

2nd Meeting of the Board for

the Nairobi Global Policy Centre Programme for 2015-2020:

“Advancing global thinking and knowledge sharing on inclusive and sustainable development in drylands and other fragile ecosystems”

Monday, 20 February 2017, 10:00-12:00

Venue: UNDP GC-RED, UNON, Gigiri, Block M, Middle Level

Meeting Summary

I. BACKGROUND

The Global Policy Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification (GC-RED) is one of six UNDP Global Policy Centers (GPCs) and the only Centre located in Africa (Nairobi, Kenya). GC-RED was constituted in October 2014, building on the achievements of the former Drylands Development Center (DDC). The main objective of the GC-RED Programme for 2015-2020 is to contribute to four of UNDP's current Strategic Plan outcomes:

- i) Outcome 1 - Growth that is inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded;
- ii) Outcome 5 - Countries are able to reduce the likelihood of conflict and lower the risk of natural disaster, including climate change;
- iii) Outcome 6 - Early recovery and rapid return to sustainable development pathways are achieved in post conflict and post disaster settings; and
- iv) Outcome 7 - Development debates and actions at all levels prioritise poverty, inequality, and exclusion, consistent with our engagement principles.

The objectives of the 2nd Meeting of the Board were to:

- Review GC-RED Programme activities completed in 2016 and provide feedback on achievements and challenges encountered;
- Approve the GC-RED Programme workplan and budget for 2017;
- Guide GC-RED's partnership building and resource mobilization efforts; and
- Provide overall guidance and strategic direction to the GC-RED Programme.

The following agenda was established for the meeting:

10:00 Overview of the Centre Programme and Presentation of Annual Report

- Overview of the Centre Programme 2015-2020
- Presentation of the 2016 Annual Report
- Discussion with Board Members

10:30 Presentation of 2017 Work Plan & Discussion

- Presentation of Annual Work Plan for 2017
- Feedback from and Endorsement by Board Members

11:00 Strategic Guidance from the Board on the Way forward

- Substantive Focus
- Partnerships and Resource Mobilization

11:45 Conclusions

II. DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE MEETING

The following decisions (D) and recommendations (R) were shared by the Board:

- D1: The 2016 Annual Report of GC-RED was endorsed (See Annex I).
- D2: The 2017 Centre Work Plan was approved (See Annex II).
- R1: Clearly define GC-RED's service offer on short- and long-term resilience building in view of diverse regional/sub-regional/national needs and priorities.
- R2: Translate the Community-based Resilience Analysis (CoBRA) related publications into French and possibly Arabic and Spanish to provide more dedicated resilience-building support to different (sub-)regions.
- R3: Better align the Centre's new programme development and resource mobilization efforts with those at regional and national levels.
- R4: Summarize and share GC-RED's past resilience building work with UNDP Kenya to contribute to the Country Office's (CO) mid-term review of the Country Programme Document to be held in 2017.

III. SUMMARY OF THE MEETING

Participants

Board Members

- Mr. Nik Sekhran, Chief of Profession, Sustainable Development, Bureau for Programme and Policy Support (BPPS), UNDP (Chair)
- Mr. Aliou Dia, Team Leader, Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction and Energy, Regional Service Center (RSC) for Africa, UNDP
- Ms. Amanda Serumaga, Country Director, UNDP Kenya

Secretary

- Ms. Anne Juepner, Director, GC-RED, UNDP

Rapporteur

- Ms. Yuko Kurauchi, Policy Specialist, GC-RED, UNDP

2016 Annual Report Highlights

The GC-RED Director briefed on the background of GC-RED, its current programme and key results achieved in 2016. 2016 delivery of all initiatives under the Centre amounted to nearly USD 8 million, including the Integrated Drylands Development Programme, IDDP (to end in June 2017) and the joint UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative, PEI (to be completed in December 2017). GC-RED received USD 13.2 million in non-core resources in 2016 for its various initiatives under the purview of the Centre. As a result, about 10.5 million are available for GC-RED to implement its programme and initiatives during 2017-2020. At the same time, the GC-RED Director acknowledged challenges facing the Centre including a continuous competitive international aid environment as well as reduced core funding to the Centre.

Board members appraised GC-RED Programme achievements realized in 2016 and stressed the need for the Centre to maintain its unique approach of working on the policy-practice interface in support

of country demands. Particular CO support provided in 2016, i.e. the crisis modifier development support in Zimbabwe and CoBRA assessment support in Malawi, was acknowledged as good practice to be replicated and up-scaled in other regions and countries. The importance to raise internal awareness of available GC-RED services was highlighted and the Centre was encouraged to more widely present its tools and methodologies in different fora and translate them into different languages to encourage their wider uptake. The further operationalization and mainstreaming of CoBRA was underscored as a priority task.

The distinct role of GC-RED was recognized in contributing to refining the corporate resilience agenda at global level, supporting regional planning and intellectual exchange processes and providing policy and programme support at country levels as per RSC/CO requests. In this context, the Board recommended that GC-RED should strengthen its partnerships with RSCs to make sure that the Centre's policy work is relevant to and supportive of regional programmes and local contexts as well as boarder corporate work such as upcoming MAPS missions.

Taking into account its location in Kenya, the Board emphasized that the Centre should maintain and enhance its strategic relationship with UNDP Kenya, among other COs, proactively exploring the areas of policy support and programmatic collaboration. Furthermore, in recognition of the reduced number of staff, the Board advised the Centre to take greater advantage of broader resources available within UNDP at global and regional levels to strengthen the quality of CO support delivery.

Presentation of 2017 Work Plan & Discussion

The GC-RED Director presented the Centre's 2017 AWP together with the latest organogram. Broadly, the workplan must remain aligned to the core thematic foci of UNDP, as articulated in its existing Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and new Strategic Plan 2018-2021. The Centre is expected to contribute particularly in the areas of risk reduction and resilience building.

The Board members commented that some of the action points outlined in the 2017 AWP are not very clear and it is difficult for RSCs and COs to understand how they can leverage on these works. In this regard, a recommendation was made that the Centre's policy, technical and programmatic support offers be articulated in more concrete and practical manner in terms of both short-term (e.g. resilient recovery) and long-term (e.g. resilient development) propositions. For GC-RED to remain a thought leader, its work should stay relevant and responsive to regional and national needs and be delivered in a manner that directly translates into programme/project development and be supportive of on-going resource mobilization efforts.

Strategic Guidance from the Board on the Way forward

The GC-RED Director outlined key resource mobilization efforts ongoing and planned during the course of 2017 as part of the 2017 AWP (Please see Annex 3: GC-RED Resource Mobilization Strategy and Action Plan). Board Members provided insightful comments on where they see potential opportunities for the Centre: e.g. support towards cross-border/multi-county initiatives, partnerships with multilateral banks to support the execution of under-performing national loans, engagement in the Green Climate Fund with a particular focus on land degradation issues, etc. The Board encouraged the Centre to pursue these and other innovative opportunities pro-actively in the course of 2017.