnered with China Youth Council and UNV to host an International Intern from China and International UNV from Russian Federation to support the team in partnership development, research and analytics.

Within the disability reform the MoLSA introduced provision of the ATs through the vouchers, which open the market for more suppliers and access to variations of ATs included in the state approved list. Considering the limited types of ATs in the approved List it was agreed to revise the list of Essential ATs, and as a first step for 2021 it is planned to develop a Catalogue of ATs to promote children's meaningful and active participation in the education process.

Strengthen personal assistants and family support skills

In collaboration with the OPDs, including the organization of parents of CWD, personal assistance and family support skills were provided through different models to find out the best-way depending on the circumstances, including children with moderate and severe disabilities and displaced children who are still in the moving. For families living far from the available services and for those families who are isolated due to the COVID, the model includes provision of physiotherapy equipment combined with the training of parents on how to work with child, and then follow up of child progress with further consultation and coaching using mix-method remotely and face-to-face.

Output 2. Policy framework to support the modernized and strengthened multi-disciplinary service provision in habilitation, rehabilitation, assistive technology, and assistance and support services at community level established.

In close cooperation with MoLSA and other key stakeholders the Project has supported developing of legal acts on the procedure and criteria for assessing person's functionality. In particular, "Reforms of Disability Assessment System and Introduction of Disability Functional Assessment System" Program, draft Law "On the Rights of Persons with Disabilities" and draft Law "On Disability Functional Assessment", as well as sub-legal acts regulating the process of conducting medical and social examination and defining disability have been studied and 4 sub-legal acts developed.

Technical support was provided to line ministries aimed at systems strengthening and enhanced access to inclusive learning environment for all children. The updated policy framework and diversified service provision created opportunities for the most vulnerable children, including children with disabilities to receive needs-based, gender sensitive services and support. Specifically, the network of pedagogical-psychological support services became available almost in all regions of Armenia, the new Law "On Preschool Education" was endorsed followed by initiating the drafting of sub-legislation, launching the revision of the preschool education standards. The new Law creates solid legal grounds for the realization of inclusive pre-school education, alternative models of early learning services as well as will promote the quality of Early Childhood Education and Care services in Armenia.

UNICEF, MoESCS and Teach for Armenia collaboration project results were used for developing a state programme on inclusive pedagogy. In 2020, Government allocated state budget for remuneration of the mentor trainers who were hired by the RPPC after the completion of UNICEF supported project. Currently 52 mentors are delivering teacher trainings in schools of Yerevan, Aragatsotn and Shirak on inclusive teaching strategies and the Universal Design for Learning (UDL), while providing pedagogical feedback to teachers.

Connect electronic systems of healthcare, education, and social sectors to ensure smooth data exchange and data management for assessment and service provision systems.

The electronic system on the special educational needs (SEN) assessment for school-age children designed in 2019 by the National Center of Education Technologies and the RPPC in collaboration with UNICEF has been tested in small-scale during this reporting period and has been discussed with the MoESCS to become a separate Module within the Educational Management Information System, and to be used for information

exchange with health and social protection sectors. The finalization of the e-system, including the development of the submodules for entering data on SEN assessment of preschool-aged children, and as a feedback mechanism providing access for parents/caregivers to keep regular communication with them on assessment, service provision and education progress of children with SEN, including CWD, as well as piloting are planned for 2021.

Develop the necessary legal framework for service provision.

Initial agreement with line ministries was reached to work on the development of the National Strategy for Early Childhood Development inline with the Concept of Nurturing care, WHO/UNICEF and update of the quality control criteria and monitoring mechanisms for rehabilitation services.

Establish research centers in relevant academic institutions, assessment and service provision center, to support evidence-based service delivery.

UNICEF partnered with Enabling Social Impact Consulting group to enhance the capacity of Republican and Regional Pedagogical Psychological Support Centers to plan and provide better services to children with SEN, including CWD. The partnership promotes institutionalization of routine monitoring methodology and tools on the availability, access and affordability of services for children in education sector to ensure timely, gender sensitive and reliable information on CWD and children with SEN for informed decision making. The Charter and the reporting procedures of RPPC were reviewed. A virtual training for the members of all RPPCs were conducted. In early April 2021 the RPPSCs will present their final Annual plans and first quarter reports, based on which the monitoring methodology will be finalized and submitted to MoESCS for approval.

