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**MID-TERM REVIEW (MTR) of the**

**Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia (MAP) Project**

Conducted by Independent Evaluators Team:

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*\* All the terms used in this report as masculine nouns also refer to their feminine equivalents.*

*\*\* The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of the UNDP.*

**ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

**AWP** Annual Work Plan

**CDR** Combined Delivery Report

**COE** Council of Europe

**COVID** Coronavirus infection disease

**CSO(s)** Civil Society Organisations

**CSO-NA Platform** Civil Society Organisations-National Assembly Platform

**CTA** Chief Technical Advisor

**DFID** Department for International Development

**ERP** Enterprise Resource Planning

**EU** European Union

**FA** Functional Analysis

**FCO**  Foreign and Commonwealth Office

**GE**  Gender Equality

**GEP** Gender Equality Plan

**GGF** Good Governance Fund

**GPG**  Global Partners Governance

**GRB** Gender Responsive Budgeting

**HQ** Headquarters

**HRDO** Office of Human Rights Defender

**ICHD** International Centre for Human Development (MAP implementing

partner CSO)

**ICT** Information and Communications Technology

**IPU** Inter-parliamentary Union

**IT** Information Technology

**MAP** Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia

**MLSA** Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs

**MP**  Member of Parliament

**MRG**  Multimedia Reference Guide

**MTR** Mid-term review of the MAP Project

**NA** National Assembly of Armenia

**NGO** Non-Governmental Organisations

**ODIHR** Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights

**OTR** Off-the-record

**OxYGen** OxYGen Foundation (MAP implementing partner CSO)

**PEU** Parliamentary Education Unit

**PLS** Post-Legislative Scrutiny

**PR**  Public Relations

**PRODOC**  Project Document

**Q** Quarter

**RA** Republic of Armenia

**RP** Responsible Party

**RPA** Responsible Party Agreements

**RRF** Results and Resources Framework

**SC**  Standing Committee

**SDGs** Sustainable Development Goals

**SIDA** Swedish International Development Agency

**THM** Town Hall Meeting

**TOR**  Terms of Reference

**UK**  United Kingdom

**UN** United Nations

**UNDAF** United Nations Development Assistance Framework

**UNDP (CP)** United Nations Development Programme (Country Programme)

**USA**  United States of America

**USAID** United States Agency for International Development

**USD** UnitedStates Dollar

**WEESC**  Women’s Economic Empowerment in South Caucasus

**WEGE**  Women Empowerment and Gender Equality

**WFD** Westminster Foundation for Democracy (UK) (MAP implementing

partner)

**WYILD** Women and Youth for Innovative Local Development

# **Executive Summary**

Initially, MAP was formulated in response to the successful electoral process assistance provided by UNDP to the National Assembly in 2017/2018, which was designed to help Armenian authorities improve electoral processes. Thereafter, the UNDP MAP Project was conceived **as a demand-driven 3.5-year programme of project interventions, technical support, professional advice and counsel, and support for members of the National Assembly (MPs), staff, and local CSOs**. MAP interventions to date have been conducted in accord with international donor development priorities and in line with the UNDP Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with specific emphasis on **SDG 16**. The Project was therefore **designed to strengthen the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia (NA) in its new and fundamentally enhanced role within the governance system in carrying out critical functions of law making, oversight, and representation**, with a long-term goal of improving the overall effectiveness of the Parliament as a policy-making institution.

**The unforeseen and operationally challenging external circumstances** faced since the project’s inception in November 2019[[1]](#footnote-2) **include the conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, political upheaval followed by snap parliamentary elections, the change in parliamentary leadership, MPs** **and staff, and the COVID-19 pandemic**. **Despite these operational challenges**, **MAP is recognised by donors and parliamentary stakeholders for its complexity, flexibility, and responsiveness**. UNDP and the three Responsible Parties (RPs ICHD, OxYGen Foundation and Westminster Foundation for Democracy) have **conducted extensive activities and parliamentary support interventions with the NA** during the first two years of Project implementation. Over time, **MAP is likely to evolve into a comprehensive *programme* of parliamentary development with significant impact and likely sustainability** given that Armenia has experienced only 4 years of parliamentary democracy following decades of a strong presidential system and multiple instances of upheaval since independence in 1991. **Information obtained during interviews** with interlocutors from NA testify that **MAP was quick in response to the needs of NA**. All interlocutors from NA expressed their **high level of satisfaction.**

Throughout the MAP project to date, the NA is more than a one-way beneficiary. There is a high level of ownership of project outcomes by NA, and a high degree of perception that most project activities are demand-driven, with **activities being led by the NA and demonstrating very strong stakeholder interest and involvement** in the process and the outcome. To date, the NA’s institutional development and capacity-buildingwas realised through MAP support to analyse and propose solutions to the transitional development challenges in various NA departments (**Functional Analysis** conducted by RP-WFD), including the administration and financial oversight capacity. In addition, **UNDP and the three RPs contributed to enhancing the functional capacity of the Parliament in terms of reviewing, drafting, and enacting key legislation**.

**Numerous knowledge products were developed and disseminated** during the first half of Project implementation. **MAP have produced knowledge products** in e-version and with teams of international and national top experts in the field of parliamentary development. This is indeed **the first project of its kind with valued quality, which provides the Parliament with knowledge products** **based on the best global practice**. These include e-learning modules, online and print outreach to raise awareness of Armenia’s nascent parliament among the public, whilst beginning the process of engagement with civil society. Furthermore, parliamentary public outreach has been enhanced despite the challenges through mobile standing committee sessions and via other mechanisms such as town hall meetings and **data-driven analysis**. **Support to the development of the Research and Training Centre**, the parliamentary Information and Outreach Unit, mobile standing committee sessions, and **the CSO-NA platform** underway, all aim to further the NA’s representative function whilst enhancing active citizen engagement with their parliament. MAP supported **town hall meetings** **and off-the-record discussions. As a result of discussions organised by the MAP and MAP RP ICHD,** concrete results are seen **in improving the legislation and adopting** **Human Rights Defender’s recommendations. The Hate Speech analysis** presents one of the most globally comprehensive studies on this topic that is predominantly important in many countries **for addressing online hate speech for the first time. The comprehensive 80-page research report** produced following MAP participatory analysis will be referenced as part of pending legislative provisions and as part of **the Code of Ethics** for the NA. Regarding the rights of **persons with disabilities, MAP assistance to the NA resulting in urgent response to unforeseen external circumstances**. Public consultations as part of the CSO-NA platform contributed in a positive way to the legislative scrutiny process. **Enhanced public participation in the legislative process has resulted in several legislative amendments and greater parliamentary responsiveness by representatives to the citizens.** Despite extenuating circumstances, **in terms of efficiency of financial resource expenditure**, the Project RP activities and the UNDP-sponsored NA **activities were accomplished in accordance with the work plan,** also in terms of **achieving the 3 Project Outcomes (and corresponding outputs)** to date.

To empower women and help ensure that they are given a voice in Armenian society, **MAP supported the publication of women’s empowerment awareness** raising articles, produced by RP Oxygen, concurrently with gender-response budgeting processes in the Assembly and training and learning tools to engage Armenian women and men in the process of gender empowerment. This includes a gender equality plan and a gender equity online course for MPs and staff in the NA. Furthermore, the Project began work during the review period on gender mainstreaming legislation with RP Oxygen.

The Project also focused on innovation through the preliminary introduction of a **comprehensive e-Parliament initiative, which includes e-learning and online engagement and will be followed by a more pervasive digitalization of the NA and the introduction of tools and modalities for enhanced citizen engagement in their Parliament**. **The NA website** is in the process of moving towards enhanced internal and external capacity, which will be more fully applied during the second half of MAP implementation.

Given the unanticipated circumstances, which arose during the initial stage of Project implementation in August 2019, there are several ethical considerations included in the MTR, including human rights and cross-cutting aspects of Project implementation. The armed conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabakh had a direct and still-lingering impact on the quality of life for many Armenians and displaced persons, and RP ICHD identified the need for policy communication and support to the NA in formulating and implementing advocacy initiatives in response.

Within the Project framework and NA purview, therefore, human rights for women, minorities, persons with disabilities and displaced persons cut across Project interventions and involved numerous NA committees and legislative priorities whilst focusing on social justice in line with SDG 16. **Given the unanticipated challenges noted** throughout this report and to which the NA, UNDP and RPs had to respond during the first two years of Project implementation. **The NA nonetheless continued to focus on various legislative and public policy priorities including the rights of women and persons with disabilities, safeguarding human rights through pending hate speech regulation, and protecting the rights of parents and employees among other legislative priorities**.

**Project risks and challenges identified by the MTR** focus on information provided by review documents and interlocutors, and are considered in the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic, which, by March 2020, disrupted the lives and livelihoods of all Armenians, whether involved in parliament or otherwise. The escalation of conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabakh in September -November 2020 forced focus away from ordinary parliamentary business and normal operating circumstance and the snap parliamentary elections held in June 2021. This created obvious challenges in fully implementing the Project given the change in parliamentary leadership, MPs and staff and the changes and challenges such elections impose on ordinary parliamentary process.

**Given that MAP has been able to accomplish almost all planned activities and indeed to flexibly and consistently respond to ad hoc requests for ongoing assistance from the NA despite the external circumstances noted throughout this report, it is likely that MAP will result in a number of sustainable outcomes after December 2022**.

**The overall MTR conclusion,** based on findings obtained through documentation review and remote interviews with available relevant stakeholders, is that there is **in the Republic of Armenia a strong need for further comprehensive democratic development support in the form of a long-lasting flexible and adaptive parliamentary programme**(e.g., comprised of more than one project such as current MAP)and broader support is needed and desired by current Project beneficiaries as part of a complete governance portfolio in order to strengthen dialogue and political participation at all levels of Armenian society. This includes politically inclusive processes with special focus on parliamentary development and strengthening parliamentary and participatory democracy.

The UNDP CO Armenia, and in particular the MAP project team, **succeeded in establishing and maintaining mutual confidence and trust as part of the adaptive parliamentary development partnership with the NA of the Republic of Armenia since 2019**. There is a high level of satisfaction from NA and other beneficiaries with UNDP implementation procedures. Since there is **still a certain level of tension regarding the sensitive political situation in Armenia** after revolution and escalation of conflict, **project beneficiaries stressed that further project support should be coordinated and implemented with reliable non-partisan (neutral) multilateral partners, in order to avoid politicization**. Interlocutors from the NA specifically pointed out a high level of satisfication with UNDP CO Armenia development cooperation and the current technical assistance modality.

MTR has prepared numerus recommendations regarding strengthening parliamentary democracy and inclusive political dialogue, research & training centre, e-parliament, reports of independent bodies, public hearings, donor coordination, project implementation, etc. In addition, MTR offered recommendations for future programming.

# **CHAPTER I: BACKGROUND, OBJECT AND METHODOLOGY**

## **1.1. Introduction**

Initially, MAP was formulated in response to the successful electoral process assistance provided by UNDP to the National Assembly in 2017/2018, which was designed to help Armenian authorities improve electoral processes while reducing the possibility of electoral fraud through the introduction of an e-Voting system inside voting precincts. This electoral effort, conducted in close collaboration with the government at the time, resulted in the 2017 parliamentary elections. That intervention then led to the opportunity for UNDP to engage with the nascent Parliament at the NA’s request to discuss how to promote parliamentary democracy in Armenia during the transition from a presidential to a parliamentary system of governance.[[2]](#footnote-3)

Thereafter, the UNDP MAP Project was conceived as a demand-driven multi-year programme of project interventions, technical support, professional advice and counsel, and material support for members of the National Assembly (MPs), staff, and local CSOs. MAP interventions to date have been conducted in coordination with international donor development priorities and in line with the UNDP Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with specific emphasis on SDG 16.[[3]](#footnote-4) The Project was therefore designed to strengthen the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia (NA) in its new and fundamentally enhanced role within the governance system in carrying out critical functions of law making, oversight, and representation. With the long-term goal of improving the overall effectiveness of the Parliament as a policy-making institution, the Project is designed to support the newly elected NA to benefit from contemporary governance tools and mechanisms. Within the project implementation timeline, and in 2021 at the mid-point of that implementation, UNDP is undertaking this mid-term review (MTR) with a specific focus on evaluating the extent to which project implementation has resulted in improved quality thus far, transparency and inclusiveness of parliamentary operations and enhanced parliamentary capacity and gender-responsive policymaking.

The unforeseen and operationally challenging external circumstances faced since project inception in November 2019[[4]](#footnote-5) include an escalation of conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, political upheaval, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. In particular, the second year of project implementation has been a particular challenge for UNDP and indeed all organisations seeking to continue developmental assistance to the National Assembly despite these circumstances.

## **1.2. Background and Context of the Project**

The three main components of the Project are focused on **legislative capacity**, **legislative transparency**, and **legislative responsiveness**. To that end, a three-stage strategy was envisioned at project inception and applied via:

1. catalytic stage of needs assessment, strategic agenda-setting, and piloting of the designed approaches;
2. full-fledged implementation of the strategic agenda, tested strategies and activities, and;
3. evaluation of the implementation, policy recommendations, and finally, Project closure by December 2022.

The MAP Project is implemented by UNDP and for particular activities, the Project engaged support from the relevant responsible parties, civil society organisations (CSOs), the International Centre for Human Development (ICHD), the OxYGen Foundation, and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy.[[5]](#footnote-6) Project interventions implemented by these partners in concert with UNDP represent a comprehensive package of parliamentary development support to the National Assembly with the long-term goal of enhancing the overall effectiveness of the NA as a policy-making institution.

This MTR will assess the implementation of the Project in line with OECD DAC Evaluation criteria[[6]](#footnote-7) as compared to expected project outcomes through December 2022 and as defined in the project document at project inception. These MAP outcomes are:

1. Quality of legislative oversight and policymaking is improved
2. Increased transparency and accountability of the NA
3. Legislative responsiveness, inclusivity and participatory approach is embedded in MP's work

**Implementing Partner:** UNDP

**Start Date:** 15 August 2019

**End Date:** 31 December 2022

**Donor:** Basket Fund (Foreign Ministry of Sweden, UK-DFID, SIDA)[[7]](#footnote-8)

**Budget:** $5,000,000 USD

**SDGs supported by the project:** SDG 16.6 Develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels.

**2016-2020 UNDAF Outcome 2** "By 2020, people benefit from improved systems of democratic governance and strengthened protection of human rights".

**2016-2020 UNDP Country Programme Action Plan Outcome 2** "By 2020, people’s expectations for voice accountability, transparency, and protection of human rights are met by improved systems of democratic governance." **Output 2.4** "Frameworks and dialogue processes engaged for effective, transparent engagement of civil society and citizens in national and local development."

**UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021 Output 2.2.2** "Constitution-making, electoral and parliamentary processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency, and accountability".

**MAP PROJECT SCOPE:**

The Project is designed to strengthen the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia (NA)[[8]](#footnote-9) in its new and fundamentally enhanced role within the governance system in carrying out its key functions - legislation, oversight, and representation. With a long-term goal of enhancing the overall effectiveness of the NA as a policy-making institution, the project is designed to support the NA in taking advantage of modern governance tools and mechanisms with a focus on improved operational quality, transparency, and inclusiveness of parliament and enhanced parliamentary capacity for gender-responsive policymaking.

The Project has a three-stage approach in addressing the enhancement of capacity, transparency, and responsiveness: (i) a catalytic stage of a needs assessment, strategic agenda setting, and piloting of designed approaches; (ii) full-fledged implementation of the strategic agenda, tested approaches and activities, and; (iii) evaluation of the implementation, policy recommendations, and project closure.

The Project is planned for the period of three and a half years (2019-2022) within the term of the NA’s seventh Convocation (2019-2023). The project is being implemented through a basket fund model. The UNDP is directly implementing the project with its responsible parties. At the mid-point of MAP implementation in 2021, this mid-term review (MTR) is intended to provide UNDP, donors and implementing partners with a review of project implementation to date in accordance with OECD/DAC evaluation criteria. Per UNDP-provided project documents, the objectives of the Project are:

* To enhance the capacity of the NA in law-making, policymaking, and oversight;
* To increase the transparency and inclusiveness of the legislature, and;
* To respond to the demand-driven needs of constituents and to strengthen the depth and scope of interactions with parliamentary stakeholders in accordance with UNDP development criteria.

**THE RESPONSIBLE PARTIES (RPs)**

The MAP Project subcontracted three responsible parties to act as implementers **of particular project activities** **(a limited part of the Project activities for a limited duration of time** and assigned with specific donor funding)as defined by the PRODOC. Jointly with UNDP, they maintain a dynamic relationship with the NA Standing Committees, build trust among governance actors and actively advocate for participatory engagement. The RPs of the project are:

* **Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD**) [Armenia - Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)](https://www.wfd.org/network/armenia-2/)
* **OxYGen Foundation (OxYGen)** <https://oxygen.org.am/en/>
* **International Centre for Human Development (ICHD)** <https://ichd.org/>

The relationship between the Project Implementer (UNDP) and the RPs vis-à-vis the project beneficiary (the NA) is addressed in the Findings & Analysis section (subsection 4.7) and in the Recommendations section of this MTR report. Regarding the three RPs engaged in project activities during the first half of MAP; all three are considered equal project implementers by the MTR team.

## **1.3. Objective of the Review**

This mid-term review (MTR) report provides an analysis of the Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia (MAP) project (“the Project”)[[9]](#footnote-10) and includes a detailed review and analysis of documentation as provided during the desk review phase of the MTR, followed by remote interviews conducted over several weeks from mid-September through mid-October. The MTR report has an overall objective to assess the continued relevance of project interventions at this mid-point of Project implementation, and to assess the progress made towards achieving the project’s planned objectives, effectiveness, efficiency and, the impact and sustainability of interventions and technical assistance delivered by the UNDP MAP Project (to the extent possible at this stage).

## **1.4. Purpose, Objectives and Scope of the Review**

In accordance with the UNDP guidelines for project evaluations (2021) and per the timetable established in the UNDP project document (“ProDoc”), pursuant to inception agreement with project donors, this MTR is being conducted in September - October 2021 (estimated 25 days). This is being led by a two-person team of independent evaluators who are neither beneficiaries of nor stakeholders in MAP activities or interventions with the Armenian National Assembly.

In accordance with the terms of reference (ToR) provided to both consultants and included in individual consulting contracts, this mid-term review (MTR) should assess relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact (to the extent possible) of project implementation thus far. The MTR will assess the degree, extent and scope of project-sponsored interventions, noting which were most effective and why, and highlight intended and unintended results while providing UNDP and relevant stakeholders with strategic lessons to guide decision-makers and inform stakeholders moving forward with the second half of the project’s implementation.

The evaluation team will review, analyse and provide conclusions and recommendations on the following:

* The status of the corresponding Country Programme outcome and estimate the degree of the MAP project's contribution to it;
* The degree to which the project activities listed in the Project Document have been successfully implemented and desired outputs achieved to date;
* What factors contributed to effectiveness or ineffectiveness;
* The efficiency of the project approach in delivering outputs;
* Assessment of external factors affecting the project, and the extent to which the project has been able to adapt and/or mitigate the effects of such factors[[10]](#footnote-11);
* The approach to project management, including the role of stakeholders and coordination with other development projects in the same area;
* The extent to which the target beneficiaries have benefited from the project activities;
* The level of beneficiaries’ and partners satisfaction with programme implementation and results, and;
* The potential for continuation or upscaling of the initiative through the scheduled MAP termination date of December 2022.

Overall, the evaluators intend to provide UNDP and project stakeholders with a comprehensive assessment that will act (in part) as a roadmap for implementation of MAP’s remaining project life cycle. This will also assess the continued relevance of reviewed interventions and the progress made towards achieving its planned objectives, effectiveness, efficiency as well as, if available already at this stage, the impact and sustainability of interventions under the “Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia” Project.

*It is important to note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has limited the evaluation team’s access to project stakeholders to remote engagement via on-line interview platforms without the ability to assess or engage stakeholders in person and in situ in Yerevan.*

## **1.5. Mid-Term Review Methodology**

The MTR findings by the evaluators are intended to be used by UNDP and affiliated stakeholders as follows:

* to align/modify the planned scope of activities with the proposed recommendations to ensure all the Project objectives are reached by the December 2022 deadline for MAP implementation;
* to maximise the Project impact in the remaining months of implementation, and;
* to further programme development in the field and enhance resource mobilization.

The MTR was conducted in close cooperation and consultation with the Project team and the National Assembly administration, based on analysis of the project results framework, review of relevant and available Project documents, and remote interviews conducted with UNDP and project stakeholders and beneficiaries. Interviews were arranged by the UNDP CO during the desk review and inception phase of the MTR, and then confirmed by UNDP Armenia CO staff. The findings contained in this report will be communicated to the Project Board and Responsible Parties (RPs) on the MAP Project (As mentioned in background – ICHD, Oxygen and WFD).

Two evaluators (Lead Evaluator based in Europe, Second Evaluator based in USA) conducted preliminary desk reviews from their respective home bases, from end-August through to the first week of September 2021. Thereafter, the MAP Project team organised and established a comprehensive list of interlocutors for remote interviews, which were conducted either jointly or singly by the Lead Evaluator. The content of these remote interviews was then used as the basis for drafting this MTR report along with specific reference to desk review documents provided and online references cited. As has been the case since early 2020, many UNDP evaluations have been conducted remotely due to the ongoing pandemic. The list of interlocutors engaged remotely is appended to this inception report.

**Conceptual framework**

The MTR will be used according to the utilization-focused approach. In accordance with UNDP guidelines and professional standards, the MTR was conducted based upon systematic, data-based inquiries and according to an honest, respectful, and open approach to all interlocutors interviewed.

**Data collection methods**

1. Review of a variety of documents provided in soft copy by UNDP (project documentation, monitoring records and progress, and other relevant reports)
2. Individual Interviews - to assess the project's relevance and effectiveness; their perception of accomplishments and potential for further development (MPs, standing staff, UNDP – Project management and project personnel, independent bodies, RPs, et al)

**Data sources**: (*listed in Annex 2*)

1. Project documents
2. Progress reports
3. Key documents produced by the project
4. Interview protocols/minutes

**Analytical approaches**

The review was conducted in accordance with UNDP and standard international practice for project review/evaluation.

The approach and methodology for the review were:

1. quantitative analysis;
2. qualitative analysis, relying on data sources and interviews.

**Risks and potential shortcomings**

1. Lack of engagement by certain participants for interviews
2. Operations of the Parliament (MPs, staff) overburdened
3. Covid-19

**Phases of work**

The review process plan is articulated in three phases. The preparatory and the final phase were accomplished through evaluators’ deskwork, and the second phase was accomplished via online interviews (NA, UNDP, independent bodies, RPs).

**First phase: Preparatory phase** (desk review and on-line research)

To gain a detailed understanding of the Project “Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia (MAP)”, a range of documents (official project documentation, project files and reports, briefing notes, minutes, performance reports, research reports, etc.) were reviewed in this phase of the review assignment. Besides reviewing the documentation of the Project, the preparatory phase served to further define and develop the evaluation methodology.

During the preparatory phase, special attention was paid to assessing whether the representatives of the beneficiaries of the Project were involved in determining the Project activities, and to what extent their specific needs were incorporated into the Project implementation and activities components.

**Second phase: Interviews and assessment**

The purpose of the assessment is to understand the direct and indirect effects of the Project. The Lead Evaluator (and co-evaluator) met remotely with as many of the Project beneficiaries as was possible during the interview period.

