

**UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP) Directorate**

**Regional Programme Document for Asia and Pacific (2014-2017)**

**Mid-term Review**

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**FINAL REPORT**

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## Contents

Acronyms.....	iii
Executive Summary .....	iv
Acknowledgements .....	viii
1. Introduction.....	1
Methodology.....	2
2. Situation Analysis .....	3
The Good News .....	3
The “Unfinished Agenda”-beyond 2015.....	4
3. Relevance .....	5
4. Programme Effectiveness .....	7
Outcome 1.....	7
Outcome 2.....	10
Outcome 3.....	14
Outcome 4.....	16
Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming:.....	18
Innovation .....	19
Partnerships .....	19
5. Programme Efficiency .....	19
Funding Delivery and Challenges .....	19
Results Based Management .....	20
6. Sustainability.....	21
7. Recommendations.....	21
Annex 1: Terms of Reference .....	23
Annex 2: Interviews Conducted .....	30
Annex 3: Review Questions.....	33
Annex 4: Key Documents Reviewed.....	35
Annex 5: Project Profiles .....	37
Profile on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific.....	37
Profile on the UN Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption (UN-PRAC) Project .....	42
Profile on Multi-Country South Asia HIV Programme .....	46

## Tables

<i>Table 1: Allocation and delivery for the AP Region 2014 - 2015 .....</i>	<i>19</i>
<i>Table 2: World Bank "Control of Corruption" results for the Pacific, 2014.....</i>	<i>42</i>

## Acronyms

Acronym	Meaning	Acronym	Meaning
ADB	Asian Development Bank	OPEC	Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	PC	Pacific Centre
BRH	Bangkok Regional Hub	PEI	Poverty Environment Initiative
CAP	Country Action Process	PFIP	Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation	PNG	Papua New Guinea
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women	PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
CO	Country Office	PRRP	Pacific Risk Resilience Programme
DFA	Development Finance Assessment	RBAP	Regional Bureau for Asia-Pacific
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)	RBM	Results-Based Management
DST	Development Solutions Team	RP	Regional Programme in Asia and the Pacific
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific	RPD	Regional Programme Document for Asia and the Pacific
EU	European Union	SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
GBV	Gender-Based Violence	SDG	Sustainable Development Goals, otherwise known as the Global Goals
GDP	Gross Domestic Product	SE4ALL	Sustainable Energy for All
GEF	Global Environment Facility	SIDS	Small Island Developing States
GEM	Gender and Economic Management	SP	Strategic Plan
GEPMI	Gender and Economic Policy Management Initiative	SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
HDR	Human Development Report	SSC	South-South Cooperation
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey	TOR	Terms of Reference
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	TG	Transgender
ILO	International Labour Organization	UN	United Nations
IOM	International Organization for Migration	UN-ACT	United Nations Action for Cooperation Against Trafficking in Persons
LDC	Least Developed Country	UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex	UNCAC	United Nations Convention Against Corruption
MCO	Multi-Country Office	UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
MDG	Millennium Development Goals	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
MIC	Middle Income Country	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
MFAT	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (New Zealand)	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
MPI	Multi-Dimensional Poverty Index	UNGA	UN General Assembly
MSM	Men Having Sex with Men	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
MTR	Mid Term Review	UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
NCD	Non-Communicable Diseases	UN-PRAC	UN-Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project
NGO	Non-Government Organisation	UNSIF	UN Social Investment Facility
NRM	Natural Resource Management	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
OECD-DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee	WHO	World Health Organisation

## Executive Summary

UNDP has commissioned this mid-term review (MTR) of the Regional Programme Document (RPD) for Asia and Pacific (2014-2017) and its two subsidiary “umbrella” projects for Asia and the Pacific<sup>1</sup>. The main objectives of this MTR are two-fold: its results are to feed into UNDP’s wider process of reviewing all regional and global programmes. This is part of a wider MTR of the current Strategic Plan (SP) for presentation to the Executive Board in mid-2016. Secondly, this MTR will help inform RP stakeholders about the emerging priorities for the next RPD from 2018. This MTR has been carried out between late November 2015 and early February 2016 by two international consultants. It is managed by UNDP’s Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP) Directorate in Bangkok.

### The Good News from the MDGs

The Regional Programme for Asia and the Pacific (RP) has been implemented against the backdrop of major Millennium Development Goal (MDG) successes up to the end of 2015. For example, almost all countries in the region have halved extreme poverty. Access to clean drinking water has improved dramatically. Nearly all children are completing primary school, including girls. While under-five, child and maternal mortality targets have in many cases not been achieved, great strides have been made. Progress in these and other important areas has been achieved with the strong and broad commitment, collaboration and support of multiple stakeholders. It is particularly encouraging that countries that were far behind have progressed even more rapidly.

### The Regional Challenges for the SDGs

Nevertheless, challenges remain for Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Within countries that are progressing, major pockets of extreme poverty still exist. There is rising inequality in income and opportunities in many countries in the region. Gaps between the “haves” and the “have nots” are widening and if this trend continues, will lead to serious negative impacts, including political unrest and instability. Furthering effective and inclusive governance remains highly relevant and critical for the region. Women continue to face severe disadvantages in many spheres of life. Rapid economic growth is increasing air pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the region. The Region is trailing the rest of the world in the protection of marine areas. South-east Asia has regressed in the forest cover target under MDG 7. The Asia region contains some of the most energy-intensive economies in the world but still some 558 million people had no access to electricity in 2011. 13 out of 22 of the world’s mega-cities are located in the Asia region and urbanisation brings growing challenges. The Pacific region faces challenges in education, health care and nutrition, and access to jobs, safe drinking water and sanitation. It is highly prone to natural and climate change related disasters. These issues form the backdrop for the future of UNDP’s Asia and Pacific Regional Programme.

### Relevance and Comparative Advantage

The RP responds well to the diverse challenges of the region. It is in line with the SP and is particularly relevant to addressing sensitive and cross-border issues as well as country and CO needs. Regionality underpins this and is more visible where countries need a collective critical mass. External partners are not always able to differentiate between regional and country programme work, i.e. between development effectiveness and development results, and they would benefit from a more connected picture of the contribution to regional development. Nevertheless, stakeholders value UNDP as a trusted and neutral partner that raises attention and action on emerging issues and approaches that are better addressed in a global/regional space. Donors and other international partners value being able to tap into UNDPs global and CO networks through the RP, which plays an important role as knowledge/thought leader and manager at the regional level. COs were unanimous that the RP brings high-quality expertise and that most advisers are innovative and knowledgeable about country-relevant best practices. Some noted that it is essential that RP advisers have a solid understanding of the local context and be sensitive to socio-cultural-political differences i.e. what works in one country may not in another.

### Effectiveness

As for all 5 Regional Programmes, the Asia and Pacific Regional Programme was formulated to be fully aligned to the SP, using an allowable 4 out of the 7 outcomes. It has had very little flexibility to adapt and focus these outcomes

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<sup>1</sup> “Advancing Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (2014-2017)” (largely for Asia) and “Achieving the simultaneous eradication of poverty and a significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion in the Pacific 2014-2017” (Pacific).

and their outputs to the needs of the region. Particularly for Outcomes 1 and 2 this has led to a dilution of overall vision and logic and difficulty in discerning higher level outcome results. In addition, as a result of re-structuring and reduction in core resources for the RP, in May 2015, the BRH management team took decisions to scale down a number of output areas. Our assessment of effectiveness for each Outcome has been informed by these factors.

*Outcome 1: Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded (Strategic plan Outcome 1)*

Outcome 1 is very broad and encapsulates several themes/interventions to address inclusive growth and development (employment, livelihoods, the poor, excluded communities, women's economic empowerment, extractives, energy access, natural resources management, urbanisation, social enterprise development). The Outcome does not convey a clear strategic vision, intent and purpose. For Asia, the approaches and interventions in support of Outcome 1 are loosely connected and fragmented. One reason is that many are funded from global or other mechanisms, not from the RP. For the Pacific, there is relatively more programmatic focus and sequencing of interventions, starting with regional and country studies on poverty, exclusion and vulnerability, complemented with interventions that address key priorities for the region. Nevertheless, progress towards the outcome is being made in both regions in that foundations have been laid in 2014 and 2015 for implementation and institutional uptake within several interventions. "Building blocks" in the form of innovative studies, integrated approaches to national planning, practical guidelines and innovative capacity building and South-South learning exchanges have been completed, which reflect the RP's role as a strong and knowledgeable development partner.

*Outcome 2: Citizen expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance (Strategic plan Outcome 2)*

Despite solid and significant results in several areas, governance work is so diverse that we cannot see a clear strategy leading to the outcome. It covers HIV, gender-based violence, women's political representation, anti-corruption, local governance, parliamentary and electoral democracy, non-communicable diseases, disability rights and social protection. While UNDP has demonstrable roles and expertise in many of these, we do not see a solid overall logic. Higher outcome level gains are difficult to determine, yet we note the following major highlights.

Work on HIV has been absorbed into the governance outcome, because the bulk of programme interventions are aimed at governance aspects of HIV prevention and associated discrimination and stigmas. Significant achievements are being made. Recognising that HIV requires a multi-dimensional, multi-sectoral, joint partnership approach, there is good regional/sub-regional joint planning and coordinated programme implementation especially with UNAIDS at country and regional levels and with ESCAP at regional level. Work on NCDs is very appropriate in the Pacific, where NCD related health care costs are burgeoning. Progress is occurring: initial rapid estimation has been performed in 3 countries; Fiji has recently completed a strategy and further work is being done with Parliamentarians on NCDs and the law; Tonga is developing a strategy, assisted by a Joint UN Interagency mission.

Parliamentary gains in Fiji have been impressive. Gains could be extended across the Pacific if resources can be found for regional and country approaches. In Asia, this type of work is nascent, focussing initially on research and regional dialogue on political transition. Anti-corruption is an important and growing area for both regional projects, with the relationship with UNODC being vital. The UNODC/UNDP work is impressive. Within a global approach, country gains in law, regulation and citizen activism are occurring. The challenge is to combine these into practical, citizen supported systems and measures and ensure the implementation of these laws and policies.

*Outcome 3: Countries are able to reduce the likelihood of conflict, and lower the risk of natural disasters, including from climate change (Strategic plan Outcome 5)*

UNDP and the RP have a leading role in disaster risk reduction and preparedness. Integration of disaster and climate-change risk in the region is proceeding well. Good assessment and planning achievements, including for early recovery may be masking systematic capacity development at national and sub-national level, especially in country programmes. It is hard to differentiate between regional and country efforts. Very good work is being done in peace building. While conflict environments in the two regions are very different, UNDP has not articulated the opportunities to link the local governance related gains in the Pacific with the regional networking to legal protections for the conflict vulnerable in Asia. This is a challenge for the future.

#### *Outcome 4: Development debates and actions at all levels prioritise poverty, inequality and inclusion, consistent with UNDP engagement principles*

The high-quality regional publications produced by the BRH and PC reflect regional strengths of UNDP's RP as neutral convener of different interest groups and as thought leader. The RP's strength is bringing human development and rights-based aspects and a focus on the poor and excluded, into development discourse. There is still an "unfinished agenda" from the MDGs. Countries are now gearing up for the SDGs which are much wider in scope, with governments and development partners still figuring out their roles. Nevertheless, at the regional level, considerable preparatory work has been undertaken by the RP team in 2015 in localising the SDGs to respond to the priorities and needs of the Asia Pacific region through the "Mainstreaming Acceleration and Policy Support for implementing the 2030 Agenda" (MAPS) process. High quality and innovative work is also being done on development and climate finance, which is now being extended globally.

**Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming:** Significant work is being done on gender equality and women's empowerment at regional and country levels. Gender considerations, which are mainstreamed into outputs, largely focus on "women-focussed/targeted" interventions. We learned that this was a conscious strategy taken at the time of the RP formulation. However recent innovative work is also focussing on the inter-dynamics between men and women in situations of violence. Attention to gender considerations is most visible in Outcomes 1, 2 and the disaster-related elements of Outcome 3. Gender is not a separate outcome in the RPD; this is not a limitation if RP senior management mandates the systematic mainstreaming of gender considerations across all outputs. With only one full-time gender adviser and focal points in Outcome teams, additional staff capacity is needed.

**Partnerships:** The RP is to be commended in the way it has pursued a range of partnerships and collaborations over the MTR period (and beyond). In every outcome area and almost every output, there are good examples of partnerships with UN agencies, other international development partners, civil society, and non-government organisations (CSOs and NGOs), academia and the private sector at both regional and country levels.

#### Programme Efficiency

Core fund delivery for 2014/15 shows a shortfall of 35% of expected expenditure for the two umbrella projects and an overall shortfall in core and non-core resources of 15%. The 35% shortfall is largely due to non-availability of expected core funds. UNDP respondents recognise that the delivery of funding is very critical and some view this to be approaching crisis point. Sharper focus is needed on programming choices and resource mobilisation that recognises the potential of new funding sources as well as downturns in traditional modes of funding. This is linked to the need for better results monitoring to inform policy thinking (painting the big picture) and promote programme effectiveness and development results. Because of design and monitoring system policies and issues, little outcome level monitoring is being undertaken. Senior management does not have the tools to do this. At output level, design and monitoring discipline is poor. Narrative reports focus on activities, not results. Raising standards in progress reporting is a work in progress. Statements of aims are prone to complex, unclear language, and milestones and targets are prone to over-ambition.

#### Sustainability

The RP has sponsored and facilitated numerous regional policy dialogues, regional exchanges and regional knowledge products. Where these focus on sensitive, politicised and/or cross-border issues, the leadership role of UNDP and the role of bringing regional best practices into the discussion are widely appreciated. These can stand independently and in their own right as key points and/or steps in an advocacy process and do not have to be "sustainable" in the traditional sense. However, due to current resource constraints, it is not always possible to maintain continuous momentum on a particular issue. One case in point is the MDG and HDR regional reports, where the frequency is likely to be reduced. Regarding advisory support to COs, in most cases these are demand-driven and part of a country project and therefore there is greater potential for sustainability. We also note that sustainability is generally poorly addressed in progress reports and other documentation.

#### Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** *Do not revise the current Regional Programme Document and its associated Results and Resources Framework during the remainder of this programming cycle. This would be a very time consuming exercise. The Regional Project Documents under this RPD were revised in 2015 and this suffices for this period. It is*

better to focus on appropriate changes for the next RPD, with attention to sustainability of core business, future programme focus and regionality in mind.

**Recommendation 2:** It is noted that the corporate agenda and priorities drive the RP. It is recognised that UNDP is able to potentially programme across a large number of the SDGs and is already firming up its response to Agenda 2030, notably within the MAPS approach. Within this framework, we recommend that in the next programme cycle the RP cautiously expand into new thematic areas and above all view all of its next RPD (and its formulation) through the development lenses of SDGs 1, 10 and 16. These 3 goals are very broad and allow for a diverse range of programme interventions. Furthermore, recognising the inter-connected nature of all SDGs, this approach should be used to enhance and strengthen the feasible linkages that can be built from SDGs 1, 10 and 16, within the RPD budget envelope and within a developing regional role in MAPS support to countries.

**Recommendation 3:** For the remainder of this programming cycle, the RP should also focus on assisting countries and their governments to follow on the MDG “gaps” and integrate and sustain them within the SDG goals and to develop their baselines for measuring SDG progress, their monitoring systems and capabilities to do this. This work should build on what has already been achieved for measuring MDG progress and achievement.

**Recommendation 4:** Prior to the preparation of the next RPD, undertake well beforehand a consultative theory of change process analysing development constraints and potential programmatic responses to help determine the regional needs that the Programme can help to address. This should involve rigorous mapping of what other development actors are doing in each field. Determine UNDP/RPs comparative strengths and realistically assess available resources. Avoid designing an over-ambitious new RP with a large “unfunded” component. Involve a sample of COs in this process. Include measures to determine what kind of in-house expertise is needed in each area.

**Recommendation 5:** Avoid over-complexity in outcome design, reducing the number of unrelated outputs grouped together. UNDP New York should allow a simpler, lighter and more flexible approach to design, so that RPs can more logically choose their own Intermediate outcomes, providing these can be demonstrated to contribute to the SP.

**Recommendation 6:** Encourage and support RP staff at all levels to use tools and methods to improve programme design and monitoring. RBM staff should be further resourced and empowered to provide continuous and structured training and follow-up for all staff involved in reporting. Institutionalise at least bi-annual outcome team meetings (if possible with an external facilitator) to assess the status of outcome progress, focusing on development results.

**Recommendation 7:** Consider ways of articulating to stakeholders the benefits and results of the advisory support to the COs, which UNDP defines as “development effectiveness”, alongside RP “development results”. Doing so would allow stakeholders to see a more connected picture of UNDP RBAP’s contribution to regional development. This may also feed in to and enhance effective attribution of and reporting on results across all RBAP-supported activities.

**Recommendation 8:** Use every effort to maintain and continue the RP’s regional role to research and publish high quality knowledge products, including those that address sensitive, politicised and cross/border issues. The RP should maintain the frequency of flagship publications, despite continuing resources constraints. Options for partnerships and co-sponsors e.g. the private sector, should be pursued more vigorously. Other social media and communications means should also be considered e.g. stories on Facebook and video films.

**Recommendation 9:** Innovate in resource mobilisation. UNDP is already considering its options for future funding on an urgent basis. This should allow for innovative approaches to working with traditional and non-traditional donors. It should include CO-RP programming options that allow country co-financing to help fund the RP to support country programmes. UNDP should seriously examine contributions from citizens. It should not fund raise from the private sector, but should seek to maximise opportunities for partnership approaches with it.

**Recommendation 10:** For gender mainstreaming, ensure that recently completed research and studies are followed-up on in terms of continued regional awareness raising and dialogue. At the country level; avoid new studies and focus on ensuring implementation of the recommendations of this work. Consider recruiting a second gender adviser for the BRH and fully funding the position in the PC to support the outcome teams to mainstream gender considerations into projects. Gender mainstreaming could also be included in RBM training. In order to strengthen gender mainstreaming in UNDP and the RP, corporate and senior level management support is essential.

**Recommendation 11:** *Besides continuing to pursue existing partnerships, special focus should be given to the partnership and joint programme potential with agencies in the UN system, including the specialised ones. This is especially relevant if the RP is moving into new thematic areas e.g. UN Habitat and UNEP on urbanisation; ILO on jobs and livelihoods; UN Women on extractive industries and the World Bank and IMF on inclusive economic growth.*

### Acknowledgements

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## 1. Introduction

UNDP's Regional Programme in Asia and the Pacific (RP) is defined by the Regional Programme Document (RPD) for 2014 to 2017, and has the overarching goal: **"Helping countries in the region achieve the simultaneous eradication of poverty and significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion through sustainable development practices and strengthened governance within regionally-agreed development goals"**.

With an allocation for 4 years of \$130 million, the programme is further defined by four outcomes from UNDP's Strategic Plan (SP) for 2014 to 2017, around inclusive and sustainable growth and development, democratic governance, disaster and conflict risk reduction and development debates and actions<sup>2</sup>. The RPD is further articulated through two "umbrella" projects, which also share the same SP outcomes: "Advancing Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (2014-2017)" (largely for Asia) and "Achieving the simultaneous eradication of poverty and a significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion in the Pacific 2014-2017" (Pacific).

The RP covers 36 countries and supports 24 UNDP country offices (COs). Under direction from RBAP in New York, it is managed through 2 centres: The Bangkok Regional Hub (BRH) and the Pacific Centre (PC) in Suva. The PC is currently being realigned with UNDP's Fiji based Multi-Country Office (MCO) into one integrated UNDP Pacific Office under one management. Through this UNDP aims to optimise governance, resource management, workflows, and increase value added advisory services and programme support across UNDP and the UN System.

The programme plays two main roles: it implements regional initiatives and activities that help countries on a cross-border basis to dialogue, analyse and strategise on development issues; and it provides technical and policy advice and expertise to COs to help develop and implement programmes. Roles are based on five regionality principles: provision of regional public goods, management of cross-border externalities/dialogue on sensitive and emerging development issues, experimentation/innovation to overcome barriers that countries find hard to overcome individually, and generation and sharing of knowledge, experience and expertise (e.g. South-South and triangular cooperation). The Asia Pacific Programme also helps to channel UNDP global resources to regions and countries.

### The post-2015 Development Agenda: Gearing up for Agenda 2030

The strong and knowledgeable regional presence, leadership and convening role of the RP is critical for advocacy and consensus building on the SDGs. Feedback from COs confirmed this view. In 2014 and 2015 the RP has facilitated multi-stakeholder consultations at regional and sub-regional levels in anticipation of the SDG Summit in September 2015 and the follow-up thereafter. Some key steps in the process were:

- Contribution on MDG implementation from 7 countries in the Secretary-General's Synthesis Report;
- UNDP-ESCAP-ADB partnership on MDG reports highlighted by UN Joint Inspection Unit as unique and valued;
- New joint MOU between UNDP-ESCAP-ADB signed at a side event of the SDG Summit in September 2015;
- Joint assessment with ASEAN of MDG achievements to help SDG implementation in its member states;
- UNDP led UN work to analyse the final MDG achievement in ASEAN as groundwork for 2030 agenda in ASEAN;
- Regional consultation with SAARC on MDG achievements;
- Regional consultation with 14 Pacific countries in Fiji in late 2014 on SDG planning and implementation;
- Sub-regional and e-consultations on lessons from MDG implementation and the post-2015 agenda;
- Regional Conference on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (co-hosted with UN-WOMEN);
- Report on the State of Human Development in the Pacific: Vulnerability and Exclusion in Time of Rapid Change, 2014 (UNDP with ESCAP, ILO, UNFPA and UNICEF); and
- Regional MDG Report "Making it Happen: Technology, Finance and Statistics for Sustainable Development".

We are of the opinion that this combination of regional and sub-regional consultations, involving a wide range of stakeholders and the production and dissemination of evidence-based regional knowledge products, has been essential to advocating the SDG Agenda in the Region. The regional and thought leadership role of the RP is clear and unequivocal, with the focus on human development, poverty, inclusion and empowerment. The RP already supports 11 of the 17 SDG goals (1,3,5,7, 8,10,11,13,15,16,17) reflecting wide diversity of thematic areas and goals. This allows for UNDP through the RP to respond flexibly to emerging new priorities in a fast changing development context. Conversely, it dilutes the programme's focus and external image. Hard choices may have to be made if resources continue to dwindle. Feedback from COs was mixed on this issue, though the general view was that the RP needs to focus more.

<sup>2</sup> Full outcome statements are provided in the Programme Effectiveness section of this report.

In September 2015, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) ratified the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UNDP has stated it will focus on SDGs 1 (Poverty reduction), 10 (Inequality) and 16 (Governance) and will use the RP to work with COs to mainstream SDGs into national development plans and programmes. The 17 SDGs are very much interlinked and create opportunities and challenges for future programme focus. We note that UNDP's Regional Programmes for Asia and the Pacific are currently linked in various ways to the majority of SDGs.