Improve the Individual Service Delivery Plans in line with best international standards, with due consideration of gender specifics in service provision.

Technical expertise and support were provided for the development and costing of the comprehensive list of services disaggregated by types of disability, gender, age group, and agencies responsible for service delivery. Currently, the MoLSA is supporting service provision through subsidizing NGOs/DPOs through the tender procedures, which itself is time-consuming for both MoLSA and service providers. In parallel, the MoLSA is aiming the gradual introduction of the voucher system for the provision of services to give the opportunity to beneficiaries to select service providers and to promote a better quality of provided services. The financial means (or credits) in the voucher will be linked with the service package based on the types and the severity of the disability of the beneficiary. For the development of the services packages for CWD, in 2021 the MoLSA in collaboration with UNICEF is planning to conduct the functional assessment of CWD in line with the WHO ICF.

Output 3. Capacities at national and local levels for policy makers and service providers to ensure quality and timely service provision to children and persons with disabilities strengthened.

As part of post-conflict response package, the UNDP in partnership with “Homeland Defender” rehabilitation center supported capacity-building and upskilling of mid-level medical personnel, including ergo-therapists, physiotherapists and rehabilitation nurses who pass on the job-training and support the rehabilitation services of veterans and broader target group.

Conduct capacity development training courses for policy makers to ensure joint vision and policy formulation on multi-disciplinary approach to service provision.

Double impact of COVID-19 and NK crises endangered education continuity, particularly for the most vulnerable and displaced children. In Armenia, all educational institutions, including 1400 schools and 884 preschools also closed. Around 400,000 children have been affected and out of school in the country, including children with disabilities and special education needs. The Government of Armenia almost immediately put into action an online learning system adopting a mix of digital and non-digital platforms to ensure the continuity of children's learning. Nevertheless, the transition to distance learning has revealed and exacerbated existing inequities in education. To address it UNICEF, in collaboration with the MoESCS and the RPPC, carried out an **assessment to evaluate the pedagogical-psychological services and support provided to children in Armenia during school closure from March 2019 to June 2020, to identify barriers faced by children with SEN, including CWD**, during their participation in distance schooling. The assessment involved specialists of 20 Regional PPCs, teachers/educators of 1,018 mainstream schools located in the service areas of those PPCs provided services and support throughout the country to overall 6,708 children with SEN, including CWD. The study revealed the current gaps and problems, including the lack of methodology for the provision of distance education services to children with SEN and CWD, lack of access to distance education, low capacity to provide quality education services during distance education, and lack of parental awareness on how to support their children to effectively participate in distance education. It also identified the priority areas and topics for knowledge and skills of teachers/educators and specialists of the PPCs.

Establish professional training centers and/or training platforms (including innovative solutions) in acting institutions for continuous education and preparation of rehabilitation professionals, occupational therapists, social workers and other professionals for habilitation and rehabilitation service provision.

In collaboration with the team of national experts, UNICEF Armenia and RPPC developed **methodological guidelines for teachers/educators and specialists** of the PPCs to promote inclusion in distance education, to provide distance support and services to children with SEN and CWD, including contingency plan for any prolonged and future disruptions, and ensure their more effective involvement and meaningful participation, and **recommendations for parents/caregivers** to promote meaningful participation of children in distance education and to support back to school during school reopening.

Output 4. Society's awareness of disability issues and foster greater knowledge among children and adults with disabilities on their rights and on how to exercise them raised

Raise awareness among persons with disabilities and their families: on types of services and assistive technology for informed choice tailored to their needs; and on their rights to be better prepared for meaningful participation at all levels: from service provision to decision making.

In 2020, social inclusion messaging was successfully integrated into risk communication and digital activations, spanning from advocating for precautionary measures to prevent the further spread of COVID-19 in Armenia to positive parenting with a focus on psychosocial wellbeing. The global parenting master class for parents of CWD was localized with integrated Armenian sign language as a key material, which was followed by a number of web articles and human interest stories targeting parents of CWD to provide with useful tips and advice from specialists on how to best take care of their children during the lockdown, how to ensure a comfortable home environment, nutrition and play at home as well as how to take care of themselves for sustained wellbeing during the pandemic.