*NB: Due to time zone constraints, the following interviews were conducted by both evaluators*:

* + UNDP Armenia Resident Representative
  + Donors (Sida, UK GGF)
  + UNDP
  + Project Responsible Parties (WFD, OxYGen and ICHD)

**Third phase: Drafting of the report**

Before the conclusion of the work, the MTR team presented the draft MTR report to the UNDP CO MAP (debriefing) team on 22nd October 2021. Thereafter, this final report was revised and redrafted in accordance with the UNDP audit trail mechanism with specific attention to UNDP reviewer comments for MTR team consideration and report revision.

The MTR review process included:

* Review of project documentation, monitoring records and progress and other relevant reports;
* An initial meeting with the UNDP MAP team to agree on the specific design and methods for the evaluation, what was appropriate and feasible to meet the review purpose and objectives for the MTR;
* Organisation of interviews with key staff involved in the project implementation;
* Preparation, submission and revision of the MTR inception report with evaluation matrix;
* Discussions with key staff involved and project beneficiaries to assess the Project's relevance and effectiveness from implementation to date (e.g. September 2021), noting interlocutor perceptions of accomplishments and potential for further development while providing suggestions for subsequent Project management response to evaluation findings;
* Preparation of the draft MTR report which was submitted on the 20th of October, and revision to that draft as part of this final report, and;
* Preparation of the Final Report with an appended Executive Summary.

## **1.6. Major limitations of the MTR**

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the evaluation team was unable to conduct in-person interviews. Live meetings would have also had its limitations given the busy schedule of MPs and staff. The fact that most of the online meetings took place after working hours is solely through zoom meetings.

The Lead Evaluator and the Second Evaluator conducted nine remote interviews (meetings) jointly within the recognised limitations and given the scheduling and logistical challenges of conducting such a review from three distinct geographically dispersed locations across eight time zones. The remaining 14 interviews were conducted by the Lead Evaluator.

In addition, and for future reference:

1. It is important for future remote evaluations that all members of the evaluation team be in a **similar time zone** (+/- 4 hours) if there are online interviews/meetings planned. If the time difference is 8 hours or more, it is not possible/feasible for both evaluators to conduct all interviews together in the time suitable for interlocutors (e.g., during Armenian working hours).
2. For some **remote interviews**, the MTR team notes that the brief online introduction (maximum 3 minutes) provided by the MAP CTA or project cooordinator created a better dynamic and more direct communication between evaluators and interlocutors as part of the challenging remote interview process.
3. For he purposes of confidenciality and professionalism, it is better that all participants during online interviews **keep cameras on** as far as it is possible given technological constraints. It is also noted that due to technological challenges, it was at times difficult for all participants to engage in interviews with cameras on as communication was either cut off or interrupted due to the Interweb connection issues.

# **CHAPTER II: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS**

## 2.1. **Relevance[[11]](#footnote-12)**

Since its inception in August 2019, the Project has worked with almost all NA Standing Committees and several subcommittees (such as the Subcommittee on the Environment) to support their legislative capacity and representative mandate. This includes technical assistance in support of an enhanced legislative drafting process, and indirect support for the project output of “improved policy making and oversight.” This assistance also established a baseline for the Research and Training centre’s work, including recognition that legislative drafting requires relevant and high-quality analysis and thorough legislative scrutiny of pending and adopted legislation.

MAP facilitated enhanced content and improved quality of public input into the legislative process and a more issue-based discussion between MPs and CSOs during the MTR period.[[12]](#footnote-13) This includes strengthening not only the representative function of the NA through greater responsiveness to citizens represented, but also the Parliament’s legislative and oversight capacity through the CSO-NA platform and via ongoing town hall meetings. While public hearings are identified elsewhere in this report as an area of potential project focus and implementation enhancement, it is noted that the incorporation of public consultations as part of the CSO-NA platform contributed in a positive way to the legislative scrutiny process. In addition, **enhanced public participation in the legislative process has resulted in several legislative amendments and greater parliamentary responsiveness by representatives to the citizens** they represent since Project inception in 2019.

*During the preceding programme cycle, the UNDP activities and results in Armenia were highly relevant to the Government’s agenda as evidenced by the 2019 independent country programme evaluation and stakeholder consultations. In particular, UNDP was recognised as a valued partner in local economic development and community mobilization; natural resource management; enhancement of legal, policy and institutional frameworks in the environmental sector; disaster risk reduction; organisation of transparent parliamentary elections; management of infrastructure investments and technical capacities of customs and other agencies; coordination of issue-based coalitions; women and youth empowerment; and citizen engagement.[[13]](#footnote-14)*

**Per interlocutor interview(s)**, Project design was demand-driven **in response to an initial NA-requested** electoral assistance initiative prior to MAP inception in 2019, with specific reference to a proactive approach and **in response to NA leadership request for UNDP to establish a comprehensive project of technical assistance to the National Assembly**. Since its inception in 2019, the project has arguably **evolved into a programme of assistance with the active participation** of RPs (e.g., OxYGen, ICHD, WFD). There is increasing beneficiary and donor agreement that **MAP is a demand-driven and responsive project with the identified ability to be adaptive and flexible despite the numerous challenges recognised by interlocutors** and given the onset of conflict, social unrest, a pandemic and snap elections during the first two years of Project implementation.

## **2.2. Ethical considerations, Human Rights and aspects**

**Institutional development and capacity building**[[14]](#footnote-15)

The **Functional Analysis of the Administration of the NA Report**[[15]](#footnote-16) finalised and submitted by WFD prior to the MTR engaged a team of national and international experts for input, review and summary response . The original WFD document was modified and substantively revised by the **UNDP team of experts (one international and three national experts) attached to the WFD for the FA analysis, who improved the document significantly, taking into account that it was of tremendous importance to reflect on the national legislation**. The report was accomplished in similar fashion to the MTR via desk review and online interviews (remote conditions), with the intent of establishing a starting point for further discussion and internal NA review on how the Parliament might engage in subsequent administrative reform. As an analysis, the report is intended to be a component of the parliamentary reform process, with the NA taking the lead moving forward and in ongoing consultation with UNDP MAP among others. The 55 recommendations contained in the report represent a potential comprehensive NA reform template intended to assist the NA in a long-term process of institutional change and development. This is an opportunity for the NA to continue the process toward realizing the overall Project goal of assisting in the creation of transparent, efficient and citizen-oriented parliament, particularly with the new convocation during the second half of MAP implementation and beyond over the next several years.

To further the NA’s institutional capacity, the Project produced a “**Handbook on Financial Oversight for the National Assembly of Armenia**” which covers the key innovative techniques and methods in financial oversight. The report includes a financial oversight to subject committees, the importance of the Supreme Audit institutions in overall financial oversight, engagement with the public and more topics that are of practical use for the RA NA. This technical resource will also be housed in the depository of the RA Research and Training Centre for further use and dissemination within the Parliament—including as part of the induction seminar for new MPs. In addition, a **comparative review of international financial and budgetary best practices** was produced during the first half of MAP implementation, intended for the standing committee on Financial Credit and Budgetary Affairs and the NA Budget Office.[[16]](#footnote-17)

To assist institutional development and capacity building further, under WFD, a review of whistle blower and witness protection models was conducted for the NA to review, consider and likely table for consideration. This was accomplished with the assistance of a WFD international comparative legal systems expert focused on analysing the oversight function of Parliament, and inclusive of best practice models in Albania, Georgia, Italy, Moldova, the UK and USA. As with other knowledge products produced by the Project, this analysis will be archived and made available to staff and MPs in the Research and Training Centre within the NA.

**Participatory deliberation[[17]](#footnote-18)**

In examining the extent and nature of participatory deliberation and civic engagement (primarily via CSOs), the MTR found that the Project produced numerous knowledge products, established both formal and informal venues for civic engagement in the legislative process, and provided incentive and expertise for elevating the number and kind of opportunities for the Parliament to more fully realise its representative mandate.

This includes the Centre for Parliamentary Democracy, which is a demand-driven endeavour between the Project and the NA. To that end, the Centre is intended to provide the NA with support for citizen engagement and outreach, thoroughly researched and in-depth independent policy analysis and stakeholder input into the legislative process as part of the NA’s capacity development over time.

To that end, the Centre includes a citizen engagement unit to allow for greater citizen access to the NA via in-person meetings, collection of petitions and relevant content for parliamentary consideration, and knowledge products (such as the Citizen Engagement and Outreach Strategy Handbook) to improve the depth and scope of Parliament’s representative function over time. In addition, the Parliamentary Education Unit is designed to utilise best practice examples from other such parliament and citizen outreach facilities in Canada, Germany, Sweden, the UK and USA. In order to ensure an active and inclusive participatory democracy in Armenia over time, this aspect of institutional development aims to educate, engage and elevate the National Assembly to the status of a truly representative institution with the interests of all citizens at the forefront of the NA’s development agenda. As in other democratic countries, there is a civic education component intended to provide schoolchildren and teachers with on-line knowledge products to incorporate into ongoing curriculum development.

In addition, the development of the parliamentary Information and Outreach Unit is intended to enhance the capacity and ability of the NA to engage citizens directly and online. This is coordinated with the e-Parliament initiative and at this stage of the Project; it includes a concept note for NA consideration and further development and implementation during the second half of MAP implementation.

Finally, an ongoing assessment of the CSO-NA platform operation, which is underway separately from this MTR, aims to assess the functioning and effectiveness of the platform, evaluate the lessons learned and based on that analysis, propose planning for future operation. The Project will continue with support for this platform through project end in December 2022.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Theme** | **Month** | **MP** | **State Officials** | **International Org.** | **CSO** | **Other** | **Total** | **Male** | **Female** |
| Women, peace, and security: discussion on the RA NA Action Plan (2019-2021) on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 | 30 March 2021 | 2 | 6 | 4 | 15 | - | 27 | 0 | 27 |
| Employment and labour market access: current challenges with the specific focus on youth and women | 30 April 2021 | 2 | 8 | 6 | 23 | 9 | 48 | 12 | 36 |
| Draft Labour law of the RA: gender mainstreaming | 03 June 2021 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 32 | 9 | 48 | 9 | 39 |
| **Total** | | **6** | **15** | **14** | **70** | **18** | **123** | **21** | **102** |

*Figure 1: Summary of CSO-NA Platform Dialogues. Source: UNDP MAP Quarterly report June 2021*

The Project piloted the first **behavioural experiment** to foster citizen engagement by both digital and traditional channels to articulate, aggregate and prioritise issues, to increase civic activism, and to engage in agenda setting and decision-making processes with the UNDP SDG Innovation Lab. It is agreed that at least two experiments are women-led. The basis for the questions were set in the public opinion poll[[18]](#footnote-19) findings. The pilot process will be finalised in late 2021 and the results will be incorporated into the NA outreach and communication strategies.

In addition, the Project supported the publication of **women’s empowerment** awareness raising articles produced by RP Oxygen, and posted online on its website.[[19]](#footnote-20) Topics include activities of women MPs, legislative initiatives aimed at solving women’s issues, pre-election organisational issues in the context of women’s political participation, and the amendments of the labour code in this context. It also included the annual report of Human Rights Defender’s Office of Armenia related to women’s political participation, positive changes in the procedure for providing maternity benefits, and other related topics.

**Mobile standing committee sessions were** supported by the MAP Project to enhance the NA’s oversight capacity, and aimed at exercising scrutiny over the Executive Branch at the national level on local or regional topics. The Project aims to convene committee sessions outside the Parliament to provide a direct link between the executive power at the national level, local self-government, independent scrutiny bodies, the citizens, and the media. The committee sessions combine the investigative process in determining the degree of government’s accountability and required response, but also open a debate by allowing local self-government and citizens to take part in such sessions. So far, the NA standing committees have utilised the legislative oversight and drafting consultation type of sessions, but the Project will, once the pandemic is over, be looking into bringing local citizens to these sessions aiming at giving voice to citizens in the legislative process whilst having an impact on key policy issues.[[20]](#footnote-21)

As regards to the participatory nature of mobile committee engagement, these efforts to date have **resulted in citizen input into the legislative process** by providing lawmakers with a range of policy options, as public input is compiled and then later utilised as part of the legislative drafting process.

**Independent Oversight Bodies (parliamentary watchdogs) landscape analysis.** The Project launched its first activities in support of the analytical capacities of the activities with the Audit Chamber. The scrutiny areas were defined, and the respective experts engaged. The Project will, in addition to the support provided within the MAP implementation framework, look into a more comprehensive support of the Audit Chamber for expanding scrutiny to Environmental and IT Audits.[[21]](#footnote-22)

**Innovation**

In brief, several project-sponsored activities are considered innovative, and all are considered in more detail in the body of this report. These are:

1. The **CSO- NA Platform**;
2. **Digital transformation of the NA**, including the development of e-Learning modules which are an innovative response to the constraints imposed by COVID-19;
3. **Research modalities** developed to enhance the capacity of the **Research and Training Centre;**
4. **Gender empowerment** aspects developed for the first time and included in the corresponding section below, and;
5. **Mobile committee sessions.**

**Development of e-Learning Modules**

**Post-legislative Scrutiny (PLS) e-Learning Module (Sub-Module 1-** An introduction to post-legislative scrutiny and **Sub-Module 2**- Apply practical steps in all phases of post-legislative scrutiny): **and Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB)** module (Sub-Module1-Why create gender-responsive budgets? and Sub-Module 2- Gender responsive budgeting – a four step process) have been developed, designed and cross-checked with the MAP national and international experts, peer reviewed by WFD in-house experts, submitted for feedback and relevant adjustments made according to the proposals. They include both international and national case studies. Both PLS and GRB modules will be finalised during the MTR assessment period.

The e-Learning modules will be playing a crucial role in meeting the challenges of the new stage of parliamentary transformation, through ensuring strong and flexible capacity building opportunities and upholding transparency of actions of MPs. The e-modules will enhance the law making and oversight functions of the MPs, and assist the NA staff in their informed decision-making processes. The Modules will be transferred to the depository of the Research and Training Centre of NA.

In line with Output 1.2 (“The expert capacity of in-house Research and Training Centre staff is enhanced”), at this mid-point, in **Support to the development of the Research and Training Centre:** At this midpoint in Project implementation, MAP commenced with the 2nd Phase of the Research Centre development. An international consultant developed the Strategic Roadmap of the Research and Training Centre (Roadmap for Research and Training Centre of the National Assembly of Armenia and the detailed action plan for the selected model of the Research and Training Centre accompanied with the comparative analysis of the management of workflow and demand in Parliamentary Research Centres. Both documents are currently being reviewed by the Research and Training Centre Head and awaiting the new convocation for presentation.

The organisation of the on-the-job training for the Research Unit Development has been initiated, for which the preliminary staff assessment and observation is done. In Q3, the Project plans to conduct a series of on-the-job trainings for staff.

**Tools for increased accountability and transparency of the NA**

The MAP Project provided ongoing technical support during the first half of Project implementation in expanding the functionality and capacity of the [www.parliament.am](http://www.parliament.am) web site toward the goal of realising a fully functional and data-driven resource web portal for the Assembly. This process includes establishing a “hot link” capacity to the online research, training, and online learning resources of the Research and Training Centre. This ongoing process is part of the requested support provided to the NA to bring the Armenian Parliament more fully into the digital age. This will allow for increased flexibility, adaptability and institutional memory for the institution, individual MPs, and other stakeholders from one convocation to the next while eventually allowing greater access to the NA by such external stakeholders as citizens, media, CSOs/NGOs and others. It is anticipated that the e-Parliament initiative will be fully realised in the short term and as part of the second phase of MAP implementation from late 2021.

**Digital Transformation:** Ongoing work on the NATransformation Assessment Strategy[[22]](#footnote-23) continued during the MTR period, and a working group workshop were organised. Given the prevalence and penetration of digital platforms, services and operational modalities in parliaments worldwide, the NA’s e-Parliament digital transformation initiative is recognised as being fundamental to the modernization of the NA as a modern parliament and its adaptation to the 21st century digital era. Parliament depends on basic premises applied to any other public organisation: the integration of tools, methods, and strategies into the organisation’s plans and daily habits toward the goal of shaping a new work culture. Once the defined strategy for digital transformation is accepted, the roadmap will emerge as a more granular and visual instrument that sets up the necessary activities and chronology to operationalise the strategy[[23]](#footnote-24). The Project will work with the IT and Secretariat Staff until the MPs from the new convocation are appointed to the working group. This process will continue until December 2021 and is planned to enter into full implementation in 2022 and 2023 (at which point the Project will focus on replenishing the basket fund).

**E-Parliament:** The Project set the system integration and interoperability with other internal and external tools and systems, defined security requirements and controls for development, and the testing, piloting, launching and maintenance of e-Parliament system in the RA NA. The document also discusses a broader vision on the expansion of e-parliament into an ERP solution for NA, which would allow consolidating the operations of all divisions under one platform. The ToR of e-Parliament have been drafted by international and local experts; it is to be shared with the parliament digital transformation workgroup for their comments. The e-parliament design for tendering for a software development company was drafted for further discussion with the NA working group and announcement later in 2021.

**Business Continuity.** The cybersecurity assessment for the business continuity planning was finalised in the reporting period. The two technical experts on IT networking and cybersecurity were hired to work closely with the NA ICT staff to design a new server complex for extending the computational and storage capacities for the Parliament and to perform the security assessment of the information systems and staff awareness on cybersecurity threats. The business continuity process will be re-approached with the new convocation and based on the Functional Analysis recommendations to form a new Unit that will serve as a hub for all business continuity and security matters as is the case in other developed parliamentary democracies. The Project is working closely with several parliaments and parliamentary risk reduction bodies primarily based in Canada on elaborating the protocols and job descriptions.[[24]](#footnote-25)

**Gender equality and Gender equity**

**Gender Equality** and gender equity are a cross-cutting consideration and address the unique social justice and equitable treatment for women in Armenia. The issue came to the fore during the first half of Project implementation, particularly in relation to the handling of these issues within the National Assembly once the external conflict was resolved. From a gender empowerment and gender parity perspective, the CSO-NA platform resulted in improved parliamentary representation while also enhancing public discourse on the challenges women face in the wake of conflict and potential measures for the NA to consider moving forward. This is particularly as the ongoing crises of the past two years diminish and as part of the NA effort to ensure that substantive support systems for women, children and society’s marginalised groups are put in place according to a sustainable, adequately financed, and politically-supported fashion.

In terms of outreach and awareness-raising via **social media**, over 40 posts have been made in [Equal Campaign](https://www.facebook.com/HavasarEqual) and [WomenNet.am](https://www.facebook.com/WomenNet.am) Facebook pages on project related topics but prepared within other projects and sources particularly about the legislative amendments adopted by the Parliament.

The first pilot hybrid (both live and online) workshop on **Gender Responsive Budgeting** has been organised and conducted for the NA staff and MPs, the Parliamentary Budget Office and the Audit Chamber representatives, in collaboration with the UNDP Women Empowerment and Gender Equality (WEGE) Programme[[25]](#footnote-26), WFD, OxYGen, and ICHD. It was opened by the Chief of Staff of the NA. During the workshop, participants were provided with comprehensive introductory sessions on GRB; they were equipped with hands-on tools and necessary intervention mechanisms into the budget approval and evaluation process, exchanged views and experiences and enhanced their understanding of the GRB. The workshop introduced the role of Parliaments in GRB, and a short overview of how gender is addressed in RA budget was conducted. This was a pilot workshop designed to collect information and an evaluation to design a bespoke GRB approach to various instances in the Parliament. Overall, the workshop was well received by the participants and special interest was expressed in the follow-up and more detailed work on the topic, especially by the Budgetary Office, the Audit Chamber and MPs. The Project will be based on the feedback and evaluations through a follow up workshop for the new convocation and during the second half of Project implementation.

**Gender Equality Plan (GEP).** A final version of the GEP has been submitted to MAP as of this writing, this 5-year plan was developed by the expert group, and RP OxYGen’s action plan is aimed at providing MPs with an effective tool, framework, and structure for achieving parliamentary gender equality through systematic and well-coordinated efforts. It includes activities aimed at comprehending and achieving gender equality objectives within the NA.

The **Project contributed** to the preparation of a **gender sensitive information package for MPs** and staff of the Parliament:

* + - **The Gender Equality Toolkit** comprises of a glossary of key terms, simple methodological guides (step-by-step TO DO manuals) on gender vocabulary and principles, as well as basic information on mechanisms and relevance of the gender mainstreaming, gender budgeting, gender impact assessment, gender audit, etc. The Kit was already shared and presented to the NA and is in the e-learning depository of the NA. It will be included in the induction courses list for the new convocation.
* **Specialised Gender Equality Course** to be integrated into the NA in-house Research and Training Centre capacity. The specialised Gender Equality online course is being developed and tested by the OxYGen team. For effectiveness, the course is based on a combination of theoretical and practical tests. The training tool is to help MPs and their advisory, support staff to understand the country’s gender profile better as well as gender aspects of the legislative work, social system and structure of the NA, ways and means to remove various hurdles and biases, and to move towards gender equality both within the Parliament and in society.

As part of the CSO-NA platform process, a discussion regarding the need for **paternity leave as a legal right** in Armenia resulted in MPs responding to participating parents’ concerns to formulate and propose an **amendment to the Labour Law** that was adopted and entered into legal force on 01 January 2021. Considering the traditional role of women and men in the country, this is a **significant achievement in the incremental move toward true equality in the country and reflects the impact of MAP on parliamentary development**. **Working fathers** are now entitled to one workweek (e.g., 5 days) of paid leave within 30 days of a child’s birth and protects the employment rights of both parents during the first year of child rearing.[[26]](#footnote-27) **This example is one of ten such policy changes (amendments) adopted by the NA because of MAP project research and public debate.**

**The Project commenced the work** on **Gender Mainstreaming of Laws** with the OxYGen Foundation[[27]](#footnote-28)

* + - As a part of the support to MPs for gender mainstreaming of draft laws, the Project formed a task force with the participation of human rights, gender experts and lawyers to review the draft Labour Code and propose recommendations for gender mainstreaming of the draft. The proposed recommendations are being presented in the e-draft and are discussed during the consultation meeting and CSO-NA platform meeting during the Q2, see Outcome 3.
    - As a result, three recommendations have been accepted by the MLSA and will be included in the revised Law. At the same time, considering the major influence of Labour Code on women’s issues and the need for the profound gender mainstreaming of the code, follow up advocacy and lobbying for the adoption of other recommendations are ongoing.

**Analysis of the women MPs’ legislative work:** A desk review analysis of women MPs’ legislative work, including several legislative initiatives, recommendations and proposed revisions of the laws took place during the MTR period. The aim of the desk research is to collect and analyse comparative statistics of Women MPs activities during the fifth, sixth, and seventh Convocations. Two information sources are being used for the desk research: [www.parliament.am](http://www.parliament.am) and [www.parliamentmonitoring.am](http://www.parliamentmonitoring.am) websites.

* **Gender analysis and knowledge products**:
  + Gender Reference Library- The OxYGen Foundation produced Electronic Gender Reference Library comprising of resource materials, books, studies and other relevant publications on gender issues worldwide and particularly in Armenia, and international documents on Women and Environment/Agriculture, Education, Economy and Labour Rights, Women and Armed Conflicts, Health and Demography
  + An Analysis of Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Actions in Armenia by the OxYGen Foundation
  + Recommendations on Gender Mainstreaming of Laws by the OxYGen Foundation
  + Recommendations on Gender Mainstreaming of the Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia Project
  + Report on Participatory Gender Assessment

**Human rights and Leaving No One Behind**

Given the unanticipated circumstances, which arose during the initial stage of Project implementation from August 2019, there are several ethical considerations included in the MTR, including human rights and cross-cutting aspects of Project implementation.

