



DEVELOPMENT EMERGENCY MODALITY

Joint Programme 2022 Annual Progress Report

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UNCT/MCO: Turkmenistan

Reporting Period: 1 January - 31 December 2022

JP title: Improving the system of social protection through the introduction of inclusive quality community-based social services

Thematic SDG Areas: Decent jobs & universal social protection;SDG localization;

PUNOS:UNICEF, UNDP

Stakeholder partner: National Government;Sub-national Governments;Civil Society Organizations;Parliamentarians;Bilateral aid organizations;

Gender Marker: Gender-responsive (for example, the JP aimed to respond to specific gendered needs, such as linking social assistance with GBV response services or maternal health support)

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Annual Progress

Overall JP self-assessment of 2022 progress:

Satisfactory (majority of annual expected results achieved; 1 to 3 months delay in implementation)

Overall Progress

The Joint SDG Fund DEM funding was received just in time to support acceleration of the National Social Services Development Plan (NSSDP) development as set forth in the new National Development Program 2022-28 to ensure adequate social protection measures of the vulnerable population.

Two PUNOs, UNICEF and UNDP, with the support from the RC Office have so far realized the following:

Capacity building and advocacy:

- 1) Identification of bottlenecks, challenges and opportunities emerging from the established practice and adopted by-laws to be addressed in the 2023-30 NSSDP and Results Framework aligned with national strategies. This was achieved through regular consultation meetings with MoLSP mid-level policy makers, Heads of Social Service Provision Organizations from all regions, supervisors of social work para-professionals, social work professionals representing primary community based services and specialized services for families and children across the country. These sessions created a space for peer-to-peer learning;
- 2) Lessons learnt from monitoring the functioning of referral mechanisms and the SOPs in practice vs guidelines for the specialized services piloted in three regions were revealed during a series of supervision sessions. The sessions provided insights for the MoLSP and the UN team on the parts to be strengthened in NSSDP for efficient scale-up of specialized services in regions.
- 3) Social Service Provision Organizations, academia, recruited social work para-professionals, and allied workforces improved their understanding of the fundamentals of social work and core competencies of social work functions during the training sessions, including TOT, to ensure consistency of the reform and quality in delivering inclusive community based social services.
- 4) Joint meeting with the USAID funded "Safe Migration in Central Asia Program", MoLSP, Organizations of people with disabilities, and other stakeholders on the inter-sectoral support to vulnerable families and children was an excellent platform for strategic policy advocacy among the national stakeholders, including the state and non governmental social service providers.

Design of draft NSSDP:

- 1) The draft NSSDP and its Results Framework was developed with the support of national and international team in close consultation with the MoLSP.
- 2) The concept of community based primary and secondary social services was introduced to the revised statutory documents of the MoLSP and Organization of Social Service Provision, submitted to the national stakeholders. The revision also widened the scope of vulnerabilities eligible for social service provision in accordance with the Law on Social Services, 2021

Development of the integrated social services case management information system:

- 1) Primary priority needs for the MIS system integration were identified from preliminary assessment conducted by local consultancy firm. The first task to be completed is to connect six Social service provision organizations in each province to the MoLSP network. Tender for equipment purchase is in process.
- 2) Due to evolving political situation, a study tour to Türkiye on integrated MIS system, initially planned for December 2022, was postponed to 2023.

Assessment of current government spending and opportunities for attracting additional financing to complement NSSDP funding

- 1) An international expert conducted analysis of fiscal space and broader financial flows targeted towards social services and social protection through a desk review of respective documentation in November 2022 and submitted draft Framework for the review. The refined version of NSSDP and finalized fiscal space analysis will be presented in March 2023. The NSSDP endorsement will set the foundation for sustainability of the new reform and enhance the national preparedness to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable during emerging crises.

SDG Acceleration progress towards the SDGs, focusing on the main SDG targets

Target 1.3: Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable:

Based on the Final analysis undertaken for the SDG Fund Joint Program on introduction of quality inclusive community-based social services in Turkmenistan (2020-2022), and as per the national strategic priorities and the new Law on Social Services, a nationally appropriate human rights based and evidence informed model of inclusive community-based social services, accompanied by nationalized practical guidance will be transformed into a cross-sectoral national plan of social services development with a specific results framework. By the end of the JP the NSSDP will be fully agreed by all national stakeholders and proposed for endorsement to the Government.

Target 10.4: Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality
The National Social Services Development plan developed with the results framework and financing strategy and the relevant legal amendments seek to provide a legal base for more effective financing mechanisms of social protection system along with provisions that would allow civil society organizations to be more effectively involved in social service provision and become a recognized part of the national social protection system.

Constraints that were encountered and any adjustments that were made to strengthen the relevance and effectiveness of the JP and the coherence and coordination of UN system support.

- 1) Although the program started in July 2022, the formal government endorsement for implementation was only received in November, 2022. It significantly constrained collaboration with the national partners and programme implementation both operationally and programmatically. Additionally, it coincided with the 2023 budget finalization period and end-of-year reporting for the national partners, which subsequently delayed important decision making processes. In order to kick off the program activities immediately, UNICEF and UNDP piggy bagged on the existing international technical consultancies, and amended contracts to avoid separate lengthy recruitment/tendering processes.
- 2) At the same time, intensive consultations on legislation, SOPs, by-laws, capacity building workshops and seminars were conducted to make sure that the NSSDP strategic objectives are correctly understood by policy decision makers, service delivery organizations, social workforce as well as the allied workforces, promoting it forward through cross-sectoral collaboration at centralized and community levels.
- 3) Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of Population hired a consultancy to conduct the preliminary assessment of information systems, and with regards the ongoing reform and demand for digitalization, identified the physical connection of Social service provision organizations to the MoLSP network as the primary priority need.
- 4) No-cost extension allowed for the meaningful and reasonable program implementation.