Significant corporate structural review of RBAP has occurred during 2014 and 2015. The BRH was established in October 2014 with a new organisational structure. Further structural change is ongoing with the integration of the PC and the Fiji MCO. Re-structuring has had positive and negative impacts on the centres, the outcome teams and their work. On the one hand, staff capacity and in-house expertise has been boosted by the deployment of Headquarters staff to the region. On the other, vacant technical adviser posts have been frozen and no new recruitment is envisaged. Also, this situation creates uncertainty and affects motivation among the staff at all levels.

The RP undertakes consultation and feedback processes to share the progress and review contributions to RPD results for both umbrella regional projects. Project governance mechanisms are the Pacific Programme Board and the Asia Outcome Board. The latest meetings have been in Suva in December 2015 and Bangkok in January 2016<sup>3</sup>. Results of these meetings, along with the findings and recommendations of this MTR, will be shared with the overall RBAP Advisory Board for the RPD. In addition, at the outset of the annual planning process, engagement calls are sent out to the COs to ask for their priorities and needs and to exchange ideas on new developments.

With this wide scope in mind, UNDP commissioned this MTR of the RPD to feed into UNDP's wider process of reviewing all regional and global programmes. Similar MTRs are being conducted for UNDP's other 4 regional programmes. This is part of a wider MTR of the current SP. UNDP aims to complete the whole review process in time for presentation to the Executive Board in mid-2016. The TOR for this MTR are in Annex 1. This rapid MTR has been carried out by a two-person team of independent consultants; Mike Freeman and Minoli de Bresser, based in Australia and the Netherlands respectively. Our work started on 23/11/2015, and is managed by RBAP, Bangkok.

## Methodology

This MTR has reviewed the RP against the OECD DAC criteria: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability.

A key aim has been to obtain an up-to-date picture of how the RP is progressing. Driven by the SP, the RPD articulates what UNDP sees as the development priorities in the regions and is delivered mainly through the two umbrella regional projects as articulated through their project documents. The MTR has, to the extent possible, collected and used qualitative and quantitative data related to the RPD and its two umbrella projects. We have reviewed 2015 draft end of year reports, which provide narrative overviews of progress and draft progress reports, which combine activity reporting with some measurement of output indicators. We have reviewed October 2015 progress reports for the Pacific and mid-year progress reports for Asia. We also reviewed reports provided by the outcome teams on individual programmes and projects.

We have attempted, to the extent possible, to verify UNDP's view of progress through face-to-face and telephone/Skype interviews. An early proposal to utilise a web-based survey did not go ahead due to time constraints. We conducted face-to-face discussions in three-day visits to both Bangkok and Suva and virtual interviews from our home bases. The interview schedule is provided as Annex 2. We have consulted UNDP senior managers from both centres and from New York. We conducted discussions with a good cross-section of UNDP programme managers and development professionals in both centres, although this does not cover all aspects of the programmes. We have consulted with all COs in the Pacific and 8 in the Asia region. We were only able to interview a small sample of colleagues from other UN and international agency partners and from member country governments and donor agencies. Where colleagues were unable to be interviewed we have encouraged them to have email exchanges. We have been informed by and are grateful for all of the responses we have received.

At the commencement of our work, we drew up sets of questions for different stakeholder groups. These were used to guide interviews and email exchanges. Generic question sets are given as Annex 3 and were designed with the TOR in mind. Sets of questions were designed for senior management, programme and project managers, country offices, other UN and international agencies, donors and member governments, but were adapted on a case by case basis to respondent organisations and programs.

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<sup>3</sup> The Team leader attended the meeting in Suva; for timing reasons we could not attend the meeting in Bangkok

Discussions have particular focused on roles and results, the comparative advantage of UNDP’s Regional Programme, the benefits of collaboration and partnership, the challenges of the SDGs and as much as possible substantive development issues. We have also touched on the impacts and benefits of restructuring and the changing funding environment. Respondents were encouraged to talk around the issues raised but also to expand the discussion to include other issues of importance to them. In line with usual evaluation ethics, individuals and their organisations have not been quoted directly; they were informed of this.

We have widely used documentary sources. These include UN strategic and thematic documents and guidelines, key knowledge products, project designs, other evaluations and progress reports, publicity material, financial summaries, meeting minutes and presentations. Annex 4 shows key documents.

As a part of our TOR we reviewed 3 regional flagship projects; two from Asia and one from the Pacific. The profiles in Annex 5 illustrate results which contribute to the delivery of the RPD/SP Outcomes. The projects chosen are: Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific (coordinated from Bangkok); the UN Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption (UN-PRAC) Project (from Suva); and the Multi-Country South Asia HIV Programme (from Bangkok).

Because most of our work has been at a distance, we have relied as a team on regular Skype communications and email, both to prepare this report and discuss the issues it contains. We have also undertaken regular virtual updates with BRH, vital in managing our requests for information and assistance in arranging interviews.

**MTR Limitations**

- The MTR has been at a time when many programme activities have only been implemented for about one year or a little more. UNDP has conducted very little analysis on achievements as measured by outcome indicators. This limits the MTR ability to comment on achievement of results.
- Along with the MTRs for other regions, this MTR has been limited to a period of about 1.5 months. Visits to the Centres in Bangkok and Suva have been possible but were very short. Visits to COs and projects were not possible. The MTR thus lacks any field level verification, especially from government, civil society and other beneficiary representatives.
- Most of the reporting information available to us was in narrative form, not well organised around results. Quantitative data against outputs is available but in some cases is incomplete and not up-to-date.
- The timing of this MTR has been over the end of the year. UNDP and some UN agency staff have largely been able to respond. Response from government representatives and donor agencies has been limited due to this timing.

These limitations have been discussed with and noted by BRH.

## 2. Situation Analysis

### The Good News

Since 2000, the Asia-Pacific (AP) region has witnessed remarkable growth and development against several of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets. Most successfully, poverty has been reduced; between 1990 and 2012, the proportion of the region’s population living on less than \$1.25 a day (purchasing power parity, PPP) has fallen from 53% to 14% and will likely be at 12% by the end of 2015. All countries in the region, with the exception of two, have achieved the MDG target of halving extreme poverty. A further notable success is that the percentage of the population without access to safe drinking water has fallen from 28% to 7% in the same period. A third achievement is that nearly all primary school children now complete primary education, with significant improvement in gender parity, as almost all girls attend primary school. The incidence and prevalence of tuberculosis has fallen and even though many developing countries have not reached the targets for under-five, child and maternal mortality, they have made great strides by 2015. It is particularly encouraging that countries that were far behind have progressed even more rapidly. In terms of the environmental targets, the region has maintained the proportion of land covered by forest and has increased its natural protected areas. CO2 emissions per unit of gross domestic product (GDP) have also reduced. All these have been achieved with the strong and broad commitment, collaboration and support of multiple stakeholders; country governments, international development

partners and donors, civil society, non-government organisations, private sector, academia, think tanks and foundations, lobby and activist groups, concerned networks and finally individual citizens themselves.<sup>4</sup>

### The “Unfinished Agenda”-beyond 2015

**Poverty and Inequality:** There are still some 570 million people living below the \$1.25 poverty line in the region<sup>5</sup>. Using the Asian Development Bank’s (ADB) poverty line of \$2, the number of extremely poor people rises to about 700 million<sup>6</sup>. There are also wide disparities in MDG achievement across countries and sub-regions and within countries, largely because economic growth has not translated into equal and shared benefits for all. There is wide divergence between the Middle Income Countries (MICs) and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs). Most worrying is rising inequality in income and opportunities in many countries in the region. 80% of Asia’s population live in countries where inequality has risen in the past two decades. Since 1990, the population weighted mean Gini index for the entire region has risen from 0.335 to 0.375. Gaps between the “haves” and the “have nots” are widening and if this trend continues, will lead to serious negative impacts, including political unrest and instability.

**Unique Features of the Pacific:** In the Pacific, tracking progress is a major challenge due to the lack of relevant data and the complexity of how poverty is defined in the Pacific. Pacific people have their own definition and refer to “hardship” as lack of access to basic services, to income earning opportunity and to being unable to fulfil community obligations. What is known is that only two countries, Niue and the Cook Islands, are on track to achieve all the MDGs and all the others are lagging behind<sup>7</sup>. Some countries experience food poverty e.g. Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Nauru. Most still face challenges in education, health care and nutrition, and access to jobs, safe drinking water and sanitation. Rising inequality, youth unemployment, gender-based violence, women’s economic and political empowerment, exclusion of vulnerable groups such as the elderly and disabled, vulnerability to natural disasters and climate change are key challenges. But Pacific countries are set to experience faster growth due to strong energy exports (PNG), post-cyclone reconstruction job creation, tourism and foreign remittances. The potential is high and the challenge is for countries collectively and individually to take advantage of it.

**Governance:** Governance principles - democratic, participatory, transparent - continue as highly relevant and critical for MICs and LDCs in the region. Without effective and inclusive governance there cannot be equitable sharing in growth and development, nor socio-political stability. Discriminatory policies and practices continue to prevail, especially among the poor and excluded. Corruption is pervasive in most of these countries. According to Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index for 2014, ten countries in the AP region were listed in the lowest category of the ranking i.e. highly corrupt<sup>8</sup>. In the past decade with increasing globalisation, a new set of cross-border issues have emerged, which need urgent attention because they not only harm economic progress but also human development and rights. Some key issues are: human trafficking and human rights, forced child labour, migration and refugees, management of water resources, environmental hazards related to climate change, trade integration for human development, market access for LDCs, communicable diseases and drug trafficking.

**Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment:** The region’s women continue to face severe disadvantages in many spheres of life: accessing education, health care and formal employment, political participation and empowerment, gender-based violence (GBV) and discrimination, human rights abuse and sexual exploitation. For example, an average 46% of women participate in formal employment as compared with an average 75% of men. Women’s average earnings are lower than men’s and only three countries in the region have achieved 30% representation of women in their national parliaments (Nepal, New Zealand and Timor Leste)<sup>9</sup>.

**Environment and Climate Change:** Rapid economic growth and changing production and consumer patterns are increasing air pollution and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the region. Between 1990 and 2010, the AP region was responsible for 52% of total global GHG emission. Over half of these emissions originated from east and north-east Asia (notably China). However, per capita GHG emissions in the Region are still below the world average. Main sources are electricity usage, transport, industrial and residential use. The Region also has the highest concentration

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<sup>4</sup> Asia Pacific Regional MDGs Report 2014/2015: Making it Happen: Technology, Finance and Statistics for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, May 2015

<sup>5</sup> ibid

<sup>6</sup> Inequality in Asia and the Pacific: Trends, Drivers and Policy Implications, ADB, 2014

<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that achievements in this Region are disproportionately affected by PNG, the most populous country

<sup>8</sup> Transparency International Corruption Perception Index Report, 2014

<sup>9</sup> Statistical Year Book Asia Pacific, UNESCAP, 2014

of particulate matter in urban areas<sup>10</sup>. The cyclical relationship and impacts between climate change and agriculture, livestock production, food (in)security, health and nutrition is well documented and is likely to worsen in the coming years with increasing economic growth and growing populations in this Region<sup>11</sup>.

**Biodiversity, Protected Areas and Forests.** The AP region is trailing the rest of the world in the protection of marine areas. With wide sub-regional differences, east and north-east Asia have protected some 16% of terrestrial areas, south-east Asia 14% and south and south-west Asia only 6%. The forest sector shows contradictory trends. On one hand, the AP region has increased its overall forest cover from 30.5% in 2005 to 30.6% in 2012; on the other, there is a shrinkage in forest cover in many sub-regions. South-east Asia has regressed in the forest cover target under MDG 7. Progress in protecting ecosystems is similarly slow. For biodiversity, Indonesia and Malaysia have more than one thousand threatened species and India and China just under that number. A more positive trend is seen in the Pacific, which is making a great effort to protect its marine areas and resources; about 13% is now protected<sup>12</sup>.

**Energy:** East and north-east Asia consumed the largest amount of energy in 2012; some 3,643 Mtoe<sup>13</sup>. The Asia region contains some of the most energy-intensive economies in the world (along with central Asia). Of the total world consumption of coal, 74% was consumed in the AP region in 2012. Countries in this region with highest growth rates in energy between 2000 and 2012 were China and Vietnam. The three highest energy users in this region are the most populous i.e. China, India and Indonesia. Some 558 million people had no access to electricity in 2011. Biomass and waste make up the majority of renewable energy products but current data is insufficient to tell whether investments in these will be sustainable and feasible in the long-run, especially given rising urbanisation<sup>14</sup>.

**Urbanisation:** One of the greatest challenges for countries in the region is rapid urbanisation and the impact of this on economic development, human development and sustainability. In 2010 the urban population in the AP region amounted to 754 million people and now nearly 50% of the region's population is urban. 13 out of 22 of the world's mega-cities are located in the region<sup>15</sup>. As urban populations rise, there is tremendous pressure on employment opportunities, public services, housing infrastructure and the environment. Poorer communities will disproportionately face more difficulties.

**The Way Forward; Sustainable Development Goals:** In September 2015, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) approved a new global development framework and agenda "Transforming our World: 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". With 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets, the objective is to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, through global, national and regional collective action. These Goals form the ambitious challenge that the UN will help address in coming decades.

### 3. Relevance

**Finding 1:** *In the vast and diversified AP region, UNDP's RP is in line with the SP and is relevant to regional needs to address sensitive and cross-border issues as well as to country and CO needs. Regionality underpins this and is more visible where countries need a collective critical mass. Stakeholders note the relevance of RP expertise, with COs unanimous in recognising the RP's high quality work. Care needs to be taken to avoid further programme dilution.*

**Finding 2:** *External partners including governments, regionally-based donors and UN agencies are not always able to differentiate between regional and country programme work. The main problem is that much of the advisers' time is for CO support, including provision of technical advice and backstopping, policy advice and supporting programme and project formulation. The regional programme development work through its projects, and the advisory policy work with country offices are intended to inform and feed into each other. It would be useful in the future to articulate to stakeholders the advisory support to the COs, which UNDP defines as "development effectiveness", alongside RP "development results"; this is not currently undertaken. Doing so would allow stakeholders to see a more connected picture of UNDP RBAP's contribution to regional development.*

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Food Policy Report, IFPRI, 2012

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> Million tons of oil equivalent

<sup>14</sup> Statistical Year Book Asia Pacific, UNESCAP, 2014

<sup>15</sup> With populations of over 10 million people



The Region is vast and diversified. It includes LDCs and upper and lower MICs, with unique sets of economic, social, cultural, political, demographic and geographical characteristics. The RP is an overarching framework, within which outcomes and outputs reflect the diversity of opportunities and challenges. Of major relevance for the AP Region, and one of the RP's greatest strengths, is that it addresses highly sensitive and/or politicised development and cross-border issues e.g. HIV, discrimination against sexual and other minorities, gender-based violence, corruption, human rights, democratic governance, human trafficking, and cross-border migration of vulnerable communities.

The RP generally follows the five regionality principles. These are easier to follow and apply in the Pacific region with 15 partner countries, geographically distant and all (except PNG) with small populations. A regional approach makes economic and practical sense, promoting a "critical mass" to address the Region's development challenges. The region has its own agendas reflecting that their voices on common challenges can be collectively heard. In Asia, where there are several sub-regions and some large countries, this is not so much an issue.

The regionality principles are less relevant and apparent in the RP's advisory services support to COs, with the exception of the principle on South-South Cooperation (SSC). Demand for RP advisory services stems mostly from the COs and therefore reflects CO priorities. At the same time during the planning process and engagement calls, opportunities are shared with the COs on new thinking and development from regional and global work, of which they can choose to avail. While the relevance of what the two regional projects are doing is a strong attribute, we have found some confusion, particularly from external partners, as to what UNDP country programmes and the regional programme are respectively contributing. Finding 2 above elaborates this.

The balance of RP services to COs is changing. Service Tracker reports for 2014-2015 note that "Support to programming, strategy and project formulation" has increased from 14 to 23%; whereas policy advisory services dropped from 13 to 7%. Technical advice and backstopping were at 53 and 55% respectively. COs have reacted positively, seeing the RP advisers as innovative and offering regional best practices and knowledge products. We note that RP development effectiveness support to COs is able to be accessed for all 7 SP Outcomes.

Following analysis and consultations through a theory of change process, the RP drew its development result outcomes from 4 SP outcomes. These and the contributing outputs are broadly defined, spanning many sectors and themes. RP and CO outcomes are generally well aligned with SP outcomes because CO programmes are also increasingly SP driven. RP outcomes and outputs have different priorities for COs in the two regions, depending on development context and country status as lower/upper MIC or LDC. For Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and the Maldives, disaster risk reduction & climate change adaptation (DRR/CCA) impacts have more relevance and priority; in upper MICs, environment, climate change and democratic governance are more important. Interviews with 11 COs confirmed that RP advisory support was generally very relevant to CO priorities and needs and generally demand driven.

### Comparative Advantages

We asked stakeholders about the RP's main comparative advantages. Their response was:

UNDP is a trusted and neutral partner, able to convene in a neutral space, drawing in a diverse range of stakeholders: government, non-government, UN partners, external development partners, private sector, civil society, regional institutions and academia. The RP facilitates platforms to advocate, discuss and address highly culturally sensitive and politicised issues.

The RP is part of a global UNDP/UN network, where emerging issues and approaches can be addressed in a neutral global/regional space e.g. the roll-out of the SDGs, accession to Conventions e.g. UN Convention on Anti-Corruption, Universal Periodic Review on Human Rights. The RP through COs can ensure that regionally relevant development issues (e.g. cross-border migration, NCDs, trafficking of women and children, access to water and energy sources) are taken to country level.

Donors and other international partners value being able to tap into UNDPs global and CO networks and the particularly close relationship between UNDP and Governments (especially with planning/finance agencies), facilitating access through the RP.

Finally, the RP plays an important role as knowledge/thought leader and manager at the regional level e.g. the work on Development Finance Assessments (DFA) and Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Reviews (CPEIR), LGBTI and HIV, women's political and economic participation.

There are also supply-driven corporate agendas on a variety of themes where UNDP (both RP and CO) has the responsibility to advocate for international norms and standards e.g. corruption, cross-border migration, trafficking, anti-corruption, LGBTI, HIV, non-communicable diseases (NCD), climate change, resilience, and gender equality.

Most of these topics are of high relevance in the regions and are largely the basis for UNDP's regional activity agendas, but they may not be of the highest priority for countries and their governments.

COs were unanimous that the RP brings high-quality expertise and that most advisers are innovative and knowledgeable about country-relevant best practices. Countries and donors also recognise in-house capacity as relevant. UN agencies interviewed - UNAIDS, UNEP, ESCAP and UN Women - recognise that UNDP expertise is complementary to theirs. However, some CO respondents stressed that it is essential that regional advisers have a solid understanding of the local context and be sensitive to socio-cultural-political differences (i.e. what works in one country may not work in another). If they do not have this, they should work closely with CO national staff who do. The highly diversified RP is a "double edged sword". Some CO stakeholders consider this reflects the diversity in the regions and allows UNDP to flexibly respond to emerging national and regional needs. Others consider this a dilution of UNDP's mandate, expertise and public image. Management of this will affect future effectiveness and efficiency and will have implications for how well the RP can mobilise additional resources in the future.

## 4. Programme Effectiveness

**Finding 3:** *The RPDs for the 2014-2017 programming cycle in all 5 of UNDP's Regional Programmes were formulated to be fully aligned to the Strategic Plan, as corporately mandated through UNDP's strategic alignment at global, regional and country levels. Hence, all five RPDs are using outcomes and outputs defined by the SP and its Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF). Each Regional Programme planned around an allowable 4 out of the 7 SP outcomes. This has meant that the RPD for Asia and the Pacific has had very little flexibility to adapt and focus these outcomes and outputs to the needs of the region. It has also meant that in Outcomes 1 and 2 in particular, there was a need to include a wide diversity in the number and scope of themes and interventions being addressed. This has led to a dilution of overall vision and logic for these outcomes and difficulty in discerning outcome level results.*

As a result of re-structuring and reduction in core resources for the RP, in May 2015, the BRH management team took decisions to scale down certain output areas e.g. access to clean energy, gender-responsive natural resources management, Human Development Reports (HDR) and MDG reporting. In other output areas a decision was also taken to limit interventions to the provision of advisory services to COs and not undertake new regional initiatives e.g. inclusive growth policies, jobs and livelihoods for women and youth, human rights and access to justice. There were no changes in the inclusive governance and sustainable and resilient development outcome areas, which according to the Service Tracker reports of 2014 and 2015, are the outcome areas where the most CO demand for advisory services was<sup>16</sup>. Our assessment of effectiveness has been informed by these changes. Findings and comments are by outcome, with separate comment at the end of the section on some cross-cutting themes.

### Outcome 1

**Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded (Strategic plan Outcome 1)**

**Finding 4:** *The formulation of Outcome 1 is very broad and encapsulates several themes/interventions to address inclusive growth and development (employment, livelihoods, the poor, excluded communities, women's economic empowerment, extractives, energy access, natural resources management, urbanisation, social enterprise development). As a result, it does not convey a clear strategic vision, intent and purpose. Underlying constraints that have led to this are noted in Finding 3.*

**Finding 5:** *For Asia, the approaches and interventions in support of Outcome 1 are loosely connected and fragmented. One reason is that many are funded from global or other mechanisms, not from the RP. The RP does fund some of the regional adviser/specialist positions that are essential for both regional activities and technical and advisory support to the COs. In the case of the Pacific, there is relatively more programmatic focus and sequencing of interventions, starting with regional and country studies on poverty, exclusion and vulnerability. These are complemented with interventions that address key priorities for the Region, such as energy access, private sector development, youth employment and financial inclusion.*

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<sup>16</sup> PPT presentation, Proposed Adjustments in view of RP core funds and technical advisory posts and budget reductions, 2014

**Finding 6:** *At the output level for Outcome 1, progress towards the outcome is being made in both regions in that foundations have been laid in 2014 and 2015 for implementation and institutional uptake within several interventions. As part of this progress, “building blocks” have been laid in the form of innovative studies, integrated approaches to national planning, practical guidelines and innovative capacity building and South-South learning exchanges, which reflect the RP’s role as a strong and knowledgeable development partner. However, as per findings 3 and 4, rigorous assessment of progress towards the outcome is very challenging.*

#### **Output 1.1 Strengthening of national and sub-national systems to achieve structural transformation of productive capacities that are sustainable and livelihoods and employment intensive**

Substantial progress is being made in the adoption of integrated approaches to national and sub-national planning, although this requires a long-term horizon. The Poverty Environment Initiative (PEI) is supporting 8 countries in the AP region<sup>17</sup> to integrate the poverty-environment dimension into planning. In Lao PDR and Myanmar, investment agencies are screening investment proposals against environmental and social standards. In Mongolia poverty-environment is being integrated into national, sectoral and sub-national planning. The innovative feature of PEI is that it goes beyond environment agencies to collaborate with finance and sectoral agencies. This is not always easy but partners like UNDP and UNEP are well placed to facilitate this multi-sectoral coordination.