The armed conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabakh had a direct and still-lingering impact on the quality of life for many Armenians and displaced persons. There is an emphasis on protecting the rights of those displaced from the disputed territory, while working to ensure that armed forces personnel negatively either affected mentally or physically by the conflict are properly cared for.[[28]](#footnote-29)

To that end, RP ICHD identified the need for policy communication and support to the NA in formulating and implementing advocacy initiatives in response. This includes **relevant information obtained during town hall meetings** **and off-the-record discussions** conducted immediately after the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Many internally displaced persons (IDPs) along with civilians and military personnel were suffering injuries and, in some cases, permanent disability, and therefore petitioning the government to address their critical care needs. This is also related to the need for health care reform, veterans’ health benefits, and ensuring that those most marginalised by conflict are adequately cared for in a post-conflict environment.[[29]](#footnote-30) The concrete results are seen **in improving the legislation and adopting Human Rights Defender’s recommendations because of discussions organised by the MAP and MAP RP ICHD.**

Within the Project framework and NA purview, therefore, human rights for women, minorities, disabled persons and displaced persons cut across Project interventions and involve numerous NA committees and legislative priorities at this time. Social justice in line with SDG 16 is another topic for consideration as part of this MTR, particularly as regards to those most negatively affected and in some cases least politically represented in the National Assembly.[[30]](#footnote-31)

In addition, and given the NA’s own internal and external priorities, the Project engaged **women within Parliament** and externally, to give women greater voice in the post-conflict and ongoing pandemic environment (and as noted previously in this report).[[31]](#footnote-32)

**Digital transformation to an e-Parliament** also presents a challenge to curb (if not prevent) online abuse of human rights. To that end, the Project engaged the NA to address hate speech and its impact on human rights for all Armenians.

A request from the Standing Committee on Human Rights on **Regulation of Hate Speech** through legislative intervention resulted in the Project providing recommendations in that regard. **A Law on Hate Speech** was discussed with the working group of the committee, and the possible regulatory models intended to limit (or prevent) incidences of **online hate speech** is being compiled at present, and will be delivered after the new convocation to the new members of the standing committee. **The comprehensive 80-page research report** produced as a product of MAP participatory analysis will be referenced as part of pending legislative provisions and as part of **the Code of Ethics** for the NA. MAP, with permission of the NA, intends to promote this effort globally, and in particular, given the unfortunate spread of hate speech in parliaments and among the general public (particularly online) in recent years.[[32]](#footnote-33) **The Hate Speech analysis** presents one of the most comprehensive studies globally on the topic that is predominantly important in many countries and it **for the first-time addresses online hate speech**.

Overall, concerning to parliamentary ethics, hate speech, anti-corruption efforts, and human rights, Project-sponsored analysis and public policy debate with direct feedback to participating MPs, has **resulted in parliamentary regulation and policy implementation**. Over time, this process is likely to result in **incremental change in the character and tone of parliamentary dialogue** and perhaps even a positive impact on the tone and content of Armenian public discourse (in person and online) during the second half of Project implementation and in the years ahead. For this reason, the efforts undertaken by the Project (and RPs) to date in this regard are noteworthy for **beginning the process now in admittedly difficult and sensitive political circumstances**. This is an important first step towards a more constructive political dialogue and civil civic engagement moving forward.[[33]](#footnote-34)

Also, regarding the **rights of employees** (particularly given the negative impact during a pandemic), the Project engaged in setting up a dialogue series on employment and the labour market and the Armenian Labour Code. The key outcomes of the events include a policy brief on the situation with women’s labour rights in Armenia. The document contains a short description of the current environment, the situation with the issues in the Republic of Armenia, as well as a set of recommendations for incremental improvement.

Regarding the rights of **persons with disabilities**, the subject of how to care for IDPs, civilians, and military personnel with disabilities effectively and compassionately became of even more importance immediately after the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. As such, health care is an important issue for military veterans who require proof of disability to obtain care to address their war injuries (both physical and psychological). To that end, the government has devised an alternative scheme for addressing the care needs of those with war-related disabilities, and this can be seen as another instance of **MAP assistance to the NA resulting in an urgent response to unforeseen external circumstances**.[[34]](#footnote-35)

**The Covid-19 pandemic and the right to work in a safe and healthy environment**. While it is noted that the UNDP MAP project staff continued to work in-person (when possible) and remotely to accomplish most anticipated project activities during the MTR period, the NA suffered numerous MP, staff and other stakeholder illnesses as a result of the pandemic. As of July 2021, approximately 100k have been vaccinated, and the number of new cases is reported to be in decline. The MAP project team anticipates a return to full activity level during the second half of Project implementation through December 2022 should the current trend and preventive intervention measures hold.[[35]](#footnote-36)

The Project’s **Contingency Plan and Adaptive Management Measures** are already in place. The Project switched to an online and semi-online format that proved to be effective in 2020, about 60 on-line meetings, four events, weekly on-line meetings with the NA, and bi-weekly meetings with the RPs were held. Given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions, the Project refocused to online work in response. The Project proposed alternative implementation modalities and new activities for RP WFD to consider and to mitigate the situation when the UK government imposed pandemic travel restrictions (so proposed planned activities under WFD RP, including study visits to the UK and WFD Senior Management, as well as experts and staff travel to Armenia were necessarily cancelled or postponed in response).[[36]](#footnote-37) In line with the Adaptive Programming/Politically Agile Management, and taking into account above explained circumstances, two dimensions of adaptive programmes were implemented: flexible delivery and getting behavioural change.

Innovative approaches for programme implementation (including remote training, consultations, and e-Learning modules) continue to be sought by the Project to support future implementation. The 2020 lessons learned, in addition to the planning for digital transformation, should not only enable business continuity but also secure more transparency, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness over time.

## 2.3. **Effectiveness[[37]](#footnote-38)**

The Project has **encouraged and enhanced the participatory policymaking and legislative drafting process through several innovative mechanisms and platforms**. The Project established an analytical framework and sustainable platforms to increase demand among MPs for technical assistance in order to further their capacity to fulfil their legislative mandate. In addition to the mobile committees’ sessions with the Executive and Judiciary, participating committees engaged across committees, solicited input from external experts, and reached out to relevant Armenian CSOs.[[38]](#footnote-39)

Several innovative implementation approaches led to enhanced Project effectiveness during the MTR period, including data and resource management tools introduced by MAP to improve the NA’s daily legislative work. Some interventions were already institutionalised, such as the research work and training modules in place within the Research and Training Centre, whereby the Centre has begun a longer-term process of accepting and then fulfilling parliamentary committee research requests.[[39]](#footnote-40)

## 2.4. **Efficiency**

All Project decisions, changes, endorsements are made by **the Project Board** comprising of the partner -National Assembly, the donors UK and Sweden, and UNDP.

**Information obtained during interviews** with interlocutors from NA testify that **MAP was quick in response to the needs of NA**, which is highly regarded by the project beneficiary and national partner (NA). All interlocutors from NA expressed their **high level of satisfaction** and gratitude for the MAP Project support.

**MAP employs “Adaptive Management and Programming”** to ensure a problem-solving approach to the challenges currently faced. This adaptive approach promoted the development and implementation of numerous activities with different modalities and actors, with monitoring and evaluation occurring on an ongoing basis to determine how and why certain approaches are more successful than others. Where success is identified, a focus on replication and institutionalization will be promoted.

**The roles and responsibilities of the responsible parties are clearly stated in the contract** that was negotiated and communicated by the UNDP Operations and the MAP Team. UNDP MAP Project developed a systemic approach and held regular meetings with all three parties[[40]](#footnote-41) every second week. All RPs were given a reporting template and explained in detail how to write their reports to the Project, that then was merged with the UNDP regular global reporting template, but also donor requirements (comments and templates UNDP received). All RPs were invited to work in synergy with the other RPs, they were all invited to attend all projects and each other’s events.[[41]](#footnote-42) RPs were attending donor’s quarterly meetings with the UK GGF and presenting their part of the work, had a possibility to raise any issues and seek additional support. This was highly appreciated, and their part of the work and contribution was duly acknowledged. MAP and RPs were opening events jointly, sometimes RPs were opening events by themselves to strengthen their role.[[42]](#footnote-43)

As of the MTR review from September 2021, the Project accomplished all planned activities with the responsible parties (RPs) by summer 2021, and expended funds and implementation obligations with RPs WFD and ICHD, while the OxYGen Foundation contract ends in Q3 2021. The Oxygen Foundation’s 2020 request to the Project for a no-cost extension through August 2021 was attributed to the following external circumstances:

* The **COVID-19 health crisis** in Armenia, which significantly delayed the implementation of some of the key Project deliverables, creating unforeseen risks for the project’s successful implementation.
* Travel restrictions and health concerns for **key experts and project staff**, which (temporarily) limited the Project’s full implementation capacity.
* Resource and priority reallocation due to war, pandemic, political upheaval (and the subsequent snap elections) for the NA and other key MAP stakeholders which also had a negative impact on promotion and implementation of the **gender equality agenda** in the country.

From mid-2021, the Project will continue to work with existing RPs in a different contractual modality and continue to hold regular meetings either remotely or in person, whilst intending to expand the number of NGOs working with the NA—including Transparency International[[43]](#footnote-44) and others to be identified later this year.[[44]](#footnote-45)

**In terms of the efficiency of financial resource expenditure**, despite extenuating circumstances, the Project RP activities and the UNDP-sponsored NA **activities were accomplished in accordance with the work plan** and as noted earlier in this report; all 3 RPs expended all project-related budget allocations during the first two years of the approximate three-and-a-half-year implementation timeline. This is important given that the 3 RPs have already completed scheduled Project activities as of this mid-point in MAP implementation.

However, it is equally important to note that MAP efficiency is not only measured through financial expenditure and human resource allocation, but also in terms of **achieving the 3 Project Outcomes (and corresponding outputs)** to date. This is noted in further detail as part of the Results and Resource (RRF) framework section below.

## 2.5. **Sustainability**

The MTR recognises that sustainability is part of ongoing monitoring and assessment through the Project’s three-and-a-half-year implementation timeline, and in that regard, the collaborative engagement undertaken since August 2019 is being measured within the Results and Resources Framework (RRF), and as part of ongoing data collection and analysis. Once the project reaches closer to its end (and presumably as part of the Final Evaluation), there will be a more clear and concise indication of the kind and scope of interventions that are likely to be sustainable once MAP ends in 2022. It is also important to consider the external circumstances noted elsewhere in this report, specific to progress against outcomes and outputs whereby the indicators showed higher values than foreseen wherever possible given the pandemic, conflict and pre-term (snap) elections.

The MAP Project **provided technical assistance intended to enhance sustainable policymaking capacity in the NA** through provision of comprehensive legislative research support, including widely sourced data inputs. This in turn provided a demand by MPs for a more in-depth analytical approach and enhanced content quality in the preparation of draft legislation, including incorporating more issue-specific, relevant and constituent-centred language in draft legislation—particularly in 2021 as compared to 2019.[[45]](#footnote-46)

**Given the extent to which MAP has been able to accomplish almost all planned activities and indeed to flexibly and consistently respond to ad hoc requests for ongoing assistance from the NA despite the external circumstances noted throughout this report, it is likely that MAP will result in a number of sustainable outcomes after December 2022**. This is because numerous activities and interventions continued remotely and online with some even continuing in person during the pandemic.

Likewise, even political upheaval and serious conflict did not halt Project-related activity but rather resulted in disruption followed by demand-driven resumption (and even intensification) of Project activities thereafter.

## 2.6. **Impact**

During the first 2 years of Project implementation, MAP organised numerous relevant and impactful seminars, workshops; conducted analysis, and supported legal change – NA adopted new regulations (laws) and amendments to certain laws. According to participant evaluations and informal feedback received thereafter by interview interlocutors and MAP staff, these activities will have a positive impact on the next parliament and incremental institutional reform, including: the induction seminar and resource kit for new MPs; capacity-building and ongoing education for the new staff and assistants; gender- responsive budgeting, and; digital transformation workshops with NA leadership and management.

Despite the limitations imposed by external circumstances within the first half of MAP implementation, the Project was nevertheless successful in accomplishing numerous activities within the MAP Outcome and results framework. Of note is that the UNDP MAP project team continued to engage MPs, staff, CSO partners and other parliamentary stakeholders in line with anticipated activity levels, despite the substantial challenges of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, an ongoing pandemic, and civil unrest tied to a political crisis that resulted in snap elections during the period leading up to the 2021 MTR.

The CSO-NA platform is a Project product that is of no additional cost but of high impact that the Project will continuously support.

Noteworthy impact activities are included in the RRF section below.[[46]](#footnote-47)

**UN in Armenia and related MAP Project Milestones since 2019[[47]](#footnote-48)**

* On June 1 2021, the Government of Armenia and the UN in Armenia signed the 2021-2025 UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Armenia, paving the way for the strategic mutual engagement to achieve the SDGs in Armenia. Nationally owned and anchored in national development priorities, this compact determines the collective offer of 20 resident and non-resident UN entities to the country and frames their work for the upcoming five years.
* In January 2021, under the joint leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator and UNHCR, the United Nations Country Team together with NGO partners, launched the Armenia Inter-Agency Response Plan to support conflict-affected people from Nagorno-Karabakh and affected communities in Armenia. The Response Plan involves 36 humanitarian partners and 188 projects with total financial requirements amounting to USD 62.6 million across six key sectors.
* In June 2020, the UN in Armenia developed and launched an Immediate Socio-Economic Response Plan, entitled “COVID-19 and Resilience in Armenia: Mitigating the Socio-Economic Impact on Vulnerable People and Communities”, to support people most affected by COVID-19. The Joint Programme combines the work of seven UN Agencies, and under the guidance of the UN Resident Coordinator, seeks to support the Government and people of Armenia.
* The UN has worked with the Government of Armenia to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment (GEWE), which is mainstreamed across the different outcomes of the UNSDCF and reflected with a stand-alone outcome. In addition, the extended Gender Theme Group (eGTG) was established under the tripartite co-chairing of the UN, WB and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. It promotes and supports mainstreaming of gender into development agendas, development partners’ activities and joint programming priorities.
* For the first time in July 2018, and again in July 2020, the Government of Armenia submitted its Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) prepared with UN Armenia’s support to the High-Level Policy Forum. Voluntary National Reviews are a key component of the follow up and review mechanism towards achieving the *Agenda 2030*. The first report primarily reflected on the achievements and challenges of the period prior to the "Velvet Revolution". The second report covered an update and introduced a long-term transformational vision, particularly paying attention to SDG 16.

## **2.7. Project Outcomes and the Results & Resource Framework**

The RRF for the Project provides a framework for periodic reflection on status of project Outcomes as compared to data gathered on an ongoing basis. In this regard, and nearly 2 years into Project implementation, a reflection on the status of projected Project outputs as compared to actual activities and interventions conducted to date is noted in brief below.

**Outcome 1: Quality of legislative oversight and policymaking is improved**

Since project inception in 2019, MAP has supported the NA in realising a number of relevant outcome milestones in line with Outcome 1. These include:

* A functional analysis of the administration and staffing capacity of the NA.
* A comparative analysis of international best practices for the formulation and introduction of whistle-blower and witness protection legislation.
* The drafting and introduction of two parliamentary training modules on Gender Responsive Budgeting and Post-Legislative Scrutiny which will be tested and introduced via the remote e-learning platform, and as part of the transition from parliamentary web site to a more research-rich and remote user-friendly on-line web portal.
* The successful implementation of a gender-responsive budgeting workshop, which was piloted during this first period of MAP implementation.

**Outcome 2: Increased transparency and accountability of the National Assembly**

At the midpoint of project implementation since MAP introduction in November 2019, MAP has realised several milestones in accordance with projected project outcomes (in this section specific to Outcome 2). As reported in periodic MAP project reports reviewed by the MTR team and confirmed by interlocutor remote interviews during the MTR, these include:

* Support, including upgrading and enhancing the NA web portal and ongoing process support toward the full introduction of the e-Parliament, communication and outreach initiative.
* Ongoing support to the Parliament Democracy Centre, and preparation for implementation of the Parliamentary Education Unit.
* Preliminary development of a comprehensive communication strategy for the NA at this mid-point of MAP implementation in 2021.
* The development of a *Citizen Engagement and Outreach Strategy* Handbook.

**Outcome 3: Legislative responsiveness, inclusivity and a participatory approach is embedded in MPs’ work**

This topic is addressed in detail as part of the Recommendation section of this MTR report, and the MTR recognises that the external obstacles noted earlier combined with remote work and public health concerns during the ongoing pandemic have limited the possibility of effectively engaging the public on a regular basis save for remote interaction. In addition, there is a need for more time and an anticipated return to normalised engagement by MPs within the Parliament, and externally with the public once it is possible to do so in 2022.

That said, and in accordance with information gathered during the desk review and remote interview process in line with the anticipated data captured in the RRF, the Project realised several relevant accomplishments in regards to Outcome 3. These include:

* 18 public hearings in 2019 with 11 additional mobile public hearings conducted since 2020 despite the practical implementation challenges of doing so during a pandemic.
* According to CSO, media and NA reports submitted and reviewed by UNDP, 25 innovative citizen engagement events were conducted.
* For Output 3.1, the CSO monitoring the NA provided two monitoring reports to date on its website.
* In terms of Output 3.2, approximately 1,000 comments have been received and catalogued to date by the NA (as collected through THMs) made up of 60% women and 40% men respondents.
* Regarding marginalised group representation in NA proceedings, 4 reports have been produced including the priorities of women, disabled persons, victims of domestic violence and displaced persons.
* Two amendments to the Labour Code regarding paternity leave and child rights were considered by the NA to date.

Overall, the RRF as envisioned at project inception proposes a reasonable number of various relevant and impactful activities specific to each of the three Project Outcomes and per respective outputs and sub-outputs. However, and given the constraints imposed on MAP implementation to date due to external circumstances noted throughout this report, it is anticipated that activities tracked within the RRF will increase in number and kind as the pandemic eases and the political environment stabilises in the remaining Project implementation period prior to December 2022.

## **2.8. Project Implementation Risk and Challenges**

Primarily, there were **several unforeseen external circumstances**, which significantly impacted the on-time and on-budget implementation timeline for the Project. These are noted in various sections of this MTR report but are significant implementation risks and challenges. They are:

* The onset of the global **COVID-19 pandemic** in March 2020 which disrupted the lives and livelihoods of all Armenians whether involved in parliament or otherwise;
* The **conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh** in October 2020 which created an obvious focus away from ordinary parliamentary business and normal operating circumstance, and;
* The **snap parliamentary elections** held in June 2021, which created obvious challenges in implementing the Project given **the change in parliamentary leadership, MPs** **and staff** and the changes and challenges such elections impose on parliamentary process.

**Despite these challenges, MAP is recognised by donors and parliamentary stakeholders for its complexity, flexibility, and responsiveness**. The Project engages multiple donors with various implementation priorities, strategic development objectives, and political sensitivities regarding parliamentary engagement—and in particular those interventions that focus on women. Given the patriarchal nature of Armenian society and the relatively short time since participatory parliamentary democracy was introduced in the country, the development of women’s access to and capacity in positions of influence (both within the NA and as external stakeholders such as leaders in civil society, academia, and the private sector) remains both a challenge and an important developmental opportunity moving forward.[[48]](#footnote-49)

At this mid-point in implementation, the Project has been addressing not only the external challenges of political upheaval, conflict, and a pandemic, it has also effectively participated in the recognised challenge of accommodating a donor-preferred safe space (e.g., the basket funding mechanism) whilst incorporating multiple and sometimes competing priorities into a single project. Since almost all parliamentary stakeholders in the NA have thus far had relatively little time to adopt and process the complex rules and procedures of parliamentary democracy, it is noteworthy that despite the external pressure imposed by unforeseen circumstance, many of the planned project activities have still been implemented to date.[[49]](#footnote-50)

At the same time, the NA is undergoing transformational change in terms of its research, analysis and resource allocation culture. This is noted at length in the **Recommendation section** of this MTR report and highlighted in terms of the NA conducting post-legislative scrutiny and engaging in gender-responsive budgeting despite external and internal challenges.

As with any nascent parliamentary programme or project undertaken during political, social, public health and/or military crises, “normal” levels of project activity can be a challenge. MAP, however, continued to engage almost all internal and external Project stakeholders effectively and efficiently with an emphasis on recognizing the challenges at hand, whilst continuing with those activities that could be implemented given the circumstances. MAP identified and engaged in a “best practice” process to assist the NA through ongoing daily technical advice and the deployment of experts to assist in moving the parliamentary development process incrementally forward.

Another identified risk is the concern that when the current Project comes to its scheduled end in December 2022, the NA may not continue to operate independently in accordance with the tools and techniques shared since November 2019. This sustainability question is one that cannot be determined at this mid-term review point, but one which UNDP (along with the NA and current/potential donors) might consider working on now to avoid any unnecessary delay in continuity of project impact and outcome sustainability.

Regarding the **Project responsible parties** (RPs), the MTR recommends addressing the relationship between the Project Implementer (UNDP) and RPs vis-à-vis the project beneficiary (the NA). In terms of RP obligations and relationship to the UNDP, RPs are contracted by UNDP - considered the Implementing Partner (IP), to perform a specified part of the overall Project activities for a limited duration of time and as per designated donor funding. The RPs are considered distinct from the relationship of the IP (UNDP) with the project partner—the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, and this is a standard UNDP contractual modality worldwide. All Project implementation decisions, changes, and endorsements (etc.) are reviewed and approved by the Project Board comprising the project partner (NA) and Project donors (UK, Sweden and UNDP). RPs are consulted and engaged throughout the implementation of designated Project activities and provided with reporting templates at Project inception.

As of October 2021, The MAP RPs have finalised their support of various MAP activities and their respective contracts have been concluded with related budget line expenditures exhausted.[[50]](#footnote-51) Moving forward, and in accordance with a modified implementation modality during the second half of Project implementation, MAP will now need to identify and obtain donor funds for continued work with Armenian civil society and interested RPs.

Regarding RPs, the MTR notes that there were implementation challenges (in the level of cooperation and coordination) identified as part of the MTR with RP WFD (neither other RPs nor NA as such had any similar claims), and that these challenges had at least some negative impact on Project flow and complementarity. Given that WFD has expended all project funds allocated within MAP as of this MTR, this is not likely to be the case during the second half of Project implementation. The role and responsibilities of RP are clearly stated and defined in the RP contract signed.

In terms of **communication challenges** during a period of external crises, if RPs are non-local, it is important for the UNDP Armenia CO to establish clear lines of communication given distance and obvious challenges of implementing without in-country representative(s)—especially during a time of various health, political and military crises.

Overall, MAP has implemented numerous (and diverse) parliamentary development activities well despite noted circumstances, and it might help to review the Project’s annual work plan periodically and especially given these external challenges which are likely to continue to some extent and for some period of time into the 2nd half of Project implementation.

Incorporating meaningful and substantive citizen input into the legislative process whilst engaging a broad and representative sample of Armenian society in their Parliament is likely to remain a challenge looking forward. This is also the case give the current political culture of NA. However, and as noted in the Recommendation section, it is important for all participants in the parliamentary development process to periodically assess, modify and adapt planned activities in order to achieve the maximum level of impact and the most effective and efficient level of project activity over time.

In sum, it is important to understand that **parliamentary development is an incremental process**—particularly in a challenging operational environment with multiple stakeholders and multiple donors. Over time and despite the evident challenges faced since 2019, **MAP is likely to evolve into a comprehensive *programme* of parliamentary development with significant impact and likely sustainability,** given that Armenia has experienced only 4 years of parliamentary democracy following decades of a strong presidential system and multiple instances of upheaval since its independence in 1991.