The regional Learning at Home digital activation was used as an opportunity to advocate for inclusion and positive parenting of young CWD with tailored at-home activities that parents can engage their children and

contribute to healthy development. This was reinforced with a human-interest story about a mother of a CWD who shared her experience of balancing different roles during the lockdown, while also ensuring that her daughter continues learning and development.

Key results from 2020 digital activations through social media channels and websites include: 307,493 reach and 71,533 engagement, with social inclusion messaging, raising the voices of children with disabilities and their parents.

On the other hand, technical support was provided to OPDs and parents of CWD to raise awareness on types of services with the possibility of remote provision, as well the various types of ATs.

Raise society's awareness on disability issues with specific attention to childhood disability, acceptance of children with disabilities and their parents to foster early inclusion.

To start the awareness campaign and create a branding umbrella for the Assistive Technology component UNDP started consultations with branding companies and the partner will be selected in 2021.

Discussion also started with the DPM office and other national partners, Diaspora groups and UN agencies for joint awareness raising campaigns, outreach and communication strategies to be designed and implemented in 2021 and beyond.

- **Describe any delays in implementation, challenges, lessons learned & best practices**

Even though the Memorandum of Understanding between UNDP and UNICEF, and MPTFO on the programme was signed in December 2019 with the starting date of the programme as of 1st January 2020, the Standard Administrative Arrangement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and UNDP's Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office has been signed in June 2020, and the financial resources have been transferred in July 2020. As a result, all planned activities automatically had been shifted for 6 months (from January to June).

On another side, the programme implementation was challenged by the impact of dual emergency, the COVID related restrictions and the military hostilities in the NK conflict zone started in September 2020. Which created new challenges, needs, and priorities impacting all people, including persons/children with disabilities and their families, reversed gains made so far, and changed annual priorities of the local partners and stakeholders. All of these forced to postpone implementation of some already started activities to 2021. One of the lessons learned from 2020, is to plan in advance alternative scenarios to be able to implement all of the project components to the extent possible. In the meantime, to ensure continuity of the program and as a mitigation measure hybrid method was applied for some of the priority interventions and virtual meetings were combined with smaller scale face-to-face meetings with limited number of participants according to the Commandant's order No.74 dated 14 May, 2020.

- **Qualitative assessment**

The National Programme Steering Committee (SC), which is the highest body for the strategic guidance and management of the JP met at the beginning of July 2020, and recommended keeping the initially agreed duration of the Project to three years, and suggested requesting to add six months to the current end date, thus bringing project closure to June 2023 (Meeting Minutes available upon request).

ii) Indicator Based Performance Assessment:

Programme Results Framework

	<u>Achieved</u> Indicator Targets	Reasons for Variance with Planned Target (if any)	Source of Verification
<p>UNDAF Outcome 2: By 2020, people benefit from improved systems of democratic governance and strengthened protection of human rights.</p> <p>UNDAF Outcome 5: By 2020, vulnerable groups have improved access to basic education and social protection services and participate in their communities.</p> <p><u>Indicator I</u> Number of persons with disabilities receiving rehabilitation services in the regions of project operation Baseline: TBD based on a baseline survey of 2020 Target: TBD based on a baseline survey of 2020</p> <p><u>Indicator II</u> % of children with disabilities using Rehabilitation services Baseline: 23 (2012) Target: 40 (2020)</p>	<p>Indicator 1: Baseline survey is initiated but the results will be available in 2021</p> <p>Indicator II 32% (2020)</p>	<p>Due to COVID-19 lockdown and limitations set with functioning of the centers, the realization of the survey has been put on hold and will be implemented in 2021.</p> <p>Indicator II The reported result for this indicator reflects percentage of children with SEN receiving rehab services in education sector only. There is no reliable resource to track % of CWD receiving rehab services overall, social</p>	<p>MoLSA, MoH, MoTAI</p> <p>MoLSA and MoESCS reports</p>