By 2015, three Pacific countries were using Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) data to integrate economic, social and environmental considerations into policy; providing appropriate poverty measurement for Pacific conditions. The PC also helped Nauru and Samoa to conduct poverty related policy research.

The approach to gender equality and women’s empowerment as part of this output focuses on women’s entrepreneurial development. In the Asia region, multi-country research<sup>18</sup> on the barriers for women entrepreneurs and their potential to trade with neighbouring countries has been supported. This helped Nepal and Pakistan to prototype new technology increasing women entrepreneurs’ productive capacities. At policy level this has been supported by two work streams: Gender and Economic Management (GEM) and the global Gender and Economic Policy Management Initiative (GEPMI) where key ministry officials and non-government professionals have been trained in mainstreaming gender into economic policy-making and management. In the former, some 81 participants from 23 countries were trained and several trainees are applying their knowledge and skills<sup>19</sup>. Under GEPMI, one training for policy-makers from the Pacific Island countries was held in Fiji in August 2103: the training evaluation was positive but there was no user feedback on if and how countries are using this training. The target for this area of work is that by 2016, 3 countries in Asia will be implementing initiatives that overcome barriers to trade for women entrepreneurs, but this may not be achieved. From other evaluation findings, we are not convinced of the comparative advantage of a regional effort on women and entrepreneurship development, given there is a multitude of other country projects in this sector.

In the Pacific, the RP is addressing women and youth in one “package”: Samoa and Fiji are implementing initiatives to promote employment and entrepreneurship development accordingly. The target is to add 5 more countries by end 2017, which may be ambitious.

Youth inclusion and youth employment are emerging as a new priority area. Several regional consultations on youth have been organised within the Asia Pacific region in 2015 and a Development Solutions Team (DST) is being formed on a regional youth initiative. A global study on youth employment has been underway since 2014, which will inform UNDP’s future role in this area. A theory of change is being prepared which will; assess UNDP’s niche, given ILO’s mandate and experience, as well as programmes supported by the World Bank and ADB; the feasibility of a Pacific sub-regional approach; and the resourcing required for short, medium and long-term approaches.

#### **Output 1.2 Inclusive and Sustainable Solutions adopted to achieve increased energy access and energy efficiency**

The RP aims to help increase energy access for the poor, including renewable energy, and to develop sustainable energy options for productive livelihoods (the energy plus principle), Global Energy Plus. With AP advisory input, global guidelines were developed with co-funding from the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Advisers ensured that the AP context was reflected but since redeployment of the BRH adviser, the

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<sup>17</sup> Bangladesh, Bhutan, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines

<sup>18</sup> Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

<sup>19</sup> See Final Project Report for details, October 2013



guidelines have stalled. The RP energy team consists of only one adviser in Fiji and with the vast geographical coverage, this capacity is inadequate and will impact negatively on results. The progress against this is off-track.

At the strategic and policy level, we see much progress with the formation of a regional partnership in June 2014 among UNDP, ADB and ESCAP to support the Secretary-General's Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL) goals. This aims to leverage respective strengths of the three agencies with UNDP's recognised comparative technical strengths in energy and climate change, its ability to engage with national governments and civil society and its network of country offices. Specifically, UNDP has facilitated country action processes (CAPs), Rapid Assessment Gap Analyses, country action agendas and investment prospectuses. CAPs have been produced in 12 countries in the two regions. These form the basis on which governments and other investors will determine investments in the sector. However, with the RP resource shortfall, we learned that the bulk of the current effort is from ADB.

In the Pacific, UNDP is supporting the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu to produce energy policies. The PC reports that it is "premature" to say whether these will lead to an integrated approach to energy access and use. The target of two countries is not being met. Support was also given to Tuvalu and Nauru to gather household level energy data and a survey on electrical appliances and lights is planned in Kiribati. Again, resources have constrained progress.

### **Output 1.3 Legal and regulatory frameworks, policies and institutions enabled to ensure sustainable management of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems to promote inclusive growth**

There is very little reporting of results against this output in Asia and we cannot assess progress against targets. The only activity reported on is a study on gender mainstreaming in sustainable development programmes and associated guidance for COs. Noting that the Natural Resource Management (NRM) adviser's post has been vacant, we suspect that this output has suffered from a lack of a clear and strategic goal. The regionality added value is also not apparent to us. Similarly, the Pacific Region had targeted one country with having a planning and budgeting framework in place for the sustainable conservation of natural resources and this has not been attained.

The RP's work in Asia on extractive industries is a year old and a set of studies and pilots is being implemented to "get the fundamentals right at the start" in this complex, politicised area. Interesting examples are: a study on legal, regulatory and fiscal aspects of oil sharing in Pakistan; and a study on mineral revenue decentralisation in Mongolia. Foundation work, for example, on the legal framework is taking place in Indonesia, PNG and Fiji. This work also involves environmental NGOs by equipping them with up-to-date knowledge on extractive industries, to raise their effectiveness in negotiating with government and the private sector.

The Pacific Centre has supported COs to strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks, policies and institutions through regional cooperation; a very appropriate approach to dealing with a sensitive and politicised subject. In 2014 PNG carried out with PC support a national HDR entitled "From Wealth to Well-Being: Translating Resource into Sustainable Human Development", expected to form the basis for regional discussions on extractive industries. The PC has also supported PNG in capacity building in social impact and conflict risk assessment.

After delays in funding, the PC began in late 2015 in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) to implement the Pacific component of a UNDP global project on low value minerals and metals (financed by the EU and the African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States). A regional component focuses on training and capacity building, and there is a Fiji country component. Delays in the start of the project have impacted on progress in terms of results. UNDP corporate resources, particularly for a regional advisor, have not been forthcoming.

### **Output 1.4 (only for the Pacific) Countries have an enabling regulatory and policy environment for increasing access to financial services, products and service delivery**

The flagship regional effort is the Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme (PFIF), which has been operational since 2008 covering 6 Pacific countries, accounting for about 80% of the total population. This is a partnership between UNDP and the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) with funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) Australia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) New Zealand and the European Union (EU). It aims to provide quality and affordable financial services to low-income households and capacity building for client governments and formal banking systems in financial services delivery. At national levels, PFIF is helping central banks with strategies for financial inclusion/literacy and facilitating National Financial Inclusion Task Forces. The RP's role is to support improved policy frameworks and regulatory services in government, facilitate access to financial services and delivery channels and strengthen the financial service delivery capacities of client

governments and central banks. According to the latest website information, 794,557 people (of the final target of 1 million) have been reached since 2008 with financial services. There is very good progress towards the RP specific current phase target of reaching 500,000 clients and this is likely to be met by 2018 when PFIP ends. More recently, innovative models of financial service delivery are being introduced, e.g. the project with BIMA, a PNG mobile phone-based insurance provider, aimed to supply 70,000 low-income people with life and hospital insurance.

### Development Solutions Team on Urbanisation-an Issues Based Approach

The fast emerging challenges of urbanisation and the poverty-urbanisation-environment link and how the RP should respond have been taken up by the Inclusive Growth team. Although reported under Output 1.1, it is a cross-cutting theme which spans all the output areas and also other outcomes. The RP is correctly approaching this with an issues-based, multi-dimensional approach; a Development Solutions Team. Foundation work has included: the development of a Strategic Guidance Note on Urban Programming with inputs from four countries; urban poverty mapping using the multi-dimensional poverty index (MPI); the creation of a Community of Practice for government and NGO representatives, development practitioners, academia, think tanks and international development agencies; and a South-South learning toolkit.

Given that several COs have been working on the poverty and sustainable aspects of urban development for many years, it is unclear to us what the future role of the RP will be and what its comparative advantages are, besides efforts around South-South, North-South and triangular learning. This DST works closely with UN HABITAT and has produced a joint issues series on sustainable urbanisation; such partnerships could be further pursued for example with UNEP and UN Women.

## Outcome 2

### **Citizen expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance (Strategic plan Outcome 2)**

This is a very diverse Outcome and this is recognised by UNDP BRH. In line with Finding 3, within the mandated allowable 4 Outcomes for the RBAP RPD, many outputs have been strategically placed under governance. While acknowledging the constraints in this arrangement, the governance team is re-thinking how to design and implement governance-related initiatives in the future. In mid-2015 the Governance Team undertook a theory of change exercise, which suggested clustering governance work around 4 main areas: “support political transitions for resilient development, inclusive states and lasting peace; strengthen the rights and voice of vulnerable, marginalised and at-risk groups; maximise the availability and good governance of development finance at global and national levels; and strengthen transparent and accountable national and local governance systems to provide effective and equitable services”. We assess progress in this Outcome against the RPD as it currently stands.

**Finding 7:** *Despite solid and significant results in several programmatic areas, governance work is so diverse that we cannot see a clear strategy leading to the outcome. It covers HIV, gender-based violence, women’s political representation, anti-corruption, local governance, parliamentary and electoral democracy, non-communicable diseases, disability rights and social protection. While UNDP has demonstrable roles and expertise in many of these, including at the regional level, we do not see a solid overall logic. Higher outcome level gains are therefore difficult to determine. Underlying constraints that have led to this are noted in Finding 3. Governance Team work to provide tighter focus to this Outcome is also noted.*

**Finding 8:** *Work on HIV has been absorbed into the governance outcome, because the bulk of programme interventions are aimed at governance aspects of HIV prevention and associated discrimination and stigmas. Two essential streams of support are; support to civil society and citizens’ voices and influencing the legal, policy and enabling environment. Access to rights and justice are a cross-cutting theme. Several significant achievements have been made in this large area. Recognising that HIV requires a multi-dimensional, multi-sectoral, joint partnership approach, there is good joint planning and coordinated programme implementation, especially with UNAIDS at country and regional levels and with ESCAP at regional level.*

**Finding 9:** *Parliamentary gains in Fiji have been impressive at the country level and collectively the MCO and the PC have significant expertise. Gains could be extended across the Pacific if resources can be found for regional and country approaches. In Asia, this type of work is nascent, focusing initially on research and regional dialogue on political transition. We are not convinced about the validity of such a regional study given the vast amount of research that has been done and that the main challenges are now at the country level.*

**Finding 10:** *Anti-corruption is an important and growing area for both UNDP's regional projects, with the relationship with UNODC being vital. Corruption will not be quickly eradicated. The UNODC/UNDP follow-up work on UNCAC is impressive, with country gains in law, regulation and citizen activism. The challenge is to combine these into practical, citizen supported systems and measures and ensure the implementation of these laws and policies.*

**Output 2.1 Parliaments, constitution making bodies and electoral institutions enabled to perform core functions for improved accountability, participation and representation, including for peaceful transitions**

Particular country level progress is noted with flagship activities in Fiji, where UNDP has been able to help with opportunities in the recent freeing up of democratic space. 16% of parliamentarians are women, a notable success in a region where women's representation is traditionally difficult. The RP and the MCO have provided training to women's candidates and assisted with a tour of the country so that people are able to better understand the (female) Speaker's role. This helps to raise the confidence of females to enter and participate in the political process. Youth awareness of parliamentary functions has been fostered through a "mock parliament" programme, and civil society organisations have been afforded briefings, including on the preparation of petitions to Parliament. Around \$900,000 financial support has been provided for TV live streaming from Parliament. Support has been provided for the development of new Standing Orders and for the operations of a number of Parliamentary Committees.

There is a reasonable expectation that some, but not all, of these gains can be extended to other Pacific countries in the current programming period, including assistance to countries considering the Temporary Special Measures. The PC is providing technical assistance to Samoa to assist the CO to develop a project document for a Women in Parliament initiative. The Centre has helped the PNG CO to develop a programme on parliamentary development as part of the Bougainville Peace Building Fund. Technical assistance has been provided on moves toward a political party system in Tonga and for induction training in Cook Islands for new members of parliament. The PC claims that the Cook Islands initiative, along with the Fiji work, has helped to meet the 2015 milestone of 2 countries in which the capacity of members are enhanced to debate and amend draft laws on key sustainable development issues (not verified). The target for 2017 is for 5 countries with this capacity and this can be achieved. It may be harder to achieve the 2017 target for effective budget oversight by Parliament in 7 countries. By the end of 2015 UNDP reports this has been achieved only in Fiji against an anticipated 2015 milestone of 4 countries. Social and cultural resistance remain challenges, as does securing sufficient funding for this work in the Pacific.

In the Asia region, work under this output has only started in 2015 with aims to assist countries to improve performance and security in elections and to strengthen functions for effective political transition. As an example, the RP has assisted UNDP Bhutan by providing technical expertise in the early stages of a Children's Parliament project, with a best practice and lessons learned review from other countries. Findings were presented to Parliament and the Electoral Commission. In May 2015, with the East-West Centre, the RP organised a dialogue in Myanmar on political transitions, which identified strategies to support peaceful political transitions in the Asia-Pacific region. A grant and technical assistance was provided to help UNDP China to design and deliver training for CSO capacity and governance to work with government on service delivery. This work does not appear to fit under current RP Outputs, but is noted. Overall, with early progress being made in Output 2.1 in Asia, it is too early to tell whether work in Asia under this output, is on track.

**Output 2.2 Rule of law institutions strengthened to promote access to justice and legal reform to fight discrimination and address emerging issues**

Work from both Centres to assist rule of law organisations is very diverse. It covers family law (including GBV), human rights, women's rights to access land and property, the rights of migrant workers and LGBTI as well as anti-trafficking. Work has been undertaken on human rights capacity assessments and assistance to CSOs and National Human Rights Institutions to engage in Universal Periodic Reviews. Clearly different ways of looking at and addressing these issues exist in Asia and the Pacific.

The RP supports a separate project on anti-trafficking (UN-ACT). The sub-regional plan of action on Anti-Trafficking in the Mekong is substantially advanced. The RP is also working through Partners for Prevention (P4P) on violence against women. We note the ground-breaking publication as a result of a UN multi-country study on men and violence in 2013, which covers both Regions. In Indonesia, support has been provided for Human Rights Commission enquiry into (inter alia) the rights of indigenous women and in China for legal research into women's land rights.

The Pacific programme is responding to GBV through supporting development of family law bills in several countries. This requires a long lead-up time and the PC notes that it is unclear whether 2015 milestones have been achieved. The Centre is also supporting advocacy work on urban informal settlements and regional media standards.

The inclusion of these widely diverse initiatives under the largely un-measurable outcome indicator “Access to justice services improved with UNDP assistance and disaggregated by sex and population group<sup>20</sup>”; makes it a little hard for us to assess the overall level of progress in this output. However, there is some milestone progress being reported; for instance, 2015 milestones for LGBT groups in Asia appear to have been achieved. We think in this area UNDP has attempted to include too many different activities and will have difficulty demonstrating across the board effectiveness. We have found reporting against indicators to be generally unclear for this output. Nevertheless, our best guess is that significant achievements are being made in Asia and the Pacific.

### **Output 2.3 Institutions and systems enabled to address awareness, prevention and enforcement of anti-corruption measures across sectors and stakeholders**

Anti-corruption (AC) is an important area in which UNDP and UNODC collaborate. In the Pacific, 11 countries have acceded to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) and others are close; the region is the only one world-wide to have undertaken an UNCAC review. The PC is ahead of its milestone for 2015 at this high level. This is a global approach that is being supported regionally. The UN-Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project (UN-PRAC) helps to incorporate gender issues in anti-corruption, e.g. tackling the insidious issue of pressure for sex in the political and working environment and rights of women vendors in markets where corruption is rife. The RP is working on anti-corruption issues within the private sector. The “Phones Against Corruption” programme with PNG’s Ministry of Finance has resulted in 250 investigations, but as yet no convictions. The PC acknowledges the need to coherently integrate work on anti-corruption within parliamentary initiatives. As one respondent said, not unreasonably, “a powerful regional process is going on”. Please refer to Annex 5 for a detailed profile on UN-PRAC.

The Asia regional project is developing tools for corruption risk mapping and mitigation plans, with linkages into service delivery. An innovative sectoral approach to anti-corruption is emerging through sectoral initiatives that address corruption as part of development solutions in 7 countries with the financial support from the Global Anti-Corruption Initiative. The RP has worked to produce a Report on Anti-Corruption Strategies, using lessons learned from the region, which was endorsed in a global UNCAC Resolution. It has also worked on measures in the region to counter illicit financial flows.

In Thailand, the RP has helped with a new methodology for tackling corruption in procurement and service delivery, which the government is adopting. It has also supported UNDP Thailand with seed funding and technical support to partner with a university and an NGO to help students to build integrity in their university, with a view to reaching out within the Mekong region. It has sponsored an Indonesian mining sector initiative on enhancing transparency and accountability in sub-national management of business licenses and state revenue collection. It is helping Pakistan to review its 18th Constitutional Amendment for equitable sharing of extractive industry revenues.

The Asia RP is also on track to meet 2017 programme aims for AC, but UNDP should not underestimate the long term challenges to transfer these early gains into solid anti-corruption enforcement and prevention. Its MTR found that UN-PRAC had “less success to date in supporting the development of practical AC efforts in Pacific island countries that are recognised by the population of these archipelagos”. UNDP may be in this field for the long-term.

### **Output 2.4 National institutions, systems, laws and policies strengthened for equitable, accountable and effective delivery of basic services to excluded groups, with a particular focus on health and HIV**

HIV and Health is a major focus in both regions and regional comparative advantages are very clear. In Asia the main focus has been on HIV, while the Pacific programme also shows major focus on non-communicable diseases (NCDs). The common thread is focus on excluded segments of the population. At the regional policy level, ESCAP, with support from UNDP and UNAIDS organised the Asia-Pacific Inter-Governmental Meeting on HIV and AIDS, which endorsed a Regional Framework for Action.

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<sup>20</sup> This indicator derives from the Strategic Plan. We are unsure how UNDP as a whole intends to measure this.

In Asia, this part of the RP has been very active during this period. Activities have been wide-ranging, with successes in the area of laws and policies to reduce HIV and related stigmas and discrimination. 15 countries held multi-stakeholder dialogues to review legal and policy barriers (we heard directly about good progress in China).

The Multi-Country South Asia (MSA) HIV Programme is the flagship programme which applies a regional approach to reduce the impact of HIV on men having sex with men (MSM), hijra and transgender (TG) people<sup>21</sup>. It operates in 7 SAARC countries<sup>22</sup>, with significant results: 40,000 MSM and TG people in Afghanistan and Pakistan have received HIV services, and 10,000 HIV testing and counselling. Advocacy has brought official recognition of MSM and TG people as a “third gender” in Nepal and Bangladesh. Sindh province in Pakistan has passed South Asia’s first AIDS protection law. India’s lower House of Parliament has approved the “Transgender Bill”. In Bhutan, the first-ever MSM size estimation has been done; and a joint UNDP/WHO “The Time has Come” training package on stigma and discrimination has been adopted into the national curricula of India, Bhutan, Indonesia and the Philippines. In the SAARC region these groups are identified as “Sexually Orientation and Gender Identity” (SOGI) making it more social and culturally acceptable. Please refer to Annex 5 for a detailed profile on the MSA HIV programme.

Many other achievements are reported for the programming period. The RP has assisted women living with HIV to engage in national reviews for the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). UNDP has also been a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force on NCDs. Cambodia, Myanmar, and Indonesia have been supported through work on intellectual property rights frameworks to expand access to affordable life-saving medicines. While we have no way of measuring progress in Asia for this outcome, (the indicator is supposed to measure coverage of HIV and AIDS services), all of the milestones identified are very likely to be achieved<sup>23</sup>.

The Multi-Country Western Pacific HIV, TB and Malaria Programme applies a multi country approach to reduce the impact of the three diseases on the region. It started in July 2015 and will operate in 11 countries till December 2017. The programme is focusing on scaling up services and prevention programmes to MSM, TG and key affected population in the PICS and building Ministries of Health strategic information, M&E and supply chain capacities. So far the programme has: started to operate a grants mechanism; supported formulation of national strategic plans for HIV/STIs in Vanuatu and Palau; undertaken procurement and supply chain assessments in 9 countries; begun behavioural surveys in 9 countries; procured diagnostic equipment for 5 countries; commenced distribution of long lasting insecticidal nets; and commenced work on databases.

Work on NCDs is very appropriate in the Pacific, where NCD related health care costs are burgeoning. The PC has assisted in analysis of economic costs of NCDs in 4 countries and collaborated in a recent United Nations Interagency Task Force on NCDs. With WHO and the SPC, it has looked at NCD policy and regulatory approaches. The PC is supporting advocacy and policy dialogue and is working with the WB to set up a Trust Fund for NCDs for the Pacific.

This output using the indicator “Number of Pacific countries that integrate the voluntary targets on NCDs into their national plans, strategies and budgets, and the number of Pacific countries that have an effective inter-sectoral coordination mechanism for NCDs in place”. Progress is occurring. Initial rapid estimation has been performed in 3 countries. We understand that Fiji has recently completed a strategy and further work is being done with parliamentarians on NCDs and the law. Tonga is developing a strategy, assisted by the Joint UN Interagency mission.

Reports do not explicitly provide the information the indicator requires. Given PC resource constraints, reported delays in countries voluntarily integrating targets on NCDs into their national plans, strategies and budgets and the lack of clarity regarding country results, we conclude that, in the Pacific, NCD work in this output may be off track.

### **Output 2.5 Measures in place and implemented across sectors to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence**

The most recent report for Asia, which also covers elements of work on GBV in the Pacific<sup>24</sup>, says new country-level programming was introduced to prevent sexual and gender-based violence under Phase 2 of Partners for Prevention (P4P) Joint Programme, which is comprised of UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV. Violence prevention interventions respond to findings in the ground-breaking publication “A UN Multi-Country Study on Men and Violence”, which covers both Asia and the Pacific. P4P reports the implementation of a baseline survey and

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<sup>21</sup> Funded by the Global Fund for AIDS Tuberculosis and Malaria

<sup>22</sup> Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.

<sup>23</sup> At the MTR report presentation on 28/1/2016, we learned that the milestones have been exceeded.

<sup>24</sup> The Pacific Project does not report separately against this output.

commencement of a GBV prevention project in the Autonomous Region of Bougainville in PNG, as well as new prevention programmes in Bangladesh, Cambodia and Indonesia. Additionally, capacity building on inter-alia transforming harmful masculinities, violence prevention, volunteerism as well as research implementation was supported in 5 countries. P4P is also targeting policy advocacy to contribute to regional knowledge to prevent GBV.