# **CHAPTER III: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **3.1. CONCLUSIONS**

1. The overall MTR conclusion based on findings obtained through documentation review and remote interviews with available relevant stakeholders is, that there **is in the Republic of Armenia a strong need for further comprehensive democratic development support in the form** **of a long-lasting flexible and adaptive parliamentary programme**(e.g., comprised of more than one project such as the current MAP)and broader support is needed and desired by current Project beneficiaries as part of a complete governance portfolio in order to strengthen dialogue and political participation at all levels of Armenian society. This includes politically inclusive processes with special focus on parliamentary development and strengthening parliamentary and participatory democracy.[[51]](#footnote-52)
2. The UNDP Armenia CO, and in particular the MAP project team, **succeeded in establishing and maintaining mutual confidence and trust as part of the adaptive parliamentary development partnership with the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia since 2019**. There is a high level of satisfaction from the NA and other beneficiaries with UNDP implementation procedures.[[52]](#footnote-53) Since there is still a certain level of tension regarding the sensitive political situation in Armenia after revolution and conflict, **project beneficiaries stressed that further project support should be coordinated and implemented with reliable non-partisan multilateral partners, in order to avoid politicization**. From the NA’s perspective, and given that the current parliament operates in an unusually sensitive political environment, project support is appreciated though **neutral** multilateral partners. Interlocutors from the NA specifically pointed out a high level of satisfication with UNDP CO Armenia’s development cooperation and the current technical assistance modality.
3. Throughout the MAP project to date , the NA is more than a one-way beneficiary. There is a high level of ownership of project outcomes by NA, and a high degree of perception that most project activities are demand-driven, with **activities as listed previously in the MTR report being led by the NA and demonstrating very strong stakeholder interest and involvement** in the process and the outcome.

4. **MAP have produced knowledge products** in e-version and with teams of international and national top experts in the field of parliamentary development. This is indeed the first project of its kind with valued quality and provides the Parliament with knowledge products **based on the best global practice**. It is important to meet a demand for quality consultancy and input by the parliament for that to continue beyond the project support.

## **3.2. LESSONS LEARNED**

1. An advance online meeting, following the signing of consulting contracts with the two person evaluation team and thereafter receiving relevant MAP documents for preliminary desk review, allowed for more time to prepare for the consultancy. This resulted in earlier engagement with better (remote) time management, particularly during the period of uncertainty worldwide during the ongoing pandemic and given the challenging circumstances on the ground in Armenia.[[53]](#footnote-54)
2. Setting up the MAP project team office in the premises of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia contributed significantly to advancing the positive professional relationship between the UNDP CO and the national partner, This also resulted in a more flexible, responsive and adaptable implementation modality with simpler and more rapid communication on an ongoing basis, and thus a more efficient implementation of various project activities to date.
3. The inclusion of different donors on a project (e.g., the MAP basket funding mechanism) provides donors with an increased level of confidence and buy-in externally. However, different responsible parties can complicate **periodic project reporting** if those various participating donors and RPs have different reporting timelines, expectations, and parameters. The diversity in reporting systems can complicate the administration and management of any project, so it has a bit of a negative influence on project dynamics and implementation regarding time management and implementation expectations. It is recommended to find a more flexible manner within joint activities or to stick to one agreed-upon reporting modality at project inception.

## **3.3. RECOMMENDATIONS[[54]](#footnote-55)**

**1. Strengthening parliamentary democracy and inclusive political dialogue:**

**MAP should continue its work through a phased approach** to support parliamentary development in Armenia. That project support should continue as a **long-lasting flexible and adaptive parliamentary programme**(e.g. in three phases or several successive projects).

**2. Public Hearings:**

In the current situation in the Republic of Armenia, MTR interlocutors indicated that public hearings have not reached full capacity and efficiency in accordance with the full potential of this important parliamentary outreach modality. This level of development is a logical consequence of the recent transformation from a presidential to a parliamentary system, and therefore the MTR has identified a demand-driven need and operational space for further development.

From the facts obtained from the interviews, it is recommended that the project bring to MPs and stakeholders a **few possible modalities for public hearings based on international best practices with relevant content and structure inclusive of public hearing benefits to parliament and external stakeholders** in Armenia.

Findings obtained during interviews showed that clarity as to the difference between a public hearing (as a parliamentary format for questioning stakeholders, experts and ministers by a committee) and a more general ‘public debate’ is not yet clear, and that there is a pressingneed for further project support in this area. There needs to be a greater understanding of the way in which committees can use existing ROP provisions to emulate and refine what is common practice by parliamentary committees elsewhere.

It is therefore recommended that MAP consider the following during the 2nd half of Project implementation:

(1) organise **consultative workshop(s)** to learn, share experience and discuss implementation strategies and process possibilities in order to produce conclusions and recommendations for further development, i.e. The improvement of public hearings on the national and local level.

(2) **develop a publication and/or handbook on public hearings** (as a knowledge product).

Through such a consultative workshop and production of a handbook /publication (knowledge product) it is recommended to address the following issues:

* Determine a definition of a public hearing and benefits of the application of this as an important tool in NA parliamentary development toward a more enhanced and inclusive political process.
* Analyse and determine the importance of public hearings as part of a more representative and inclusive modern parliament at the national level and local self-government assemblies whereby both include civil society organisations and citizens more actively in parliamentary processes.
* Carry out analysis of different modalities of public hearings in contemporary parliamentary practice (e.g., legislative, control and investigative).
* Examine a comparative overview of public hearings and procedures in different countries and parliaments (international best practice).
* Identify criteria for delineation between *public debate* and *public hearing.*
* Conduct analyses of the legal framework of public debates and public hearings.
* Explore the forms of citizen participation in modern representative democracy – from participation to influence, which assists in overcoming a participatory democratic deficit in practice. This will have a focus on innovative mechanisms (both formal and informal) and will be inclusive of individual and collective mechanisms.
* Examine scientific articles and relevant materials regarding public hearings (or alternatively prepare a list of recommended sources and additional literature available in foreign languages or on the internet for subsequent translation to Armenian as requested by NA stakeholders).
* Explain recognised proper procedure for organisation and implementation of public hearings in different phases and in various formats specific to purpose.

We can conclude that the NA has recognised public hearings in the Republic of Armenia and by those aware of public hearings in the civic sphere. They are potentially a vehicle for enhancing and improving parliamentary process—particularly as public hearings allow all stakeholder points of view to be heard and recognised. However, the way in which public hearings are currently organised and conducted needs modification. Since the concept of public hearings has not yet been fully established and **due to the way they are currently conducted, “public hearings” may be mistaken for a conference or public debate**, **and therefore** **this process is in need of improvement, and would benefit from international best practice comparison**. A proper public hearing is a large and logistically complex event, the outputs of which help a great deal in the improvement of certain draft laws, with current space for improvement of the process. For this reason, it is necessary to continue to work on improving the institution of public hearings in Armenia, which entails:

a) Improvement of the organisational and procedural aspect which should address all questions with regards to organisation in detail: participation, written evidence, a larger number of MPs, who gets to speak, duration of speeches, mandatory participation of a minister and other representatives of executive branch, duration, etc.

b) Development of more interest among MPs, citizens, and other stakeholders to ensure their attendance, preparation for and active participation in the public hearing process.

c) Recognition and actualization of specific results and outputs once a public hearing is conducted. A public hearing that deals with a concrete problem should be followed by concrete and serious questions directed toward the executive branch as part of the parliament’s oversight function. This will mean developing the ‘information’ produced at the end of a public hearing into a document more akin to a committee report, which analyses the evidence heard at the hearing whilst making actionable recommendations for meaningful change.

The MTR recommends that MAP organise workshops regarding structure and participation in public hearings in order to find the best and most efficient modality of public hearings in Armenia. The separate workshops could be organised with MPs in order to explain the importance of their attendance at public hearings. The recommendation is **to educate, raising awareness about the importance of public hearings** (as an important parliamentary outreach and representative mechanism) and the benefits they provide in order to significantly stimulate the interest, presence and participation of MPs in the public hearings.

It would be useful to organise public hearings **outside of the NA and outside of Yerevan in particular (at the local or regional level)** as standard practice. It could be possible to implement synergy of two mechanisms: a public hearing in the form of a mobile NA committee session.

Finally, it is recommended to proceed with **online public hearings** during the pandemic or, to adopt a hybrid mode once possible during the second half of MAP implementation.[[55]](#footnote-56)

As of October 2021, there have been no on-line public hearings and given the importance of public hearings as part of enhanced NA representation and responsiveness to the constituents whom they are elected to serve, MAP might consider how to organise and conduct more inclusive and issue-specific public hearings as part of the second half of Project implementation. While there were 18 hearings in 2020, the customary format for such hearings in Armenia is to use them as a tool for the opposition to create a ruckus in the NA in accordance with the Rules of Procedure. However, the MTR recognises the desire by various stakeholders to engage in a more participatory and citizen-centric process moving forward, with the hope that such hearings will have increasing relevance and influence as the pandemic becomes more manageable.

**3. Town Hall Meetings:**

As noted in this report, town hall meetings have taken place on-line (as an innovative tool piloted in the frames of the project) and are part of regional mobile town hall meetings modality. Their effectiveness is noted in the example of town hall meetings for rural administrative areas with territorial administration resulting in a new chair of the committee. This recognises the possible to hear the voices of the regions and how the UNDP works and participates as an impartial mediator in this process, showing the positive impact of MAP intervention. Once the pandemic has subsided during the second half of MAP project engagement, this modality for parliamentary public engagement should continue and expand.

**4. Enhanced engagement of women in the political process**

Regarding this issue, MAP’s primary purpose should be gender equality and the Women’s Parliamentary Network within the parliamentary domain.

* Promotion of this work regionally (e.g., Armenian to English/Georgian/Ukrainian)
* More public awareness work to bring attention to these issues in a non-political and more socially progressive way.
* As Armenian society is highly politicised and polarised, it is important to incorporate the ruling party and opposition in these activities and engagements.
* Following the Velvet Revolution in Armenia, conflict, COVID and snap elections, it is important to focus on research to ensure that the approach is balanced and more representative of all in Armenian society. This should be in line with UNDP’s vision (e.g., SDGs, gender empowerment[[56]](#footnote-57)) and through the UNDP Gender Portfolio, since UN Women is currently non-existent in Armenia.

When developing additional **MAP knowledge products**, **it is also important to consider the cultural, political and legal context in Armenia.** Things to consider in the future: how to debate based on evidence; how to represent constituency based on evidence; how to adapt project implementation modalities to respond flexibly to project beneficiary needs, within both the NA and externally (the demand-driven constituencies whom the NA is elected to represent).

**5. Research & training centre**: to continue with collaboration of the MAP with R&TC and providing peer-to-peer training, and workshops on facilitation skills.

It is necessary that the NA of the Republic of Armenia **makes a decision on the final position (format, concept and legal position) of the parliamentary Research Centre**. When a decision is made, it is necessary to prepare an adequate legal framework for the proper establishment of such a Centre. In accordance with information received from interlocutors during the interview process, there are two possibilities for this centre:

(1) a non parliamentary independent centre/ institue to prepare information for all state bodies, or;

(2) an internal organisation of the NA, located within the NA precinct, in line with parliamentary development trends globally.

During interviews, it was noted that some of interlocutors believe that it is important to avoid any political influence on this centre in order for this centre to provide comprehensive and multi-faceted research and analysis. Information prepared by this centre should therefore be of a practical and useful nature for the NA as an institution, in the same (equal) manner for ruling and opposition MPs.

Considering that MAP has provided the NA with different research centre models that exist in different parliaments (comparative analytical review)[[57]](#footnote-58),it is recommended **to support the NA in analyzing pro and con arguments** of each one, in order to provide technical development support to the NA in order to make strategic decisions regarding the Armenia NA Research Centre.

One of the possibilities is to consider howa Parliamentary Institute (hereinafter referred to as PI) is organised in **the Parliament of the Czech Republic**. This PI resolves issues of a scientific, informative and educational nature for the Chamber of Deputies: Deputies, Committees and other authorities, Office of the Chamber, Senate and its office, senators and Senate authorities.[[58]](#footnote-59)

Additionally, PI serves as an educational and training centre for the Chamber of Deputies and its office employees by organizing seminars and study visits.[[59]](#footnote-60) The PI provides services of the same extent also to the Senate and office of the Senate. Seminars and study visits are usually organised by the PI staff. In case of interest in a subject matter not covered by staff members, the PI is able to invite an external consultant in the relevant field.[[60]](#footnote-61) Since 2006, the PI has been organizing seminars for newly elected MPs who do not have previous experience with parliamentary work out of its own initiative, and along with other sections of the Office of the Chamber of Deputies.[[61]](#footnote-62)

It is recommended **to provide all necessary support to the NA in addressing s**everal important issues, such as: the **legal status of employee-researchers, salaries, the recruitment process**, etc. Adequate status and addressing of these issues is necessary in order to provide and secure high-level professional research and legal experts/lawyers in this centre. **It is up to the NA Administration implement the discussions on the status of employees and make a decision**.

**6. E-parliament:**

The MTR has identified a need to prepare an intermediate e-software as a tool to connect all parts of the electronic system in NA as part of a single consolidated e-platform in order to prepare e-parliament to be fully operational and functional.[[62]](#footnote-63)

The E-vote system needs to be linked to a website in order to automatically export data after voting. In line with information gathered from interviews conducted, in the current system after voting, information is manually compiled for the web site and there is the possibility of data entry error which can then be referenced by some stakeholders as being politically motivated despite being a technical error.

There is a need for e-links and e-tools in order to link drafts of legislation with minutes from the NA session in order to provide citizens and other external stakeholders with a verbatim record of parliamentary proceedings on issues of interest and concern.

**7. Legislative drafting:**

The MTR has identified the need to **strengthen legislative capacities in the NA**. It is recommended to organise seminars/training on various legislative techniques, including legislative drafting (for current/new convocations of the NA) and to use and promote a Guide on “Legislative Process“ (the legal path of passing a law) developed by the ICHD for the first time in Armenia. In the current system, each MP has an assistant, but in practice, they are administrative assistants who do not have the legal expertise or technical experience of a lawyer.

**8. The standing committees of the NA:**

It is recommended to analyse and **review the possibilities to further support standing committees in the form of external expertise, advisory bodies (to committees), depending on the country’s needs.**

**9. Donor coordination and engagement**

There is a need **to strengthen donor cooperation and coordination** regarding providing further international development support to the NA, in order to increase the level of cooperation and possible multi-donor interventions.[[63]](#footnote-64) MTR findings indicate that there is no overlap at present, but on the other hand there should be better communication, mutual exchange of information, shared plans and regular coordination meetings. Of note is tha,t as with so much else planned for the first half of MAP implementation, the operational situation was better during the pre-Covid period when such meetings were held.

For the second half of MAP implementation, it is important to find an adequate and **functional technical coordination format** in order to upgrade partner cooperation and to have better synergy and complementarity of donor-sponsored activities in support of the NA moving forward.

From 2021, the MAP project team might consider playing on the strength of its flexible and local presence toward the goal of further engaging both RPs and local partners to secure additional basket funds from January 2022. This is whilst continuing to focus on MAP strengths and the unique relationship inside NA and on the “demand side” of democracy via RPs engaged in women’s empowerment, analysis, and civic engagement.

* In Armenia, an excellent project team is in place, and the standard has been maintained since 2020 because they are reliant on HQ or regional staff because of challenges between donors and UNDP in some cases. If possible, in the next phase of the project, whenever there is an important governance project, as is the case with parliamentary projects, it is recommended that all RPs have national representatives in the beneficiary country (in this case Armenia).
* Donors however, need to consider enhancing the project design during the MAP (or other) project implementation period (e.g., minimum annually) to include flexibility and adaptability on an ongoing basis—and in particular given the evident external circumstances which have disrupted planned activities during first 2 years of MAP.

Given the unforeseen external circumstances described earlier in this report, it is important for both internal and external Project stakeholders to consider a pause when circumstances prevent following an implementation timeline. It would serve well for stakeholders to pause, reflect and reconfigure activities and Project interventions in accordance with the new set of circumstances. While it is hoped that the current situation in Armenia, and globally as regards to the pandemic is temporary, all involved in Project implementation are dedicated to accomplishing an ambitious set of activities in line with significant parliamentary development priorities.

**10. Project implementation**

It is important to promote and ensure NA ownership in order for project results to be sustainable over time.

Taking into account that the political situation is not yet stable, there are lingering social and political tensions and evident polarization and politicization of issues. It is therefore **important for MAP to stay institution-oriented and to deliver technical parliamentary development support in order to minimise political influence whilst maintaining neutrality and the current level of good will within the NA** and among stakeholders of the parliament.

**Project implementation recommendations from 2021:**

The **MAP already produced and formulated relevant strategic recommendations. The strategic setup was developed by the CTA and MAP is utilising those recommendations**. Regarding snap elections, it is recommended to understand the needs of the current convocation of the NA. It is an important element of continuity and in the interest of sustainability and institutional memory to use capacities of the CTA as a modality of project implementation.

**11. Citizen engagement and providing direct feedback to their Parliament**

Digital and traditional tools can be used for accomplishing citizen access to their parliament. It is important to ensure MP outreach and informing of citizens, in order for them to understand how the NA works. People need to be empowered and able to access their MPs, and influence the agenda (e.g. Budget Priorities and allocation). In the next project phase, after signing the consulting contracts with the 2-person evaluation team, it is recommended to consider the relevant MAP documents for preliminary desk review and the possibility of focusing on **citizen input on issues and policy priorities. These citizen-identified priorities should be established via survey** and should outline what the priorities are, how they can be accomplished, and what citizens want from their parliament.

## **3.4. FUTURE PROGRAMMING**

1. From the interlocutors’ perspective and reflecting on findings obtained during interviews, it is necessary to have **broader developmental support** in building parliamentary democracy in Armenia.

2. It is recommended to strengthen **citizen involvement and** MP**-citizen relations** after an election, in order to strengthen **participative democracy** as an incremental process over time.

3. It is recommended to analyse the current level of participatory parliamentary democracy at the local level, and to analyse possibilities to transfer participatory processes from a national to a local level.

4. It is necessary to work with both MPs, all sectors of society, CSOs and the media in Armenia to strengthen public deliberations, public consultations, public debate, and public hearings. This will encourage citizen participation in the effective policy decision-making process and shape public policies in response to the challenges of modern parliamentary democracy. **It is important to ensure that citizens’ concerns, argumentation and priority issues are reflected in the final texts of laws and other regulations** so that participatory democracy in Armenia is fully realised over time.

5. The MTR recommends addressing the **procedure for direct citizen engagement with the NA**, when coming to the parliamentary precinct in order to engage staff or an MP on an issue of concern. It is important to implement proper procedure for engaging citizens directly, firstly by accepting, then by following up on issues raised, and finally determining how these concerns can be addressed in subsequent (revised) legislation or regulation.

6. It is recommended to develop a **publication** which would address and explain **citizen participation in a modern representative parliamentary democracy**. This should include various forms of direct citizen participation, and new constructive **solutions which enable citizens** not only to express their own opinions, positions, experiences and arguments but also **to participate in public deliberations** in an active and informed manner. The goal is to empower citizens to actively engage in public political deliberation and to encourage the participation of a larger number of citizens and all sectors of society in this process. Thereafter**, it is important to help ensure that citizens’ concerns, argumentation and priority issues are reflected in the final texts of laws and other regulations** so that participatory democracy in Armenia is fully realised over time.

It is therefore recommended that this publication address several relevant topics, including:

* + - * + Citizens' participation in shaping public policies;
        + Citizen and Constitutional Democracy;
        + the Legal Framework of citizens' right to participate in decision-making on public affairs;
        + Encouraging citizens' participation in shaping public policies in response to the challenges of modern parliamentary democracy;
        + New avenues for effective citizen participation in public policy deliberation, and, public deliberations, public consultations, public debate, public hearings.

7. It is necessary to work with both MPs and citizens in Armenia to better understand the difference between a **public debate and public hearing**. A better understanding of these different participatory processes could help in developing a more appropriate and relevant implementation of these democratic processes, which will lead to further enhancing public participation in the policy decision-making process.

8. To support **parliamentary education and youth.** In-line with information obtained during MTR interviews, there is negative political tension in Armenian society and clear political divisions both internally and externally of the NA as a result of revolution, social and political transformation. In order to support parliamentary democracy for the youth, it is necessary to work on the education of young people through influencing the education system. It is recommended to review the secondary school curriculum for opportunties for input into the civic education curriculum.

9. For faculty and students, it is recommended to develop a **civics prize competition** on topics regarding public deliberation, dialogue, parliamentary democracy, citizen participation, etc.

10. The Republic of Armenia is one electoral unit and there is a proportional (party-list system), it is necessary to build stronger relations between citizens and MPs. Therefore, it is recommended to **pilot a citizen outreach project** from several MPs’ parliamentary offices with the goal of enhanced two-way communication and more effective constituent relations between MP and citizens.[[64]](#footnote-65)

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

11. Taking into account the current situation in Armenia and regarding the possible use of public hearings in different parliamentary occasions, it would be of benefit to inform MPs and other relevant stakeholders of 4 possibilities and modalities for public hearing implementation in accordance with the **European Parliament format.** These include:

a) **Committee hearings with experts** - A committee is permitted to organise a hearing with experts, where this is considered essential to its work on a particular subject. Two or more committees can also hold hearings jointly. Most committees organise regular hearings, as they allow them to hear from experts and hold discussions on key issues.[[65]](#footnote-66)

b) Public hearings on European **Citizens’ Initiatives****[[66]](#footnote-67)**

c) **Pre-appointment hearings** - Pre-appointment hearings do not have to receive prior authorization from the Parliament's Bureau. The committees responsible enjoy considerable freedom as regards their organisation and conduct, except in the case of hearings held as part of the Commission appointment procedure, for which the Parliament's Rules of Procedure set out detailed provisions.[[67]](#footnote-68)

d) **Hearings held by committees of inquiry** - Temporary committees of inquiry may also hold hearings as part of their investigative activities in relation to 'alleged contraventions or maladministration in implementation of Union law'[[68]](#footnote-69), inviting witnesses to give evidence before them.[[69]](#footnote-70) Members of the EU institutions and other bodies, as well as members of Member States' governments, may be invited by committees of inquiry to take part in their proceedings.[[70]](#footnote-71)

12. In addition, it would be useful to present procedural rules that have developed special rules, decisions or guidelines for public hearings to Armenian NA stakeholders.

13. One of the concerns is the lack of an agreed upon purpose for public hearings. At this point in MAP implementation, there is a lack of undestanding and experience on facilitation skills for persons who organise public hearings. It is therefore necesary to assist the process in order to avoid politization (since focus is on practical or expert topic). In this respect, it is recommended to prepare **guidlines and** **training for facilitation skills**.[[71]](#footnote-72) The process should help ensure that any hearings are clearly focused, politically effective, well managed and make the best use of available resources. The facilitator of the hearing plays a significant role in this process (it can be the committee chairperson).[[72]](#footnote-73)

14. **A Comparative analysis for public hearings** needs to be produced. This document should aim to provide a description of best practices and a framework for activity which could be standardised across committees and become the standard of practice for the NA of the Republic of Armenia.

15. It is recommended that **special guidelines be developed for each interested party participating in public hearings**.[[73]](#footnote-74) These would provide more detail and explain the importance of the public hearing, its goals, impact, benefits and give practical information for speakers to ensure that public hearings are as efficient as possible. These guidelines should not be overly comprehensive (ideally two to three pages long), and they should help achieve the following three benefits:

a) Firstly, to educate, because the guidelines written for the interested party specifically should explain in more detail what a public hearing is.

b) Secondly, such guidelines could later be sent to interested parties together with an invitation for a concrete public hearing and serve as a reminder at the same time. This would facilitate the preparation process of the public hearing for the committee secretaries (who would not have to explain the nature of invitation, but only attach the guidelines), and;

c) Thirdly, the guidelines are suitable to be posted on the National Assembly website.