<p><u>Indicator III</u> Number of children with special education needs enrolled in inclusive schools Baseline: 3000 (2014) Target: 6000 (2020)</p>	<p><u>Indicator III</u> 6,708 (including 1,962 girls)</p>	<p>protection, health and education sectors. So, the Result is calculated based on the Number of children with SEN received rehabilitation services in education sector out of total number of CWD.</p>	<p>MoESC, NCET and NPPC reports</p>
<p>JP Outcome 1⁸: By 2022, Institutions and systems strengthened to improve protection of human rights through enhancement of access to services and inclusive environment for participation of persons with disabilities, including children with disabilities.</p> <p>Indicator 1: Number of children under five with disabilities and/ or developmental delays receiving early identification and early intervention services. Baseline: TBD based on a baseline survey of 2020 Planned Target: TBD based on a baseline survey of 2020</p>	<p>Indicator 1: Baseline survey is initiated but the results will be available in 2021</p>	<p>Due to COVID-19 lockdown and limitations set with functioning of the centers, the realization of the survey has been put on hold and will be implemented in 2021.</p>	<p>MoLSA, MoH, MoESCS</p>

⁸ Note: Outcomes, outputs, indicators and targets should be **as outlined in the Project Document** so that you report on your **actual achievements against planned targets**. Add rows as required for Outcome 2, 3 etc.

<p>Indicator 2: Number of 5-18 years old children with disabilities receiving need-based quality services and assistive devices and technologies. Baseline: TBD based on a baseline survey of 2020 Planned Target: TBD based on a baseline survey of 2020</p>	<p>Indicator 2: Baseline survey is initiated but the results will be available in 2021</p>	<p>Due to COVID-19 lockdown and limitations set with functioning of the centers, the realization of the survey has been put on hold and will be implemented in 2021.</p>	<p>MoLSA, MoH, MoESCS</p>
<p>Indicator 3: Number of youth and adults with Disabilities receiving need-based quality services and assistive devices and technologies. Baseline: TBD based on a baseline survey of 2020 Planned Target: TBD based on a baseline survey of 2020</p>	<p>Indicator 3: Baseline survey is initiated but the results will be available in 2021</p>	<p>Due to COVID-19 lockdown and limitations set with functioning of the centers, the realization of the survey has been put on hold and will be implemented in 2021.</p>	<p>MoLSA, MoH, MoESCS</p>
<p>Indicator 4: Policy framework for provision of accessible and quality services developed and adopted. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 1 (2020)</p>	<p>Indicator 4: Policy framework is under development. the UNDP has supported in developing of sub-legal acts on the procedure and criteria for assessing person's functionality</p>		<p>MoLSA, MoH, MoESCS</p>
<p>Indicator 5: National system of data collection on disability is updated, functional and complies with international standards. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 1 (2022)</p>	<p>Indicator 5: The indicator is not yet achieved, however, the initial prerequisites for the update of the national data collection system on disability</p>		<p>Gov. decision, MoLSA, MoH and MoESCS reports</p>

	are already in process.		
<p>JP Output 1: Access to services and programmes for persons with disabilities (with special attention on children) close to the place of their residence through modernized and strengthened service centers improved.</p> <p>Indicator 1.1.1. Existence of regional Centers of Excellence for Independent Living. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 5 (2022)</p> <p>Indicator 1.1. Number of regions with capacitated healthcare professionals in early identification and intervention at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels of health care system. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 2 (2022)</p> <p>Indicator 1.2. Number of regions where youth and adults with disabilities receiving need-based quality services and assistive devices and technologies. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 3 (2022)</p> <p>Indicator 1.3.1. Number of regions with modeling parent support services. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 2 (2022)</p>	<p>Indicator 1.1.1 N/A Targeted for 2022</p>	Discussions with key line Ministries are in process.	Programme reports, MoLSA and MoESCS reports
	<p>Indicator 1.1. N/A Targeted for 2022</p>	The process has been initiated; however, the implementation will be in 2021.	Programme reports, MoH reports
	<p>Indicator 1.2. N/A Targeted for 2022</p>	Discussions with key line Ministries are in process.	
	<p>Indicator 1.3.1. N/A Targeted for 2022</p>	The process initiated; however, the implementation will be in 2021.	Programme reports, MoLSA, MoESCS, MoH and MoTAI reports