UNDP has also supported the development and dissemination of knowledge products for evidence-based decision making, and a regional study on violence against sexual minorities and the impact on services for them, scheduled to be completed in late 2015.

We cannot find an appropriate outcome level indicator, unless this output was originally intended to be aligned to Output 2.2. For this reason, it is unclear as to whether the RP is on track in regard to this output. But, we do know from discussions and reading, that P4P is actively supporting work in this area in China, Cambodia, PNG, Indonesia, Vietnam and Bangladesh. There have been quite severe limitations on funding for the P4P joint programme. It may be that the scope of P4P to deliver violence prevention programmes in the region will be reduced. Despite this being the first year, preparations for this new initiative have gone well.

### **Output 2.6 Measures in place to increase women's participation in decision-making**

Work on supporting women in decision making in Asia has not substantially commenced as yet. In the Pacific we already noted above (output 2.1) significant gains in Fiji (and hopefully beyond) in women's roles in parliamentary democracy. There are some reporting issues around inclusion of this as a separate output for the Pacific. The outcome level indicator calls for gains in women's representation in the legislative, judicial and executive branches of governments in the region. We can only find information in reporting about women's representation in parliaments. This is being reported against two different outputs. In the absence of further information to the contrary we conclude that work on representation in the judiciary and in executive positions is not going ahead.

## **Outcome 3**

### **Countries are able to reduce the likelihood of conflict, and lower the risk of natural disasters, including from climate change (Strategic plan Outcome 5)**

***Finding 11:** UNDP has had a leading role in disaster risk reduction and preparedness for many years. Integration of disaster and climate-change risk in the region is proceeding well. Good assessment and planning achievements, including for early recovery may be masking systematic capacity development at national and sub-national level, possibly in country programmes. It is hard to differentiate between regional and country efforts.*

***Finding 12:** Very good work is being done in peace building. While conflict environments in the two regions are very different, UNDP has not articulated the opportunities to link the local governance related gains in the Pacific with the regional networking to legal protections for the conflict vulnerable in Asia. This is a challenge for the future.*

### **Output 3.1 Effective institutional, legislative and policy frameworks in place to enhance the implementation of disaster and climate risk management measures at national and sub-national levels**

Pacific Region work on this output is through the Pacific Risk Resilience Programme (PRRP) and is complemented by Global Environment Facility (GEF) projects for countries in the region. PRRP has been active in disseminating knowledge and learning related to risk governance through several regional and global platforms. The programme is fostering "a paradigm shift from simply managing symptoms of disasters/climate change toward addressing underlying causes of vulnerability and incorporating dimensions of resilience into socioeconomic development".

PRRP has shown impressive results. The number of national/sub national plans in which disaster and climate risk management are addressed is significantly in excess of the planned 2015 milestone (39 instead of planned 3). This is because many local authorities have also adopted the approach, which will go a long way to achieving intended 2017 results. However, no progress information is given for improvements in related institutional and coordination arrangements, so challenges may remain. Moving towards the regional Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development is very useful, given the commonalities in risks to Pacific Island Countries. UNDP says that it is actively engaged in this process, leveraging its portfolio in the Pacific to influence regional and national policy. The 2015 Draft Results Reporting document for the Pacific lists a large number of initiatives that have been supported under this output. This shows PRRP to have been very active in the current programme period. Many of these are activities rather than development results; e.g. facilitation of meetings, media messages and production of papers.

The 2015 Results Reporting document for Asia says “countries now have turned to applying their enhanced skills to prepare country-level assessments, as well as to better understand climate change impacts on the agriculture and water sectors in particular”. This has been supported through training on the Economics of Climate Change Adaptation. This topic is also being crafted into a region-specific course on the economics of adaptation in partnership with the United Nations University and other institutions. The Development Solutions Team on integrating CCA and DRR is undertaking ongoing work in this area.

Narrative reporting makes it clear that quite a large number of countries are moving towards country level assessments that include CC and sectoral analysis. It is not clear whether these countries have already taken disaster and CC risk into account in their budgets and plans, but it appears that the RP helps them to move in this direction. The RP in this area is demonstrating that it reaches national systems on climate finance and disaster/climate risk assessment. We are unsure of the progress in using SS dialogue to promote sustainable recovery. Nevertheless, we suspect that given the achievements noted above, that this outcome is largely on track to achieve results.

### **Output 3.2 Preparedness systems in place to effectively address the consequences of and response to natural hazards (geo-physical and climate related) and man-made crisis at all levels of government and community**

Linked to disaster and climate risk assessment are UNDP efforts in both regions on planning and preparedness for CCA. The Asia RP reports “UNDP has contributed to one of the most significant changes in the region – namely, improved levels of disaster preparedness and early warning systems ... in turn, these have led to major reductions in mortality”. Work has also gone ahead to support country national disaster loss and damage databases. Also noted is the Asia project’s role in early recovery and the formulation of recovery plans, notably in the wake of disasters in the Philippines (Typhoon Haiyan) and Nepal (earthquake). This work, which utilises UNDP’s SURGE capacity (support for crisis response) uses significant staff resources from time to time but it is highly appreciated by COs and governments. Another example is that the Afghanistan CO requested the RP for an early recovery and livelihoods adviser for Kunduz province, which had been under Taliban control: the adviser was immediately on the spot, even though travel to Kunduz was impossible. The RP has also provided technical support for the ASEAN Disaster Recovery Reference Guide due to be ratified in early 2016 by ASEAN member countries.

Similar work is going ahead in the Pacific under the PRRP, which focuses on preparedness systems to recover from natural disasters. Again the programme reports significant results at sub-national level. The PC has supported formulation and implementation of multi-stakeholder disaster recovery plans and programmes and associated livelihood programmes; the PC reports this work has exceeded anticipated milestones for 2015. We note that significant progress is being made in the Solomon Islands with a flood recovery action plan that has leveraged funding from the government and from development partners. Also demonstrating SURGE capacity, the PC has also assisted cluster coordination for disaster management following Tropical Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu and has supported the establishment of a new Risk Resilience Unit for livelihoods and food security there.

It is not clear whether UNDP judges any countries being able at this stage to (as per the outcome indicator) systematically assess economic and human development loss from natural hazards. We note the 2017 target is 12 countries with this capacity and have no evidence of the progress towards this. There may be further information on common tools and methods being fostered by UNDP and adopted by countries that would support this. In the Pacific, the development of livelihood programmes and capacity for national authorities to lead, design and implement early disaster recovery efforts are signs that progress is being made. In Asia follow-up work from risk assessment into preparedness planning and early warning systems also seems to be moving in the right direction.

### **Output 3.3 Mechanisms enabled for consensus building around contested priorities and for addressing specific tensions through inclusive and peaceful processes**

In the Pacific, much of the progress reported for this output is on the extensive work of the Strengthening Citizen Engagement in Fiji Initiative. This has been important in promoting engagement and dialogue on sensitive issues, which if not embraced and resolved could lead to conflict in the future. This has involved linkages between parliament and civil society, work on ending various forms of stigma, promoting human rights in policing, the training of traditional community leaders on good governance and inclusive leadership, and feeding (inter alia) good governance and human rights perspectives into the government’s own training programmes, supporting youth to have a voice and encouraging national NGOs to develop citizen engagement on a range of issues.

In the Asia region, the major thrust in this output is through the continuing N-Peace initiative. The Results Reporting document for 2015 says that N-Peace is able to act “as a convener, connector, capacity builder, and advocate of the women, peace and security agenda across the region.” It now works in 8 Asian countries. It is reported that N-Peace members have been able to work with key policy and decision makers, through national dialogues. We note the contribution to the Bangsamoro peace initiative in the Philippines. In Indonesia, the signing of a new National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security and the promulgating of a Presidential Decree on the protection of women and children during civil conflict are evidence of progress. UNDP has also been active in helping Afghanistan to develop a plan that articulates the need for women and men alike to be engaged in peace and security processes. N-Peace is also reported to be facilitating cross-border dialogue on these issues.

For both regions quantitative reporting against output indicators is missing. In the Pacific one indicator is supposed to measure the number of countries with policy frameworks and mechanisms about women's involvement in peace building. We do not know what constitutes a “mechanism” for purposes of reporting. This indicator has been dropped for Asia. Both projects are supposed to measure the number of countries that have policies and frameworks in support of the women, peace and security agenda, as well as the number of countries with mechanisms for conflict prevention and consensus building capable to perform core functions. Clearly progress is being made in Fiji, but the PC itself is not clear as to whether 2015 milestones have been met. In Asia, N-Peace is clearly making progress, particularly in network development in 8 countries. Nevertheless, on balance, significant progress appears to be being made in several countries in Asia and one in the Pacific.

#### Outcome 4

#### Development debates and actions at all levels prioritise poverty, inequality and inclusion, consistent with UNDP engagement principles

##### Advocacy and Awareness-Raising around Sensitive and Priority Regional Issues

Although there is no output to reflect the RPs work in this area, it is important to take note of a RP role in which it excels. Flagship studies have been published to form the basis for regional dialogue and engagement and for programming. The partnership aspect of these is noteworthy in that in most cases these publications and the launch events for them have been undertaken and co-sponsored jointly with other partners. To name a few:

- “Sex Work and Violence: Understanding Factors for Safety and Protection”, 2014, presented at the 20th International Conference on AIDS; received the first Robert Carr Research Award for its unique collaborative research among sex workers, rights activists, the UN (UNDP, UNAIDS, UNFPA), and Nepal, Indonesia, Myanmar and Sri Lanka Governments.
- “Women’s Participation and Leadership in Governments at Local Level”, 2014, which brought together governments, civil society, women activists and international development agencies to collectively commit to increasing women’s political participation and leadership. This was co-sponsored between the RP and the USAID Regional Mission in Asia.
- “Biodiversity for Sustainable Development”, 2014, UNDP and the Global Environment Facility (GEF), presents dozens of inspiring and innovative examples of how to conserve precious water, land and ocean resources.
- “The State of Human Development in the Pacific Region: Vulnerability and Exclusion in Time of Rapid Change”, 2014, analyses the state of human development using new data from the HIES surveys. This was undertaken through a unique collaboration among UNDP, UNFPA, ESCAP, UNICEF and ILO.

Such publications truly reflect the RP’s regional role as thought leader, convener and facilitator of multi-stakeholder responses to regional development issues and should not be affected by any future resource constraints.

**Finding 13:** *The high-quality regional publications produced by the BRH and PC, particularly on sensitive, politicised and cross/border issues, reflect regional strengths of UNDP’s RP as neutral convener of different interest groups and as thought leader. The RP’s strength is bringing human development and rights-based aspects and a focus on the poor and excluded, into development discourse.*

**Finding 14:** *At the country level, there are many examples of countries that have integrated MDG goals. However, there is still an “unfinished agenda”. Countries are now gearing up for the roll-out and implementation of the SDGs which are much wider in scope. Country governments and development partners are still figuring out their roles. Nevertheless, at the regional level, considerable preparatory work has been undertaken by the RP team in 2015 in localising the SDGs to respond to the priorities and needs of the Asia Pacific region; “Mainstreaming Acceleration and Policy Support for implementing the 2030 Agenda” (MAPS). This has involved taking into consideration “My World” survey results and a survey of CO priorities, sub-regional consultations in partnership with ESCAP, SAARC and*



*PIFS, mapping of priority areas for engagement within the 3 SDGs and identifying service lines and related tools that UNDP has the best capacity to offer.*

**Finding 15:** *Bearing in mind the changing financing for development context and the graduation of many countries in the Asia Pacific region to MIC status, the RP has recognised with forethought the need to pursue other forms of development financing (beyond ODA) and is developing and testing out innovative methodologies to assist governments to examine and plan their own resources from both public and private sources in a more integrated and holistic way.*

The Asia Pacific Region has experienced strong socio-economic growth and development over the past 25 years. Millions of people have been lifted out of poverty and the MDG 1 target of eliminating extreme poverty, measured at the poverty line of \$1.25 a day (PPP) will quite likely be achieved by 2030.<sup>25</sup> However, it is well known that several LDCs and SIDS in the Region have substantial poor and excluded populations and that even within MICs, there are substantial “pockets of poverty”. As mentioned earlier, about 570 million people are still living in extreme poverty.<sup>26</sup> In its planning for the roll-out of the 17 SDGs, UNDP, through the RP, will continue the pressure on addressing poverty, sustainability, inclusion and empowerment of the remaining poor populations. This is an ambitious long-term goal and will also certainly require additional new and innovative sources of development financing.

#### **Output 4.1. National development plans to address poverty and inequality are sustainable and risk resilient**

The greatest impact of the RP on this outcome has been through regional MDG and HDR<sup>27</sup> reports, the dialogues around their launches and follow-up by COs and country governments to produce their own reports. These reports uniquely raise discussion around emerging new development issues such as human development and climate change, gender equality and rights, technology, development financing and statistics. Since 2009, UNDP, ESCAP and ADB have partnered to support regional MDGs. 5 regional MDG reports have been produced between 2010 and 2015: including in February 2013 “*Asia Pacific Aspirations: Perspectives for a Post-2015 Development Agenda in Asia Pacific*” and in May 2015 “*Making it Happen: Technology, Finance and Statistics for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific, 2014/2015*”. In April 2016 the latest MDG Report on “*Demographic Change and Human Development*” will be launched to address current issues of concern around the “youth dividend” and aging populations.

The past two reports have been produced in a much more consultative manner, through sub-regional consultations with a wide range of stakeholders. A recent evaluation of the partnership and the MDG says that “The OIOS (ESCAP’s Office of Internal Oversight Services) notes the satisfaction of users with the regional MDG Reports which reports are considered to be very authoritative in addressing development issues in the region”<sup>28</sup> The evaluative review also mentions that the dissemination of the results and key messages could have been “more strategic and systematic” and that this process would benefit from resources being allocated for a regional communications plan.

At the country level, the MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF) process has been successful in identifying MDG gap achievement in many countries and this, combined with country office longer-term support and advocacy (also prior to this reporting period) resulted in several countries in the Region having integrated MDG goals and indicators into their national development plans and strategies. Examples are: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Fiji, PNG, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu.

#### **Output 4.2. Countries enabled to gain equitable access to, and manage, ODA and other sources of global development financing**

The RP is supporting the governance of financing for development through 2 innovative methodologies: development finance assessments (DFAs) and Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Reviews (CPEIRs). DFAs are under way or completed in 7 countries, assisting them to formulate Integrated National Financing Frameworks, incorporating cross-cutting issues with climate financing and budgeting. CPEIRs are being undertaken in 15 countries to assess existing budget allocations and expenditures. Led by the respective governments, with UNDP support, recommendations from these studies have led to programmes aiming to integrate climate finance in

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<sup>25</sup> Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific, 45<sup>th</sup> Edition, poverty in Asia; A Deeper Look, ADB, 2014

<sup>26</sup> Regional MDG Report “Making it Happen”, UNDP/ESCAP/ADB, 2015

<sup>27</sup> The last regional HDR was launched in 2012 and is outside of the MTR period. However, some countries in the region have produced national HDRs e.g. Sri Lanka on Youth and Development in 2014

<sup>28</sup> Draft Evaluative Review, UNESCAP/ADB/UNDP, Supporting the Achievement of the MDGs in Asia Pacific, Frank Noij, December 2015

budget systems, and to strengthen accountability and responsiveness of budgets to the impacts of climate change. Such tools can be considered as laying the foundation for governments to think in a very different way about the national budgeting processes and how they can identify non-traditional sources of development financing.

In the case of the work on climate finance, widening the ownership of the climate finance agenda has resulted in more comprehensive approaches to addressing climate change. For example, Ministries of Finance in Bangladesh and Nepal are taking on the role of National Designated Authority in the context of the Green Climate Fund. We understand that these methodologies are progressively being rolled out in other UNDP Regional Programmes. Additionally, the World Bank has also developed a CPEIR handbook.

In the Pacific region, climate change impacts are a critical issue and the PC has provided quality technical advisory services to Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu on climate finance assessments. Climate finance was included in a side event at the 3rd International SIDS Conference in Samoa in September 2014. CPEIRs are also being planned in other cross-cutting themes: Disaster Reduction and Recovery (2 countries); Biodiversity (7 countries) and NCDs (the Pacific). Please refer to Annex 5 for a profile on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific.

We consider that such methodologies are cutting edge and very appropriate and relevant in the changing development finance context in the Region. However, the challenge of adopting such integrated methodologies into existing national and sub-national planning and budgeting systems (which tend to work in silos) is a concern and has been recognised by the RP team. A longer-term horizon is necessary for institutional uptake and hence this is a “work in progress”.

#### **Output 4.3. South-South and triangular cooperation partnerships established and/or strengthened for development solutions**

South-South, North-South and Triangular cooperation and learning exchanges are an integral part of the RP and are being pursued in all the four outcome areas. At the policy level the RP has supported South countries to have stronger negotiating power when defining the parameters and targets of the SDGs and is developing new mechanisms for South-South cooperation e.g. the social enterprise facility, innovation fund, solution exchange.

At the outcome level there are numerous examples in both the Asia and Pacific regions: China and Bangladesh exchange on sustainable and inclusive urbanisation, India and Cambodia collaboration on HIV and AIDS, Pakistan and Nepal on electoral security, several countries on LGBTI rights, India/Thailand/Vietnam collaboration on GBV, eight countries collaborating on women, peace and security, Indonesia and Timor Leste on cross-border policy dialogue. Feedback from CO interviews confirm that such exchanges are very useful. However, due to lack of information it was not possible for the team to make a thorough and systematic assessment of the results in terms of how the knowledge is being used from these diverse learning exchanges.

#### **Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming:**

**Finding 16:** *Significant work is being done on gender equality and women’s empowerment at regional and country levels. Gender considerations, which are mainstreamed into outputs largely focus on “women-focussed/targeted” interventions. We learned that this was a conscious strategy taken at the time of the RP formulation as part of a theory of change process. However recent innovative work is also focussing on the inter-dynamics between men and women in situations of violence<sup>29</sup>. Attention to gender considerations is most visible in Outcomes 1, 2 and the disaster related elements of Outcome 3. Gender is not a separate outcome in the RPD; this is not a limitation if RP senior management mandates the systematic mainstreaming of gender considerations across all outputs. With only one full-time gender adviser and focal points in Outcome teams, additional staff capacity is needed.*

Currently the gender team consists of only one regional adviser and to boost gender mainstreaming work, a gender focal point has been appointed in every outcome team. However, a 50% post in the PC was not retained in the new Pacific Office structure. Nevertheless, additional staff capacity, perhaps in the form of an Associate Expert or Junior Professional Officer and relevant staff training is recommended. Given the diversity of gender-related areas that the RP supports, the comparative advantages of UNDP in a substantive sense are not always fully clear e.g. in women’s political participation and women’s economic empowerment, and could be better assessed and defined in the new Regional Programme.

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<sup>29</sup> The multi-country research publication “Why do some men use violence against women and how can we prevent it?, 2013”

Both the Asia and the Pacific projects are doing significant work on gender equality and women's empowerment at the regional and country levels. Several examples at the output level have already been mentioned in the programme effectiveness section: women's economic empowerment, women's political representation, women's rights to resources and opportunities, GBV, HIV and AIDS, disaster reduction and relief, energy access, women-peace-security etc. While recognising the achievements in these areas, a recent global evaluation of UNDP's contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment has stressed the need to move towards more gender equality approaches that also involve men and the socio-cultural-political context that women and men live.

We note that guidelines on gender mainstreaming in environment and in sustainable development projects were developed in 2015 but implementation of these has yet to take place. A gender review of energy projects and guidance has also been developed by the RSD team; this has potential to be replicated globally.

## Innovation

In a fast changing and globalising development context, UNDP has recognised the need to adopt an innovations-led approach to development problem solving. RBAP/BRH set up an Innovation Fund in 2015, which provides seed funding to COs to prototype and experiment with innovative solutions. Although it is too early for this MTR to assess development results, several pilot initiatives are already underway and demonstrate initial success. In Bangladesh, UNDP partnered the Transport Corporation and a local start-up to test and prototype GPS-tracked buses that allow commuters to access real-time traffic data via a mobile application. The Government is scaling up this initiative. In Nepal, UNDP has partnered Microsoft to develop a smart phone app that monitors reconstruction efforts and ensures that poor families in the cash-for-work programme are being paid on time. Debris from 3000 houses has been removed and 3,500 poor people have had work and income. In PNG, the "Phones against Corruption" initiative in partnership with Mobimedia Telecom Australia has led to 1500 citizens sending in SMS texts about incidents of corruption. These cases are being investigated by the Internal Audit and Compliance Division.

Another innovation is the UN Social Investment Facility (UNSIF), a global fund that was set up in late 2015. This is a facility that aims to raise social impact investments in the Region, using the RP as a regional platform to enable regional impact. Memoranda of understanding are currently being negotiated, with the SAARC Development Fund, China, Myanmar and for a global initiative on South-South impact. It is too early to report on development results.

## Partnerships

**Finding 17:** *The RP is to be commended in the way it has pursued a range of partnerships and collaborations over the MTR period (and beyond). In every outcome area and almost every output, there are good examples of partnerships with UN agencies, other international development partners, CSO, NGOs, academia and the private sector at both regional and country levels. Some notable (though far from exclusive) examples of these are: the joint UNDP/ESCAP/ADB partnership on Sustainable Energy for All; the joint UNDP/UN Women/UNFPA/UNV partnership P4P on gender-based violence; the joint GFATM/UNAIDS/ESCAP partnership on HIV and the Law; the joint UNDP/ILO/IOM/UNICEF/UN Women on UN Action for Cooperation against the Trafficking of Persons (UN-ACT); and the joint UNDP/UNODC partnership in the Pacific on accession to the UNCAC and anti-corruption measures.*

## 5. Programme Efficiency

**Finding 18:** *Sharper focus is needed on programming choices and resource mobilisation that recognises the potential of new funding sources as well as downturns in traditional modes of funding. This is linked to the need for better results monitoring to inform policy thinking (painting the big picture) and promote programme effectiveness and development results.*

**Finding 19:** *Because of design and monitoring system policies and issues, little outcome level monitoring is being undertaken. Senior management does not have the tools to do this. At Output level, design and monitoring discipline is poor. Narrative reports focus on activities, not results. Raising standards in progress reporting is a work in progress. Statements of aims are prone to complex, unclear language, and milestones and targets are prone to over-ambition.*

## Funding Delivery and Challenges

Table 1: Allocation and delivery for the AP Region 2014 - 2015

Funding is in USD million	Core	Non-Core	Total
Total Allocation 2014-2017	43.749	86.424	130.173
50% Allocation (expected end 2015)	21.8745	43.212	65.0865
Total Delivery 2014-2015	14.138	41.304	55.422
Shortfall against expected 50%	7.736	1.908	9.644
%age shortfall	35.4	4.5	14.8

Source: UNDP RBAP Bangkok, January 2016

UNDP suggests that core allocations for the Regional Programmes in Asia and the Pacific are 40% lower than estimated for 2014-2017. The table above broadly supports this figure. It shows delivery of core and non-core funds to end 2015. We assume that by the end of 2015, under ideal circumstances, approximately 50% of funding during the 4-year period would have been delivered. The delivery of core funds shows a shortfall of 35.4% of expected expenditure for the two umbrella projects and an overall shortfall in core and non-core of 14.8%. We recognise there are some inefficiencies in expenditure due to the restructuring process; less funding is required in start-up years for projects; and late arrival of some funds has occurred. But the 35% shortfall is largely due to non-availability of expected core funds. Delivery of non-core funds has a modest shortfall for the period of 4.5%, which is of less concern. Funding shortfalls directly impinge on the efficiency of programmes, especially if hard choices have to be made on priorities. Reduction in core funding clearly places pressure on policy and advisory support. Key positions remain unfunded; we note that gender and energy adviser positions have suffered particularly.

