



***The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic***

**&**

***The United Nations Development Programme***

***“Enhancing Aid Effectiveness and Coordination  
in Syria”***

**SYR/07/003**

**Brief Description**

Scaling up of development assistance and the commitments of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness demand urgent steps to increase the quality, transparency and accountability of the Official Development Aid (ODA). The recipient government's leadership and ownership of aid coordination is essential to develop better and more transparent aid management tools and raise the quality of partnership between recipients and donors; this making up for aid effectiveness.

Syria endorsed the Paris Declaration in July 2007. This project will focus on enhancing the capacity of the State Planning Commission in its coordination role and play a catalyst role in promoting Syria's interactions and initiatives within the Paris Declaration.

**Country: Syrian Arab Republic**

**UNDAF Outcome(s)/Indicator(s):**

UNDAF Outcome 2: Efficiency and accountability of governance structures at central and local levels strengthened, by government, civil society and the private sector, towards sustainable development

**Expected Outcome(s)/Indicator (s):**

CP Outcome B1: Policy and decision-making supported by quality information and analyses  
MYFF 2.1 Policy support for democratic governance

**Expected Output(s)/Indicator(s):**

1. Policy framework for greater aid effectiveness in Syria strengthened
2. Upgraded and sustainable instruments in place for coordinating and managing international cooperation partners' assistance
3. Capacity building of SPC and line ministries staff in aid effectiveness, coordination and management reinforced

**Implementing partner:** State Planning Commission

Programme Period: <b>2007 – 2011</b>
Programme Component: <b>Democratic Governance</b>
Project Title: <b>Enhancing aid effectiveness and coordination in Syria</b>
Project ID: <b>SYR/07/003</b>
Project Duration: <b>24 months</b> October 2007- October 2009
Management Arrangement: <b>NEX</b>

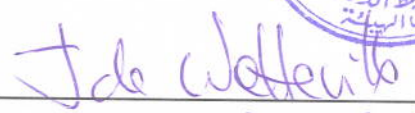
Programme Budget: US\$ 433,333
GMS Fee: US\$ 16,667
Total Project Budget: US\$ <b>450,000</b>
Allocated resources:
• Government/SPC: US\$ 200,000
• UNDP
• TRAC: US\$ 100,000
• Donor:
• SDC: US\$ 150,000
• In kind contributions: office premises at SPC

The UN exchange rate prevailing at the signature date is: US\$1 = SP 49.70



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On behalf of the Syrian Government  
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Date: 

**Agreed by: H.E. Mr. Jacques De Watteville**  
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Date: 3.10.2007

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Date: 3 Oct. 2007  


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## I. Situation Analysis

### 1.1 Syria in the process of endorsing the Paris Declaration

Since the UN Millennium Summit of September 2000 adopting the MDGs, followed by the Monterrey conference on Financing for Development in March 2002 and the Rome Declaration on Harmonization<sup>1</sup> of February 2003, the Paris Declaration<sup>2</sup> is another step towards a growing international consensus that more effective and efficient aid is needed to achieve the MDGs and to encourage sustainable peace, security and socio-economic development.

From recipient countries, this requires that national aid management structures need to substantially mature and become part of a transparent "aid architecture" to improve effectiveness. Better aid management also means increased capacity to absorb additional financial assistance and to produce more effective results in line with poverty reduction strategies.

At the last Syrian Coordination Forum in December 2005, the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs reaffirmed Syria's commitment to effective aid coordination and open dialogue with international cooperation partners. Shortly after the Forum, the Government requested the assistance of UNDP to assess the implications of joining the Paris Declaration for Syria. In a technical note sent to the State Planning Commission (SPC), UNDP has concluded that benefits outweigh risks<sup>3</sup>. In particular, it is likely that, in the future, an increasing amount of external aid flows will go in priority to countries that endorsed the Paris Declaration, and can demonstrate compliance with the commitments and progress towards achieving the targets.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the SPC have given favorable opinions, and Syria should present their official endorsement of the Paris Declaration before the end of 2006, according to the appropriate OECD procedure. In November, the SPC requested the assistance

### 1.2 The policy and institutional environment regarding international cooperation and donors

Both the Paris Declaration and the UN world Summit in 2005 stressed the importance of nationally owned poverty reduction strategies aimed at accelerating the achievement of the MDGs. This implies the importance that information on aid flows is taken into account at policy level and in preparing budgetary frameworks that translate national priorities into actions.