<p>Indicator 1.4.1. Number of regions with personal assistants, institutions and family support system. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 3 (2022)</p>	<p>Indicator 1.4.1. N/A Targeted for 2022</p>	<p>The process initiated; however, the implementation will be in 2021.</p>	<p>Programme reports, MoLSA, MoESCS, MoH and MoTAI reports</p>
<p>Output 2. Policy framework to support the modernized and strengthened multi-disciplinary service provision in habilitation, rehabilitation, assistive technology, and assistance and support services at community level established.</p> <p>Indicator 2.1.1 Systems of data collection on disability are functional and effectively feed evidence-based policy formulation. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 1 (2022)</p> <p>Indicator 2.2.1. Existence of a national policy on service provision and assistive technology. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 1 (2021)</p>	<p>Indicator 2.1.1 N/A Targeted for 2022</p>	<p>Discussions with key line Ministries, preparatory activities with partner organisations are in process.</p>	<p>Programme reports, MoLSA, MoESCS, MoH and MoTAI reports</p>
<p>Indicator 2.2.1. Existence of a national policy on service provision and assistive technology. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 1 (2021)</p>	<p>Indicator 2.2.1. N/A Targeted for 2021</p>	<p>The process initiated and discussed with line ministries; however, the implementation will be in 2021.</p>	<p>Programme reports, MoLSA and MoH reports</p>
<p>Indicator 2.2.2 Existence of a national Strategy for Early Childhood Development. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: Strategy developed (2022)</p>	<p>Indicator 2.2.2 N/A Targeted for 2022</p>		<p>Programme reports, MoLSA, MoESCS, MoH and MoTAI reports</p>

<p>Indicator 2.3.1. Survey on children with disabilities. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 1 (2021)</p>	<p>Indicator 2.3.1 Survey initiated but will be continued in 2021.</p>	<p>Due to COVID-19 lockdown and limitations set with functioning of the centers, the realization of the survey has been put on hold and will be implemented in 2021.</p>	<p>Survey report</p>
<p>Indicator 2.3.2. Research and analytical capacity is built in 3 centers to ensure scientific support to the new policy framework on disability assessment and service provision. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 3 (2022)</p>	<p>Indicator 2.3.2 N/A Targeted for 2022</p>		<p>Reports from 3 selected institutions, Programme reports, MLSA, MoH statements</p>
<p>Indicator 2.4.1. Existence of gender-sensitive and age-specific Individual Service Delivery Plans for children/adults. Baseline: Individual Rehabilitation Plans are at initial stage of development to include gender sensitive and age-specifics. Planned Target: Gender sensitive and age-specific Individual Service Delivery Plans for children/adults developed (2022)</p> <p>Output 3. Capacities at national and local levels for policy makers and service providers to ensure quality and timely service provision to children and persons with disabilities strengthened.</p> <p>Indicator 3.1.1. Number of policy makers trained and applying the knowledge in the policy formulation. Baseline: 15 (2019) Planned Target: 100 (2021)</p>	<p>Indicator 2.4.1 The work in process, Targeted for 2022</p> <p>Indicator 3.1.1. No results achieved yet, targeted for 2021</p>	<p>In process</p> <p>Activity postponed to 2021</p>	<p>Reports from 3 selected institutions, Programme reports, MLSA, MoH statements</p> <p>Programme reports, MoLSA, MoESCS, MoH and MoTAI Reports</p>

<p>Indicator 3.2.1 Number of regions with trained health, social and education professionals /service providers/.</p> <p>Baseline: 15 (2019)</p> <p>Planned Target: 5 (2022)</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.1. The modernized and strengthened service provision centers have sufficient technical and human resources to provide quality services to children and adults with disabilities.</p> <p>Baseline: 0 (2019)</p> <p>Planned Target: 3 (2022)</p> <p>Indicator 3.4.1. Model curricula for targeted groups of health care, rehabilitation and habilitation service providers developed.</p> <p>Baseline: 0 (2019)</p> <p>Planned Target: 2 (2022)</p>	<p>Indicator 3.2.1. N/A Targeted for 2022</p> <p>Indicator 3.3.1. N/A Targeted for 2022</p> <p>Indicator 3.4.1. N/A Targeted for 2022</p>		<p>Programme reports, MoLSA, MoESCS, MoH and MoTAI Reports</p> <p>Programme reports, MoLSA, MoESCS, MoH and MoTAI Reports</p> <p>Programme reports, MoLSA, MoESCS, MoH and MoTAI Reports</p>
<p>Output 4. Society’s awareness of disability issues and foster greater knowledge among children and adults with disabilities on their rights and on how to exercise them raised.</p> <p>Indicator 4.1.1 Number of regions where persons/children with disabilities are informed about their rights and can exercise them effectively.</p> <p>Baseline: 0 (2019)</p> <p>Planned Target: 11 (2022)</p>	<p>Indicator 4.1.1. N/A Targeted for 2022</p>		<p>Programme reports, Campaign Materials</p>