Next steps, scaling and sustainability [up to half a page]

The draft NSSDP with strategic results framework will be presented at a Roundtable to the wide range of national stakeholders, service providers, as well as NGOs on February 10, 2023. The Roundtable was designed with consideration of the cross-sectoral nature of the strategic document in order to ensure the participatory approach to the results framework design, including the

proposed activities, indicators, timelines, as well as the lead partners for each of the outputs. The roundtable will be followed by official request for endorsements from each of the relevant ministry and local government representatives, before presenting the finalized version to the Cabinet of Ministers in March. Additionally, the work on adapting by-laws instructions, SOPs will continue to ensure that the legal base is ready for rapid implementation of the NSSDP.

In March, based on the final draft of NSSDP and the Fiscal Space Analysis, the draft ToRs for the Inter-Ministerial Committee, draft policy documents on relevant structural changes, as well as calculations for 2024 budget will be shared with the government for further roll out, to ensure the scale-up of community based social services to each district of the country.

Additionally, equipment for six Social Service Provision Organizations in the capital and each regional center will be installed to connect the state community based social service providers to the central network of the MoLSP and accelerate data flow for further creation of the integrated social service data management system. The NSSDP results framework will set the base for further development of integrated information management system in social protection.

The NSSDP and its Results Framework and financing strategy will create a solid foundation for achieving the objectives set forth in the new long-term Strategic National Socio-Economic Development Programme for 2022-2052. Establishment of the High level Inter-Ministerial Committee will ensure the efficient cross-sectoral collaboration and further country wide scale up of the community based social services system, strengthening the ability of the state social protection system to respond to the global crisis.

Strategic Partnerships and Communications

Explain how diverse stakeholders were engaged with the JP

During the DEM Fund implementation, mainly the national government, sub-national government, parliamentarians were engaged, given the JP main focus on upstream policy engagement. At the same time, to use momentum, series of capacity building events for social work para-professionals, allied workforce, representatives of local governments, as well as the stakeholder consultations were conducted to ensure a participatory approach to the reform. Additionally, in cooperation with USAID funded “Safe Migration in Central Asia Program” Program, MoLSP, State Migration office, Ombudsperson’s office, Organizations of people with disabilities, a joint workshop was organized on the inter-sectoral support to vulnerable families and children. The workshop was an excellent platform for policy makers, social work specialists, civil society organizations to network and learn about application of rights based approaches in quality inclusive community based services provision. Focus of workshop was dedicated to services for people and children with disabilities, and support for victims of trafficking and displacement.

Key meetings and events organized

| | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| JP steering committee/ programme board meeting | Strategic partners/ donors | Kick-off meeting event |
|---|-------------------------------|---------------------------|

Priority Cross-cutting Issues

Cross-cutting results/issues

Endorsement of the NSSDP will contribute to the following cross-sectoral results:

- 1) Establishment of integrated social protection system will create an access to inclusive quality services in every community that are gender responsive, rights-based, beneficiary-centred, tailored for wider range of vulnerabilities, promoting participation and empowerment of beneficiaries (children, women, girls, youth, people and children with disabilities, elderly, people and families in crisis in need of social support) as well as developing mechanisms to prevent from falling into crisis situations;
- 2) Creation of the High Level Inter-Ministerial Committee on Social Protection as a mechanism for interdepartmental interaction at the national and local levels will reinforce intersectoral response and coordination in the field of social support provision to the target population;
- 3) Establishment of a unified social services information system based on the case management data and integrated into the social

protection data basis to generate evidence for constant improvement of the system, for reporting purposes and for policy analysis of primary and specialized services data (disaggregated by gender, age, type of vulnerability, cause etc);

How did the JP apply the Gender Marker

The JP is Gender-responsive (for example, the JP aimed to respond to specific gendered needs, such as linking social assistance with GBV response services or maternal health support). Policy dialogues, advocacy (e.g. direct inputs to national policies, strategies, laws, including women’s and girls’ rights groups in coordination mechanisms);Capacity development (e.g. training of social workers, local governments, local communities);

JP address the below cross-cutting issues and principles of leaving no one behind

| | | | |
|--------------|---------------------------|-------|------------------------------------|
| Human Rights | Persons with disabilities | Youth | Environmental and social standards |
| Yes | No | Yes | No |

Contribution to enhancing SDG Financing

| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|---|--|--|
| Drafted a bill, strategy, and/or approved a law increasing the fiscal space for the policy in focus | Produced financing, costing, diagnostic and feasibility analyses as a basis to invest or increase spending on the SDGs | Improved efficiency (cost savings) in the management of programmes/schemes | Improved effectiveness (value for money; i.e. social impact of \$1 spent) of spending | Drafted policies/regulatory frameworks or developed tools to incentivize private sector investment on the SDGs | Structured new financial instruments (public, private or blended) to leverage additional funding |
| Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | No |

How and in which area your JP contributed to enhancing SDG financing

Analysis to be completed of fiscal space and broader financial flows for National social services development reform, targeted towards social services and social protection as part of INFF operationalization in the country