UNDP respondents recognise that the delivery of funding is very critical and some view this to be approaching crisis point. This begs the question of seeking tighter substantive focus; a complex issue that will increasingly become influenced by the roll-out of the SDGs. It may be possible to simply reduce or cut efforts in areas that do not receive sufficient funding, but these may be precisely the areas that UNDP considers its core business (e.g. HDRs, human rights, gender equality). Alternatively, funding availability may mean that the RP is encouraged to expand into areas that may not be core business. With UNDP's intended focus on the SDGs, future programming will increasingly focus on poverty reduction, inequality and governance. The future regional programme should not be defined because funding is available but because UNDP can do a good job to address specific and relevant SDG challenges. Ultimately, if the regional programmes are to implement in the priority areas that emerge because of the three chosen SDGs, it will be vital to convince funders (existing and potential) that a good job is being done with the money. The results based management processes will be crucial in making the case (see below).

Other potential sources of funding are of growing importance. They include "non-traditional" donors, who could provide significant funding, although may have different views on how and where money should be spent. Just now, country co-financing is only of benefit directly to COs. In the future UNDP might find countries prepared to include RP inputs in their contribution, especially if COs were to plan annually for the RP support they need and include it in budgets shared with governments. This is a paradigm shift for the RPs as the COs would be seen more clearly as being in the driving seat. Private sector funding is often mooted as a possibility. UNDP is aware of the opportunities and risks of working with the private sector for funding support for programmes, with major due diligence issues to be considered. Private sector organisations are more suited as programme partners, separately funding complementary activities to those of UNDP. This approach has major merit. Finally, UNDP could consider citizen contributions, bearing in mind the success that UNICEF has with this. This would require substantial investment from UNDP especially in communications strategies.

### Results Based Management

RBM increasingly helps UNDP convince stakeholders that it is doing what it said it will do and that this is leading to development results. It seeks to involve programme and senior managers in monitoring against expected results as defined in the SP, the RPD and Asia and Pacific project documents; to keep programmes on track. The projects and the RPD are defined by the SP and are in our view in conformity with it. The two project documents have been revised in 2015 as a result of the re-structuring and core budget cut. While we think it would be unproductive and

time-consuming to revise the RPD at the mid-term stage in the programming cycle, we offer the following for future reference.

Regarding the current Results and Resources Framework, monitoring takes place at several levels and with different measurements: outcomes and outcome indicators, outputs and output indicators, milestones, targets and result areas which overlap and are confusing. But this is a corporately determined framework and for now, the RP cannot change this. A second related and well-known feature is that RP results incorporate global, regional and CO results and that it is a challenge to distinguish them from each other.

UNDP is developing a common monitoring framework, with outcome indicators from the SP mandatory for regional programmes. Some of these are inappropriate to the AP regions or unmeasurable at programme level. As a result, we see little evidence of outcome monitoring in the BRH or the PC. At output level, we see a lack of rigour in design and monitoring discipline, despite best efforts of RBM staff to encourage this. This may partly be due to mandatory outputs, which are not programme specific and to the requirement that each project also has its own outcomes and outputs which have to be reported on. Project documents are prone to complex and unclear statements with nested intentions, with in some cases unrealistic targets which are unlikely to be met. Sources of monitoring data and responsibility for data collection are not defined. Programme and development results are confused; programme results are being reported that are really stepping stone activities towards development results.

## 6. Sustainability

Within the current and potential resource picture, we examined to the extent that we could<sup>30</sup>, the sustainability aspect at two levels: sustainability of regional activities e.g. regional dialogues and exchanges, regional knowledge products; and the sustainability of RP advisory support to the COs on themes and topics within the four outcome areas. Our findings also reflect common viewpoints from interviews with the selected COs.

The RP has sponsored and facilitated numerous regional policy dialogues, regional exchanges and regional knowledge products. Where these focus on sensitive, politicised and/or cross-border issues, the leadership role of UNDP and the role of bringing regional best practices into the discussion are widely appreciated. Our view is that these can stand independently and in their own right as key points and/or steps in an advocacy process. In this sense they do not have to be “sustainable” in the traditional sense of the word. However, due to current resource constraints, it is not always possible to maintain continuous momentum on a particular issue. One case in point is the MDG and HDR regional reports, where the frequency is likely to be reduced in the coming years.

In most cases advisory support to COs is demand-driven and part of a country project and therefore there is greater potential for sustainability. Feedback from COs also emphasised that the dissemination of regional knowledge products is not always timely and that a regional communications plan would help to structure this.

## 7. Recommendations

**Recommendation 1:** *Do not revise the current Regional Programme Document and its associated Results and Resources Framework during the remainder of this programming cycle. This would be a very time consuming exercise. The Regional Project Documents under this RPD were revised in 2015 and this suffices for this period. It is better to focus on appropriate changes for the next RPD, with attention to sustainability of core business, future programme focus and regionality in mind.*

**Recommendation 2:** *It is noted that the corporate agenda and priorities drive the RP. It is recognised that UNDP is able to potentially programme across a large number of the SDGs and is already firming up its response to Agenda 2030, notably within the MAPS approach. Within this framework, we recommend that in the next programme cycle the RP cautiously expand into new thematic areas and above all view all of its next RPD (and its formulation) through the development lenses of SDGs 1, 10 and 16. These 3 goals are very broad and allow for a diverse range of programme interventions. Furthermore, recognising the inter-connected nature of all SDGs, this approach should be*

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<sup>30</sup> Sustainability is generally poorly addressed in the programme/project narrative reports and other documentation and therefore we relied on CO feedback.

used to enhance and strengthen the feasible linkages that can be built from SDGs 1, 10 and 16, within the RPD budget envelope and within a developing regional role in MAPS support to countries.

**Recommendation 3:** For the remainder of this programming cycle, the RP should also focus on assisting countries and their governments to follow on the MDG “gaps” and integrate and sustain them within the SDG goals and to develop their baselines for measuring SDG progress, their monitoring systems and capabilities to do this. This work should build on what has already been achieved for measuring MDG progress and achievement.

**Recommendation 4:** Prior to the preparation of the next RPD, undertake well beforehand a consultative theory of change process analysing development constraints and potential programmatic responses to help determine the regional needs that the Programme can help to address. This should involve rigorous mapping of what other development actors are doing in each field. Determine UNDP/RPs comparative strengths and realistically assess available resources. Avoid designing an over-ambitious new RP with a large “unfunded” component. Involve a sample of COs in this process. Include measures to determine what kind of in-house expertise is needed in each area.

**Recommendation 5:** Avoid over-complexity in outcome design, reducing the number of unrelated outputs grouped together. UNDP New York should allow a simpler, lighter and more flexible approach to design, so that RPs can more logically choose their own Intermediate outcomes, providing these can be demonstrated to contribute to the SP.

**Recommendation 6:** Encourage and support RP staff at all levels to use tools and methods to improve programme design and monitoring. RBM staff should be further resourced and empowered to provide continuous and structured training and follow-up for all staff involved in reporting. Institutionalise at least bi-annual outcome team meetings (if possible with an external facilitator) to assess the status of outcome progress, focusing on development results.

**Recommendation 7:** Consider ways of articulating to stakeholders the benefits and results of the advisory support to the COs, which UNDP defines as “development effectiveness”, alongside RP “development results”. Doing so would allow stakeholders to see a more connected picture of UNDP RBAP’s contribution to regional development. This may also feed in to and enhance effective attribution of and reporting on results across all RBAP-supported activities.

**Recommendation 8:** Use every effort to maintain and continue the RP’s regional role to research and publish high quality knowledge products, including those that address sensitive, politicised and cross/border issues. The RP should maintain the frequency of flagship publications, despite continuing resources constraints. Options for partnerships and co-sponsors e.g. the private sector, should be pursued more vigorously. Other social media and communications means should also be considered e.g. stories on Facebook and video films.

**Recommendation 9:** Innovate in resource mobilisation. UNDP is already considering its options for future funding on an urgent basis. This should allow for innovative approaches to working with traditional and non-traditional donors. It should include CO-RP programming options that allow country co-financing to help fund the RP to support country programmes. UNDP should seriously examine contributions from citizens. It should not fund raise from the private sector, but should seek to maximise opportunities for partnership approaches with it.

**Recommendation 10:** For gender mainstreaming, ensure that recently completed research and studies are followed-up on in terms of continued regional awareness raising and dialogue. At the country level; avoid new studies and focus on ensuring implementation of the recommendations of this work. Consider recruiting a second gender adviser for the BRH and fully funding the position in the PC to support the outcome teams to mainstream gender considerations into projects. Gender mainstreaming could also be included in RBM training. In order to strengthen gender mainstreaming in UNDP and the RP, corporate and senior level management support is essential.

**Recommendation 11:** Besides continuing to pursue existing partnerships, special focus should be given to the partnership and joint programme potential with agencies in the UN system, including the specialised ones. This is especially relevant if the RP is moving into new thematic areas e.g. UN Habitat and UNEP on urbanisation; ILO on jobs and livelihoods; UN Women on extractive industries and the World Bank and IMF on inclusive economic growth.



## Annex 1: Terms of Reference

### RPD for Asia and Pacific (2014-2017) Mid-term Review – Terms of Reference, November 13, 2015<sup>31</sup>

#### 1. Background and Context

United Nations Development Program Executive Board has approved the UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 in June 2013 and new Regional Programme Document for Asia and the Pacific (RPD) in January 2014. The RPD for the 2014-2017 period was developed through a consultative process, including inputs from UNDP country offices, and countries of the region. The regional programme is structured around four outcomes selected from the UNDP Strategic plan, 2014-2017, that are considered most relevant to regional needs and the comparative advantage of UNDP in Asia and the Pacific at the regional level.

The four Strategic Plan Outcomes prioritized by the RPD are:

1. Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded
2. Citizen's expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance
3. Countries are able to reduce the likelihood of conflict, and lower the risks of natural disasters, including from climate change
4. Development debates and actions at all levels prioritize poverty, inequality and exclusion, consistent with UNDP engagement principles

The Regional programme is intended to capture the multi-faceted nature of the work that is carried out at the regional level, which combines inter-country cooperation initiatives in consultation with and approval of the countries involved, and the provision of policy advisory services in support of the implementation of country programmes in the region and the achievement of development effectiveness at the country level. The regional programme focuses on areas of work most relevant to the Asia and Pacific region consistent with priorities identified both at national and global levels. In addition, as explained in the Regional Programme Document, the UNDP work at the regional level will be guided and informed by the five *regionality* principles and a number of key cross cutting issues as in terms of *how* UNDP will work at the regional level.

Total financial resources for the RPD are estimated at \$130.2 million over 2014-2017, including expected core resources of \$43.7 million and \$86.4 million of other or non-core resources, which are to be mobilized.

In keeping with UNDP's results based approach and to establish clear and measurable indicators of achievement at both output and outcome levels of the RPD, two umbrella Regional Project Documents "*Advancing Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (2014-2017)*" and "*Achieving the simultaneous eradication of poverty and a significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion in the Pacific (2014-2017)*" were developed by the UNDP Regional Policy and Programme support (RPPS), Bangkok Regional Hub and the Pacific Centre respectively. These two Regional Projects operationalizes the implementation of the RPD in the Asia and the Pacific region.

In its decision adopting the Strategic Plan, the Executive Board has requested UNDP to present a midterm review of the SP, including an assessment of results achieved, cost-effectiveness, evaluations, comparative advantages and progress made in achieving the vision of the strategic plan, and report to the Executive Board at its annual session 2016. Corporate decision has also been made that a key focus of the SP MTR will be on the performance of Regional and Global Programmes. Accordingly, all Regional Bureaus have been requested to complete their RPD MTRs latest by January 2016 in order to provide inputs to feed into the larger SP report back to the EB.

Further, the MTR is expected to inform the RPD Management Board, senior management and stakeholders on the status of the regional programme, provide lessons learned and some key findings and recommendations to inform the way forward during the remaining period of the current RPD well as beyond, particularly for the SDGs and the

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<sup>31</sup> This TOR has been reformatted to suit the style of the MTR Report.

post-2015 development agenda. The MTR of the RPD will also feed into its end-term independent evaluation to be conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office later in 2016.

## *2. MTR Objective and Scope*

### **2.1 Objective and purpose:**

Overall, the MTR will assess progress against the RPD results for 2014 and 2015, extract lessons learned, and propose corrective actions and recommendations which will inform the Regional Programme activities and budgets during 2016-2017 and beyond.

In doing this, the MTR will:

- i. Review the RPD's cumulative development results achieved at the regional level from January 2014 to the end of 2015, through the implementation of the regional projects and initiatives, both in Asia and the Pacific, and specifically through the implementation of the two umbrella Regional Projects, highlighting progress, value add to the CO development results using the regionality principles, drivers of success, main gaps, and recommending mid-course adjustments.
- ii. Review relevance and effectiveness of the policy advisory services provided in support of the implementation of country programmes in the region. In this regard, review the theory of change and identify the development effectiveness component delivered through support to COs in the achievement of planned development results at the country level.
- iii. Review and clearly identify results of the RPD's multi-faceted nature of the work that is carried out at the regional level supported through global funds, Global UNDP TTFs, and other sources of funding from RBAP. This should include review of the effectiveness and relevance of regional knowledge products supported by the RPD such as the production of RHDRs and RMDGRs, and regional initiatives like development solution teams, innovative solutions and approaches to working, support to the UN Office for REDD+ Coordination in Indonesia (UNORCID), International Centre for Human Development (IC4HD), the UNDP Singapore Centre, etc.
- iv. Assess whether the RPD outcomes are likely to be met by its end period or what are the additional resources and partnerships needed?
- v. Assess the impact of the UNDP structural review and the reduced core budget envelope for the RPD and provide a forward-looking view about the current and future priorities and positioning of the RPD.
- v. Review at least three regional flag ship projects – two from Asia and one from the Pacific as selective case studies to investigate in greater depth and provide the evidence needed to showcase results which contribute to the delivery of the RPD/SP Outcomes. The effectiveness of using the RPD Regionality Principles and cross-cutting priorities to guide the design and implementation of these regional projects, and the relevance and sustainability of these principles should also be assessed.
- viii. Review and relevantly update the RPD situational analysis to reflect current situation and context in the Asia-Pacific region.
- ix. Provision of a "way forward" for the RPD that includes both short (during the remaining period of the current RPD) and medium-term recommendations, and which outline future priorities and positioning of the next RPD and beyond given the evolving external and internal UNDP regional development context and the regional level work for the new SDG agenda.

### **2.2 Scope:**

- i. The MTR should cover the Asia and the Pacific region and provide an initial assessment of the contributions of UNDP to the development results in the areas set out in the RBAP RPD (2014- 2017) and provide recommendations based on an assessment of changes and context specific issues at the regional and sub-regional levels. The Regionality Principles and cross-cutting priorities should be used to inform this assessment to the extent possible.
- ii. Further, the MTR should cover and be informed by areas or issues of special focus for RBAP such as the evolving regional development context, and how the mainstreaming of the 2030 sustainable development agenda and the SDGs can be a powerful opportunity for UNDP positioning in the region in terms of engaging and supporting countries proactively.



### 3. Structure and Content

RPD MTR will be undertaken structured around a common set of questions and resultant recommendations aligned with the MTR objective and scope as listed below:

#### **Relevance:**

(a) How have UNDP's operating environment shifted in the region since the adoption of the SP (2014-2017) and the RPD? What strategic opportunities and risks are emerging as a result? (Update the RPD situation analysis)

(b) Context analysis and an understanding of how the partnership environment is evolving based on both UNDP and non- UNDP sources of information, and how can the RPD benefit from this?

#### **Programme Effectiveness:**

(a) Qualitatively and quantitatively access:

- Whether the RPD is on track to achieve the expected development results at the regional level, mainly guided by the regionality principles, what are the gaps left to achieve UNDP's targets in the region and is the pace good enough to do so?
- What has been the value add of the RPD supported advisory services and products for the achievement of country level development results and development effectiveness

(b) What has been initial results of the UNDP reforms/structural change on the RPD

(c) What has been the RPD's contributions towards supporting UNDP's role in the Regional undg and engagement with regional bodies?

(d) What are the underlying causes of underperformance and key drivers of success?

(e) Where does the RPD and the Regional Projects stand vis-a-vis the corporate quality standards? (Refer to the CPDs standards as reference).

(f) What improvements could be made for improving Regional Program formulation and monitoring in the future? Should the present RPD RRF be revised to reflect necessary updates and changes?

#### **Programme efficiency:**

(a) What resources have been used to achieve/produce the results?

(b) How can the regional projects and programme improve their value for money?

(c) Was there an effective partnership strategy to leverage resources and collaboration?

#### **Sustainability:**

(a) How is the resource situation evolving with regard to the RPD budget outlay?

(b) What is the likelihood that the programme interventions are sustainable?

(c) What changes should be made in the current set of regional projects and programme partnerships in order to promote sustainability

#### **Lessons learnt and recommendations:**

(a) What are the key thematic, operational and institutional lessons to be drawn?

(b) What are the main recommendations for 2016-17 and beyond, including the positioning of the Regional Programme vis-a-vis the SDGs?

### 4. MTR Team and Methodology/Review Process

4.1 The MTR team will be recruited by RBAP consisting of two consultants – one of whom would be designated the lead consultant and the other will be a supporting consultant. Both the consultants should have advanced university degree and at least five years of work experience on programme/project evaluations and reviews.

Between them, the team members should have substantive knowledge and previous evaluation expertise and demonstrated experience to cover all the practices covered under the RPD.

4.2 The Team Leader will perform the following tasks:

- Be overall responsible for the satisfactory completion of the MTR exercise, and as such lead and manage all aspects of the MTR exercise, with the specific inputs of the other team members as noted below;
- Review documents (such as programme, project documents and knowledge products, etc. emanating or related to RPD work);
- Undertake interviews and consultations with all stakeholders identified with the assistance of RBAP;
- Design the scope and methodology of the review in detail and ensure its implementation;
- Decide the specific division of labour within the MTR team in addition to what has been specified below for the second team member;
- Design the web-based surveys and questionnaires;
- Finalise the MTR report and be responsible for direct liaison with RBAP MTR management on the all aspects of the MTR exercise.

4.3 Under the guidance and advice of the TL, the other Team member, an Evaluation Specialist, will provide the required technical expertise and inputs with respect to the practice areas of governance and poverty;

- Review documents in line with the agreed upon division of responsibility with the TL;
- Undertake interviews and consultations with stakeholders as determined by the team leader;
- Participate in the design of the scope and methodology and assist the TL in undertaking the review;
- Assist the team leader in the analysis and reporting on the exercise, with specific responsibility for focus areas assigned;
- Draft relevant parts of the review report;
- Assist with the finalization of the report and presentation to RBAP.

4.4 The MTR will adhere to the UNDP Evaluation Policy and UNDG Norms & Standards with its findings and judgements based on sound evidence and analysis, clearly documented in the review report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) to the extent possible, and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned. Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out. The limitations of the methodological framework should also be spelled out in the review reports.

4.5 The RPD MTR will be undertaken guided by the Objective and Scope, and the Structure and Content outlined in section 2 and 3 above

4.6 It will be conducted over a period of 30 working days each by the two international consultant under the overall responsibility and management of the RBAP Directorate (see Section 7.1).

4.7 As this is a mid-term review, particular attention should be given to assessing the performance and contributions of the RPD and identifying possible challenges and issues that should be resolved to enhance the current programme performance. The MTR should also provide the basis for concrete and realistic recommendations for the way forward in the short as well as for the medium term.

## *5. Data sources and Tools*

The RPD MTR will make use of the following tools and data sources:

5.1 A **desk review** of relevant documents including, but not limited to:

- RBAP RPD (2014-2017), Strategic Plan (2014-2017); the two umbrella Regional Project Documents and the cumulative progress reporting for 2014 and 2015 of the “Advancing Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (2014-2017)” and “Achieving the simultaneous eradication of poverty and a significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion in the Pacific (2014-2017)”,
- Regional projects and regional initiatives which contribute to the RPD in Asia and the Pacific

- Annual Work plans and budgets, progress reports for the RPD as prepared by BRH and Pacific centre in 2014 and 2015, Annual Report on the Advisory Services provided to COs from the BRH service tracker and other sources, etc.
- RBAP IWPs and ROARs, RPD related decentralized evaluations, evaluation and MTRs of regional projects, relevant external evaluations by donors and partners, etc.
- Progress reports and related documentation of selected regional projects contributing to the RPD results both in Asia and the Pacific, including websites, articles and other relevant reports
- Annual Management Board, Pacific Programme Board and RBAP Advisory Panel Meeting Reports pertaining to Regional Priority setting, annual work planning and progress reporting both in Asia and the Pacific
- Regional knowledge products, knowledge management and innovation initiatives supported by the RPD both through the two umbrella Regional Projects as well as others supported through Global Funds, Global TTFs, other sources of RBAP funding, etc.
- UNDP Structural review information and related documents pertaining to RBAP and the RPD
- Other relevant non-UNDP sources of information which will in particular benefit and better inform context analysis and an understanding of how the partnership environment, resource mobilization opportunities, development priorities in the region evolving

5.2 Semi-structured interviews held over the phone or through virtual meetings with a sample of key informants, stakeholders and participants bearing relevance to the RPD, drawn from:

- Government stakeholders, including ministries participating in regional project PACs, Steering Committees; Outcome and Programme Boards
- Current and potential donors and other external partners, both UN and non-UN
- Selected RRs/RCS from countries with RPD related regional project interventions and receiving policy advisory services

5.3 Undertake detailed **Case studies of at least three flagship regional initiatives** (two from Asia and one from the Pacific) to selectively investigate some results and their value add in greater depth.

5.4 **Consultations with and inputs from various stakeholders will be critical and will be sought virtually through relevant web-based surveys, virtual meetings, electronic exchanges, use of studies** and reviews undertaken by other relevant stakeholders (donors, regional organizations, etc.)