16. The guidelines for public hearings will help all participants prepare for the hearings in a better, more appropriate way, which in turn will improve the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of the hearings. When compiling the guidelines, it would be helpful to **identify key points each of the participating parties should understand**. Therefore, the following items could be prepared: Guidelines for MPs, Guidelines for citizens, Guidelines for representatives of the executive branch, Guidelines for representatives of the independent state bodies, and Guidelines for civil society organisations.

17. The smaller group of committee members could form a Working Group and be tasked to organise the hearing by the Committee. It has been recommended that the committee, when deciding to hold a public hearing, choose a Working Groupconsisting of five MPs for organising a public hearing - members of the committee who would prepare questions for the witnesses at the public hearing and would have to take part in the public hearing. The same MPs would be expected to attend and participate in the hearing.

18. **Terms of Reference for a public hearing**: To improve the organisation and conduct of a public hearing. It would be useful for the committee, when choosing the topic of the public hearing, to define five or six key issues in the form of Terms of Reference (ToRs) on which witnesses would base their evidence, whether written or oral. These issues could also be used to organise the information in a more structured way obtained from the public hearing. Once the committee has decided to hold the public hearing the Working Group of five/six members should draw up these Terms of Reference. They will need to decide whether the hearing is intended to provide a platform for stakeholders to express their views, or if its purpose is to subject stakeholders’ views/conduct to public challenge by committee members. The purpose of the Terms of Reference is therefore to:

• Set objectives for the public hearing;

• Help the chairperson conduct the public hearing successfully by keeping the hearing focused on the ToRs;

• Provide a framework for stakeholders to produce written submissions prior to the public hearing taking place, and;

• Provide a framework for any statements that stakeholders may make at the public hearing.

The ToRs should be **short and produced as bullet points**. These should be placed on the committee’s website, and sent out electronically to organisations on the committee’s database, as well as to the media.

19. **Written submissions**: To improve the efficiency of the process, it is recommended to introduce written evidence in advance of the public hearing. Analysis of comparative best practice has shown that in most parliaments, witnesses provide respective viewpoints on the issues of interest to a given committee before the public hearing to submit written evidence. After signing the consulting contracts with the 2-person evaluation team, they receive the relevant MAP documents for preliminary desk review. The submission of written evidence has been recognised in comparative parliamentary law as best practice and an essential element of effective preparation and conduct of a public hearing. The Terms of Reference drafted by the Working Group can take the form of an ‘issues and questions paper’, to which interested parties can be invited to make written submissions. Those making submissions should feel no obligation to comment on all the issues raised in the ToRs, but rather should focus on those areas in which they have specific expertise or interest. It is helpful to the committee if contributors structure their submissions using the headings indicated by the ToRs.

The purpose of written submissions is to ensure that the public hearing makes the best use of available time by having material which could be provided in writing circulated in advance (preferably in electronic “soft copy” format) and then allowing stakeholders to be questioned on their submissions. The introduction of written evidence would also improve the organisation of public hearings by reducing the time taken up by introductory speeches. The focus of the public hearing would be MPs asking questions and receiving answers from witnesses. Opening statements by stakeholders should preferably be avoided. There are two reasons for this: first, they waste time by restating what is already in the written submission; second, they pre-empt the committee’s own questioning. Instead of an opening statement, the chairperson might offer the participants the opportunity to make a closing statement if the participants feel that the committee, in its questioning, has not given them the opportunity to explain their position fully.

The status of a written submission with regard to parliamentary immunity from legal action (defamation, for example) needs to be addressed. The same consideration may also apply to words spoken at a public hearing. The committee might wish to specify that written submissions are the property of the committee until the public hearing has been held. The purpose of the public hearing is to enhance the parliament’s oversight and representative functions. The committee’s role at the public hearing should not therefore be pre-empted by stakeholders’ own interest in publicising their submissions in a public forum.

20. **Timetable for the public hearing**: In hearings where there are fewer time constraints, an advance schedule of hearings can be planned. The following timescale might be a structure to aim for, and the timing and submission deadlines should be clearly noted on the committee (or within the NA) website.

a) 30 days before the hearing: announcement of public hearing with ToRs. Invitation sent to individuals and organisations to make written submissions to the committee. Request to government department for a written memorandum addressing the matters identified in the ToRs.

b) 15 days before the hearing: deadline for receiving written submissions from interested parties (and the government)

c) 10 days before the hearing: announcement of organisations/individuals to speak (and to be questioned) at the hearing.

21. **Length of public hearing**: it is recommended to limit the duration of public hearings in order to avoid turning it into a political event. During the hearing, it is important to be focused on the topic. Public hearings are not debates among committee members. Their purpose is to obtain pertinent and relevant information and to help parliament perform its oversight function. There should therefore be no exchange of views between committee members at the public hearing. Assuming that a public hearing is **designed to last for two to two and a half hours**, we make the following suggestions on the timing of sessions with individual stakeholders. Staff may have provided a brief and suggested questions for the hearing, a 15-minute period should therefore be held by the committee in private before the start of the public hearing to go through the brief. If there is no brief, this private session should allow the chairperson to say how s/he intends to run the hearing and get a feel from committee members for the questions they wish to ask. Each session with a stakeholder lasts for 40 minutes maximum. On that basis, a two-hour hearing would enable the committee to hear at least three stakeholders.

**REPORTS OF INDEPENDENT BODIES**

22. Unfortunately, due to travel restrictions caused by Covid-19 and limitations and **failure to conduct an interview with the Human Rights Defender’s Office**, there was not enough evidence to reference cooperation between the parliament (NA) and independent bodies.

23. It is necessary to have oversight of the process of implementing conclusions and to introduce a mechanism for monitoring progress with the implementation of recommendations of independent state bodies, as well as monitoring the implementation of conclusions and recommendations adopted by the NA. Committees need to be able to verify that recommendations have been implemented and their time frame. Committees must be able to know whether a situation has improved, whether the executive branch has conducted any actions, and if so, which, when and to what extent.

24. Committee staff should be trained to have the ability to closely follow the situation in these areas and produce long-term analysis to examine and compare which ministries (and in what timeframe) have acted/have not acted in accordance with conclusions and recommendations of the NA, its committees and independent state bodies. They should also identify which areas show improvements and which do not. Committee experts (with possible support from R&TC) could produce analysis and review of the situation in these areas. Such **analysis produced by the National Assembly staff would be very helpful for the MPs in their conduct of parliamentary oversight**.

25. A controlled public hearing would be organised as an effective oversight measure to establish whether and to what extent recommendations and conclusions of the NA, its committees and independent state bodies have been acted upon, since the advent of parliamentary democracy in Armenia.

26. It is recommended to develop and prepare **consultative workshops in order to consider possible improvements** regarding structure and content of all reports produced by different state institutions, organisations and bodies that are then submitted to the NA.[[74]](#footnote-75)

27. In order to propose possible project support regarding NA-independent bodies’ relations, it is recommended to develop and prepare consultative workshops. These will **evaluate possible improvements** regarding structure and content of all reports, produced by different state institutions, organisations and bodies that are then submitted to the NA.

28. It is recommended to consider **report summaries** and to advise on specific content for such reports. In practice, the NA and its standing committees receive various types of reports, which is why it is important that the structure and contents of these reports be in line with the needs of the NA and its standing committees. The workshop could be organised to address the format and content of these reports to make them more relevant and useful to MPs and standing committees. It would be helpful to set out a standard for the structure and form that all reports can follow.

**29. Standardization of the structure of all reports would facilitate MPs’ work and their ability to search for key components of comprehensive reports**. The reports should comprise of:

1) An Executive summary;

2) A Report about the work of the body submitting the report;

3) A Report about the situation in the area of work (sector) – view on how a concrete public policy was enforced;

4) A Qualitative grading of the progress in the area within competence of the state body or a particular ministry;

5) Implemented conclusions and recommendations of the NA and independent bodies. There should also be a report about actions regarding issues discussed during standing committee sittings, plenary sessions of the NA, public hearings, and all that MPs brought to attention through parliamentary questions etc. and whether the situation in this area has improved;

6) An Overview of what has and what has not been realised in line with the plan (e.g. annual work plan). In addition, there should be an explanation for planned activities that have not been realised;

7) Identification of open and disputable issues in the area – pinpointing the problems in the area (and not only the problems which the government body encounters in its work);

8) A Report pinpointing the efficiency and “performance” of certain sections of laws, identifying which legal provisions have proved problematic in practice;

9) Information about whether laws and other regulations that regulate this area have been enforced and to what degree;

10) Identification of regulations that need to be modified/amended or introduce new ones – with a concrete proposal;

11) Clear recommendations that are as specific and concrete as possible, and;

12) A Conclusion.

30. A **written briefing note** is one of the most important outputs, which committee staff can provide to committee members for these public examinations to be successful. The purpose of the briefing note is to help the committee have focused and effective enquiry sessions by eliminating the need for members to read all the information on the subject and clarifying the often-complex areas under discussion. Therefore, the written briefing note should:

• Summarise the relevant information for the committee members;

• Highlight key issues and questions, and;

• Suggest potential lines of questioning which they might wish to follow.

31. It is recommended to consider engagement in order to promote a constructive debate, open consideration, oppositional dialogue and peaceful and collaborative conflict resolution in a parliamentary context.[[75]](#footnote-76)

32. During MTR interviews, some interlocutors pointed that it can be useful **to consider including some think tanks in future project implementation,** in order to strengthen national capacities for parliamentary democracy. The inclusion of think tanks in MAP can then lead to the strengthening of Armenian legislative and political capacity over time, and enhance democratic institutional sustainability after MAP (in its current form) has come to an end.

33. **Other NA stakeholders and potential implementation modalities from 2021:**

* **A Green parliament** with a focus on environmental awareness and legislative action. This is very important for a modern Armenia.
* **The Armenian diaspora** is an excellent resource for developing the parliament. Utilise those who have worked in Europe, USA etc. who are retired from local government, businesses, and local parliaments and have less of a language barrier. Language is not a barrier to this kind of engagement as interpreters are available. This is also a cultural and social cohesion and may help Armenia emerge from focusing on NK conflict and Covid.
* **To support open and inclusive dialogue and debate** in Armenia (opening up to other/different ideas/opinions and put in place new instruments and modalities in line with the national context[[76]](#footnote-77)).
* Since there isongoing conflict and overly politicised and violent behaviour, it is **recommended in the new convocation of the NA** **to continue working on the Code of Ethics** as an appropriate mechanism.

# **ANNEXES**

### Annex 1: Terms of Reference for Lead Consultant and Second Consultant

**Post Title: International Consultant/Lead Evaluator for Mid-Term Review** **of the Parliamentary Project**

**Project Title:** Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia (MAP)

**Project number:** Project ID: 00082042 / Output ID: 00091127

**Contract modality:** Individual Contract (IC)

**Starting Date:** 20 September 2021

**Duration:** September-October 2021 (estimated 25 consultancy days)

**Duty Station:** Home based with 1-week mission to Armenia (alternatively distant support, depending on COVID-19 restrictions)

1. **Background and context:**

UNDP MAP The Project is designed to strengthen the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia (NA) in its new and fundamentally enhanced role within the governance system in carrying out critical functions of law-making, oversight, and representation. With a long-term goal of improving the overall effectiveness of the Parliament as a policy-making institution, the Project is designed to support the newly elected NA to take advantage of the modern governance tools and mechanisms that are focusing on improved quality, transparency and inclusiveness of parliamentary operations and enhanced parliamentary capacity for gender-responsive policy-making.

The three components of the Project are focused on the areas of Legislative capacity, Legislative transparency, and Legislative responsiveness. To that end, a three-stage strategy is applied:

1. catalytic stage of needs assessment, strategic agenda-setting, and pilots of the designed approaches,
2. full-fledged implementation of the strategic agenda, tested strategies and activities,
3. evaluation of the implementation, policy recommendations, and Project closure.

The MAP Project is implemented by UNDP and for particular activities the Project engaged a support from the Responsible Parties, CSO organisations, the International Centre for Human Development (ICHD) the OxYGen Foundation and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy. Actions implemented by the partners represent a comprehensive package of support to the National Assembly with a long-term goal of enhancing the overall effectiveness of the Parliament as a policy-making institution.

The Project expected outcomes are:

1. Quality of legislative oversight and policymaking is improved
2. Increased transparency and accountability of the NA
3. Legislative responsiveness, inclusivity and participatory approach is embedded in MP's work

UNDP Armenia hereby seeks the services of an international consultant specialised in parliamentary development evaluations to lead the team of two evaluators to conduct the Mid-Term Review of the “Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia” Project, which as a parliamentary development Project with a strong focus on non-partisan role, demand-driven and strong ownership approach that UNDP is renowned and trusted for. The international Lead Evaluator will be responsible to lead the team of two international evaluators, as well as for the overall design and writing of the mid-term evaluation report.

The team leader is expected, should the COVID-19 permit, arrive to Yerevan for live interviews. The second evaluator can be home based and attend the online interviews.

The evaluator cannot have participated in the Project preparation, formulation and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project document) and shall not have a conflict of interest with the Project’s related activities.

Basic project information in a table format:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Project title | Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia (MAP) | |
| Atlas ID | Project ID: 00082042; Output ID: 00091127 | |
| Corporate outcome and output  CPD 2016-2021  UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021 | Outcome 2: By 2020, people’s expectations for voice, accountability, transparency, and protection of human rights are met by improved systems of democratic governance  Output 2.4: Frameworks and dialogue processes engaged for effective, transparent engagement of civil society and citizens in national and local development.  Outcome 2. Output 2.2.2 “Constitution making, electoral and parliamentary processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency and accountability” | |
| Country | Armenia | |
| Region | UNDP Europe and the CIS Region | |
| Date project document signed | August 2019 | |
| Project Dates | Start  15 August 2019 | Planned End  31 December 2022 |
| Project budget (resources required) | USD 5,000,000 | |
| Project budget (resources allocated) | USD 4,303,266.44 | |
| Project expenditure at the time of evaluation | USD 2,154,247.02  (May 2021) | |
| Funding source | UK, The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida, Government in-kind contribution | |
| Implementing Party | UNDP Armenia | |

**2. Objectives and Scope of work:**

The overall objective of the mid-term review assignment is to assess the continued relevance of an intervention and the progress made towards achieving its planned objectives, effectiveness, efficiency as well as, if available already at this stage, the impact and sustainability of interventions under the “Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia” Project.

The evaluation findings may be used:

* to align/modify the planned scope of activities with the proposed recommendations to ensure all the Project objectives are reached within the lifetime of the Project;
* to maximize the Project impact;
* for further programme development in the field and resource mobilization.

The evaluation will be carried out in close cooperation and consultation with the Project team and the National Assembly administration based on the project results framework, reviewing the Project documents and conducting interviews with main stakeholders, members of the beneficiary groups and selected communities. Interviews should be organised and held, should the circumstances permit for travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic, by the Lead Evaluator live, and online for those meetings with donors and parties that are out of Armenia, for special groups, etc. Findings of the mid-term evaluation will be communicated to the Project Board and Responsible Parties (RPs) on the MAP Project (As mentioned in background – ICHD, Oxygen and WFD).

The interview will be held with the following organisations and individuals as a minimum:

Key Stakeholders:

* Speaker’s Cabinet
* Chief of Staff’s Cabinet
* Members of the Parliament
* Parliamentary staff
* Donors: SIDA/Swedish Embassy and GGF/UK Embassy

Other stakeholders:

* RPAs (OxYGen, ICHD, WFD)
* Audit Office
* Ombudsman’s Office
* Development partners working with parliament (COE, EU, USAID etc.)
* CSOs

**3. Evaluation Criteria and Key guiding questions:**

All Project related documents and materials will be thoroughly reviewed in the Inception phase by the Evaluator to finalise the evaluation design with a clear Evaluation Matrix, a clear logic and workplan of the evaluation, which shall be agreed by all parties. Five core OECD DAC evaluation criteria, namely the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, as well as sustainability and impact (to the extent possible) will be analysed. Key evaluation questions will include, but are not limited to the following:

***Relevance***

* Are the Project activities/components relevant to the actual/defined needs of the beneficiaries? Were the objectives clear and feasible? How do the main components of the Project contribute to the planned objectives and are logically interlinked?
* Is the Project in line with the current priorities of the country? Is the National Assembly of Armenia committed to the Project? How is the Project aligned with and supports the national, regional and community strategies/plans?
* Has the Project involved relevant stakeholders through consultative processes or information-sharing during its preparation phase? Was the needs assessment/analysis on women’s political participation carried out at the beginning of the Project reflecting the various needs of different stakeholders? Are these needs still relevant? Have there any new, more relevant needs emerged that the Project should address?
* How Project adjusted to COVID-19 and post-war conflict context with activities and mode of operation?

***Effectiveness***

* How effective has the Project been in establishing ownership by the stakeholders? How has the Project encouraged ownership on behalf of the beneficiaries for learning and applying the newly acquired knowledge and skills in practice? Can the Project management and implementation be considered as participatory?
* Is the Project making sufficient progress towards its planned objectives/outcomes/outputs? What are the key achievements, challenges, and implementation lessons? How can these be applied to the Project?
* To what extent has the online capacity building work been effective and did it serve its purpose?

***Efficiency***

* To what extent has the UNDP made good use of the human, financial and technical resources, and has used an appropriate combination of tools and approaches to pursue the achievement of Project results in a cost-effective manner?
* Was there a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities of key actors involved?
* To what extent did the Project capitalise on other complementary initiatives to the Project to reinforce the results of the Project?
* Have Project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered? To what extent are the activities and achieved results cost-efficient?

***Sustainability (to the extent possible)***

* To what extent has the Project been able to support the National Assembly in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure ownership and the durability of effects under the ongoing government reforms initiatives in this Mid-term period?
* Is there a need to adjust the Project (i.e. timeline in relation to COVID-19 and post-conflict situation)? If so, do Project objectives and strategies have to be adjusted?
* What are the possible sustainability prerequisites for each of the Project components? What are the hindering factors for ensuring the sustainability of Project outcomes beyond the Project lifecycle?

***Impact (to the extent possible)***

1. Has the Project contributed or is likely to contribute to long-term political or social changes for individuals, communities and institutions in achieving the SDGs agenda?
2. To what extent has the Project achieved its overarching goal of improved quality, transparency and inclusiveness of parliamentary operations?
3. Has the Project had any intended or unintended secondary effect throughout the implementation?

**Cross-cutting issues:**

**Institutional development and capacity building**

* To what extend did the Project contribute to the institutional building of various new mechanisms and tools.
* Has the Project contributed to institutionalization of new organisational structure units to support the roles of the parliament?
* To what extent did stakeholders (National Assembly, CSOs) enhance their capacities on addressing cross-cutting topics?

**Participatory deliberation**

* To what extent are the participatory themes integrated into the Project’s activities?
* To what extend did the Project contribute to raising the dialogue culture and public participation?
* To which extent had the Project contributed to inclusion of CSOs in the consultations with the National Assembly?

**Innovation**

* To what extends has the Project innovative approach and tools contribute to the work of the National Assembly in terms of oversight and outreach?

**Gender equality**

* To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and impact by the Project?
* Is the gender marker data assigned to this project representative of reality?
* To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?

**Human rights, leaving no one behind**

* To what extent have disadvantaged/marginalised groups such as poor, persons with disabilities, etc benefited from MAP?

Please note that specific questions are expected to be included in the inception report. The Lead Evaluator will finalise the specific questions to be used in coordination with UNDP.

1. **Evaluation methodology**

**The evaluation methodology will be guided by the Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).** The evaluation will be conducted in a participatory manner: key stakeholders will be involved in all phases of the evaluation, including the planning, inception, fact-finding and reporting phases.

In this evaluation mixed method approach will be applied by combining qualitative and quantitative components to ensure complementarity. The two independent evaluators will collect data from desk review and verify them with soft in-depth interviews. The analysis will be built on triangulating information collected from different stakeholders (Project staff, Project partners, stakeholders, and beneficiaries) through different methods including secondary data and documentation review and primary data. It should critically examine the information gathered from the various sources and synthesise the information in an objective manner. If contradictory information is obtained from different stakeholders, an effort should be made to understand the reasons for such information, including any gender-based factors and differences.

The Lead Evaluator shall review the following documents before conducting any interviews: Project documentation, progress reports, work plans, monitoring data, workshop reports, country data, policies, legal documents, etc.

Preliminary suggestions for data collection methods to be envisaged include:

1. Desk review including review of analysis of existing documents, legal and policy framework;
2. Review of monitoring and evaluation reports, available reports and analysis generated through the Project;
3. Interviews with key and other beneficiaries (as listed above).
4. Key interviews with partners and stakeholders as specified above;
5. Focus groups where possible

As mentioned, because of COVID-19 the interviews and focus group discussions may be conducted online to ensure no risk for evaluator and interviewees.

The independent evaluator will interview key stakeholders (including but not limited to Project implementers, decision makers, direct and indirect beneficiaries, etc.), and appropriate data collection methods for each interviewee category (such as semi-structured or in-depth interviews, expert interviews), in close coordination with the MAP team.

A combination of these methods should be proposed by the independent evaluator in the detailed evaluation methodology in the inception report.

In close cooperation with the Project team, the Evaluator will also be responsible for the development of appropriate instruments, interviews and for each of the methods selected.

The evaluation will follow the principles of the **UN Evaluation Group’s norms and standards** in particular with regard to independence, objectiveness, impartiality and inclusiveness and will be guided by the UN ethics guidance as guiding principle to ensure quality of evaluation process, especially apropos conflict of interest, confidentiality of individual informants, sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs, discrimination and gender equality, to address issues of vulnerable population.

Should face-to-face interviews be impossible, due to COVID-19 restricting measures, data will be obtained through online means and digital tools, following the guidelines.

**5. Evaluation products (key deliverables)**

**Evaluation Workplans and Inception Report:** Evaluation methodology, including (online) data collection tools/questionnaires, list of beneficiaries and stakeholders to be interviewed, interview schedules and reports.

1. **Draft Evaluation Report:**  After the field activities (online interviews conducted), the Lead Evaluator will submit a draft evaluation report of MAP, highlighting achievements, constraints, and lessons learnt as well as corrective measures where required and recommendations
2. **Final evaluation report:** Evaluation report in English including key recommendations (minimum 30 pages plus annexes). Evaluation report shall be in line with the UN Evaluation Group standard 4.9. It shall be evidence-based, presenting the Project’s progress vis-à-vis the Results Framework, based on triangulated data, findings and recommendations on Project planning, programming, necessary adjustment to the course change, etc.
3. Separate 1-2 pager **summary brief** with infographics summarizing the key findings of the evaluation for sharing with external audiences.

**Related Evaluation Activities**

To achieve the objectives and produce the deliverables of the evaluation, the Lead Evaluator will be expected to:

1. Contextualise MAP interventions.
2. Prepare Inception Report.
3. Conduct meetings (online interviews) with stakeholders
4. The UNDP project team will brief the Lead Evaluator and evaluation team and provide all necessary details and clarifications on the documents made available for the document review.
5. The evaluation team will have meeting and discussions with the project team, Chief Technical Advisor, Democratic Governance Portfolio Manager and other unit staff as relevant, UNDP Resident Representative a.i.
6. The evaluation team will meet with relevant National Assembly representatives and government counterparts, project implementing partners, civil society partners, etc to learn on their experiences with the project.
7. The evaluation team will meet with donor representatives and relevant development partners.
8. Consultation on draft report and recommendations following the submission of the draft report, undertake consultations with UNDP to receive feedback for incorporation into the final report

**6. Evaluation team composition, required competencies and skills for Lead Evaluator:**

A team of two independent consultants will conduct MAP evaluation under the leadership of the Lead evaluator. The selection of the consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall “team” qualities. The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project’s related activities.

