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Country programme document for Turkmenistan (2010-2015)

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Introduction

1. The country programme document for Turkmenistan was prepared using a participatory approach, involving extensive consultations with national stakeholders, the United Nations, as well as other development partners during the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2010-2015. It is also based on statistical information from national and other sources researched and analyzed when preparing the country analysis.

I. Situation analysis

2. As an oil and gas producer, Turkmenistan has experienced impressive economic growth. Forecasts suggest the gross domestic product is expected to increase by 10.5 per cent in 2009. The economy remains dependent on energy exports but there is potential for diversification to achieve sustainable economic growth. The president was elected in February 2007 and immediately announced a broad reform agenda. Included in that agenda was an amended constitution (adopted September 2008) that significantly changed the composition and structure of parliament. Much of the power of the 2,507-member Halk Maslakhati (People's Council) – made up of mostly presidential appointments – was transferred to an expanded, elected Mejlis (Parliament). National elections were held 14 December 2008.

3. With a human development index of 0.728, Turkmenistan ranks 108 out of 179 countries. There are no figures on poverty and unemployment, nor disaggregated data by vulnerable groups, making it difficult to differentiate disparities. Despite being on track to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, more specific data on all sectors will help policy development and MDG monitoring. Turkmenistan has made progress around compliance with international human rights treaty obligations, while legal reforms for harmonizing national legislation with international standards are ongoing. There is a need to strengthen rule of law and access to justice for people at large, as well as civil society activity. Gender stereotyping and gender inequalities exist but in an attempt to address this, the government passed a new law in 2008 guaranteeing equal rights for women.

4. The lengthy Turkmenistan border with Afghanistan – the world's biggest opium producer – makes it a route for trafficking narcotics; the government has recognized drug trafficking and drug abuse as major issues. Commitments made under international drug control conventions have been actively followed up and the government has taken the lead on a new initiative to focus on illicit drug routes through the region. HIV/AIDs prevalence is low but may increase with injection drug use and low awareness on prevention among young people.

II. Past cooperation and lessons learned

5. During 2005-2009, UNDP pursued collaborative approaches to development, exposing national partners to new thinking and building capacity in the areas of governance, social and economic development, and the environment. A major expansion of the UNDP programme occurred in 2007 in response to a request by the President of Turkmenistan for support to the new reform agenda. The new directions included UNDP support to local self-governance, improvement of electoral processes, building capacity of institutions concerned with human rights protection, and economic development and market reform. UNDP (and the United Nations in general) has emerged as the main international partner of the government in supporting social and economic reform. The longstanding presence of UNDP in the country, its transparency in operations, impartiality and constructive engagement were key factors leading to this strategic

position. UNDP access to the highest level of government has been instrumental in securing partnerships required to advance these new initiatives.

6. Patient and constructive engagement by UNDP has promoted positive change in areas such as human rights. For example, support to treaty reporting has resulted in the establishment of a high-level coordination body to monitor the implementation of commitments to international conventions and prepare reports to treaty bodies. In addition, a treaty body 'reporting plan' has been created. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was acceded to in September 2008 and Turkmenistan was reviewed under the universal periodic review of the Human Rights Council in December 2008. The first visit of a Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief was successfully completed in September 2008.

7. UNDP provided considerable support to strengthen data collection and analysis. A 2006 outcome evaluation found that statistical capacity was built under this support but that more efforts are required to provide reliable data on the social and economic status of the population. Official data on the number of people living with HIV/AIDS shows a very low prevalence. However, UNDP has provided technical assistance to the government in implementation of the national programme on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infection prevention (2005-2010). This support has included building national capacity for provision of voluntary and routine counselling, testing services and prevention work with high risk groups such as sex workers and intravenous drug users. In 2007, statistics on drug abuse and drug trafficking were published for the first time. Turkmenistan has created a national drug agency to improve the fight against drug trafficking, which is now a clear priority. The European Union-funded Border Management for Central Asia programme and Central Asia Drug Action Plan have developed a high-level of cooperation with the government to build capacity for more effective border control and drug detection.

8. Following several years of UNDP advocacy and capacity development efforts, selected secondary schools were connected to the Internet, providing web access to 20,000 school children and teachers. Similarly, UNDP advocacy and piloting has led to the creation of small business and income generation opportunities for poor women and people with disabilities. An important lesson learned: UNDP must maintain long-term involvement and have the vision and resolve to follow through.

9. In the area of environment and energy, cooperation has largely been with organizations focused on protecting nature, conserving biodiversity and combating desertification. Much stronger commitment from economic sectors is required, as well as more effective institutional coordination. UNDP assisted in preparing packages for building environmental information monitoring capacities and aligning national environmental law with international norms and standards. UNDP also supported the development of a national park network and promoted community-based management of biodiversity. Major advocacy efforts have led to the introduction of carbon finance mechanism in Turkmenistan, with projects expected to start in 2009.