5.5 In-depth interviews by the consultant with relevant staff in BRH, including RPPS staff, Pacific Centre, RBAP NY, BPPS and other relevant HQ Bureaus, etc.

## 6. *Expected Deliverables*

### 6.1 Inception Report:

Following the contracting, the MTR team will prepare a brief inception report that contains:

- A proposed schedule and division of tasks, list of activities and deliverables
- Proposed Table of Contents of the MTR Report and Annexes
- The Review Framework which provides a more detailed list of review questions and sources/methods of data collection, including a list of key stakeholders and other individuals, who should be consulted, developed with the assistance of the BRH Directorate
- A preliminary list of documents that will be reviewed and consulted by the review team.
- The Inception Report will be finalized after its been reviewed and cleared by the RBAP Directorate and the Reference Group from UNDP (see Section 7.1)

### 6.2 MTR Report:

The key product expected from this MTR is a comprehensive analytical report in English meeting the required criteria outlined for objective, scope, structure and content, and that should, at least, include the following content:

- (a) Executive summary
  - (b) Introduction
  - (c) Description of the review methodology
  - (d) An analysis of the situation in line with the scope of the MTR;
  - (e) Key findings;
  - (f) Conclusions and recommendations
  - (g) Annexes: TOR, field visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.
  - (h) Finalization of the report based on comments received followed by either face-to-face or video-conference presentation of the Final Report key findings and recommendations.
- ii. In the report, to the extent feasible, there should be segregation of the data, analysis and presentation by sub-region, as for example for the Pacific.
  - iii. The recommendations included in the draft report will be addressed to the different stakeholders and prioritized: they will be evidence-based (with references to the relevant findings in the report), relevant, focused, clearly formulated and actionable.
  - iv. The Draft MTR Report will be submitted first to the RBAP Directorate and the MTR Reference Group, who will review the document for quality and completeness and request enhancements from the consultants as needed.
  - v. Comments will be incorporated as deemed appropriate by the MTR team. A “Response to comments matrix” will be prepared by the MTR team to show how comments received have been dealt with in the Final MTR Report.
  - vi. Final Mid-Term Review Report – should be in English and about 20 pages (8,500 words maximum) of the main text of the report (excluding annexes). The report should be strategic, future-oriented, results-driven and analytical.
  - vii. Annexes to the MTR report will include, though not limited to, the following as relevant:
    - Terms of reference for the MTR;
    - Additional methodology-related documentation (for example – web based survey results, relevant record of stakeholder consultations and meetings, etc.);
    - The two cumulative progress reports of the umbrella Regional Projects for Asia and the Pacific
    - Case Studies of selected flagship regional initiatives
    - List of documents reviewed;
    - List of Country Offices, regional institutions, and external stakeholders consulted and interviewed by the MTR team;
    - Others as deemed necessary by the MTR team to support the MTR findings and recommendations in the final MTR Report
  - viii. Review time required by UNDP - At least one working week after submission of each deliverable for review/approval

### *7. MTR management and timeline*

7.1 The over-all management of the RPD MTR will be by the RBAP Directorate under the guidance of a RBAP DRD/BRH Director and coordinated and supported by the Regional Programme Specialist in BRH.

7.2 A Reference Group comprising of the Chief of RPPS; the Regional Manager of the Pacific Centre; and the RPPS and Pacific Centre Practice Team Leaders and relevant representation from other parts of RBAP and UNDP will provide advice and support and will be consulted for inputs and feedback on the MTR deliverables

7.3 The MTR will be conducted by the two member international consultant’s team for a duration of 30 working days each. It is proposed that the MTR team schedule the first 5 work days of the consultancy to be used for desk review and the preparation of the Inception Report; 16 days for data collection, inclusive of a 3 to 4 days mission to Bangkok for briefings and meetings, 7 days for MTR report writing; and 2 days for appropriate revisions of final draft MTR Report following review and feedback from relevant stakeholders.

7.4 One mission to Bangkok will be carried out by the MTR Team (assuming the consultant is from outside Bangkok) at the beginning of the MTR for relevant briefings and meetings with BRH. The option for a presentation to RBAP and the RPD Management Board of the final Report by the MTR Team Leader or Team in Bangkok will be discussed and decided.

7.5 The RPD MTR report preparation timeline will be from 23rd November 2015 with the Final MTR Report submission to RBAP latest by the 15th of January 2016.

#### *8. Qualifications of the RPD MTR consultants*

##### **8.1 The MTR Team Leader**

The Team Leader will have the responsibilities as defined in Section 4 of the ToR and should have following qualification/competencies:

- Advanced university degree in relevant social science areas.
- Good knowledge of evaluation and assessment methods with the professional working experience of having conducted and led at least 3-4 reviews/evaluations as the Team leader and related report writing; preferably for UNDP
- At least 6-8 years of solid experience in undertaking evaluations, reviews and strategic analysis and report writing for international organizations, including UNDP
- Minimum 6 years of experience working on similar evaluation/review assignments which require extensive consultations and interactions with national governments and senior government officials; and also with other stakeholders such as donors, regional organizations, CSOs, etc.;
- Good knowledge and technical understanding of the UN, and in particular UNDP programmes in Asia and Pacific in the relevant thematic sectors of the RPD, good understanding of the Asia and Pacific region in terms of its development programmes, development issues and other evolving environment
- Strong analytical capability; openness to change and ability to receive and integrate feedback;
- Strong interpersonal skills and communication skills and ability to adhere to agreed timelines and to meet tight deadlines
- Excellent report writing, presentation and editing skills in English

##### **8.2 The other MTR team member**

The second consultant will have the responsibilities as outlined in Section 4 of the ToR and will work under the guidance of the Team Leader to provide the required evaluation and MTR related technical expertise and inputs and other MTR tasks as and as decided by the TL.

S/he will have the following qualifications and competencies:

- Advanced university degree in a relevant social science area
- At least 4-5 years of solid experience in undertaking evaluations and reviews, and similar strategic analysis and report writing for international organizations, preferably for the UNDP and for regional programmes and projects
- Good knowledge of evaluation and assessment methods with the professional working experience of having conducted at least 2-3 global, regional and country level reviews/evaluations and related report writing; preferably for UNDP following UNEG guidelines
- Good knowledge and technical understanding of the UN, and in particular UNDP programmes in Asia and Pacific region both at the country and regional level.
- Prior experience of working in Asia-Pacific region is required along with in-depth knowledge and good technical understanding of the Asia and Pacific Region and its development issues and challenges
- Good analytical, strategic thinking skills, inter-personal, teamwork, and communication skills
- Excellent report writing and editing skills in English

## Annex 2: Interviews Conducted

We are very grateful to everyone on this list for the time they have kindly provided to discuss the Regional Programme and their part in it.

### GOVERNMENT

Dr. Lv Fan, Director, Division of Policy Research and Social Sciences, National Center for AIDS/STD Control and Prevention, Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Key populations in National AIDS Strategy, China

Mrs. Ma'u Leha, Head of National Planning, Tonga Strategic Development Framework, Tonga

Ms. Noumea Simi, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Finance, Samoa

Dr. Yuba Raj Khatiwada, Vice- Chairman, National Planning Commission, Nepal - written comments by email

Ms. Tandin Wangmo, Sr. Programme Coordinator, Gross National Happiness Commission, Bhutan

### DONORS AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

Ms. Anuradha Rajivan, Adviser, Strategy and Policy Department, ADB

Dr. Basudev Bajagain, National Human Rights Commission, Multi-country Global Fund programme and work on marginalised women, Nepal-written comments by email

Mr. Daniel Klasander. 1st Secretary Sweden/ Environment and CC Programme Manager. Governance of climate change finance

DFAT Australia (Canberra): Ms. Joanna Pinkas, Asia Pacific Development Effectiveness Facility; Ms. Ella Kinnear, Assistant Director, United Nations Economic and Development Section; Mr. Sean Batten, Director Global Development Policy Section.

DFAT Australia (Suva): Mr. Matthew Lapworth, Counsellor Regional Programme, Ms. Joanne Choe, Counsellor Bilateral Programme, Mr. Marcus Khan, First Secretary Governance, Bilateral; Ms. Melinia Nawadra, Senior Programme Manager Regional Governance; Mr. Nilesh Gounder, Programme Manager Gender (Regional) (former manager for UN Partnerships Programme); Mr. Alex Konrote, Programme Manager Regional Governance & UN Partnerships

Mr. Jiwan Acharya, Senior Climate Change Specialist (Clean Energy), Sustainable Infrastructure Division, Regional and Sustainable Development Department, ADB- written comments by email

MFAT New Zealand (Suva): Dr. Willy Morrell, First Secretary Development; Mr. Tu Tangi, Programme Manager

Mr. Michael Denham, Development Assistance Specialist, USAID, Suva

Mr. Robert J. Dobias, Team Leader, Adaptation Funds and Capacity Building, ADAPT Asia-Pacific, CPEIRS and ECCA

Ms. Solstice Middleby, former Regional Counsellor for DFAT, Suva

### UN AGENCIES, COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES AND OTHER PARTNERS

Ms. Janneke van der Graaff-Kukler, Strategic Planning and Coordination Specialist, UN Women Regional Office, Bangkok

Mr. Jonathan Gilman, Regional Coordinator, Inter-Agency and Country Level Coordination, UNEP, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok

Mr. Srinivas Tata, Chief, Social Policy and Population Section, Social Development Division, ESCAP, Bangkok

Mr. Sudip Basu, Regional MDGR Partnership, ESCAP, Bangkok

Mr. Tony Lisle, Regional Programme Adviser, UNAIDS, Bangkok

Mr. Timothy Boyle and Ms. Celina Kin Yii Yong, UNREDD team-consulted via email exchanges

#### UNDP - NEW YORK AND BANGKOK REGIONAL HUB:

Mr. Haoliang Xu, Assistant Administrator and Director, RBAP

Mr. Nicholas Rosellini, RBAP Deputy Regional Director, and Director of the BRH

Ms. Daniela Gasparikova, Team Leader, RBM unit, COSQA, BRH

Ms. Kamolmas (Tun) Jaiyen, Evaluation & RBM Specialist, RBM unit, COSQA, BRH

Ms. Margaret Chi, Programme Specialist, Global Programme Team, BPPS, NY

Ms. Tshering Pem, Regional Programme Specialist, Directorate, BRH

#### UNDP COUNTRY OFFICES:

Ms. Beate Trankmann, RC/RR, Mongolia

Ms. Christina Carlson, RC/RR, Bhutan

Mr. Christophe Bahuét, CD, Indonesia

Mr. Douglas Keh, CD, and Mr. Jocelyn Mason, Deputy CD. Afghanistan

Mr. Jaco Cillier, CD, India

Mr. Jaime de Aguinaga Garcia, DRR, MCO Samoa

Ms. Lisbeth Cullity, RC/RR, MCO Samoa

Ms. Lovita Ramguttee, RR a.i., Sri Lanka, Ms Sonali Dayaratne Policy Specialist/Governance, Ms. Keshini Wijesundera ACD/Operations, Mr. Rajendrakumar Ganesarajah ACD/GESI, Mr. Fadhil Bakeer Markar Communications Analyst

Mr. Nasheeth Thoha, ARR/Policy and Programme Management, Maldives

Ms. Osnat Lubrani, RC/RR, Fiji

Mr. Sukrob Khoshmukhamedov, DRR (P/O), PNG

Mr. Trivedy Roy, RC/RR, PNG

#### BRH AND THE PACIFIC CENTRE

We have variously interviewed the many people from the Bangkok Regional Hub and the Pacific Centre individually and in group discussions. We have also received written materials from many colleagues.

#### Regional Programme and Policy Support (RPPS), BRH:

Ms. Caitlin Wiesen, Chief, RPPS

Mr. Gordon Johnson, Regional Team Leader, Resilience and Sustainability

Mr. Joseph D'Cruz, Regional Team Leader, Inclusive Growth

Ms. Nadia Rasheed, Team Leader, HIV, Health & Development, Governance and Peacebuilding

Mr. Phil Matsheza, Regional Team Leader, Governance and Peacebuilding

Ms. Ashley Palmer, Programme Analyst, Development Finance and Effectiveness

Mr. Beniam Gebrezghi, Programme Specialist, Civil Society and Youth, Effective Governance Team,

Mr. Bishwa Tiwari, Programme Specialist, Human Development Report, Inclusive Growth



Ms. Cecilia Oh, Programme Advisor, Governance and Peacebuilding, Governance and Peacebuilding  
Mr. Edmund Settle, Policy Specialist, HIV, Health & Development, Governance and Peacebuilding  
Ms. Elodie Beth, Regional Anti-Corruption Advisor, Bangkok Regional Hub  
Mr. Francisco Santos-Jara Padron, Programme Adviser, Inclusive Growth  
Ms. Kathy Taylor, Manager, P4P Regional Project  
Mr. Kevork Baboyan, Governance and Public Finance Specialist, Development Finance and Effectiveness  
Ms. Koh Miyaoi, Regional Gender Adviser  
Ms. Kristina Leuchowius, Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist, UN-ACT (United Nations Action for Cooperation Against Trafficking in Persons, Regional Management Office  
Ms. Joan Manda, Climate Change Finance Specialist, Development Finance and Effectiveness  
Ms. Marjolaine Nicod, Policy Consultant, Development Finance and Effectiveness  
Ms. Michaela Prokop, Programme Advisor – MDGs/SDGs, Inclusive Growth  
Ms. Nan Collins, Programme Specialist, SSC  
Mr. Patrick Duong, Regional Programme Adviser, Local Governance and Decentralization  
Mr. Rajesh Sharma, Programme Specialist (Global), Disaster Risk Information and Application, Resilience and SD  
Ms. Shairi Mathur, Program Specialist, Recovery/Crisis Response, , Resilience & SD  
Ms. Sharon Cuddy, Women, Peace and Security Consultant  
Ms. Sujala Pant, Regional Programme Specialist, Governance and Peacebuilding  
Mr. Thomas Beloe, Governance, Climate Change Finance and Development Effectiveness Advisor  
Ms. Uyanga Gankhuyag, Program Specialist/ Economist, Extractive Industries, Inclusive Growth  
Ms. Yumiko Yamamoto, Policy Specialist, Inclusive Growth

Pacific Centre, Suva:

Mr. Peter Batchelor, Regional Manager  
Mr. Ahmed Moustafa, Team Leader, MDG and Poverty Reduction  
Mr. Dyfan Jones, Parliamentary Development Specialist  
Ms. Elizabeth Larson, Results Measurement Advisor, PFIP  
Mr. Jeff Liew, Financial Capacity Adviser, Pacific Financial Inclusion Project (PFIP)  
Ms. Jennifer Namgyal, Gender and Knowledge Management Specialist  
Mr. Michael Carr, Inclusive Insurance Specialist, PFIP  
Mr. Moortaza Jiwangi, Project Manager, Pacific Risk Resilience Programme (PRRP)  
Ms. Nanise Saune, Project Manager, Fiji Parliament Support Project

**MTR CONSULTANTS FOR OTHER UNDP REGIONAL BUREAUX**

Mr. Javier Jahsen, MTR consultant for UNDP RBLAC  
Ms. Lilith Melikian, MTR Consultant for UNDP RBEC

## Annex 3: Review Questions

We prepared the following sets of generic questions for MTR interviews. These were adapted on a case by case basis to respondent organisations and programs.

Questions for UNDP Senior Management	
1	In your view does the current RP adhere to the five regionality principles and is it in line with the priorities of the Strategic Plan? Are there gaps that need to be addressed in the future?
2	What are the comparative advantages of UNDP's regional presence in the Asia Pacific region in terms of delivering regional public goods, policy advisory services and knowledge products?
3	In your view, do governments appreciate the regional presence and role of UNDP? How could this improve?
4	The recent re-structuring of UNDP has led to many changes internally. What in your opinion stand out as the major changes impacting the RP and its delivery of results? Secondly, what have been the staffing implications on the RP?
5	One major RP recommended implementation mechanism is the multidimensional "issue-based" response and Development Solution Teams. Is this working effectively?
6	Given that the ODA context is changing fast in this region, what are the implications for UNDP in terms of the future financing of regional initiatives?
7	Are you satisfied that the RP is effectively generating development results including in response to CO demand? Do you see areas where UNDP could do better?
8	What is your assessment of the partnership strategy-with regional associations, networks, donor agencies, UN agencies, civil society that UNDP is pursuing at the regional level?
9	Among your senior colleagues in the region (within and outside of UNDP), who else do you suggest we consult with?
Questions for the Practice Leaders and Teams	
1	Describe briefly your role and responsibilities vis a vis the Regional Programme (RP).
2	What development results and successes have you observed from 2014-2015 at the regional level following the implementation of the RP? How are you informed about results and successes?
3	What development results and successes have you observed as a result of the provision of regional advisory services to the Country Offices (COs)? How are you informed about results and successes?
4	Where do you see weaknesses, inadequacies or gaps that still need to be addressed?
5	The recent re-structuring of UNDP has led to many changes internally. What in your opinion stand out as the major changes impacting the RP and its delivery of results? Secondly, what have been the staffing implications on the RP?
6	One major RP recommended implementation mechanism is the multidimensional "issue-based" response and Development Solution Teams. Is this working effectively?
7	How do you see the changing ODA context and trends affecting the RP and its future financing?
8	What do you see as the comparative advantages of UNDP having a regional presence? How are you informed about the regional programme's added value?
9	How effective is UNDP's partnership strategy in delivering regional public goods and services? Examples?
10	How do you assess the sustainability aspect of RP interventions? Good examples? Your ideas to improve sustainability?
11	When we consult with CO's and other colleagues in the region, which issues do you think this MTR can help to illustrate?
Questions for the Results Based Management (RBM) Unit	
1	Please explain the current M&E system for monitoring progress against the RP outcomes and outputs at the regional, sub-regional and country levels? Which units and teams are responsible for what?
2	How is M&E information aggregated to respond to the RPD and Strategic Plan requirements? Is data also aggregated with CO results?
3	What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current system and how do you think they could be improved? In this regard, please explain whether the proposed common RP monitoring framework would help and in what way.
Questions for UN Resident Coordinators/Country Representatives	
1	Is the RP in line with the priorities of the Strategic Plan? Are there gaps that need to be addressed in the future?
2	Does the current RP adhere to the five regionality principles? What are the key benefits of a regional approach for countries in your region? How do countries best use the Regional Programmes? How could the regional approach improve in this regard?

3	What are the comparative advantages of UNDP's regional presence in the Asia Pacific region in terms of delivering regional public goods, policy advisory services and knowledge products?
4	How does the Bangkok Regional Policy & Programme Support or the Pacific Centre contribute to your country or multi-country programmes? Can you please give examples?
5	Do regional programme activities result from requests from you and your CO colleagues in other countries, or are they as a result of suggestions from the Regional Centres? How responsive are the Centres to the requests that you make? (Is the response timely and appropriate?)
6	How can the Regional Programme best help your work in assisting countries to implement the SDGs?
7	What is your assessment of the partnership strategy with regional associations, networks, donor agencies, UN agencies, civil society that UNDP is pursuing at the regional level?
8	One major RP recommended implementation mechanism is the multi-dimensional "issue-based" response and Development Solution Teams. Is this working effectively and how has it contributed to your programme? How could it improve?
9	The recent re-structuring of UNDP has led to many changes internally. What in your opinion stand out as the major changes impacting the RP and its delivery of results? Secondly, what have been the staffing implications on the RP?
10	Given that the ODA context is changing fast in this region, what are the implications for UNDP in terms of the future financing of regional initiatives? How do you think the regional programme elements should be prioritised in the future?
Questions for Government Representatives	
1	What UNDP Regional Programme activities has your country participated in during the period 2014 to 2015?
2	In your view, how useful were these activities? What were the main benefits of participating? What do you think are the comparative advantages of UNDP as compared to other multilateral organisations or regional associations?
3	Were participants from your country able to learn from other countries taking part in these UNDP Regional Programme activities? Can you give examples?
4	On returning home, how have participants from your country used the results of the activities?
5	Can you suggest how UNDP could refine or improve its regional activities in the future?
Questions for donors/other UN agencies and development partners	
1	How does UNDP's Regional Programme in Asia and/or the Pacific fit in with your organisation's programme(s)? Do you have examples?
2	What are the comparative advantages that UNDP's Regional Programme (or the elements of the programme to which you contribute) bring to progress in the regions?
3	From your organisation's perspective, what are the most useful aspects of partnership with UNDP's Regional Programme? Could improvements be made?
4	Does UNDP's Regional Programme provide you with the feedback, reporting and accountability that your organisation needs on regional activities? How could this improve?
5	Can you suggest how UNDP could refine or improve its regional activities in the future?

