



To whom it may concern

Open Reference for Dr. Ricardo Pinto, Pinto Consulting GmbH

This is to confirm that Ricardo Pinto was contracted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Bratislava Regional Centre and Armenia Country Office during the period June - July 2010. His experience and background meant that he was clearly the best candidate to implement the proposed project.

Ricardo was asked to undertake a fact-finding mission to Armenia in order to design a new programme for implementation by the UNDP Country Office. He led a team of local experts and his work consisted of undertaking detailed discussions locally (Ministries, UNDP, donors, projects and programmes), analysing existing UNDP and other projects and developing a concept for a new rural development programme. The project concept was discussed locally with UNDP, as well as national and local government representatives, prior to being written-up as a Programme Document.

Ricardo produced a detailed Programme Document for a five year, \$5 million project called "Enhanced Support to Rural Development in the Tavush Region," whose goal is to raise quality of life and the income levels in a cluster of six communities located in the Tavush marz (region). This goal is to be achieved through a focus on four inter-related aspects:

- Upstream policy support: to the Government of Armenia to develop cooperative legislation based on international best practice and undertake awareness raising of the value of cooperatives among farmers;
- Integrated community development: participative community development covering a cluster of 6 communities centred on the Lusadzor community;
- Enhanced rural support: focusing on issues such as co-operative development, cold storage, small-scale processing, low-cost demonstration projects, yield and output improvement and access to market support;
- Labour market support: focusing on generating non-farm income, rapid re-training and start-ups support for target groups with no access to land.

Both the UNDP Armenia Country Office and the Bratislava Regional Office were extremely satisfied with the quality of the Programme Document, which is timely, customised to the needs of the country and very detailed; it provides a sound basis for effective implementation of the Project.

Throughout the contracting period, Ricardo Pinto demonstrated a high level of professionalism, as well as high quality leadership qualities in leading the team and undertaking the necessary background work and analysis. His commitment and enthusiasm for development work were obvious in the manner in which he undertook this assignment.

He produced high quality work, which demonstrates his expertise and knowledge in various aspects of development work, including rural development. The Armenian counterparts were extremely satisfied with both his method of working, as well as the outcome of the assignment. There is a strong degree of conviction locally that the project to be implemented will be sound, necessary and lead to higher quality of life for local people through improved incomes.

Based on my experience with this assignment (and others previously carried on behalf of UNDP), I would not hesitate to recommend Ricardo Pinto to others.

Yours faithfully,



Nicholas Maddock
UNDP Bratislava Regional Office