III. Proposed programme

10. During 2010-2015, UNDP will focus its strategy on: (a) access to international good practices, knowledge, skills and resources in the design of national development policies and strategies; and (b) capacity strengthening and human resource development across a range of sectors, to sustain impact at the system level. The UNDP programme has four priority areas identified under the UNDAF, namely: strengthening democratization and rule of law; strengthening human development to achieve the MDGs; improving sustainable development and inclusive growth; and promoting peace and security.

Strengthening democratization and rule of law

11. UNDP will support programmes that strengthen legislation and development of policy frameworks and their alignment with international standards. In partnership with the European Commission and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, support will be provided to improve the institutional and capacity base to better protect human rights. Special attention will be given to strengthening the capacity of the judiciary and law enforcement authorities. Public education on human rights will also be supported. UNDP will advocate for creating an enabling environment for information and communication technology for development.

12. UNDP will expand its work to ensure the participation of people in local development initiatives and decision-making processes. Capacity building of local governments and communities will be linked to support for institutional and policy development to provide an enabling environment for local self-governance. UNDP will also promote inter-governmental collaboration for the sharing of good development practices and knowledge.

13. UNDP will continue work to improve electoral legislation and capacity-building of electoral officials at central, regional and district levels. UNDP will also promote civic and political awareness on electoral rights through the mass media, as well as mobilize the participation of citizens in governance institutions, such as electoral bodies. UNDP will cooperate with the United Nations Department of Political Affairs in the area of electoral reform.

14. UNDP will provide support to strengthen the capacity of the parliament, assisting deputies to carry out their law-making and oversight duties effectively. Emphasis will be placed on legal assistance to clarify and implement constitutional powers, support for legal analysis to improve the legislative review process and technical assistance for oversight of the state budget process.

Strengthening human development to achieve the Millennium Development Goals

15. UNDP will continue efforts to promote and apply a rights-based approach to development, by building the capacity of rights-holders to exercise their claims, and duty-bearers to fulfill their obligations. Specific attention will be paid to the rights of vulnerable groups and their equal participation in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life. UNDP will also provide organizations for the disabled with capacity development assistance and continue to promote partnership building and dialogue between such organizations, civil society and key legislative and executive bodies to align policies on people with disabilities with the principles of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. UNDP will continue providing policy guidance and support for institutional strengthening to better address the causes and effects of HIV/AIDS, and ensure access to services and expand opportunities for groups vulnerable to HIV, by promoting legal aid services and economic empowerment, especially for women.

Improving sustainable development and inclusive growth

16. UNDP will support the government in restructuring economic processes towards greater inclusion and growth. From a capacity development perspective, UNDP will focus on private sector development, especially small and medium enterprises, public administration reform, and financial, macroeconomic and social policy reform. A key aim will be to establish a planning process that links medium- and long-term goals with the annual budget.

17. In cooperation with other United Nations organizations, UNDP will advocate for the establishment of national machinery for coordinating, implementing and monitoring

measures to promote gender equality. Capacity for gender analysis will be developed, including an understanding of the linkages between advancement of gender equality and human security. UNDP will also provide capacity development support to ensure environment and energy concerns are taken into account in formulating and implementing national policies, strategies and programmes. For initiatives on land degradation and biodiversity conservation, UNDP will continue to mobilize the support of the Global Environmental Facility and other sources.

18. UNDP will assist Turkmenistan in its adaption to climate change. Support will be provided to assess vulnerability in key sectors, integrate climate change risk considerations into national development plans and policies, and gain access to new funding sources to support innovative adaptation initiatives. UNDP aims to increase environmental financing through the MDG carbon facility.

Promoting peace and security

19. UNDP will focus on promotion of peace and security, sustainable border trade and, eventually, poverty reduction in line with the MDGs. UNDP will provide technical assistance to develop comprehensive, multi-hazard community risk management strategies and integrate them into planning processes at district, regional and national levels. Professionalizing the disaster management systems, developing regulatory frameworks at national and sub-national levels, and strengthening emergency preparedness and response systems will also be key target areas. The European Union-UNDP partnership will be advanced to include drug epidemiology, drugs in prisons, drug profiling at airports and railways, public awareness campaigns and improved trade and transit of legal goods and persons.

IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

20. The government coordinating authority will be the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The main planning and reporting instrument will be the annual work plan, to be developed in close cooperation with relevant government and civil society partners, as well as other interested United Nations organizations. The government, in consultation with UNDP, will assign national implementing partners and national project coordinators for project execution. UNDP will also explore other implementing arrangements, taking into account developments in the national banking system, public administration, and civil society.