**Required qualifications, competencies and skills for Lead Evaluator**

***Education:***

* + - PhD in development studies, law, social sciences, law or similar field. MA in development, law, social science would be taken into account where experience prevails.

***Experience***

* + - 10 years of professional experience in programme/Project development, analysis, monitoring and evaluation for or with a parliament and international organisations in the above-mentioned areas;
    - 5 years of experience in development and application of methodologies for evaluation and assessment, including tools and techniques.
    - Experience of leading evaluations and teams
    - Experience in working in a parliament of with a parliament
    - Proven experience in leading parliamentary evaluation for UNDP

***Languages***

* + - Fluency in English, Russian is an asset.

***Competencies/Skills:***

* + - Strong data collection, analysis and **writing skills in English**;
    - Strong knowledge of parliamentary development principles;
    - Substantive knowledge of concept and principles of local development and governance processes, as well as subject-matter international instruments;
    - Strong analytical capacity and creative thinking;
    - Proven capacity to write analytical reports;
    - Strong planning skills and ability to respect deadlines;
    - **Excellent communication and oral presentation skills in English;**
    - Excellent teamwork skills; ability to consult, involve and work with stakeholders of different backgrounds, points of view and interests;
    - Demonstrated initiative, high sense of responsibility and discretion;
    - High level of integrity, **professionalism and respect for diversity.**
    - Availability to travel as required.

**7. Evaluation ethics**

This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG ‘Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation’. The consultant must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The consultant must also ensure security of collected information before and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must also be solely used for the evaluation and not for other uses with the express authorization of UNDP and partner.

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1. **Time frame for the evaluation process:**

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| **Description of deliverables** | **Delivery time** |
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**Key Documents to review**

* Project Document
* Results Framework
* Annual and Progress/Monitoring Reports with annexes
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* CCA and UNDAF Evaluation, other relevant Evaluations (UNDP, stakeholders, etc), UNDP Annual Results-Oriented Analysis Report

***Indicative structure of the Evaluation Report:***

***Contents page***

***Opening pages (acknowledgments, list of acronyms)***

***Executive Summary (5-6 pages)***

**Chapter I Background, Object and Methodology**

* 1. Introduction
  2. Background and context of the Project
  3. Object of the Evaluation
  4. Purpose, Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation
  5. Evaluation Methodology (short)
  6. Major Limitations
  7. Ethical considerations, Human Rights and Cross-cutting aspects

**Chapter II Analysis and Findings**

2.1 Relevance

2.2 Effectiveness

2.3 Efficiency

2.4 Sustainability

2.5 Impact

**Chapter III Conclusions and Recommendations**

3.1 Conclusions and Lessons Learned

3.2. Recommendations

**ANNEXES**

1. Terms of Reference
2. Desk Review and Background Documents
3. List of Key Informants Interviewed
4. Detailed Methodology
5. Interview Guides and Survey Instruments
6. Output tables
7. **Application process**

**Evaluator will be selected from UNDP rosters**

Candidates will be evaluated using a cumulative analysis method taking into consideration the combination of the applicants' technical qualifications, experience and financial proposal. The contract will be awarded to the candidate whose offer has been evaluated and determined as technically responsive/compliant/acceptable to the requirements of the ToR and received the highest cumulative (technical and financial) score out of below defined technical and financial criteria.

**Only candidates obtaining a minimum of 49 points in the technical evaluation would be considered for financial evaluation.**

**Technical Criteria - 70% of total evaluation - max. 70 points**

**Financial Criteria - 30% of total evaluation - max. 30 points.**

1. Application should include the following documents: **CV**, including Education/Qualification, Processional Certification, Employment Records /Experience
2. **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the [Letter of Confirmation of Interest template](https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/PSU_%20Individual%20Contract_Offerors%20Letter%20to%20UNDP%20Confirming%20Interest%20and%20Availability.docx&action=default). If an applicant is employed by an organisation/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

Application may be submitted via email to the following e‐mail address: [**silva.abelyan@undp.org**](mailto:silva.abelyan@undp.org)

**Terms of Reference (second consultant)**

**Post Title: International Consultant/Evaluator for Mid-Term Review** **of the Parliamentary Project**

**Project Title:** Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia (MAP)

**Project number:** Project ID: 00082042 / Output ID: 00091127

**Contract modality:** Individual Contract (IC)

**Starting Date:** 20 September 2021

**Duration:** September-October 2021 (estimated 19 consultancy days)

**Duty Station:** Home based. Possible 1-week mission to Armenia (alternatively distant support, depending on COVID-19 restrictions)

1. **Background and context:**

UNDP MAP The Project is designed to strengthen the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia (NA) in its new and fundamentally enhanced role within the governance system in carrying out critical functions of law-making, oversight, and representation. With a long-term goal of improving the overall effectiveness of the Parliament as a policy-making institution, the Project is designed to support the newly elected NA to take advantage of the modern governance tools and mechanisms that are focusing on improved quality, transparency and inclusiveness of parliamentary operations and enhanced parliamentary capacity for gender-responsive policy-making.

The three components of the Project are focused on the areas of Legislative capacity, Legislative transparency, and Legislative responsiveness. To that end, a three-stage strategy is applied:

1. catalytic stage of needs assessment, strategic agenda-setting, and pilots of the designed approaches,
2. full-fledged implementation of the strategic agenda, tested strategies and activities,
3. evaluation of the implementation, policy recommendations, and Project closure.

The MAP Project is implemented by UNDP and for particular activities the Project engaged a support from the Responsible Parties, CSO organisations, the International Centre for Human Development (ICHD) the OxYGen Foundation and the Westminster Foundation for Democracy. Actions implemented by the partners represent a comprehensive package of support to the National Assembly with a long-term goal of enhancing the overall effectiveness of the Parliament as a policy-making institution.

The Project expected outcomes are:

1. Quality of legislative oversight and policymaking is improved
2. Increased transparency and accountability of the NA
3. Legislative responsiveness, inclusivity and participatory approach is embedded in MP's work

UNDP Armenia hereby seeks the services of an international consultant specialised in parliamentary development evaluations to work in a team of two evaluators under the leadership of the Lead Evaluator to conduct the Mid-Term Review of the “Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia” Project, which as a parliamentary development Project with a strong focus on non-partisan role, demand-driven and strong ownership approach that UNDP is renowned and trusted for. The international evaluator will help the Lead Evaluator to produce the design and write the mid-term evaluation report.

The Evaluator is not expected to arrive to Yerevan for live interviews. The Evaluator can be home based and attend the online interviews.

The evaluator cannot have participated in the Project preparation, formulation and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project document) and shall not have a conflict of interest with the Project’s related activities.

Basic project information in a table format:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Project title | Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia (MAP) | |
| Atlas ID | Project ID: 00082042; Output ID: 00091127 | |
| Corporate outcome and output  CPD 2016-2021  UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021 | Outcome 2: By 2020, people’s expectations for voice, accountability, transparency, and protection of human rights are met by improved systems of democratic governance  Output 2.4: Frameworks and dialogue processes engaged for effective, transparent engagement of civil society and citizens in national and local development.  Outcome 2. Output 2.2.2 “Constitution making, electoral and parliamentary processes and institutions strengthened to promote inclusion, transparency and accountability” | |
| Country | Armenia | |
| Region | UNDP Europe and the CIS Region | |
| Date project document signed | August 2019 | |
| Project Dates | Start  15 August 2019 | Planned End  31 December 2022 |
| Project budget (resources required) | USD 5,000,000 | |
| Project budget (resources allocated) | USD 4,303,266.44 | |
| Project expenditure at the time of evaluation | USD 2,154,247.02  (May 2021) | |
| Funding source | UK, The Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Sida, Government in-kind contribution | |
| Implementing Party | UNDP Armenia | |

**2. Objectives and Scope of work:**

The overall objective of the mid-term review assignment is to assess the continued relevance of an intervention and the progress made towards achieving its planned objectives, effectiveness, efficiency as well as, if available already at this stage, the impact and sustainability of interventions under the “Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia” Project.

The evaluation findings may be used:

* to align/modify the planned scope of activities with the proposed recommendations to ensure all the Project objectives are reached within the lifetime of the Project;
* to maximise the Project impact;
* for further programme development in the field and resource mobilization.

The evaluation will be carried out in close cooperation and consultation with the Project team and the National Assembly administration based on the project results framework, reviewing the Project documents and conducting interviews with main stakeholders, members of the beneficiary groups and selected communities. Interviews should be organised and held, should the circumstances permit for travel due to the COVID-19 pandemic, by the Lead Evaluator live, and online for those meetings with donors and parties that are out of Armenia, for special groups, etc. The Evaluator will participate in the meetings online (home-based if not otherwise decided). Findings of the mid-term evaluation will be communicated to the Project Board and Responsible Parties (RPs) on the MAP Project (As mentioned in background – ICHD, Oxygen and WFD).

The interview will be held with the following organisations and individuals as a minimum:

Key Stakeholders:

* Speaker’s Cabinet
* Chief of Staff’s Cabinet
* Members of the Parliament
* Parliamentary staff
* Donors: SIDA/Swedish Embassy and GGF/UK Embassy

Other stakeholders:

* RPAs (OxYGen, ICHD, WFD)
* Audit Office
* Ombudsman’s Office
* Development partners working with parliament (COE, EU, USAID etc.)
* CSOs

**3. Evaluation Criteria and Key guiding questions:**

All Project related documents and materials will be thoroughly reviewed in the Inception phase by the Evaluator to finalise the evaluation design with a clear Evaluation Matrix, a clear logic and workplan of the evaluation, which shall be agreed by all parties. Five core OECD DAC evaluation criteria, namely the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, as well as sustainability and impact (to the extent possible) will be analysed. Key evaluation questions will include, but are not limited to the following:

***Relevance***

* Are the Project activities/components relevant to the actual/defined needs of the beneficiaries? Were the objectives clear and feasible? How do the main components of the Project contribute to the planned objectives and are logically interlinked?
* Is the Project in line with the current priorities of the country? Is the National Assembly of Armenia committed to the Project? How is the Project aligned with and supports the national, regional and community strategies/plans?
* Has the Project involved relevant stakeholders through consultative processes or information-sharing during its preparation phase? Was the needs assessment/analysis on women’s political participation carried out at the beginning of the Project reflecting the various needs of different stakeholders? Are these needs still relevant? Have there any new, more relevant needs emerged that the Project should address?
* How Project adjusted to COVID-19 and post-war conflict context with activities and mode of operation?

***Effectiveness***

* How effective has the Project been in establishing ownership by the stakeholders? How has the Project encouraged ownership on behalf of the beneficiaries for learning and applying the newly acquired knowledge and skills in practice? Can the Project management and implementation be considered as participatory?
* Is the Project making sufficient progress towards its planned objectives/outcomes/outputs? What are the key achievements, challenges, and implementation lessons? How can these be applied to the Project?
* To what extent has the online capacity building work been effective and did it serve its purpose?

***Efficiency***

* To what extent has the UNDP made good use of the human, financial and technical resources, and has used an appropriate combination of tools and approaches to pursue the achievement of Project results in a cost-effective manner?
* Was there a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities of key actors involved?
* To what extent did the Project capitalise on other complementary initiatives to the Project to reinforce the results of the Project?
* Have Project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered? To what extent are the activities and achieved results cost-efficient?

***Sustainability (to the extent possible)***

* To what extent has the Project been able to support the National Assembly in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure ownership and the durability of effects under the ongoing government reforms initiatives in this Mid-term period?
* Is there a need to adjust the Project (i.e. timeline in relation to COVID-19 and post-conflict situation)? If so, do Project objectives and strategies have to be adjusted?
* What are the possible sustainability prerequisites for each of the Project components? What are the hindering factors for ensuring the sustainability of Project outcomes beyond the Project lifecycle?

***Impact (to the extent possible)***

1. Has the Project contributed or is likely to contribute to long-term political or social changes for individuals, communities and institutions in achieving the SDGs agenda?
2. To what extent has the Project achieved its overarching goal of improved quality, transparency and inclusiveness of parliamentary operations?
3. Has the Project had any intended or unintended secondary effect throughout the implementation?

**Cross-cutting issues:**

**Institutional development and capacity building**

* To what extend did the Project contribute to the institutional building of various new mechanisms and tools.
* Has the Project contributed to institutionalization of new organisational structure units to support the roles of the parliament?
* To what extent did stakeholders (National Assembly, CSOs) enhance their capacities on addressing cross-cutting topics?

**Participatory deliberation**

* To what extent are the participatory themes integrated into the Project’s activities?
* To what extend did the Project contribute to raising the dialogue culture and public participation?
* To which extent had the Project contributed to inclusion of CSOs in the consultations with the National Assembly?

**Innovation**

* To what extends has the Project innovative approach and tools contribute to the work of the National Assembly in terms of oversight and outreach?

**Gender equality**

* To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and impact by the Project?
* Is the gender marker data assigned to this project representative of reality?
* To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?

**Human rights, leaving no one behind**

* To what extent have disadvantaged/marginalised groups such as poor, persons with disabilities, etc benefited from MAP?

Please note that specific questions are expected to be included in the inception report. The Lead Evaluator will finalise the specific questions to be used in coordination with UNDP.

1. **Evaluation methodology**

**The evaluation methodology will be guided by the Norms and Standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG).** The evaluation will be conducted in a participatory manner: key stakeholders will be involved in all phases of the evaluation, including the planning, inception, fact-finding and reporting phases.

In this evaluation mixed method approach will be applied by combining qualitative and quantitative components to ensure complementarity. The two independent evaluators will collect data from desk review and verify them with soft in-depth interviews. The analysis will be built on triangulating information collected from different stakeholders (Project staff, Project partners, stakeholders, and beneficiaries) through different methods including secondary data and documentation review and primary data. It should critically examine the information gathered from the various sources and synthesise the information in an objective manner. If contradictory information is obtained from different stakeholders, an effort should be made to understand the reasons for such information, including any gender-based factors and differences.

The Evaluator shall review the following documents before conducting any interviews: Project documentation, progress reports, work plans, monitoring data, workshop reports, country data, policies, legal documents, etc.

Preliminary suggestions for data collection methods to be envisaged include:

1. Desk review including review of analysis of existing documents, legal and policy framework;
2. Review of monitoring and evaluation reports, available reports and analysis generated through the Project;
3. Attend all online Interviews with key and other beneficiaries (as listed above).
4. Attend all online key interviews with partners and stakeholders as specified above;
5. Attend all online focus groups where possible

As mentioned, because of COVID-19 the interviews and focus group discussions may be conducted online to ensure no risk for evaluator and interviewees.

The independent evaluator will participate in online interviews with all stakeholders (including but not limited to Project implementers, decision makers, direct and indirect beneficiaries, etc.), and appropriate data collection methods for each interviewee category (such as semi-structured or in-depth interviews, expert interviews), in close coordination with the MAP team.

A combination of these methods should be proposed by the independent evaluator in the detailed evaluation methodology in the inception report.

In close cooperation with the Project team, the Evaluator will also be responsible for the development of appropriate instruments, interviews and for each of the methods selected.

The evaluation will follow the principles of the **UN Evaluation Group’s norms and standards** in particular with regard to independence, objectiveness, impartiality and inclusiveness and will be guided by the UN ethics guidance as guiding principle to ensure quality of evaluation process, especially apropos conflict of interest, confidentiality of individual informants, sensitive to beliefs, manners and customs, discrimination and gender equality, to address issues of vulnerable population.

Data will be obtained through online means and digital tools, following the guidelines.

**5. Evaluation products (key deliverables)**

1. **Evaluation Workplans and Inception Report:** Evaluation methodology, including (online) data collection tools/questionnaires, list of beneficiaries and stakeholders to be interviewed, interview schedules and reports.
2. **Draft Evaluation Report:**  After the field activities (online interviews conducted), the Lead Evaluator will submit a draft evaluation report of MAP, highlighting achievements, constraints, and lessons learnt as well as corrective measures where required and recommendations
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4. Separate 1-2 pager **summary brief** with infographics summarizing the key findings of the evaluation for sharing with external audiences.

**Related Evaluation Activities**

To achieve the objectives and produce the deliverables of the evaluation, the Evaluator will be expected to:

1. Desk review analysis.
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3. Conduct online interviews with stakeholders
4. The UNDP project team will brief the evaluation team and provide all necessary details and clarifications on the documents made available for the document review.
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**Financial Criteria - 30% of total evaluation - max. 30 points.**

1. Application should include the following documents **CV**, including Education/Qualification, Processional Certification, Employment Records /Experience
2. **Financial Proposal** that indicates the all-inclusive fixed total contract price and all other travel related costs (such as flight ticket, per diem, etc), supported by a breakdown of costs, as per template attached to the [Letter of Confirmation of Interest template](https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/PSU_%20Individual%20Contract_Offerors%20Letter%20to%20UNDP%20Confirming%20Interest%20and%20Availability.docx&action=default). If an applicant is employed by an organisation/company/institution, and he/she expects his/her employer to charge a management fee in the process of releasing him/her to UNDP under Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA), the applicant must indicate at this point, and ensure that all such costs are duly incorporated in the financial proposal submitted to UNDP.

Application may be submitted via email to the following e‐mail address: [**silva.abelyan@undp.org**](mailto:silva.abelyan@undp.org)

**Annex 2: Desk Review and Background Documents**

**UNDP Armenia corporate documents reviewed in e-copy**:

[Country Programme Document (CPD) 2021-2025](about:blank)

[United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Armenia 2021-2025](about:blank)

[Independent Country Programme Evaluation: Armenia](about:blank)

[Country Programme Document (CPD)](about:blank)2016-2020, revised

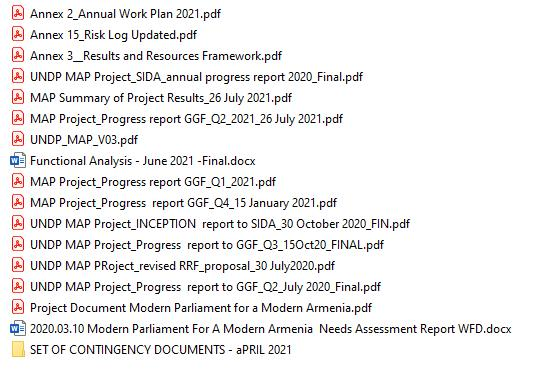
UNDP ROAR 2020

UNDAF Evaluation

**MAP project-related documents**

1. All donor reports for MAP as of August 2021
2. AWPs
3. Risk log updates
4. Results and resources framework (updated)
5. Needs Assessment
6. Functional Analysis

These include:



**Select Interweb reference links** (in addition to those directly referenced as footnotes in body of MTR Report)

Armenia, female candidates and: [How will women participate in Armenia's new government? (armenianweekly.com)](https://armenianweekly.com/2021/05/12/how-will-women-participate-in-armenias-new-government/)

Armenia legal system: [Legal System (investinarmenia.am)](http://investinarmenia.am/en/legal-system#:~:text=The%20Constitution%20of%20the%20Republic%20has%20supreme%20juridical,legal%20force.%20Armenia%20is%20a%20Civil%20Law%20country.)

Armenia MPs on Facebook: [National Assembly of Armenia / Ազգային ժողով - Home | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/parliament.am)

Armenia NA internship programme: [Internship Program at the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia :: CSO DePo (hkdepo.am)](https://hkdepo.am/en/opportunity/internship-program-at-the-national-assembly-of-the-republic-of-armenia)

Armenia National Assembly, political violence in: [Mass brawl erupts in Armenian parliament: Third violent bout in just two days - BBC News](https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-58340042) and [Mass brawl breaks out in Armenian parliament – video | World news | The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/world/video/2021/aug/26/mass-brawl-breaks-out-in-armenian-parliament-video)

Armenia, war veterans: [Armenia: Karabakh Veterans Fight to Survive | Eurasianet](https://eurasianet.org/armenia-karabakh-veterans-fight-to-survive)

See also Insurance Foundation for Veterans: [Insurance Foundation for Servicemen - 1000plus.am](https://www.1000plus.am/en/)

Canadian parliament and Armenia NA: [Armenian Parliament Prioritizes A Diversified Workforce: An Armenia-Canada Dialogue on Inclusion • Parliamentary Centre (parlcent.org)](https://parlcent.org/armenian-parliament-prioritizes-a-diversified-workforce-an-armenia-canada-dialogue-on-inclusion/)

Chatham House Rules ([Chatham House Rule | Chatham House – International Affairs Think Tank](https://www.chathamhouse.org/about-us/chatham-house-rule))

Council of Europe Office in Yerevan: [Council of Europe Office in Yerevan (coe.int)](https://www.coe.int/en/web/yerevan/home) and [Armenia (coe.int)](https://www.coe.int/en/web/programmes/armenia)

COVID-19, Armenia: [Armenia: WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard With Vaccination Data | WHO Coronavirus (COVID-19) Dashboard With Vaccination Data](https://covid19.who.int/region/euro/country/am), [COVID-19 in Armenia - COVID-19 Very High - Level 4: COVID-19 Very High - Travel Health Notices | Travelers' Health | CDC](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices/covid-4/coronavirus-armenia), and [Armenia: Coronavirus Pandemic Country Profile - Our World in Data](https://ourworldindata.org/coronavirus/country/armenia)

European Parliament, research: [European Parliamentary Research Service (europa.eu)](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/at-your-service/en/stay-informed/research-and-analysis) and [EPRS - European Parliament Research Service | Knowledge for policy (europa.eu)](https://knowledge4policy.ec.europa.eu/organisation/eprs-european-parliament-research-service_en)

Government-sponsored NGO (GONGO): [What Is a GONGO? – Foreign Policy](https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/13/what-is-a-gongo/)

International Centre for Human Development (ICHD): [https://ichd.org/](about:blank)

National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia: [National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia | Official Web Site | parliament.am](http://www.parliament.am/news.php?do=view&cat_id=2&day=24&month=09&year=2021&NewsID=15149&lang=eng) and [Armenian Assembly Yerevan - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgcOdL1cIx60NAOZAomhGHQ)

National Center for Educational Technology: [National Center of Educational Technologies (ktak.am)](https://ktak.am/index.php/en)

Open Government Partnership (OGP): [Initiatives - «Open Government Partnership» Initiative - The Government of the Republic of Armenia](https://www.gov.am/en/open-government/)

OSCE/ODIHR parliamentary ethics standards, and elaboration of NA Code of Ethics: [Armenia | OSCE - ODIHR](https://hatecrime.osce.org/armenia)

OxYGen Foundation [https://oxygen.org.am/en/](about:blank)

Public hearing examples: [Assembly Procedure (coe.int)](https://pace.coe.int/en/pages/procedure) and [Upcoming Public Hearings – Parliament of Australia (aph.gov.au)](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Upcoming_Public_Hearings) and also [Kazakhstan: Parliamentary Hearings on Labour Market and Youth Employment (ilo.org)](https://www.ilo.org/moscow/news/WCMS_650579/lang--en/index.htm)

Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)/Armenia: <https://www.sida.se/en/sidas-international-work/armenia>

UNDP alternative communication platform beyond current social media extensive use: [Parliament of Western Armenia - Home | Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/ParliamentWesternArmenia/)

UNDP MAP Project introduction in 2019: [Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia | UNDP in Armenia](https://www.am.undp.org/content/armenia/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2019/modern-parliament-for-a-modern-armenia.html)

United Nations Agenda 2030: [UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](https://www.coe.int/en/web/programmes/un-2030-agenda)