## Annex 4: Key Documents Reviewed

	Document	Source	Year
<b>Programming documents and reports</b>			
1	Regional Programme Document (RPD) for Asia-Pacific (2014-2017)	UNDP	2014
2	UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017)	UNDP	2013
3	“Advancing Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (2014-2017)” (Asia-Pacific Programme Document)	UNDP	2014
4	Advancing Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (2014-2017)” (Asia-Pacific Programme Document) Adjusted 2015	UNDP	2015
5	Mid-Term Results Reporting for the Bangkok Regional Hub 2014-2015 (Zero Draft)	UNDP	2015
6	2014 Progress Reports (by team)	UNDP	2014
7	2015 Progress Reports (by team)	UNDP	2015
8	Achieving the simultaneous eradication of poverty and a significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion in the Pacific (2014-2017) (Pacific Programme Document)	UNDP	2014
9	Achieving the simultaneous eradication of poverty and a significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion in the Pacific (2014-2017) (Pacific Programme Document)” Adjusted 2015	UNDP	2015
10	Mid-Term Regional Programme Results Reporting for the Pacific Centre - 2014-2015 (30 <sup>th</sup> November Draft)	UNDP	2015
11	2014 Results Report for Pacific Programme	UNDP	2014
12	2015 Results Report for Pacific Programme	UNDP	2015
13	2014 UNDP Pacific Centre Annual Report	UNDP	2014
14	Mid-Term Review of the Asian and Pacific Regional Programme (RP) 2008 - 2013	UNDP	2010
15	MAPS: UNDG Concept Note	UNDG	2015
16	Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	UN	2015
<b>Selected Regional Knowledge Products</b>			
1	Sex Work and Violence: Understanding Factors for Safety and Protection	UNDP, UNAIDS, UNFPA	2014
2	Women’s Participation and Leadership in Governments at Local Level	UNDP/USAID	2014
3	Biodiversity for Sustainable Development: Delivering Results for Asia Pacific	UNDP/GEF	2014
4	The State of Human Development in the Pacific Region: Vulnerability and Exclusion in Time of Rapid Change	UNDP, UNFPA, ESCAP, UNICEF and ILO	2014
5	Making It Happen: Technology, Finance and Statistics for Sustainable Development In Asia and the Pacific	UNESCAP, ADB, UNDP	2015
6	Why Do Some Men Use Violence Against Women	UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV	2013
7	Achieving Development Results in Asia and the Pacific	UNDP	2015
8	Anti-Corruption Strategies: Lessons learned from Asia Pacific	UNDP	2015
9	Corruption challenges in small island developing states in the Pacific region	Transparency International	2010
10	ESCAP Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific 2015	UNESCAP	2015
11	Statistical Year Book for Asia and Pacific, Country Profiles	UNESCAP	2014
12	Guide and Toolkit for the Pacific on how to design projects to end violence against women	UN Women	2015
13	Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines in Environment and Sustainable Development Projects, A Perspective from the Asia Pacific Region	UNDP	2015
<b>Other Key Documents</b>			
1	Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme Document	UNCDF, UNDP	2013
2	UN Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption Project Document	UNODC, UNDP	2012
3	Draft Evaluative Review, Supporting the Achievement of MDGs in Asia Pacific, Phase 2, Frank Noij	UNDP/ESCAP/ADB	2015
4	Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Asia Pacific, 2008-2013	IEO	2012
5	Global Evaluation of UNDPs Contribution to Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment	IEO	2015

	Document	Source	Year
6	Food Policy Report	IFPRI	2012
7	World Economic Outlook	IMF	2015
8	Regional Economic Outlook for Asia and Pacific	IMF	2015
9	Corruption Perception Index Report	Transparency International	2014
10	Inequality in Asia and the Pacific: Trends, Drivers and Policy Implications	ADB	2014
12	Mapping of DFID Programmes on Violence Against Women, Abridged Report	DFID	2014

## Annex 5: Project Profiles

### Profile on Financing for Development in Asia and the Pacific

#### Development Context

The Asia Pacific region has been the most economically dynamic region in the world over the past two decades and the “growth engine of the world economy”<sup>32</sup>. This is reflected in the fact that in 2000 the region accounted for less than 30% of world output and this had shot up to 40% by 2014. The region is highly diversified economically, socially, culturally, geographically, politically and demographically, consisting of LDCs, upper and lower MICS, SIDS and Fragile States.

This economic growth has fuelled tremendous advancements particularly in reducing income poverty: between 1990 and 2012 the proportion of the region’s poor living on \$1.25 per day fell from 53% to 14% and this is expected to fall to 12% by 2015 (the end of the MDG target period)<sup>33</sup>. At the same time human development indicators in education, health, drinking water and gender equality have also improved.

However, some 570 million people still live in extreme poverty i.e. less than \$1.25 per day, and they constitute the “unfinished agenda” that the world still has to address, now through the seventeen SDGs. The second important point of concern is that the benefits of this growth have not been evenly spread and that there is rising inequality between sub-regions, between countries and within countries.

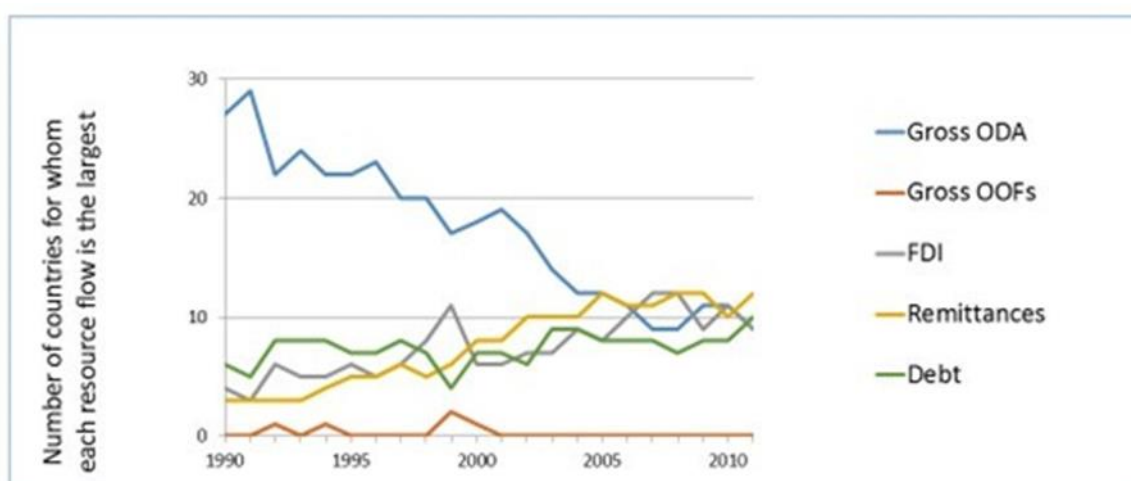
**Development Finance and Corporation in the Region:** Regarding the financing of development, there are several new trends emerging in the region which will impact greatly on the global development scene and on global partnerships for development. These are summarised as follows:

- *Public and private financial resources have increased significantly in the region.*

Domestic resource mobilisation has been very impressive with private sector capital formation reaching 23% of GDP in 2012; similarly, net government expenditure has also grown to an average of 26% in 2012.

- *A large and varied pool of international resources have supported the region’s development over the past to decade; however, the trends in this area are changing.*

International resource flows rose five-fold from \$229 billion in 1990 to \$1.2 trillion in 2012. Foreign direct investment (FDI) increased significantly but its impact on equitable and sustainable development has been uneven. Remittances have also been a major source of inflows and these have almost entirely supported poor and low-income families.



Source: Presentation Paper prepared by RP team, October 2015<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Regional Economic Outlook: Asia and Pacific, IMF, October 2015

<sup>33</sup> UNDP-ESCAP-ADB MDG report, “Making it Happen”, May 2015

<sup>34</sup> OOF: Other Official Funds

ODA also grew from \$31 billion in 1990 to \$42 billion in 2012 but there is now increasing pressure on donors to deploy these resources to LDCs, SIDS and Fragile States. Secondly, despite absolute growth, ODA's contribution to overall financial inflows has experienced a marked reduction from 13.5% in 1990 to 3.36% in 2012. As maybe be expected based on the above growth scenario, the number of countries that depend on ODA as a primary source of finance has dropped from 27 countries in 1990 to only 7 in 2012, of which 6 are LDCs.

- *Changes are also occurring in the profile of ODA providers.*

While traditionally important players in the region e.g. Australia, Japan are cutting back their aid budgets, new development partners are emerging; China, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates. Multilateral funding from several emerging economies is also growing especially in response to humanitarian crises e.g. natural and man-made disasters.

As ODA continue to diminish in quantity, there is increasing pressure for it to demonstrate added value and development effectiveness and to be used to catalyse other mechanisms-such as public financial management, public-private partnerships and anti-leakage measures that will release additional domestic resources for sustainable development.

Given this changing landscape in financing for sustainable development and the 2030 agenda and targets set by the SDGs, there is a need to support countries in a set of inter-connected interventions: analysis and assessments of their national budgets; development of a more comprehensive and integrated national financing framework which integrates poverty reduction, environmental preservation and sustainability objectives; provision of advice on the necessary policy and institutional reforms needed to plan and implement such integrated approaches; provision of advice on how to move onwards more results-based financing; analysis of fiscal management systems and options for bringing private sector resources to support sustainable development pathways.

#### *Project description and objectives*

UNDP's overall objectives are firstly, to assist governments in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the changing development finance landscape and secondly, to support them in leveraging resources for SDG implementation. The Third International Conference on Financing for Development held in Addis Ababa in July 2015, further defined UNDP's particular role across the following three 'service lines':

1. *Supporting policy and institutional reforms that allow governments to better articulate the link between results and resources in the context of sustainable development by:*
  - a. Implementing Development Finance Assessments (DFAs) and supporting the development of integrated national financing frameworks (INFF) for sustainable development; and
  - b. Implementing strategic reviews of international development cooperation and supporting policy development and results frameworks for Asian providers
2. *Supporting targeted reforms and to strengthen the responsiveness and accountability of the national budget to the SDG agenda by:*
  - a. Implementing Public Expenditure and Institutional Reviews (PEIRs) to accelerate accountability and responsiveness of budgets for sustainable development, for example in the areas of climate change and disaster risk reduction.
3. *Providing access to a regional platform of data and knowledge on financing for development and acts as a broker for south-south dialogue across countries*

This work is being undertaken within the Regional Programme framework and specifically addresses Output 4.2, Countries enabled to gain equitable access to and manage ODA and other sources of global funding, under Outcome 4. Based on its comparative strengths, the RP's role is methodological, to be innovative and to act as a knowledge broker in this complex field. Total funding for this work stream amounts to \$11.2million for the period 2012-2016. Donor support for service line 1 is made up primarily of resources from Australia, with DFID, ADB and the EU also participating. Funding for service line 2 is from SIDA and DFID amounting to \$9.2 million. All participating donors in service lines 1 and 2 also support service line 3. While the initial DFAs were primarily financed from the RP, the latest DFAs (e.g. Bangladesh and Myanmar) are mainly financed by Country Offices, with some additional seed money from the RP, plus specialist staff time for guidance and oversight. In the case of CPEIRs, RP resources have supported 6 countries in particular (Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan and Thailand) whilst UNDP COs and other donors have supported uptake in other countries of the region including the Bhutan, China, Vietnam and the Pacific.



Other regional programmes, beyond Asia and the Pacific, have picked up support for over ten CPEIRs in Africa and Latin America.

#### *Reflection of the five regionality principles*

**Regional public goods:** Both the DFA and CPEIR methodologies can be considered as regional public goods in that they have from collective interest from the south, and constitute regional frameworks for examining national budgets, and in the case of the CPEIR, that part of the budget that addresses the impacts of climate change.

**Cross-border externalities:** There has been significant peer-to-peer exchange and learning around the DFAs. In 2015 APDEF organised a regional workshop on “Realising the Addis Ababa Action Agenda at Country Level and Using Development Finance to Achieve Country Results”. This event brought together representatives from 15 countries, representing government, civil society and the private sector. The APDEV Secretariat has used this workshop to further disseminate the DFA methodology with for example, Cambodia and Nepal, which now plan to implement the DFA in 2016. The workshop has also been used to refine the DFA methodology in the area of linking finance with development results.

**Awareness, dialogue and action:** Given the changing development context in the A-P region, countries will need to mobilise a wider range of resources, both from public and private sources, to support their development agendas, including the SDGs. The focus will be more on quality than on quantity. DFAs provide the evidence to raise awareness and stimulate dialogue and action on how identify and make the best use of a wide range of resources at national and sub-national levels. CPEIRS do the same for climate change financing, with the aim of focussing more on mitigation and adaptation rather than on response to negative impacts.

**Innovation:** The DFA and CPEIR are certainly innovative tools. The DFA is innovative because it assists governments in adopting an *integrated* approach to manage different resource flows that they can mobilise for development financing. The CPEIR is different from the World Bank’s public expenditure reviews (PERs) in that it analyses the *institutional framework* for climate change public finance. This add-on is due to the cross-cutting nature of climate change. Climate change expenditures are not explicitly recorded in government statistics systems and the CPEIR process provides information on climate change public financing that governments themselves do not possess.

**Sharing of knowledge, expertise etc.:** In September 2015, UNDP co-hosted a Climate Finance and Sustainable Development regional dialogue with the Ministry of Finance of Indonesia in Jakarta. This brought together countries from across the region to exchange experiences and present innovations in their reforms aimed at integrating climate change within the budget. Following the dialogue, a specific south-south exchange meeting was organised to support Bhutan in considering its approach to mainstreaming climate change within the budget. UNDP and UENP jointly supported the participation of Indonesia, Nepal and Cambodia to support Bhutan’s learning. This led to a commitment by Government of Bhutan to implement a CPEIR.

#### *Progress and achievements - DFA*

UNDP was requested to support nine countries in carrying out development finance assessments (DFAs) and significant progress and initial results are visible from this effort. These assessments focus on mapping out finance flows and on identifying policy and institutional reforms that strengthen the links between finance and sustainable development. A second objective is to facilitate accountability across government and non-government sectors. A key element of the DFA exercise is to work with governments on a more long-term basis, to develop an Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) which includes necessary policy and institutional reforms.

DFAs have been completed in Bangladesh, Fiji, Laos PDR, Myanmar Philippines, Papua New Guinea, and Vietnam and are being planned in Cambodia, Nepal and the Pacific Islands.

Examples of outcomes are presented in the box below. In some country cases, these have led to the re-structuring of government departments to apply a more integrated approach to managing their finances, or to the development of integrated policy frameworks that are articulated in a new policy document. A new line of work on improved integrated tracking of finances has just been initiated and is planned for implementation in eight countries across the region.

### Achievements So Far - DFA

- Philippines used the DFA to inform the financing chapter of their Long-term Vision Policy
- Vietnam used the DFA to inform their national development cooperation dialogue and FDI-related policy development
- In PNG, the DFA supported the ongoing formulation of their new development and aid policy
- Bangladesh set up a new Development Effectiveness wing in their Ministry of Finance, which will focus on ODA, climate change finance and south-south cooperation; the DFA is also informing the formulation of their new development cooperation policy
- In LAO PDR, the DFA informed the financing framework for the next Five-Year Plan and their new partnership policy
- In Fiji, the DFA will inform their new development cooperation policy and is expected strengthen the mandate of the Ministry of finance on climate finance
- In Myanmar the DFA will inform the Myanmar Development Cooperation dialogue on the evolving aid architecture
- In Cambodia (pipeline stage) the DFA has potential to inform the policy and institutional focus of the Cambodia Development Council in leveraging new financing for their industrialisation development policy
- In Nepal (pipeline stage) the DFA has the potential the ministry of Finance on institutional reform
- In the Pacific, the DFA has the potential to support the regional Pacific islands Forum Secretariat-led dialogue on development finance

Source: Updated Information from the RP team, January 2016

### *Progress and achievements - CPEIR*

With support from DFID and SIDA, UNDP has supported six countries in Asia Pacific through the Governance of Climate Finance Regional (GCCF) Programme. The programme is focussed on establishing a regional platform for promoting innovations and sharing experiences on the governance of climate change finance to benefit the poor and vulnerable. Country support is delivered through on-going UNDP country programmes and/or new initiatives with PFM tools which support innovation in the area of linking climate policy and public finance. The programme uses regional networks to strengthen international discussion about the channelling of climate finance at the country level.

### Achievements So Far - GCCF

- In Bangladesh the Climate Fiscal Framework (CFF), which the programme supported on the back of CPEIR analysis has been produced and now frames an on-going reform programme in the Ministry of Finance, as well as the government's use of 6-7% of its annual budget for climate change.
- In Cambodia the reforms proposed in the Climate Change Financing Framework (CCFF) are being led at the highest levels, demonstrated by an MOU between the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Cambodia Climate Change Alliance (situated in Ministry of Environment) to implement and sustain the interventions catalysed by the programme. In addition, Cambodia's recently established National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSA) has taken full ownership of the CCFF, in elaborating further guidelines promoting more effective finance delivery and in developing new institutional coordination mechanisms.
- In Thailand, the climate change benefits analysis (CCBA) guidelines and suggested processes for their application toward budget proposal development at line ministry level have been endorsed by ONEP and will be proposed for approval by the National Climate Change Commission to make operational during the annual planning and budgeting cycles. Their development closely involved the main central ministries (Budget, Planning and Environment) and concerned line ministries (agriculture, health, energy and transport)
- In Pakistan the project has completed an assessment of the Climate Change Integration Index (CCII) – a stocktaking, benchmarking and planning tool with high applicability across the region.
- In response to a growing demand to establish and implement climate finance tracking as part of budget systems, a knowledge product has been developed on Climate Change Budget Tagging (CBT) showcasing best practice from the Regional Programme's focus countries such as Nepal, Indonesia and Bangladesh.
- UNDP's revised CPEIR methodological guidance is widely perceived as best practice internationally. The UNFCCC's first Biennial Assessment (BA) report of Climate Finance Flows, tabled at COP-20, states that "There is no current method to report domestic finance in a consistent manner (...) The most thoroughly documented approach is the CPEIR process".

The GCCF programme has consolidated regional knowledge and data in ways that provide an effective platform for knowledge management and south-south cooperation among the six focus countries and more widely in the region. For example, drawing upon lessons learned from Cambodia's pioneering development of a CCFF and Bangladesh's work on the Climate Fiscal Framework, Nepal and Pakistan are both developing climate financing frameworks. In addition, a number of countries are adopting the PEIR approach to issues such as biodiversity (e.g. Philippines) and disaster risk reduction (Lao PDR, Thailand and Vietnam). Some countries are taking integrated approaches looking at the relationship between public expenditures and sustainable development (e.g. Bhutan looking at climate,

biodiversity and poverty; and Bangladesh looking at social protection and climate change). Of particular significance is the fact that as of 31 July 2015, five countries where CPEIRs have been conducted with support from the programme have chosen central ministries such as finance or planning as their National Designated Authority for the Green Climate Fund. This demonstrates the stronger engagement from ministries of finance and planning on climate related issues.

**Regional Platform for Data and Knowledge Sharing on financing for Development:** UNDP has already established the Asia Pacific Development Effectiveness Facility (APDEV), a regional platform that facilitates south-south dialogue and cooperation and shares information on issues related to development effectiveness and development financing. This facility is the natural focal point for sharing tools, information and lessons learned from the DFAs. The GCCF programme's regional skills building initiative for capacity development on integrating climate change within the budget process has been rolled out including delivery of training on climate policy and public finance tailored to country demand. The programme has initiated a regional learning and knowledge exchange platform for Climate Change Finance amongst the Asia Pacific countries. The overall objective is to increase both the level of skills and South-South collaboration on specific aspects of integrating climate change finance in national public financial management systems. The programme aims to establish ongoing services comprising a network of national and regional training institutions together with a Regional Peer Learning Network (RPLN), operating across South and South East Asia. Through the RPLN, individual stakeholders will have consistent engagement and be able to maintain long-term relations, leading eventually to change. Through the network of national and regional training institutions, training can be scaled up and made more sustainable in the long term.

#### *Lessons Learned*

**Replicability:** The prospects of applicability of the DFA beyond Asia Pacific are good, for example Mozambique is the first country beyond the Asia Pacific which is currently undertaking a DFA. A number of other countries in Africa, Latin America and Central Asia are potentially interested and may pilot the methodology in 2016. On the CPEIR-side more than ten countries have already replicated the CPEIR.

**Innovative aspects:** in comparison with other assessment tools, the DFAs and CPEIRs are action-oriented, combining both diagnostic and prescriptive analysis, *providing a process for establishing the baseline and the roadmap* to implement recommendations emerging from the analyses.

**Country interest:** DFAs and CPEIRs are implemented in a mix of LDCs and MICs. Although MICs have larger budgets within which to mainstream sustainable development objectives and a stronger potential to mobilise the full range of finance flows to finance the SDGs, LDCs also see a great interest in using the DFA as they also move towards MIC status and the CPEIRs as a way of aligning climate and other international sources of finance with their budgets. For example, Bangladesh and Myanmar are preparing for their graduation to MIC status and will face a much more complex and varied development finance context.

**Introducing an Integrated approach:** this is a challenging aspect in this area of work. Both the DFA and CPEIR are process methodologies that aims to initiate cross-government coordination in the area of linking finance with results to support the implementation of SDGs. How does this happen? This is built into the methodologies which propose that an oversight committee be established to steer the process. Such a committee normally includes members from leading government entities, typically the Ministry of Finance, and also other government agencies involved in the process (e.g. planning, central bank, etc.) as well as climate focussed ministries in the case of the CPEIR.

**Institutional uptake and reform:** it is well-known that reforms involving difficult and cross-cutting issues in government, often changing the balance of power, require time. The DFA and CPEIRs are only a small contribution in this process and it is a "work in progress". A key lesson learned is that institutional uptake is more likely when the analyses are undertaken as part of a long-term and on-going government reform process or as part of UNDP programming which can support the implementation of the recommendations.

## Profile on the UN Pacific Regional Anti-Corruption (UN-PRAC) Project

### Development Context

At the time of 2012 UN-PRAC Prodoc, 8 countries had acceded to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC): PNG (2007), Fiji (2008), Palau (2009), Vanuatu (2011), the Cooks (2011) the Marshalls (2011), the Solomons (2012) and Micronesia (2012). With the addition of Nauru (2012), Kiribati (2013) and Tuvalu, (2015), the total is now 11 countries. Samoa, Tonga and Niue are expected to accede soon.

The World Bank annually publishes a composite percentile rank indicator on “Control of Corruption”. For 2014, the results against this indicator for UN-PRAC supported countries are in table 1. This suggests, with the possible exception of PNG, where control of corruption is clearly a major problem, that countries in the Pacific region may benefit from significant focus on early preventative anti-corruption efforts.

Table 2: World Bank "Control of Corruption" results for the Pacific, 2014

Country	Rank	Country	Rank	Country	Rank
Cook Islands	54.5	Niue	40.8	Solomon Islands	49.5
Fiji	56.7	Palau	45.2	Tokelau	NA
FSM	77.9	PNG	15.4	Tonga	48.1
Kiribati	64.9	RMI	56.3	Tuvalu	58.2
Nauru	45.2	Samoa	65.9	Vanuatu	71.2

*N.B. Scores for the Cook Islands and Niue are for 2011. Tokelau, a New Zealand Territory, is not reported separately.*

There is no definitive measure for “perception of corruption” for the Pacific. The 2014 Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) only includes PNG, which has a CPI score of 25. This rates near the bottom of the global scale; the higher the score the less corruption is perceived to be a problem.

Bureaucratic and administrative corruption and nepotism are evident in the region<sup>35</sup>. Corruption is noted in a wide range of public services institutions. Improving public finance management is an area of development concern. Money laundering is an issue; a number of countries have been reported by the Financial Action Task Force’s (FATF) as “non-cooperative”<sup>36</sup>. Resource-rich countries tend to show large-scale corruption around mining, petroleum, gas and forestry, while in resource poorer countries this is smaller in scale. Corruption in the fisheries sector is a source of concern around the region. As in many parts of the world, petty, local corruption is harder to define and control, especially where it may impinge on traditional social entitlements and rights<sup>37</sup>.

Nevertheless, commitment to tackle corruption is on the rise in the Pacific. Parliaments have mostly now endorsed UNCAC; countries are putting in place or considering laws and mechanisms to enforce anti-corruption; and most importantly awareness of and active support for anti-corruption from citizens, communities and advocates is growing fast. This is the lens through which we view UN-PRAC progress.

### Project description and objectives

The UN-PRAC MTR was completed in September 2015. It is not the intention in this brief profile to either repeat all or contradict any of its findings. We draw selectively on the UN-PRAC MTR, an interview with the UNODC Adviser under UN-PRAC in Suva, other documents available to us and notes on regionality provided by UN-PRAC. For the purpose of the MTR for UNDP’s Asia and Pacific Programmes, this profile simply illustrates at a project level an initiative that fits under the overall aegis of UNDP’s Pacific Regional Programme, as well as the wider global mandate of its UN-PRAC partner, UNODC.