21. The annual programme review will be done at the same time as the annual UNDAF review, with all partners involved. Mid-year and annual reports will be prepared and submitted to the government coordinating authority according to the agreed upon report formats. Each outcome will be evaluated at least once during the programme cycle. National capacity will be built for monitoring and data collection systems related to specific programmatic areas. UNDP will encourage government institutions to use data sets generated by different surveys that are financed by international institutions for policy analysis and policy planning, and continue advocating for independent, reliable and accessible national statistics.

Annex. Results and resources framework for Turkmenistan (2010-2015)

National priority or goal: Promoting democratic principles of governance and ensuring supremacy of law					
Intended UNDAF outcome #1: By 2015, rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan are respected and guaranteed in accordance with international human rights standards and principles of democracy and the rule of law					
Programme Component	Country programme outcomes, including outcome indicators, baselines and targets	Country programme outputs	Output indicators, baselines and targets	Role of partners	Indicative Resources
1.Strengthen democratization and the rule of law	<p>1.1. Government authorities establish and implement mechanisms to protect and promote rights and freedoms in Turkmenistan; Indicator: Human rights protection mechanisms are in place and implemented; Baseline: National legislation is not entirely aligned with international standards and principles, and human rights protection mechanisms are not in place; Targets: National legislation aligned with international human rights standards and legal capacity for rights holders to claim their rights improved.</p> <p>1.2. The Government integrates principles of good governance and rule of law into national policies, legislation and decision-making; Indicator: Principles of good governance and rule of law are being practiced by key institutions; Baseline: Amendments in the Constitution; Limited capacity of government institutions for quality policy making; Limited participation of citizens in governance; Target: Enabling environment and capable institutions for introducing principles of good governance and rule of law created.</p>	<p>1.1.1 Duty bearers are more aware and integrate human rights principles into national legislation;</p> <p>1.1.2 Government institutions, judiciary and civil society have increased capacity to regularly implement and monitor human rights standards</p> <p>1.1.3 Rights holders are more aware of human rights, and access mechanisms to claim and protect their rights</p> <p>1.2.1 All levels of governance formulate legislative and institutional frameworks and have enhanced capacities for more effective public services delivery</p> <p>1.2.2 All institutions have full access to reliable and disaggregated statistical data</p> <p>1.2.3 Judiciary and law enforcement bodies practice enhanced professional skills to ensure access to justice</p>	<p>Indicators : Amount of legislation aligned with international treaties the government is party to; institutional mechanisms for monitoring human rights situation established and operational; number of outreach centers on human rights and legal advice and number of visitors; Baseline: National legislation not entirely aligned with international standards and principles; No effective system for review of individual human rights claims; Targets: Human rights national action plan developed. Human and institutional capacities for development and implementation of legislation improved and used. Increased number of rights holders claim their rights.</p> <p>Indicators: Number of democratic institutions, civil society organizations, and processes that give voice to people and hold government officials accountable are in place; Baseline: Parliamentary reforms started; insufficient capacity of local self-governments, limited access to reliable data; weak application of rule of law; Targets: Democratic reforms are supported in areas of parliamentary development, local governance, rule of law, elections, public administration. Credible national statistical information accessible and used for policy decisions.</p>	Central and local government, Mejlis, Institute of Democracy and Human Rights	Regular: \$1,084,000 Other: \$5,000,000
National priority or goal: Free education and health services for all; sustainable natural growth; decreased mortality, especially infant and maternal mortality; increased life expectancy; social protection for citizens					
Intended UNDAF outcome #2: By 2015, human resources developed to achieve sustained socio-economic development					
2.Strengthen human development to achieve the MDGs	<p>2.1 The government ensures comprehensive socio-economic integration of all vulnerable groups including women, disabled and HIV+ persons; Indicator: Resources/budget allocation; Number of national programmes integrate and address issues of vulnerable groups; Baseline: No reliable data on socio-economic status of vulnerable groups and limited services available; Target: National programmes for comprehensive socio-economic integration of vulnerable groups of population developed. Data collection tools and systems to monitoring status of vulnerable groups developed.</p>	<p>2.1.1 National authorities strengthen legislative and institutional frameworks for social protection</p> <p>2.1.2 Government institutions and communities practice improved social services delivery to vulnerable groups</p>	<p>Indicators: Disaggregated data on vulnerable groups of society (by group, age, gender, others); number of new policy initiatives; number of social services available to vulnerable groups; Baseline: Capacity and institutional assessment of the situation of vulnerable groups not available; No comprehensive capacity building program for professionals working with vulnerable groups; Targets: Capacities and mechanisms for collection and analysis of data developed. Skills and capacities for informed policy making on vulnerable groups enhanced. New social services for vulnerable groups developed and implementation started.</p>	Government institutions, Mejlis, civil society organizations	Regular: \$1,000,000 Other: \$2,600,000
National priority or goal: A fast-growing, powerful State; socioeconomic development of world standards; high living standards of the population					
Intended UNDAF outcome #3: Improvements to environmentally sustainable economic management for expansion of population's opportunities to participate in social and economic development, especially in rural areas					