<p>Indicator 4.2.1 Number of public events on disability issues. Baseline: 0 (2019) Planned Target: 11 (2022)</p> <p>Indicator 4.2.2 Stigma towards persons with disabilities and their families decreased among service provider professionals and community. Baseline: Needs a pre- and post assessment Planned Target: Target to be determined based on initial assessment.</p>	<p>Indicator 4.2.1. N/A Targeted for 2022</p> <p>Indicator 4.2.2 Planned in 2021</p>	<p>The activity is planned for end of 2021.</p>	<p>Survey and assessment materials, Programme reports, Campaign materials and records</p>
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III. Other Assessments or Evaluations (if applicable)

UNICEF initiated the evaluation of the National Policy and Programmes for CWD in Armenia for generating evidence on impact of policy reforms focused on ensuring non-discrimination towards CWD and provision of conditions for full enjoyment of their fundamental human rights and decent life. The Inception Report was ready by June 2020, however COVID-19 pandemic outbreak and later the war over NK created difficulties and limitations in the process of programmatic data collection and the evaluation schedule was postponed to 2021.

During this reporting period, UNICEF, in collaboration with the MoESCS and the RPPC, carried out an **assessment to evaluate the pedagogical-psychological services and support** provided to children in Armenia during school closure from March 2019 to June 2020, **to identify barriers faced by children with SEN, including CWD**, during their participation in distance schooling. The assessment involved specialists of 20 Regional PPCs, teachers/educators of 1,018 mainstream schools located in the service areas of those PPCs provided services and support to 6,708 children with SEN, including CWD. The study revealed the current gaps and problems, including the lack of methodology for the provision of distance education services to children with SEN and children with disabilities, lack of access to distance education, low capacity to provide quality education services during distance education, and lack of parental awareness on how to support their children to effectively participate in distance education. It also identified the priority areas and topics where knowledge and skills of teachers/educators and specialists of the pedagogical-psychological centers on provision of distance learning resources and support to children with SEN and children with disabilities require further strengthening.

The analysis of the data revealed that 14% of children with SEN (children with severe functional impairments) participated in distance classes up to 25%, in other words they almost or at all did not participate, and another 11% of children participated on 25-50%, which means they attended distance classes not regularly, from time to time (Figure 1).

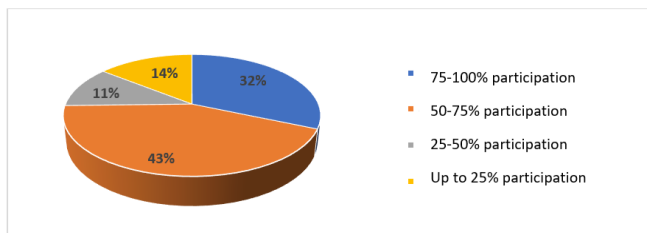


Figure 1. Participation of children with SEN in distance classes, by percentage

Provision of pedagogical-psychological support services is crucial for the education and development of children with SEN, CWD. Figure 2 shows, that more than half of children with SEN only partially received pedagogical-psychological services, while 10% of children with SEN out of 6,708 did not receive almost at all.

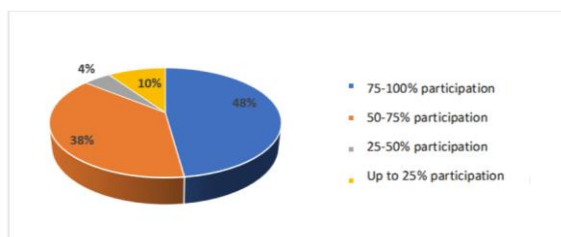


Figure 2. Percentage of children with SEN received pedagogical-psychological support and services through distance meetings

The assessment also revealed the main reasons of being dropped out from the distance education for children with SEN: the absence of technologies, including mobile phones, lack of access to internet and lack of parental support (Figure 3).