United States Agency for International Development (USAID): [Armenia | U.S. Agency for International Development (usaid.gov)](https://www.usaid.gov/armenia)

UN Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions [Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions (undp.org)](https://www1.undp.org/content/oslo-governance-centre/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-16-peace-justice-and-strong-institutions.html)

Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD UK)/Armenia: [Armenia - Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)](https://www.wfd.org/network/armenia-2/)

World Bank/Armenia: [Individuals using the Internet (% of population) - Armenia | Data (worldbank.org)](https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/IT.NET.USER.ZS?locations=AM)

### Annex 3: List of Key Informants Interviewed

**17 September – 08 October 2021**

| **No.** | **Name** | **Organisation/Position** | **Interview conducted by** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | |  |
| 1. **National Partners: National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia** | | |  |
|  | **Vladimir Vardanyan** | MP, "Civil Contract" Faction  Standing Committee on State and Legal Affairs (Committee Chair) | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Maria Karapetyan** | MP, "Civil Contract" Faction | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Ani Samsonyan** | Ex-MP, “Bright Armenia” Faction, Opposition | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Vahan Naribekyan** | Chief of Staff | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Heghine Khachikyan** | Assistant to Chief of Staff | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Tigran Galstyan** | Former Chief of Staff | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Davit Karapetyan** | Former Advisor to the Speaker of the RA NA | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Lusine Hovhannisyan** | Head of the Service Division for the Official Web Site of the NA | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Tigran Parsilyan** | Head of Department for Automatic Management and Information Systems | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Gagik Barseghyan** | Head of Budget Office | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Arusyak Kananyan** | Head of Division of Legal Monitoring and Information | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Artak Galstyan** | Head specialist of Social, Educational, Healthcare Expertise Dept | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Lilya Vardanyan** | Expert of Standing Committee on Regional and Eurasian Integration | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Marietta Khurshudyan** | Expert of Standing Committee of Social Affairs and Healthcare | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
| **B. Independent Scrutiny Bodies** | | |  |
|  | **Karen Arustamyan** | Board Member, Audit Chamber of the Republic of Armenia | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
|  | **Zorayr Karapetyan** | Head of Methodology, Analysis, and International Relations Department, Audit Chamber of the Republic of Armenia | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
| **C. Project Responsible Partners** | | |  |
|  | **Christina Sargsyan** | Project Director for the RPA with MAP Project, ICHD | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
|  | **Margarita Hakobyan** | Executive Director  OxYGen foundation | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
|  | **Kristine Hovhannisyan** | Project Coordinator  OxYGen foundation | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
|  | **Christopher Levick** | Regional Director, Europe & Central Asia | Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
|  | **Ketevan Chaduneli** | Country Representative | Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD) | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
| **D. INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL IGOs and NGOs** | | |  |
|  | **Tatevik Barseghyan** | COE | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
|  | **Anahit Khachatryan** | USAID | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović |
| **E. DONORS** | | |  |
|  | **Lauriane Povey** | Country Programme Manager for Armenia and Moldova  Good Governance Fund | Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office | London, GGF | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
|  | **Oksanna Abrahamyan** | Head of Programmes | British Embassy Yerevan, Armenia, GGF | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
|  | **Izabella Eriksson** | Counsellor / Development Cooperation, SIDA | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
| **F. UNDP** | | |  |
|  | **Mihaela Stojkoska** | UNDP RR a.i. | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
|  | **Alla Bakunts** | Head of Governance and IBM Unit | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
|  | **Biljana Ledenican** | MAP Project Chief of Technical Advisor | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |
|  | **Ruzanna Hayrapetyan** | MAP Project Associate Coordinator | Dr. Slobodan Vukadinović and Tim Baker |

**ITINERARY**

* **Meeting with UNDP:**
  + **Friday 17th September 16:30 -17:15 UNDP RR a.i. Mihaela Stojkosa**
  + **Friday 17th September 17:15 -18:30 MTG with the MAP CTA and Project Associate Coordinator**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Time AMD** | **MONDAY**  **20 Sept** | **TUESDAY**  **21 Sept** | **WEDNESDAY**  **22 Sept** | **THURSDAY**  **23 Sept** | **FRIDAY**  **24 Sept** |
|  | NA mtgs day | NA Meetings day | Secretariat / RPAs day | Committee Secretaries and MPs day | NA Advisers |
| **12:00** |  |  |  | 12:00- 13:30 NA **Vladimir Vardanyan**, MP, Chair of the Legal Affairs Standing Committee | 12:00- 13:30  NA Experts/ Standing Committee Secretaries  **Lilya Vardanyan**, Expert of Standing Committee on Regional and Eurasian Integration  **Marietta Khurshudyan**, Expert of Standing Committee on Social Affairs and Health Care |
| **13:00** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **14:00** |  |  | 14:00- 15:00  NA Secretariat  **Heghine Khachikyan**  Assistant to the Chief of Staff | 14:00 – 15:00 MTG  **Gagik Barseghyan**  Head of Parliamentary Budget Office | 14:00 – 15:00  **Tigran Parsilyan**, Head of IT Unit |
| **15:00** |  |  | 15:30-16:30  MTG with Oxygen  **Margarita Hakobyan** |  |  |
| **16:00** |  |  |  | 16:00 – 17:00 MTG /MPs  **Maria Karapetyan,** MP, Code of Ethics | 16:00-17:30  **Arusyak Kananyan,** Head of Division of Legal Monitoring and Information;  **Artak Galstyan,** Head Specialist of Social, HealthCare and Expertise Department- |
| **17:00** |  |  | 17:00 – 18:00  MTG with ICHD  **Christina Sargasyan** |  |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Time AMD** | **MONDAY**  **27 Sept** | **TUESDAY**  **28 Sept** | **WEDNESDAY**  **29 Sept** | **THURSDAY**  **30 Sept** | **FRIDAY**  **1 Oct** |
|  | PBO and Independent bodies | Partners and donors |  |  |  |
| **12:00** | 12:00- 13:00  **Davit Karapetyan**  Former adviser to the Speaker | 12:00 – 13:00  **Arnak Avetisyan**  **ex-CoS**  CANCELLED |  | 12:00- 13:00 Ombudsperson Office  **(contacted-wait for response)** CANCELLED | 12:00- 13:00  **Ani Samsonyan**, former MP opposition, gender |
| **13:00** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **14:00** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **15:00** |  | 15:00 – 16:00  MTG with SIDA  **Izabella Erickson** |  | 15:00- 16:00 COE  **Tatevik Barseghyan** |  |
| **16:00** | 16:30-18:00  **Karen Arustamyan, Ph.D.**  Board Member, RA Audit Chamber  **Zorayr Karapetyan, Ph.D.**  Head of Methodology, Analysis, and International Relations Department, RA Audit |  |  | 16:30- 17:30  **Lusine Hovhannisyan,** Head of the Service Division for the Official Web Site of the NA | 16:30 – 17:30  **Vahan Naribekyan,**  Chief of Staff |
| **17:00** |  |  |  |  |  |
| **18:00** |  | 18:00 – 19:00  **WFD -**  **Christopher Levick and Ketevan Chaduneli** | 18:00 – 19:00  **Tigran Galstyan ex-CoS** |  |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Time AMD** | **MONDAY**  **4 October** | **TUESDAY**  **5 October** | **WEDNESDAY**  **6 October** | **THURSDAY**  **7 October** | **FRIDAY**  **8 October** |
| 12:00 |  | 12:00-13:00  **Anahit Khachatryan,**  USAID |  |  |  |
| 13:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 14:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16:00 |  |  |  |  |  |
| **17:00** |  |  | 17:00-18:30 **Alla Bakunts,** Head of UNDP Governance |  | 17:00- 18:00 MTG GGF and UK Embassy  **Oksanna Abrahamyan and**  **Lauriane Povey** |

### Annex 4: Detailed MTR Methodology

**Evaluation criteria and questions**

1. **Relevance**

The relevance of a project relates primarily to its design and concerns the extent to whichits stated objectives correctly address the identified problems or *real* needs. Relevance can be defined also as the extent to which the [objectives](about:blank) of the programme are consistent with the country needs, strategic priorities, specific policies, etc.

Evaluation questions for Relevance:

1. Was the project relevant to national priorities and beneficiary needs? Did stated outputs adequate response to the real needs of beneficiaries?
2. Was the project relevant to UNDP’s mandate? Were stated outputs in accordance with CPD and UNDAF for the Armenia?
3. Was the NA involved in determining the Project activities during the project preparation phase?
4. Are the Project activities/components relevant to the actual/defined needs of the beneficiaries? Were the objectives clear and feasible? How do the main components of the Project contribute to the planned objectives and are logically interlinked?
5. Is the Project in line with the current priorities of the country? Is the National Assembly of Armenia committed to the Project? How is the Project aligned with and supports the national, regional and community strategies/plans?
6. Has the Project involved relevant stakeholders through consultative processes or information-sharing during its preparation phase? Was the needs assessment/analysis on women’s political participation carried out at the beginning of the Project reflecting the various needs of different stakeholders? Are these needs still relevant? Have there any new, more relevant needs emerged that the Project should address?
7. How Project adjusted to COVID-19 and post-war conflict context with activities and mode of operation?
8. **Effectiveness**

The effectiveness criterion concerns how far the project’s results were *used* or their potential benefits were realised - in other words, whether they achieved the projectpurpose. The key question is what difference the project made in practice, as measured by how far the intended beneficiaries really benefited from the products or services it made available. The effectiveness criterion serves to establish to what extent the intervention's objectives/results have been achieved. Where possible, the relative importance of each operation (priority/action/project) being evaluate within the project’s context should also be taken into account. Effectiveness is the family of criteria more closely related to identified indicators and targets.

Evaluation questions for **Effectiveness**:

1. Was stated outcome 1 (Quality of legislative oversight and policymaking is improved) achieved?
2. Did project develop tools for increasing accountability and transparency of the NA?
3. Was stated outcome 3 (Legislative responsiveness, inclusivity and participatory approach is embedded in MPs work) achieved?
4. Did the NA participate in the decision-making process during the implementation of the Project?
5. How effective has the Project been in establishing ownership by the stakeholders? How has the Project encouraged ownership on behalf of the beneficiaries for learning and applying the newly acquired knowledge and skills in practice? Can the Project management and implementation be considered as participatory?
6. Is the Project making sufficient progress towards its planned objectives/outcomes/outputs? What are the key achievements, challenges, and implementation lessons? How can these be applied to the Project?
7. To what extent has the online capacity building work been effective and did it serve its purpose?
8. **Efficiency**

The efficiency criterion concerns how well the various activities transformed the available resources into the intended results /outputs, in terms of quantity, quality and timeliness. A key question it asks is “have things been done right?” and thereby also addresses value-for-money, that is whether similar results could have been achieved more by other means at lower cost in the same time. Efficiency is widely considered as a measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results. In other words, the efficiency criterion serves to establish the relation between the costs and the benefits/results of a given project, or else, the resources utilised for a set of given results, where actual results have been eventually achieved.

Evaluation questions for **Efficiency**:

1. What is the relation between the project budget and outcomes? Has implementation in the form of project activities made it possible to obtain the same effects with lower costs?
2. Has the budget been changed during the implementation of the project? How did that affect the project results?
3. How were decisions made? How did that affect the project results?
4. To what extent has the UNDP made good use of the human, financial and technical resources, and has used an appropriate combination of tools and approaches to pursue the achievement of Project results in a cost-effective manner?
5. Was there a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities of key actors involved?
6. To what extent did the Project capitalise on other complementary initiatives to the Project to reinforce the results of the Project?
7. Have Project funds and activities been delivered in a timely manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered? To what extent are the activities and achieved results cost-efficient?
8. Sustainability

Often most important criterion is sustainability. It relates to whether the positive outcomes of the project at purpose level are likely to continue after external funding ends, and also whether it’s longer-term impact on the wider development process can also be sustained at the level of the sector, region or country.Sustainability is defined as the possibility to sustain a given policy/practice/development path, etc., in the long run. As an evaluation criterion, “sustainability” is widely referred as the continuation of benefits from a given interventions after these have been “completed”. It refers to “the probability of continued long-term benefits”. It is obvious that sustainability has a close relation to the three previous criteria. It is fact very difficult to achieve good level of sustainability, if any, in cases where effectiveness, efficiency and impacts (hopefully beneficial) have been disappointing. “Possibility to sustain in the long run”, “long-run resilience (maintain) of beneficial results/impacts”.

Evaluation questions for **Sustainability**:

1. To what extent has the Project been able to support the National Assembly in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure ownership and the durability of effects under the ongoing government reforms initiatives in this Mid-term period?
2. Is there a need to adjust the Project (i.e., timeline in relation to COVID-19 and post-conflict situation)? If so, do Project objectives and strategies have to be adjusted?
3. What are the possible sustainability prerequisites for each of the Project components? What are the hindering factors for ensuring the sustainability of Project outcomes beyond the Project lifecycle?

**5. Impact**

Another term that is commonly used is results. Results is defined by **OECD DAC** as the “output, outcome or **impact** (intended or unintended, positive and/or negative) of a development intervention”. ‘Results’ is defined differently by different organisations. Some only use it to describe actual achievements whilst others use it to describe predicted change.

Evaluation questions for **Impact**:

1. Has the Project contributed or is likely to contribute to long-term political or social changes for individuals, communities and institutions in achieving the SDGs agenda?
2. To what extent has the Project achieved its overarching goal of improved quality, transparency and inclusiveness of parliamentary operations?
3. Has the Project had any intended or unintended secondary effect throughout the implementation?

**Cross-cutting issues:**

**Institutional development and capacity-building**

* To what extend did the Project contribute to the institutional building of various new mechanisms and tools?
* Has the Project contributed to institutionalization of new organisational structure units to support the roles of the parliament?
* To what extent did stakeholders (National Assembly, CSOs) enhance their capacities on addressing cross-cutting topics?

**Participatory deliberation**

* To what extent are the participatory themes integrated into the Project’s activities?
* To what extend did the Project contribute to raising the dialogue culture and public participation?
* To which extent had the Project contributed to inclusion of CSOs in the consultations with the National Assembly?

**Innovation**

* To what extends has the Project innovative approach and tools contribute to the work of the National Assembly in terms of oversight and outreach?

**Gender equality**

* To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and impact by the Project?
* Is the gender marker data assigned to this project representative of reality?
* To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?

**Human rights, leaving no one behind**

* To what extent have disadvantaged/marginalised groups such as poor, persons with disabilities, (et al) benefited from MAP?
* How has MAP impacted Armenian human development and individual rights in line with the SDGs?

**Evaluation matrix**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Criteria/Sub-criteria** | **Questions to be addressed by evaluation** | **What to look for** | **Data sources** | **Data collection methods** |
| **Relevance** | Was the project relevant to national priorities and beneficiary needs? | Did stated outputs adequate respond to the real needs of beneficiaries? | Project document  Project stakeholders | review, interviews |
| Was the project within UNDP’s mandate? | Were stated outputs in accordance with  CPD and UNDAF for the Republic of Armenia? | Project document,   * [Country](about:blank) Programme Document, [UN Development Assistance Framework for the Republic of Armenia for the Republic of Armenia](about:blank) | review |
| Was the NA involved in determining the Project activities during the project preparation phase? | Selection of the Project activities (Did NA express interest in determining the Project activities?) | NA- Secretary General, MPs, staff; UNDP: Project team | interviews |
| **Effectiveness** | 1. Was stated outcome 1 (Quality of legislative oversight and policy-making is improved) achieved? | Has the capacity of the NA legislature to analyse, draft and amend legislation been enhanced? Has expert capacity of the in-house research and training centre’s staff been enhanced by Project intervention, and if so, to what extent? Has inter-parliamentary cooperation strengthened? | workshops for MPs, assistants and staff; programme curricula; Research and Training Center; initiatives, events, training sessions and/or training programmes | review, interviews |
| Did project develop tools for increasing accountability and transparency of the NA? | Are existing tools enhanced (or) new tools introduced that result in increased accountability and transparency of NA during MAP implementation to date? Has public awareness of parliamentary activities been enhanced and if so, how and to what extent? | NA web-site analytics and records; Level of expressed and recorded citizen satisfaction with accountability and transparency tools; Preliminary Design of the Parliamentary Visitor and Information Center | review,   * interviews with MPs, clerks |
| Was stated outcome 3 (Legislative responsiveness, inclusivity and participatory approach is embedded in MPs work) achieved? | Has dialogue and collaboration with civil society and citizens improved? Has citizen engagement in parliamentary processes enhanced? How can MAP interventions be linked to these results and to what extent? | project reports,  number of experimental events and initiatives to connect MPs with citizens,  citizen’s feedback records, evidence produced by NA beneficiaries and stakeholders | review,  interviews with MPs, clerks |
|  | Did the NA participate in the decision-making process during the implementation of the Project? | selection of workshops programme / plans;  development of preliminary Design of the Parliamentary Visitor and Information Center | Reports, feedback questionnaire from participants, MPs and staff | * review;   interviews - NA: Secretary General, MPs and staff); UNDP: Project management team |
| **Efficiency** | What is the relation between the project budget and outcomes? | 1. Has implementation in the form of project activities made it possible to obtain the same effects with lower costs? | other projects, other donors | review |
| Has the budget been changed during the implementation of the project? | How did that affect the project results? |  | interviews |
| How were decisions made? How did that affect the project results? | Whether Project Board existed and was it operational/efficient etc. Project management: Is project manager satisfied with respect of the budget   and avoiding risks? | Project team | review,  interviews |
| **Sustainability** | To what extent has the Project been able to support the National Assembly in developing capacities and establishing mechanisms to ensure ownership and the durability of effects under the ongoing government reforms initiatives in this Mid-term period? | Are activities initiated by project continuing? Are NA planning to continue activities after the project ended? | NA - Feedback from MPs and parliamentary committee clerks | interviews |
| Is there a need to adjust the Project (i.e., timeline in relation to COVID-19 and post-conflict situation)? If so, do Project objectives and strategies have to be adjusted? | To what extent the COVID-19 affected the probability of long-run resilience of beneficial results/impact? Is NA planning that Research and Training Centre will be operational on permanent basis after project ended? Will upgraded NA web-portal be operational as regular activity? | NA representatives, Responsible Parties, CSO | interviews,  review |
| What are the possible sustainability prerequisites for each of the Project components? What are the hindering factors for ensuring the sustainability of Project outcomes beyond the Project lifecycle? | Is level of satisfaction of stakeholder groups (MPs, CSO, citizens) with performance increasing? Are MPs, assistants and staffers trained through capacity development and coaching programmes? Were the capacities of responsible staff increased? | NA representative, reports | interviews with MPs, parliamentary staff;  review |
| **Cross-cutting issues (PROMOTION OF UN VALUES FROM A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE)** | | | | |
| **Criteria/Sub-criteria** | **Questions to be addressed by evaluation** | **What to look for** | **Data sources** | **Data collection methods** |
| **Institutional development and capacity-building** | To what extend did the Project contribute to the institutional building of various new mechanisms and tools? | multi-stakeholder discussions and dialogue (events organised by the project), initiatives and /or follow up actions; actions initiated by vis-à-vis citizens’ question, suggestions | reports, documentation, project stakeholders | review,  interviews |
| Has the Project contributed to institutionalization of new organisational structure units to support the roles of the parliament? | Research and Training Center; Development of preliminary Design of the Parliamentary Visitor and Information Center | project records, reports,  interlocutors from NA | interview, review |
| To what extent did stakeholders (National Assembly, CSOs) enhance their capacities on addressing cross-cutting topics? | Quality and relevance of the topics across parliamentary capacity-development areas, Can it be said that project actions and interventions in the NA supporting policy dialogue on human development issues? | feedback from the stakeholders,  reports | interview, review |
| **Participatory deliberation** | To what extent are the participatory themes integrated into the Project’s activities? | Has the Project produced quality increase of the debate and the feedback from citizens? | reports, minutes, staff and MPs | review,  interviews |
| To what extend did the Project contribute to raising the dialogue culture and public participation? | The citizens’ perception of the Parliamentary system should be strengthened, and the integrity of MPs raised; Did the Project engage citizens in public deliberation and debate on matters of public policy? | reports, minutes, Consultative workshops for NA staff and MPs | review,  interviews |
| To which extent had the Project contributed to inclusion of CSOs in the consultations with the National Assembly? | inclusion of CSOs in the consultations with the National Assembly; Is there a network of CSO representatives established? | CSOs representatives, NA staff and MPs | review,  interviews |
| **Innovation** | To what extends has the Project innovative approach and tools contribute to the work of the National Assembly in terms of oversight and outreach? | innovative approach and tools contribute to  multi-stakeholder discussions and dialogue (events organised by the project), initiatives and /or follow up actions; actions initiated by vis-à-vis citizens’ question, suggestions | reports, stakeholders | review,  interviews |
| **Gender equality** | To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design, implementation and impact by the Project? | number of women and man participating in the workshops for NA staff and MPs (Was special attention paid to ensure equal participation of both men and women at the workshops for NA staff and MPs?) Are there any instances of women participating during MAP who may have not participated in NA activities pre-MAP? | reports, minutes, consultative workshops for NA staff and MPs | review,  interviews |
| Is the gender marker data assigned to this project representative of reality? | number of women and man participated at the workshops, various project actions. Was special attention paid to ensure equal participation of both men and women? | reports, minutes, Consultative workshops for NA staff and MPs, actions and events | review,  interviews |
| To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects? | number of women and men who participated in various gender-focused or inclusive project activities.  feedback from the stakeholders (with examples) | reports, NA staff and MPs. | review,  interviews |
| **Human rights, leaving no one behind** | To what extent have disadvantaged/marginalised groups such as poor, persons with disabilities, (et al) benefited from MAP? | Representation/social inclusion (Were needs of women and men belonging to marginalised groups expressed during project activities, and if so, how and to what extent?) | reports, minutes | review,  interviews |
| How has MAP impacted Armenian human development and individual rights in line with the SDGs? | Representation /participation of citizens | reports, minutes | review,  interviews |

**MTR Work Plan**

ToR Start Date: 20.09.2021.

Duration: September-October 2021

Actual start date (desk review and inception report): 01.09.2021.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Activity** | | **Due Date** |
| **1** | Initial remote (Zoom) meeting with UNDP | 29.07.2021 | |
| **2** | Desk review of relevant project documentation, monitoring records and progress and other relevant reports | 01.09.2021-15.09.2021. | |
| **3** | Inception report including work plan and evaluation matrix – produce and submit to UNDP CO | 16.09.2021 (ToR 26.09.2021) | |
| **4** | Conduct remote (Zoom/Skype/WhatsApp) Interviews | 17.09.2021—8.10.2021 | |
| **5** | Analysis and drafting report | 9.10.2021-19.10.2021. | |
| **6** | Draft Report – preparation, produce, submit draft to UNDP CO via email | 20.10.2021 | |
| **7** | Analysis: comments from UNDP, feedback;  Conclusions and recommendations | 27.10.2021-03.11.2021 | |
| **8** | The final draft report is presented and accepted. Separate 1-2 page summary brief summarizing the key findings of the evaluation for sharing with external audiences | 05.11.2021 | |
| **9** | (revised) Final Report with the Executive Summary appended. | 10.11.2021 as per ToR | |

### Annex 5: Examples of Select NA media/publications and Knowledge Products

**“Yerevan City” Magazine** is a renowned youth and professional public magazine that is distributed in all major city places in-print and distributed in Yerevan for free, one can find it in bookstores, cafes/restaurants and widely available on the streets of the capital. The magazine has been published since 2011, now it has published its 69th Special edition, dedicated to the NA and the new approach to citizens’ participation and overview of the Armenian parliamentarism through milestones and history. This is important for promoting the importance of parliamentary democracy and parliamentary education in general. This is also considered as part of the NA outreach strategy.