3. Improve sustainable development and inclusive growth; and mainstream environment and energy	<p>3.1. Men and women of all social groups effectively contribute to the country's development policy and implementation processes to achieve inclusive growth and social equality; Indicator: Number of strategies developed and adopted; ratio of women/ethnic minorities in business; ratio of unemployment in urban/rural areas; number of men and women taking part of formulation of national policies and strategies; ration of private sector in GDP; Baseline: National development strategies 2020 and 2030; nationalized MDGs. No mechanism for participatory policy development; No access to reliable data; Target: Inclusive national strategies/policies/plans designed and implemented; enhanced national capacities applied to design, implement, monitor and evaluate development interventions</p> <p>3.2. Environmentally sustainable use of natural resources contributes to effectiveness of economic processes and increased quality of life Indicator: Number of national and local plans/strategies; number of national institutions are using information and monitoring system Baseline: National strategies exclude environmental priorities and concerns; no access to official statistics; non-sustainable use of natural resources at national and local levels; Target: Information and monitoring system is in place; environment mainstreamed in development planning.</p>	<p>3.1.1 Government formulates and implements people-centered national strategies and sector specific policies to promote inclusive growth;</p> <p>3.1.2 Private sector enjoys favorable environment for market development.</p> <p>3.2.1 National authorities better plan, manage and monitor the environment sector;</p> <p>3.2.2 Local communities contribute to and benefit from sustainable use of natural resources;</p> <p>3.2.3 Government introduces carbon reduction and energy saving technologies.</p>	<p>Indicators: Number of capacity development strategies designed and implemented as a part of national development planning process; number of support mechanisms for private sector available; Baseline: National development strategies 2020 and 2030; unfavorable environment for private sector development; limited/weak capacities in policy analysis and design; Targets: Number of national strategies/policies/ plans integrate sustainable development principles; Legal and institutional framework for development of private sector in place; Analytical and research capacities enhanced; Monitoring and evaluation tools and methodologies developed and used.</p> <p>Indicators: Systemic and institutional mechanisms and instruments in place for integration of environmental concerns in development processes; number of community based action plans; number of carbon finance projects developed and under implementation; Baseline: No systemic and institutional framework linking the environmental sector with socio-economic planning and decision-making; Targets: Capacity for coherent inter-sectoral planning and management of sustainable development processes increased. Community based initiatives implemented carbon finance and energy saving initiatives introduced.</p>	Government, Mejlis, Union of Manufacturers and Entrepreneurs, Union of Economists, Ministry of Nature Protection, Ministries for Water Economy, Agriculture, Energy, Turkmengas	Regular: \$2,000,000 Other: \$10,000,000
National priority or goal: Combating of illicit drug trafficking and organized crime strengthened; border management improved; more effective preparedness and response to natural and manmade disasters					
Intended UNDAF outcome #4: By 2015, peace and security for people in Turkmenistan, in both the national and Central Asian contexts, are ensured in accordance with international standards					
4. Promote peace and security	<p>4.1 National authorities effectively apply Integrated border management principles; Indicator: Number of integrated border management initiatives adopted; Baseline: Limited capacity to develop and implement integrated border management principles; Target: Principles of integrated border management introduced.</p> <p>4.2 Local communities and national authorities more effectively prepare for, and to respond to disasters; Indicator: Number of communities prepared for effective disaster management; Baseline: Limited capacities at government and community levels for disaster preparedness; Target: National system for disaster preparedness operational.</p>	<p>4.1.1 National authorities employ improved procedures with neighboring countries to facilitate legal trade across the borders</p> <p>4.2.1 Local communities have enhanced awareness and capacity to mitigate and adapt to disaster</p>	<p>Indicators: Number of new border procedures introduced; number of legal acts adopted; Baseline: Border management not in line with International practice; Targets: Border management capacities and legislation improved.</p> <p>Indicators: Disaster management coordination mechanism established; national preparedness plan adopted; Baseline: Lack of coordination in emergency preparedness; lack of awareness among population; Targets: Capacity of local communities and authorities to respond to/mitigate consequences of disaster(s) in coordination with regional/international players improved.</p>	Government, United Nations organizations, donors.	Regular: \$800,000 Other: \$8,000,000

Total indicative resources: \$4,884,000