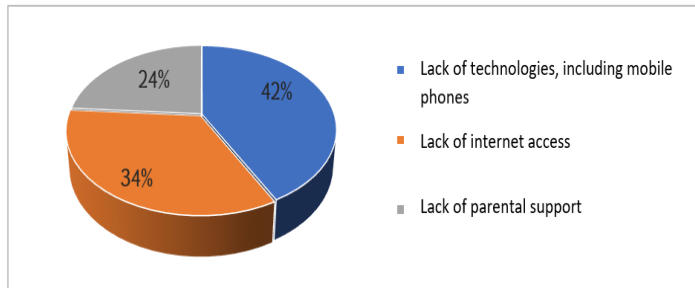


Figure 3. Causes of dropping out children with SEN from the distance education, by percentage

The results of the assessment on the distance education revealed that parents/caregivers also need methodological support to organize their daily routine duties along with the participation of their children in distance education.

IV. Programmatic Revisions

Even though the Memorandum of Understanding between UNDP and UNICEF, and MPTFO on the programme was signed in December 2019 with the starting date of the programme as of 1st January 2020, the Standard Administrative Arrangement between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and UNDP's Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office has been signed in June 2020, and the financial resources have been transferred in July 2020. Therefore, the implementation of planned activities automatically had been shifted for 6 months. So, the National Programme Steering Committee (SC), which is the highest body for the strategic guidance, management, coordination, and advisory authority of the Joint Programme met at the beginning of July 2020, and agreed on the scope of the approved Project including the objectives and results. The SC recommended keeping the initially agreed duration of the Project to three years, to ensure that the Project has sufficient time for implementation. With this, given the late start of six months, the SC suggested counting the three years from the actual implementation starting date and request the Donor/RF Government to add six months to the current end date, thus bringing project closure to June 2023 (Meeting Minutes available upon request).

V. Resources

- Financial management and procurement procedures are conducted in accordance with the UNDP and UNICEF own regulations, rules, directives and procedures. PUNOs have bank accounts set up in Armenia. These accounts are managed by authorized staff who maintain comprehensive records of local bank account transactions (including clearly labelled receipts) and produce monthly reconciliations. The operational departments in each organization support the financial management of the Programme by approving timesheets, expenses and contractor invoices, and by preparing internal financial reports, including periodic financial reports. Both UNDP and UNICEF hired staff for administration of this JP, as it was planned.

- The joint work conducted so far on support of disability reform and this JP helps to mobilize additional resources, particularly, UNDP and UNICEF jointly with other UN Agency (UNFPA) under the RCO coordination and in close collaboration with the OPDs/NGOs, parents of children with disabilities,

government stakeholders developed the Expression of Interest to the UNPRPD's 4th Funding Round in September 2020, based on which the country team was selected (one of 26 selected countries out of 111) for the 2nd step the Situational Analysis to conduct a comprehensive review of the national context. The Situational Analysis planned to be conducted on the first half of 2021, based on which the full proposal will be developed.

- UNICEF contributed to a greater UN inter-agency collaboration on the issues of disability and inclusive education as well as served as catalyst for integration of disability issues in agency specific projects and programming. UNICEF CO intensive negotiations with the developmental partners, the MoESCS, civil society organizations and the Global Partnership for Education secretariat eventually resulted Government of Armenia entrance into the global education constituency with initial US\$ 550,000 GPE grant for the development of education sector plan with focus on quality, equity and inclusion.

- UNICEF continued efforts at private sector engagement, continuing its partnership with ACBA bank and Hayastan All Armenia Fund to support social inclusion of CWD and promote early learning through building an inclusive playground in Vardenis town, which is the first big playground in the town that is also accessible for children with disabilities. Over 3000 children will benefit from this partnership. UNICEF also partnered with Ameriabank to provide 220 tablets to the MoESCS for students with and without disabilities who did not have access to technology to continue learning during the lockdown due to the COVID outbreak.

- As a response to the post-war crisis, the UNDP has mobilized additional funds for the purpose of needs assessment and veteran support from the Crisis Bureau (55,000 USD) and Needs assessment fund (20,000 USD).