The MAP project activity was also highlighted featuring the interviews with the UK and Swedish Ambassadors. ([www.evnmag.com](http://www.evnmag.com)). The MAP project provided the financial support and resources to these two issues as part of its efforts for public campaigning and outreach.

*The publication is a 67-page magazine and has 4000 editions. The target audience of the magazine is the most active and politically-engaged population of Yerevan (aged 16-40).*

**“Regional Post”** is a bimonthly magazine issued in English language founded in 2016, dedicated to diplomacy, economy, business world, international relations, culture, and everything related to the development of Armenia and the Caucasus Region. It is a publication targeting the new generation of emerging professionals and experts across the Caucasus region and beyond. It discusses international relations, geopolitics, economy, diplomacy but also culture and mutual respect. The magazine cooperates with some of the best experts and authors in Armenia, Georgia, and other countries.

The magazine is also available digitally via their [website](https://regionalpost.org/en/) and [Facebook page](https://www.facebook.com/regionalpost.org/).

*Regional Post* is mainly distributed targeting Embassies, international organisations, leading businesses, governmental institutions, NGO’s, diaspora organisations.

The special 2nd edition is dedicated to the work of the NA, where the MAP Project key activities are also featured as an integral part of the parliamentary democracy support provided towards the institutional development.

The Magazine is also distributed in Europe: France, Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Belgium, and Russia targeting organisations and outstanding individuals who have active interest with Armenia.

*Print circulation is up to 3000, around 2000 of which is distributed in Armenia. It is being distributed free of charge. The target readership group is the international community within Armenia and internationally.*

**MAP Project knowledge products:**

Since 2020, in the frames of the MAP Project, a large amount of knowledge products were produced, some of which in cooperation with the OxYGen Foundation, ICHD and WFD, aimed at providing assistance and strengthening to NA, MPs, Standing Committees in carrying out their fundamental role and key functions.

All these publications are to fall under the depositary of the Research and Training Centre. In addition, several publications will be designed and printed for sharing at the Induction Seminar for new MPs.

* **MPs’ Code of Conduct set of documents produced**:
  + Parliament Relations with Anti-Corruption Agencies by WFD
  + Human rights aspects of the Code of Conducts
  + Mapping of Hate Speech
  + Codes on Ethics and Conduct for Legislative Body Comparative Study
  + Mapping Report on Ethics Code for the RA National Assembly: anti-corruption aspects of integrity and accountability
  + Draft Law on “On Making Amendments and Addenda to the Constitutional Law "Rules of Procedure of the National Assembly".
  + Handbook on Codes of Conduct for the Armenian Parliament by GPG
  + Parliamentary Code of Conduct: Template Code with Explanation by GPG
* **The NA Research and Training Centre**:
  + The Research Unit Roadmap
  + Concept Design
  + The Training Unit Roadmap
  + The Training Unit Outlines of training for MPs
  + Induction Seminar for new MPs Outline
* **Report** on Activities for Reforming the Constitutional Law on “**Rules of Procedure** of the National Assembly of Armenia”
* **Public Opinion Poll** - 1st periodic comprehensive poll sampled.
* **Guides:**
  + MPs’ Constituency Guide
  + Guide to Creating a Citizen Engagement and Outreach Strategy
* **Comparative reviews and studies by WFD**:
  + International Practices of Parliamentary Digital Engagement – Guide for the Armenian Parliament by WFD
  + Needs Assessment of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia by WFD
  + Information and Outreach Centre Paper

1. That is, initial Project implementation began in November 2019 with full implementation beginning in May 2020 following the first Project Board’s approval of the AWP by national patterns and donors during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and prior to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in September 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. See: [Elections in Armenia Explained: New Rules, New Voting, New Powers (armenianweekly.com)](https://armenianweekly.com/2017/02/28/elections-in-armenia-explained/) and [JTF\_MR\_6\_17.pdf (ec-undp-electoralassistance.org)](https://www.ec-undp-electoralassistance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/JTF_MR_6_17.pdf) and also in reference to MTR interviews. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. See: [Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions (undp.org)](https://www1.undp.org/content/oslo-governance-centre/en/home/sustainable-development-goals/goal-16-peace-justice-and-strong-institutions.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. That is, initial Project implementation began in November 2019 with full implementation beginning in May 2020 following the first Project Board’s approval of the AWP by national patterns and donors during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and prior to the war in September 2020. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. See ICHD [https://ichd.org/](about:blank), OxYGen Foundation [https://oxygen.org.am/en/](about:blank), and WFD UK in Armenia [https://www.wfd.org/network/armenia-2/](about:blank) . [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. The OECD DAC Network on Development Evaluation (EvalNet) has defined six evaluation criteria – relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability – and two principles for their use. These criteria provide a normative framework used to determine the merit or worth of an intervention (policy, strategy, programme, project or activity). They serve as the basis upon which evaluative judgements are made: [https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm](about:blank) . [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. UNDP signed Cost-sharing Agreements with each donor. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. The project partner is the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, in line with the standard UNDP contractual modality. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. UNDP MAP Project introduction in November 2019: [Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia | UNDP in Armenia](https://www.am.undp.org/content/armenia/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2019/modern-parliament-for-a-modern-armenia.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
10. This includes political and social challenges, natural disaster, conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, and the ongoing pandemic since project inception. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
11. Based upon comparative desk review of MAP Project documents formulated at project inception including the Project legal framework: [Standard Basic Framework Agreement (SBBA)](https://www.am.undp.org/content/dam/armenia/docs/SBAA_eng.pdf), [United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Armenia 2021-2025](https://www.am.undp.org/content/dam/armenia/docs/UN%20Armenia%20Cooperation%20Framework_2021-2025_Digital.pdf), [Country Programme Document (CPD)](https://www.am.undp.org/content/dam/armenia/docs/UNDP_ARM_CPD_2021-2025.pdf)[2021-2025](https://www.am.undp.org/content/dam/armenia/docs/UNDP_ARM_CPD_2021-2025.pdf), [Letter of Agreement for the provision of Country Office support services](https://www.am.undp.org/content/dam/armenia/docs/LoA_UNDP_Gov_support_services_eng.pdf) with reference to statements made by interlocutors as part of the interview process from 01 September – 10 October 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
12. Reference REGIONAL POST CAUCASUS (#2, 2021): *The Most Important Laws of the Last 2.5 Years* and *Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia’s Project to Modernize the National Assembly*. See also ibid: Ararat Mirzoyan “Society has expectations from the National Assembly” (PDF). [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
13. Country programme document for Armenia (2021-2025)/PDF, p. 3 [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
14. Content for the Cross-Cutting Issues section of this MTR Report excerpted in part from e-Copy of Project Document, evaluator meeting notes compiled during remote interview phase of MTR and soft copy of periodic Project reports provided by the UNDP CO during desk review. These include periodic (Quarterly) reports to donors from 2019-2021 (2Q/June 2021). Additional relevant source links are noted as footnotes throughout this report. *Anonymous participant in the MAP MTR interview process*: “Initially (in 2019) there was a lot of interest in capacity-building for the Parliament such as in-person training, consultations, and workshops. Then, snap elections resulted in polarization in Armenian society, especially in Yerevan. This affected the learning environment and because of the highly-charged political environment, it became difficult for MPs and staff to dedicate time, attention and effort to MAP project priorities.” [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
15. See Functional Analysis of the Administration of the National Assembly by Westminster Foundation for Democracy: [Armenia - Westminster Foundation for Democracy (WFD)](https://www.wfd.org/network/armenia-2/) [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
16. Ref: MAP/Armenia: [A Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia: Global Partners Governance work with the National Assembly of Armenia - Global Partners Governance (gpgovernance.net)](https://gpgovernance.net/a-modern-parliament-for-a-modern-armenia-global-partners-governance-work-with-the-national-assembly-of-armenia/) [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
17. *Nota Bene*: This section contains specific reference to Output 2 (and specifically 2.2 Public awareness of parliamentary activities is enhanced) as well as Outcome 3 (Legislative responsiveness, inclusivity, and participatory approach is embedded in MPs’ work) with specific reference to Output 3.1 (Dialogue and collaboration with civil society and citizens is improved) and Output 3.2 (Citizen engagement in parliamentary processes is enhanced). See: MAP Project Document (PDF) and also [Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia (MAP) | UNDP in Armenia](https://www.am.undp.org/content/armenia/en/home/projects/modern-parliament-for-a-modern-armenia--map-.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
18. The MAP Project has comprehensive poll with 100 questions related only to the parliament. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
19. See OxYGen Armenia: [Homepage - NGO (oxygen.org.am)](https://oxygen.org.am/en/#:~:text=OxYGen%20is%20an%20independent%20advocacy%20and%20development%20foundation,and%20influence%20decisions%20that%20impact%20on%20their%20lives.) and Havasar-infohub.am. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
20. Ref: [All projects | UNDP in Armenia](https://www.am.undp.org/content/armenia/en/home/projects.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
21. See position job description at: [Public Sector IT databases Audit | Armenia (indevjobs.org)](https://indevjobs.org/jobs/public-sector-it-databases-audit). [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
22. Position link: [UNDP - International Expert – Strategy for Digital Transformation of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia (untalent.org)](https://untalent.org/jobs/international-expert-strategy-for-digital-transformation-of-the-national-assembly-of-the-republic-of-armenia). [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
23. Linkage to recently adopted NA digital strategy: [https://www.e-gov.am/gov-decrees/item/35586/](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.e-gov.am%2Fgov-decrees%2Fitem%2F35586%2F&data=04%7C01%7Calla.bakunts%40undp.org%7Caf59c2d667754400ee8008d8e532476e%7Cb3e5db5e2944483799f57488ace54319%7C0%7C0%7C637511351394942785%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=HUBPPxYPcLBBVpS0M49ayBfTOz%2BPS8LxActdLqrY8Y8%3D&reserved=0) in Armenian only. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
24. For additional reference see: [LABCoN-EN-2019-03-15.pdf](https://labcon.network/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/LABCoN-EN-2019-03-15.pdf) and [Parliaments must continue to serve the people during coronavirus pandemic | www.aravot-en.am](https://www.aravot-en.am/2020/04/01/253108/) [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
25. Women and Youth for Innovative Local Development (WYILD)

    Women in Politics (WiP)

    Women’s Economic Empowerment in South Caucasus (WEESC) [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
26. See: [Armenia introduces paternity leave | ARMENPRESS Armenian News Agency](https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1027789) and [Armenia PEO & Employer of Record - Expand Business into Armenia (globalization-partners.com)](https://www.globalization-partners.com/globalpedia/armenia-employer-of-record/#content). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
27. See for example: [Promoting More Gender-sensitive Legislation in Armenia - NGO (oxygen.org.am)](https://oxygen.org.am/en/completed_projects_eng/promoting-more-gender-sensitive-legislation-in-armenia/) [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
28. See for example: [Azerbaijan and Armenia: The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict (congress.gov)](https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46651) and [Nagorno Karabakh- The Conflict Between Azerbaijan and Armenia - Humanitarian Aid Relief Trust (hart-uk.org)](https://www.hart-uk.org/blog/nagorno-karabakh-the-conflict-between-azerbaijan-and-armenia/) [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
29. See: [ICHD - International Center for Human Development](https://ichd.org/) under “UNDP” for a comprehensive list of findings and reports related to this topic. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
30. [Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions | United Nations in Armenia](https://armenia.un.org/index.php/en/sdgs/16) [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
31. See also: [Voice of Women (armeniangirlpower.blogspot.com)](https://armeniangirlpower.blogspot.com/) and [Armenia country gender equality brief | United Nations in Armenia](https://armenia.un.org/en/134528-armenia-country-gender-equality-brief) [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
32. See for example hate speech in Armenia: [Armenia debates cracking down on “fake news” and hate speech | Eurasianet](https://eurasianet.org/armenia-debates-cracking-down-on-fake-news-and-hate-speech), Armenia & EU: [Armenia Follows European Example in Combating Hate Speech (evnreport.com)](https://www.evnreport.com/politics/armenia-follows-european-example-in-combating-hate-speech), and hate speech globally: [Parliamentarians as Peacebuilders: Displacing Online Hate Speech | United Nations Development Programme (undp.org)](https://www.undp.org/speeches/parliamentarians-peacebuilders-displacing-online-hate-speech) [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
33. On hate speech: [ECHR - Hate Speech Case Database - The Future of Free Speech (futurefreespeech.com)](https://futurefreespeech.com/hate-speech-case-database/), regarding parliamentary ethics and social justice: [Parliamentary Ethics | Agora (agora-parl.org)](https://agora-parl.org/resources/aoe/parliamentary-ethics), anti-corruption and human rights: [Anti-Corruption and Human Rights – UNDP Anti-Corruption Portal](https://anti-corruption.org/themes/human-rights-transparency-accountability/) [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
34. [Armenia: Karabakh Veterans Fight to Survive | Eurasianet](https://eurasianet.org/armenia-karabakh-veterans-fight-to-survive). See also Insurance Foundation for Veterans: [Insurance Foundation for Servicemen - 1000plus.am](https://www.1000plus.am/en/) [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
35. See: [COVID-19: Armenian Parliament To Probe Government's Response (rferl.org)](https://www.rferl.org/a/covid-19-iran-says-it-s-moving-toward-third-wave-of-virus/30841309.html) and [Parliament Panel To Probe Government’s Response To COVID-19 - The Armenian Mirror-Spectator (mirrorspectator.com)](https://mirrorspectator.com/2021/01/21/parliament-panel-to-probe-governments-response-to-covid-19/) [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
36. As per information obtained from MAP project team, the WFD action plan comprised more than 60% travel from and to London-Yerevan and salaries for Regional Directors and Staff in London (it was accepted). When the UK Government passed COVID-19 travel restriction, it was clear that WFD will not spend these funds, the Project having adopted by the Project Board the Politically Agile Programming (Adaptive Programming) proposed new activities that were demand driven to supplement the action plan and help WFD delivery. Hence, UNDP proposed, financial comparative study, digital participation, e-modules (PLS and GRB) amongst other which was accepted by the WFD. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
37. [UNSDG | UN in Action - Armenia](https://unsdg.un.org/un-in-action/armenia) and UNDP MAP Project Document. Also, see section: Ethical considerations, Human Rights and Cross-cutting aspects (in order to avoid repetition). [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
38. Reference REGIONAL POST CAUCASUS (#2, 2021): *The Most Important Laws of the Last 2.5 Years* and *Modern Parliament for a Modern Armenia’s Project to Modernize the National Assembly*. See also ibid: Ararat Mirzoyan “Society has expectations from the National Assembly”. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
39. See MAP Project Board Meeting Minutes (26 May 2020) and (28 April 2021). [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
40. For the UNDP all three responsible parties on the contract are equal. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
41. This is evident form the Agenda and lists of attendees and the minutes. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
42. MAP team has spent extensive amount of time to train the parties to write financial reports (with changes of financial persons in the RPs) and to help with presentations etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
43. [Armenia - Transparency.org](https://www.transparency.org/en/countries/armenia) [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
44. In reference to: Country programme document for Armenia (2021-2025)/PDF. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
45. See: Final Evaluation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Armenia (2016-2020)/PDF: “Measured by positive changes in relevant statistical indicators, UN Agencies have been, in general, effective in delivering results and contributing to progress under UNDAF outcomes. Credible contribution of UN Agencies to outcomes could be established. Some of the essential factors that contributed to UNDAF effectiveness have been active dialogue with the GoA, quick decision-making procedures, and strong partnership between the UN Agencies, national stakeholders and international development partners.” [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
46. See p. 38 (Section 2.6. Project Outcomes and the Results & Resource Framework). [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
47. As excerpted in part from: [UNSDG | UN in Action - Armenia](https://unsdg.un.org/un-in-action/armenia). [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
48. SIDA: [Armenia | Sida](https://www.sida.se/en/sidas-international-work/armenia#development-1) UK/GGF: [UK Good Governance Fund Supports Project Empowering Women and Youth in Armenia | UNDP in Armenia](https://www.am.undp.org/content/armenia/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2019/uk-good-governance-fund-supports-project-empowering-women-and-yo.html) UNDP and: [Women in Politics | UNDP in Armenia](https://www.am.undp.org/content/armenia/en/home/projects/women-in-politics---.html) See: also [Women’s rights in Armenia | Social Watch](https://www.socialwatch.org/node/11600) and [Independence Generation: Perceptions of Family and Marriage (evnreport.com)](https://www.evnreport.com/politics/independence-generation-perceptions-of-family-and-marriage) [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
49. As noted in terms of RPs WFD, ICHD and OxYGen having completed their contractual obligations and expenditures and UNDP continuing to engage in activities in a hybrid remote and in-person modality. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
50. Meetings were held with all three RPs during September 2021 and all were invited continue engagement with the Project and propose new activities that could be working on within the Project scope for fundraising. The CSO-NA platform is a Project product that is of no additional cost but high impact that the Project will continuously support. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
51. This is of import given the contemporary history of the country. It has only been just over 2 years since the Republic of Armenia transitioned from a presidential system to a participatory parliamentary democracy. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
52. In addition to interviews and findings, advantages in approach and mandate were seen in UNDP as inter-governmental organisation working directly with parliaments (governments) on joint programming, demand-driven and strong ownership. The interlocutors identify and highly value the fact that UNDP is obliged to keep the highest level of transparency and as on all projects all project documents, evaluations, and procurements are publicly available. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
53. Contracts were counter-signed in July 2021, with a remote online meeting taking place later that month, and MTR evaluators conducting initial remote interlocutor interviews from the middle of September 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
54. It is not necessary that all subsequent recommendations be implemented in the second phase of the MAP project (considering that the current project has 1 year left for implementation). If they cannot be realised during 2022, they can be used for the further parliamentary programme development in the Republic of Armenia. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
55. Online public hearings are a useful and possible remote modality but need to ensure that NA demand-driven activity and digital e-Parliament. Online public hearings could be smaller scale (not 150 participants but rather 50) and then online training as to how online public hearings are done. Perhaps a hybrid model which is a great opportunity to engage experts from other countries either online remote or in person as is possible moving forward. Important to have substantive, subject-oriented discussions. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
56. See: [Country Fact Sheet | UN Women Data Hub](https://data.unwomen.org/country/armenia) and [Armenia country gender equality brief | UN Women – Europe and Central Asia](https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2020/05/armenia-country-gender-equality-brief). [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
57. As example of comparative study, see: Parliamentary Libraries and Research Services in Central and Eastern Europe ([Parliamentary Libraries and Research Services in Central and Eastern Europe (degruyter.com)](about:blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
58. In order to provide the best possible services, the PI has been divided into three departments, each dealing with a particular agenda: (1) The Department of General Analysis deals predominantly with Deputy and Senator requests and provides general analyses and analyses in the field of foreign relations. (2) The Department of EU Affairs serves mostly as an expert base for the Committee for European Affairs of the Chamber of Deputies. The department elaborates and holds the database of incoming EU documents and those that have some relation to the EU. (3) The Department of Communication and Education provides services to the public and operates the Information Center of the Chamber of Deputies. Departments within the PI closely cooperate with each other, and they together organize seminars either for MPs or for the public. Members of all departments participate commonly on major projects and analyses.See: [Parliamentary Institute (psp.cz)](about:blank). Surveys PI are available at: [Přehledy Parlamentního institutu (psp.cz)](about:blank" \t "_blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
59. Seminars and study visits are usually undertaken either from an initiative of the PI itself or alternatively on request of the relevant body. In this regard it stands for any office or authority within the Parliament or at least a group of four deputies or senators. Most seminars however are being prepared upon a request of Parliament committees. Seminars and study visits are being organised in two major sections. First one, called the general one, deals with issues of parliamentary system, parliament operations, MPs status issues and procedural rules of lawmaking. Second section is focused on the European Union. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
60. The extent and duration of seminars and study visits are being consulted with the submitter and it does reflect his duration possibilities. Obviously, the main aim is to provide best possible time effectiveness. For the purposes of seminars PowerPoint presentations are used and of course PI assures materials and additional supplementary documents, if required. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
61. See: [Parliamentary Institute (psp.cz)](about:blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
62. See: [e-Parliament Programme: IT for parliamentary work | DIGITEC News (europa.eu)](https://europa.eu/digitec/news/eparliament-project/) and [Publications of the UN Public Administration Programme](https://publicadministration.un.org/publications/content/series_world_e-parliament_report.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
63. Coordination with other actors (such as Council of Europe re corruption and ethical standards, OSCE/ODIHR parliamentary ethics standards, and elaboration of NA Code of Ethics). See: [Armenia | OSCE - ODIHR](https://hatecrime.osce.org/armenia) . Anti-corruption with integrity and accountability is very important. See: [National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia | Official Web Site | parliament.am](http://www.parliament.am/news.php?do=view&cat_id=2&day=24&month=09&year=2021&NewsID=15149&lang=eng) [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
64. Constituency Offices have been in implementation for some time as part of the NDI work. See: [Armenia | National Democratic Institute (ndi.org)](https://www.ndi.org/eurasia/armenia). [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
65. See: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/events/events-hearings](about:blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
66. The European Citizens'' Initiative allows 1 million citizens from at least a quarter of EU member states to ask the European Commission to propose legislation in areas that fall within its competence. Organizers of successful initiatives are invited to present their initiative at a public hearing in the European Parliament, before the legislative committee responsible for the subject matter. See: [European Citizens’ Initiatives | Events | ITRE | Committees | European Parliament (europa.eu)](about:blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
67. See: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/BRIE/2021/696172/EPRS\_BRI(2021)696172\_EN.pdf](about:blank) . [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
68. Article 226 TFEU and Rule 208 RoP. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
69. As provided for under Decision 95/167/EC (Decision of the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission of 6 March 1995 on the detailed provisions governing the exercise of the European Parliament's right of inquiry). See: [EUR-Lex - JOL\_1995\_078\_R\_0001\_003 - EN - EUR-Lex (europa.eu)](about:blank). [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
70. Article 3(2) of Decision 95/167/EC. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
71. See for example: [Chapter 33. Conducting a Direct Action Campaign | Section 13. Conducting a Public Hearing | Main Section | Community Tool Box (ku.edu)](https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/advocacy/direct-action/public-hearing/main) and [Ottawa\_Study\_Visit\_Publication\_ENG.pdf (parlamericas.org)](http://www.parlamericas.org/uploads/documents/Ottawa_Study_Visit_Publication_ENG.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
72. [Guides for Committee Chairs & Committee Members (bpaa.com)](https://bpaa.com/sourcebook/bpaa-national/committees/guides-for-committee-chairs-committee-members) [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
73. See for example: [337133aUnesco-a (ipu.org)](http://archive.ipu.org/PDF/publications/unesco_en.pdf) and [Best Practice Guide\_11.rtf (internationalbudget.org)](https://www.internationalbudget.org/wp-content/uploads/Best-Practices-of-Public-Accounts-Committees.pdf) [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
74. See: future programming (in this report). [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
75. See: [Parliament’s role in peacebuilding highlighted at key UN meeting | Inter-Parliamentary Union (ipu.org)](https://www.ipu.org/news/news-in-brief/2018-05/parliaments-role-in-peacebuilding-highlighted-key-un-meeting) [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
76. Such as Chatham House Rules (see: [Chatham House Rule | Chatham House – International Affairs Think Tank](https://www.chathamhouse.org/about-us/chatham-house-rule)). The MAP project has already used a number of open and inclusive processes for better policy making and parliamentary processes, i.e. THMs, OTRs, CSO-NA Platform, Mobile sessions. Some of them are again programmed for 2022 already. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)