UN-PRAC has a timeline of 2012 to 2016. The original allocation was \$4.3 million, of which approximately \$2.5 and \$1.8 million were through UNDP and UNODC respectively. Australia’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) is providing funding support. Based in Suva, Fiji UN-PRAC covers 15 countries in the Pacific, with a project team of 3.

<sup>35</sup> The 2010 TI report “Corruption challenges in small island developing states in the Pacific region”, while dated and not detailed, does provide a useful summary of corruption challenges.

<sup>36</sup> We note FATF processes of “grey” and “blacklisting” limit countries’ capacities to attract ODA and borrow internationally.

<sup>37</sup> We note that UN-PRAC is working on, for example, corruption in local markets, which affects women’s rights to trade.

The goal of UN-PRAC is to **strengthen the capacity of Pacific island countries to tackle corruption and thereby to improve service delivery**. There are 3 outputs:

Output 1: To strengthen political will to endorse strong policy and legal frameworks aimed at implementing UNCAC.

Output 2: To strengthen the capacity of key national anti-corruption institutions and non-state actors to more effectively tackle corruption with resultant improvements in service delivery.

Output 3: To promote more informed anti-corruption policy and advocacy by conducting tailored research and sharing knowledge.

The driver for UN-PRAC activities is the UNCAC, adopted by the UN General Assembly in October 2003. UN-PRAC focuses particularly on UNCAC provisions for preventive measures, criminalization and law enforcement, international cooperation and asset recovery<sup>38</sup>.

UN-PRAC links with UNODC and UNDP global and regional strategies and results frameworks on corruption as well as the UNDAF for the Pacific. It clearly contributes to UNDP's RPD Outcome area 2, "Citizen's expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance". It specifically responds to Output 2.3 "Institutions and systems enabled to address awareness, prevention and enforcement of anti-corruption measures across sectors and stakeholders". With UN-PRAC due to finish in mid-2016, a Prodoc for a further phase is now being considered by stakeholders.

#### *Reflection of the five regionality principles*

We are grateful for UN-PRAC for providing notes and observations addressing the issue of regionality.

**Regional public goods:** There are not really any "regional public goods" in consideration in the UN-PRAC context. Both the accession to UNCAC and the conduct of UCAC reviews follow on from UNODC's global mandate. Most importantly in this case, the Convention itself, the globally agreed processes for UNCAC review and follow-up and global standards like the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) revised standards are in the broadest sense "global public goods".

**Cross-border externalities, awareness, dialogue and action:** On the one hand corruption is clearly a sensitive and emerging issue for individual countries. On the other hand, Pacific countries are clearly working on setting up their own frameworks to tackle it. As an example of how UN-PRAC contributes on a cross-border basis, civil society organizations from 14 countries across the region, including Transparency International Pacific Chapter representatives, were invited to participate at the first ever Pacific CSOs Anti-Corruption Workshop in December 2015. This was a follow-up to the in-country CSO workshops that have been conducted in several countries and provided an opportunity for civil society to participate in the ongoing anti-corruption dialogue and awareness within the Pacific of UNCAC. It also allowed CSOs to share best practices on how to stimulate greater anti-corruption awareness in their respective countries and sub-groupings (Melanesia, Polynesia, Micronesia).

**Sharing of knowledge, expertise etc.:** UN-PRAC provides some specific examples of the sharing of knowledge, expertise and experience in the Pacific Region. Countries like Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Palau and PNG have undertaken attachments with the Fiji Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU). The Fiji FIU is considered one of the best FIUs in the region, and often plays a leadership role among other FIUs. Increasingly, the UN-PRAC Project has partnered with the Fiji FIU to enable training and mentoring to other FIUs in the region, in the spirit of Pacific-Pacific exchange in the region. UN-PRAC first enabled an exchange from the Kiribati and Nauru FIUs to the Fiji FIU in 2013. This attachment enabled first-hand experience and the sharing of knowledge and lessons learned, in relation to financial intelligence analysis, understanding and applying the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) revised standards, and law enforcement cooperation. In June 2014, UN-PRAC has further enabled the Federated States of Micronesia and Solomon Islands FIUs to benefit from a training and attachment in the Fiji FIU. In 2015, an additional three Pacific Island Countries (Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands and again, Solomon Islands) travelled to Fiji.

South-South exchanges, as part of the UNCAC Review Mechanism, have been key to the review process in the Pacific. As States under review in the first year (2010-2011) of the UNCAC Review Mechanism, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, for example, have played an active role in sharing their experiences with other States in the region, both in terms of the lessons learned, challenges encountered and advice on how to coordinate the UNCAC review process. This has

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<sup>38</sup> Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 of UNCAC respectively.

been facilitated and fostered by UNODC, such as during trainings that have taken place in Suva, Fiji. In 2013 and 2014, States that have benefited from this sharing of experience include Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Following on from the 16<sup>th</sup> International Anti-Corruption Conference (IACC) which was attended by 16 CSO and Government representatives from across the region, UN-PRAC convened the Pacific CSO Anti-Corruption workshop and brought in several experts that presented at the IACC to be resource people at the Pacific workshop. This allowed for the sharing of experiences and expertise, especially on new topics like sextortion.

### *Progress and achievements*

This section summarises some of the notable achievements of UN-PRAC since 2012 i.e. the current phase. This does not follow the RP MTR period of 2014-2017. Neither do we follow progress by the output-by-output structure of UN-PRAC. This has been documented in UN-PRAC's own MTR. We have chosen to focus on three aspects.

**Accession to UNCAC and follow-up Review:** UN-PRAC has exceeded UNDP's RP expectations at the end of 2015. The RP anticipated that 10 countries would have acceded to UNCAC by 2017; the current total is 11. In addition, countries have undertaken the UNCAC Review Mechanism, an inter-governmental process whereby each country undertakes legal analysis and peer reviews with two others to provide "opportunities to exchange views, ideas and good practices"<sup>39</sup>. These UNCAC processes are central to UNODC's work and are complemented by UNDP capacity development and institutional strengthening support. UN-PRAC has helped with a range of workshops, training events and advisor support related to accession and review. So far, 10 countries have completed the Review. The 11<sup>th</sup>, Tuvalu, only acceded to UNCAC in September 2015, but is anticipated to complete the Review by project completion in June 2016. This makes the Pacific the first region in the World to have substantially completed UNCAC Review. Ownership of UNCAC is high, boding well for future sustainability in anti-corruption efforts.

**Institutionalisation of UNCAC:** UN-PRAC support for the institutionalisation of UNCAC is progressing in different ways across the region. The best articulation of this is in the Solomon Islands (SI). The government was elected in 2014 on a ticket that included reform to tackle corruption. It wishes to establish an Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC); it hopes in 2016<sup>40</sup>. In 2015, after the Solomons had completed its UNCAC Review, UN-PRAC facilitated a workshop that included Cabinet participants, which discussed (inter alia) the Prime Minister's ICAC and anti-corruption strategy agendas. UN-PRAC also facilitated a visit for SI delegates to find out how the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission has been set up since it was established in 2009 and similarly for the Timor-Leste Anti-Corruption Agency, also established in 2009. The Solomon Islands has so far tabled six anti-corruption related bills, including on enforcement penalties, whistle-blowers and freedom of information. It is amending its Ombudsman Act and its Leadership Code.

Papua New Guinea would also like to establish an Independent Commission Against Corruption. UN-PRAC provided, at Government request, substantial UNDP adviser time in 2013 and 2014 to help review draft ICAC legislation. Unfortunately, the UNDP adviser has left but a replacement will arrive in Suva in March 2016. It is hoped that UN-PRAC's momentum can be regained in the project's next phase. Other countries have also received institutionalisation support, for example: UNCAC workshops for Parliamentarians in Tuvalu and Samoa; support for Public Accounts Committees in the Marshalls and Vanuatu; Kiribati and Vanuatu have been provided guidance on anti-corruption policy and establishment of anti-corruption coordination committees (as required under UNCAC); in the Federated States of Micronesia, a full time adviser helped the country to address recommendations from the UNCAC review, with focus on the Whistle-blower Protection Bill and coordination on anti-money laundering.

**Citizen awareness and support for anti-corruption:** Citizen involvement is axiomatic to what countries do legally and institutionally to tackle corruption. This is not strongly articulated in UN-PRAC project cycle documentation. The project MTR does, however, conclude that with successes in UNCAC and anti-corruption approaches with parliaments and institutions (as above), UN-PRAC has had "less success to date in supporting the development of practical AC efforts in Pacific island countries that are recognized by the population of these archipelagos". Nevertheless, two recent UN-PRAC newsletters<sup>41</sup> have some very encouraging stories to tell.

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<sup>39</sup> Terms of reference of the Mechanism for the Review of Implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

<sup>40</sup> Parliament website statement by the Minister of Finance and Treasury, 18/12/2015. <http://www.parliament.gov.sb/>.

<sup>41</sup> For July and December, 2015



In May 2015, TI and UN-PRAC collaborated in Fiji for a workshop involving civil society organisations (CSOs) that looked at their role in anti-corruption and their engagement with Government and oversight bodies. Also in 2015, with the Pacific Youth Council, UN-PRAC brought youth from around the Pacific to Fiji for the 2015 Pacific Youth Forum Against Corruption. Participants drafted an Outcomes Document, whilst UN-PRAC announced the placement of an anti-corruption specialist with the Council. UN-PRAC funded the Tonga “Don't CRY” (Corruption Robs Youth) workshop and has started providing grants to Fiji’s Youth For Integrity and Kiribati’s Children’s Campaigners Network. Related to this, the project also facilitated anti-corruption workshops for CSOs in Tonga and NGOs in Tuvalu. UN-PRAC has also launched the regional “Sound the Alarm” competition inviting young people in the Pacific to share views and solutions to corruption through music. UN-PRAC is innovating to engage citizens. It is also working with the private sector and the press. In June 2015, Tonga’s Chamber of Commerce members joined UN-PRAC and the Ombudsman for an UNCAC workshop. A regional workshop was held with the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation in July. In August, journalists from around the region were introduced to UNCAC Awareness Training for Pacific Media.

### *Lessons Learned*

We repeat a finding from our MTR report, which in itself forms a “lesson”: “Anti-corruption is an important and growing area for both UNDP’s regional programmes, with the relationship with UNODC being vital. Corruption will not be quickly eradicated. The UNODC/UNDP follow-up work on UNCAC is impressive, with country gains in law, regulation and citizen activism. The challenge is to combine these into practical, citizen supported systems and measures and ensure the implementation of these laws and policies”.

The above refers to UNDP’s regional work on anti-corruption in Asia and the Pacific. For its part, UN-PRAC is making serious inroads into anti-corruption in the Pacific. The UNCAC driven work has shown significant progress in terms of both accession and review, reflecting UNODC’s mandate. UNDP’s strengths in capacity and institution building are no less important and relevant. The establishment of commissions, enacting laws, regulations and the capacity and institutional support required are crucial and longer-term ambitions. So too are the absolutely vital measures to help citizens, civil society and the private sector to own and champion the fight against corruption.

UN-PRAC is only one player in the Pacific anti-corruption effort. The achievements documented above would not be possible without multiple actors taking the stage. Attribution is hard to assess; contribution is clear. As UN-PRAC makes its case for a further phase, we hope that it will receive the “green light” with enough human and financial resources to maintain and increase the momentum it has helped to build. As one respondent said, not unreasonably, “a powerful regional process is going on”.



## Profile on Multi-Country South Asia HIV Programme

### A Grassroots Informed Sub-Regional Approach

#### *Development Context*

Sexual and gender minorities across Asia face continuing deep-seated discrimination, social stigma, rights abuse and marginalisation in terms of access to HIV and health services, economic opportunities and social services. The South Asian sub-region is no exception. In six of the seven countries<sup>42</sup> supported by the Multi-Country South Asia HIV Programme, sex between men is criminalised, and only the constitution of Nepal provides protections for people of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities<sup>43</sup>. In all seven countries covered under the Programme<sup>44</sup>, these marginalised groups have limited access to health and other social services, and often there is little provision for them in national HIV budgets. In many cases, countries lack the social, demographic and behavioural information on these groups that is needed to inform inclusive national policy and budget processes.

In South Asia, the HIV rate among men who have sex with men and transgender women is significantly higher than among other adult groups, particularly for transgender women.<sup>45</sup> The report of the Commission on AIDS in Asia estimates that by 2020, these two population groups could make up to half of new HIV infections.

#### *Project description and objectives*

The Multi-Country South Asia (MSA) HIV Programme is a regional programme implemented by UNDP and funded by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund). The Programme is aimed at reducing the impact of HIV on men who have sex with men and transgender people<sup>46</sup>.

The Programme was conceptualised by civil society groups in South Asia in 2009. During the first phase of the programme, which was implemented by Populations Services International (PSI) Nepal<sup>47</sup>, UNDP was requested to provide technical assistance on advocacy and capacity development (July 2010 – July 2013). At the end of Phase 1, PSI withdrew and UNDP was requested by the Global Fund and civil society representatives to develop and re-submit a proposal for the second phase. This Phase, amounting to 16.7 million USD, was approved by the Global Fund for July 2013–December 2015. A no-cost extension was granted in 2015 to December 2016. Under UNDP's management, the performance rating of the Programme by the Global Fund improved from B2 at the end of Phase 1 to the current A1 rating (the highest possible rating, denoting exceeding expectations).

The Programme operates in seven South Asian countries, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, in a region facing highly restrictive legal environments and heightened social stigma and discrimination towards men who have sex with men and transgender people.

The ultimate development impact of the Programme is to reduce the number of new HIV infections among men who have sex with men and transgender people in these countries. Recognising that the challenges faced by these groups are multi-dimensional in nature, the Programme aims to achieve this by:

- promoting an enabling policy and legal environment in the partner countries in line with global conventions and international norms and standards;
- strengthening the capacities of regional and national civil society and community-based organisations to lobby, advocate for and deliver health, care/counselling and preventative services to these two groups; and
- supporting partner countries in collecting necessary strategic information on these groups to improve HIV responses and strengthening their M&E capacity.

To promote sharing of community best practice and south-south learning, the Programme engages with two regional community networks as programme Sub-recipients: the Asia-Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health and the Asia-Pacific Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS. In addition, the programme partners with 9 national sub-recipients, 8 of which are civil society organisations. The majority of these are led by marginalised populations

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<sup>42</sup> Only in Nepal have they never been criminalised.

<sup>43</sup> Nepal is again the exception as the Constitution of Sept 2015 recognises the “third gender”

<sup>44</sup> Afghanistan, Pakistan, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Maldives

<sup>45</sup> HIV and Men who have Sex with Men: Country Snapshots, UNDP/SAARCLAW, 2012

<sup>46</sup> Known as hijra in South Asia

<sup>47</sup> As the initial Principal Recipient (PR)

themselves and hence ensures a community-informed HIV response at the regional level and in their respective countries. In addition, they also work towards strengthening grass-roots community-based organisations whilst carrying out regional and national level advocacy activities for marginalised populations.

**Relationship to the Regional Programme:** The MSA Programme contributes to Output 2.4, National institutions, systems, laws and policies strengthened for equitable, accountable and effective delivery of basic services to excluded groups, with a particular focus on health and HIV. This programme management arrangement ensures that the MSA Programme outcomes are directly contributing to UNDP development results at the regional level.

*Reflections on the five Regionality Principles*

**Regional public goods:** This initiative emerged from collective action from civil society groups in this sub-region. The Programme has developed a series of regional tools and partnerships that have influenced policies and programming and strengthened regional cooperation. These include a joint UNDP/WHO training package on stigma and discrimination for healthcare providers, and a partnership with the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions and Regional civil society organisation that resulted in a joint Programme of Action and Support to promote and protect human rights in the context of sexual orientation and gender identity.

**Cross-border externalities:** The focus on ensuring access to HIV services for marginalised populations contributes to addressing cross-border health challenges and promoting the right to health for migrants.

**Awareness, dialogue and action:** The Programme provides a vital regional platform for advocacy on sensitive human rights issues, enabling dialogue between countries on approaches to address legal and policy barriers to services for marginalised populations at national and sub-national levels.

**Innovation:** Innovations include establishing a seed funding programme for over 70 small community-based organisations to support community-led delivery of services, and supporting them to develop resource mobilisation strategies for sustainability.

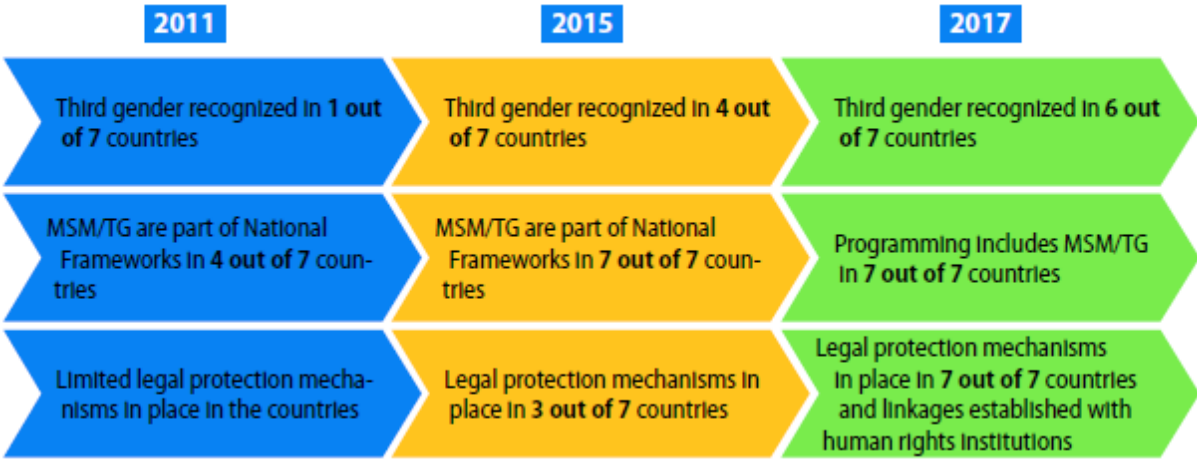
**Sharing of knowledge, expertise etc.:** A Regional Steering Committee brings together government and community representatives from seven Global Fund Country Coordinating Mechanisms, as well as regional organisations. This enables the exchange of lessons and experiences and dialogue on challenges between countries and with regional stakeholders. In addition, a regional body was established to guide and prioritise the development of knowledge products, fill knowledge gaps, and review regional strategic documents in South Asia.

*Progress and achievements*

Since its inception in 2011, the Programme has achieved significant results both in terms of regional awareness and knowledge building and even more significantly at the country level.

The flow chart below describes the overall progress that has been made since the inception of the Programme

**IMPROVING THE ENABLING LEGAL AND POLICY ENVIRONMENT**



Source: Key Impacts 2011-2017, Prepared by RP team

Key milestones and achievements at the country level are:

- A regional advocacy framework and resources guide on HIV, Human Rights and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) was developed, with inputs from the 7 countries. This framework was important in creating consensus among these countries to address the serious issues facing men who have sex with men and transgender people and also to raise country awareness of the need for an integrated approach. Following the development of the regional framework, seven national advocacy frameworks were produced in partnership with civil society groups and national AIDS control programmes.
- Advocacy for the recognition of transgender and hijra people contributed to the official recognition of a “third gender” in Bangladesh and Nepal; national dialogues on HIV and the law resulted in Sindh province in Pakistan passing South Asia’s first protective AIDS law. In April 2015, the Upper Chamber of India’s Parliament approved a progressive “Transgender Bill”.
- Afghanistan, Bhutan and Pakistan included for the first time men who have sex with men and transgender people in the 2015 IBBS<sup>48</sup> survey and in Bhutan a first-ever MSM population size estimation was undertaken. Including these marginalised groups in national surveys will enable them to be recognised and prioritised in future national AIDS strategies and budgets, as well as future Global Fund national programmes.
- A joint UNDP/WHO “The Time has Come” training package, to reduce stigma and discrimination towards men who have sex with and transgender people in health care settings, has been adopted as part of training curriculums in Bhutan and India.
- Community-based organisations (CBOs) in Afghanistan and Pakistan have been strengthened to deliver HIV testing and STI diagnosis services for men who have sex with men and transgender women reaching over 40,000 people from these groups; in addition, almost 10,000 people were tested for HIV and knew their results in 2014.
- The first men who have sex with men and transgender community group was established in Bhutan; seven new CBOs were registered in Pakistan to deliver services to these two groups – and they continue to receive capacity building support from the programme to ensure sustainability. Through a seed-funding component of the Programme 70 small CBOs in all the countries are being strengthened for advocacy, including human rights-based advocacy.
- In terms of integrating human rights into the work, the Programme has engaged with regional and national human rights institutions (NHRIs), resulting in a common action plan to promote and protect human rights of people of diverse sexual orientation or gender identity. This plan was developed in close cooperation with the Asia Pacific Forum of NHRIs and 17 Human rights Commissions, including 5 from South Asia<sup>49</sup>. The Commissions will report annually on progress towards the agreed plan.

#### *Lessons Learned*

The Regional Programme has provided an important forum to address critical gaps in reaching marginalised groups, thereby complementing national HIV programmes. It has also provided a vital regional platform for advocacy on sensitive human rights issues, in a way that supports action to address legal and policy barriers to services for marginalised populations at national and sub-national levels.

The Programme’s focus on community systems strengthening, complemented by the facilitation of linkages between government and community groups, has been essential to improving the reach of HIV and other services for the most marginalised. Partnering with regional and national sub-recipients, UN agencies and others has also allowed small community-based organisations to link to a network of organisations to build their capacity, understanding of HIV programming, best practices and innovations, and to contribute to regional and global HIV strategies. Country-to-country resource and experience sharing have fostered South-South cooperation and enabled countries to draw valuable lessons and adopt best practices from one another. Additionally, UNDP’s engagement facilitates elevation of key issues and lessons learned in policy discussions and convening of diverse stakeholders at country level.

The Programme has also contributed to the successful establishment of a similar regional initiative in sub-Saharan Africa in 2015, through a partnership between UNDP and civil society organisations. Experiences and learning from the MSA Programme are enabling cross-regional linkages and also contributing to development of global advocacy

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<sup>48</sup> Integrated Biological and Behavioural Surveillance Survey

<sup>49</sup> Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka

and strategies. In particular, the MSA Programme is recognized for prioritising efforts to address legal and policy barriers that impact access to services, in order to ensure that service delivery actually reaches and benefits marginalised populations.

Finally, recognising that attitudinal, institutional and eventually transformational change require a long-term horizon, the two-phase funding support for this Programme (2010-2017) has been essential for the successes so far.