The Government's 10<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (FYP) for the period 2006-2010 lays down a comprehensive plan for the socio-economic development of Syria. It has been designed taking account of the MDGs. Throughout the preparation of the Plan, the Government fostered a dialogue with the donors individually; some of them, including UNDP, having provided technical assistance for the Plan's formulation. A FYP outline was officially shared with the donor community at large at the Second Coordination Forum in December 2005, organized with the support of UNDP. Line ministries are currently developing their sectoral FYP. The preparation, presentation and implementation of the FYP demonstrate a strong ownership and leadership of the development process by the Syrian Government.

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<sup>1</sup> The text of the Rome Declaration is also available in Arabic: <http://www.aidharmonization.org/ah-wh/secondary-pages/why-RomeDeclaration>

<sup>2</sup> The text of the Paris Declaration is also available in Arabic: [http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_3236398\\_35401554\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,2340,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html)

<sup>3</sup> See Annex 1 – UNDP technical note on the Paris Declaration

The International Cooperation Directorate (ICD) of the SPC prepared the FYP chapter on international cooperation. This international cooperation strategy focuses on i) the creation of an enabling environment to place Syria on investment maps (both domestic and foreign) in the region and ii) transfer of knowledge.

This needs further detailing and development to address all challenges in the field of aid coordination tools and instruments, especially including a comprehensive action plan for the implementation of the Paris Declaration in Syria.

Established within the SPC in 2003 with the support of UNDP, the ICD is in charge of developing, maintaining and following up coordination and management mechanisms, including the aid management database and the coordination forums.

In addition to this, there are focal point staffs or units for international cooperation within each line ministry.

National partner institutions can be better prepared with enhanced capacity to host and implement projects funded with external aid. The poor absorption capacity of beneficiary institutions impacts aid effectiveness in Syria. The involvement of beneficiary institutions in the project formulation, as and in applying procedures during project implementation can contribute to better aid effectiveness. The relationship between the ICD and the international cooperation focal points in line ministries can also be made clearer and more coordinated.

### **1.3 Features and functionalities of the International Cooperation Information Management System (ICIMS)**

With UNDP assistance, an ICT-based system, called ICIMS<sup>4</sup>, that is directly used for the daily management of aid was established in 2003, at the SPC, under the management of the International Cooperation Directorate (ICD). This database gathers information on both development projects partly funded with external resources, and donors and lenders of Syria. It allows monitoring and reporting on development initiatives within the country by calendar, sector, donor, type of initiative and other criteria. This is made available online, through the [SPC website](#).

The ICIMS database is composed of several modules rotating around a project register, including:

1. Donor information: Data related to donors, including country, status (active or not), contacts, etc.
2. Recipient information: Information related to the recipient of financial aid and implementing agencies.
3. Project register: Information related to sector, sub-sector, beneficiaries, and geographic locations (in Arabic).
4. Financial information: Financial information including commitments and disbursements related to a given project.
5. Reports: ICIMS tracks the status, tasks (calendar) and management issues related to each project and produces a number of preset reports, while more can be compiled on a custom basis.
6. Administration: Allows administrators to modify security clearance levels, manage users, and access tools to modify any data table to meet specific needs. It also contains audit features.

The database is designed to meet the requirements of the ICD for the daily management of project information and to be the single source of access to that information. Donors and recipient information, financial inputs and sector and sub-sector data are collected and analysed

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<sup>4</sup> Initially called the Aid Management Information System (AMIS), it is now known as ICIMS.

by the system. Reporting is done through the use of additional software<sup>5</sup> which draws information from the database and presents it on-line. This gives clients the ability to produce reports in any desired format while putting less pressure on the technical staff at the ICD. The database is designed to process requests from line ministries and direct their proposals for approval.

The database is not yet complete, as the Directorate has been facing the challenge to collect information from donors. Beyond its completion, the database is not exploited in terms of generating regular and accurate reports.

Yet, comparative experiences show that a critical prerequisite to reliable aid management system is the disclosure of information related to international cooperation partners' financial assistance, within government and between government and donors. And the validity of the data recorded depends directly on the quality and frequency of reporting by donors and government<sup>6</sup>.

#### **1.4 The aid management business process**

The SPC, subdivided into directorates dedicated to one or more line ministries, entertains a constant dialogue to determine sectoral priorities and financial needs ahead of the upcoming budget cycle. Gaps in funding are identified in line with sectoral policies and poverty reduction strategies. Projects are lined up for consideration by appropriate donors to supplement national budget inputs as needed.

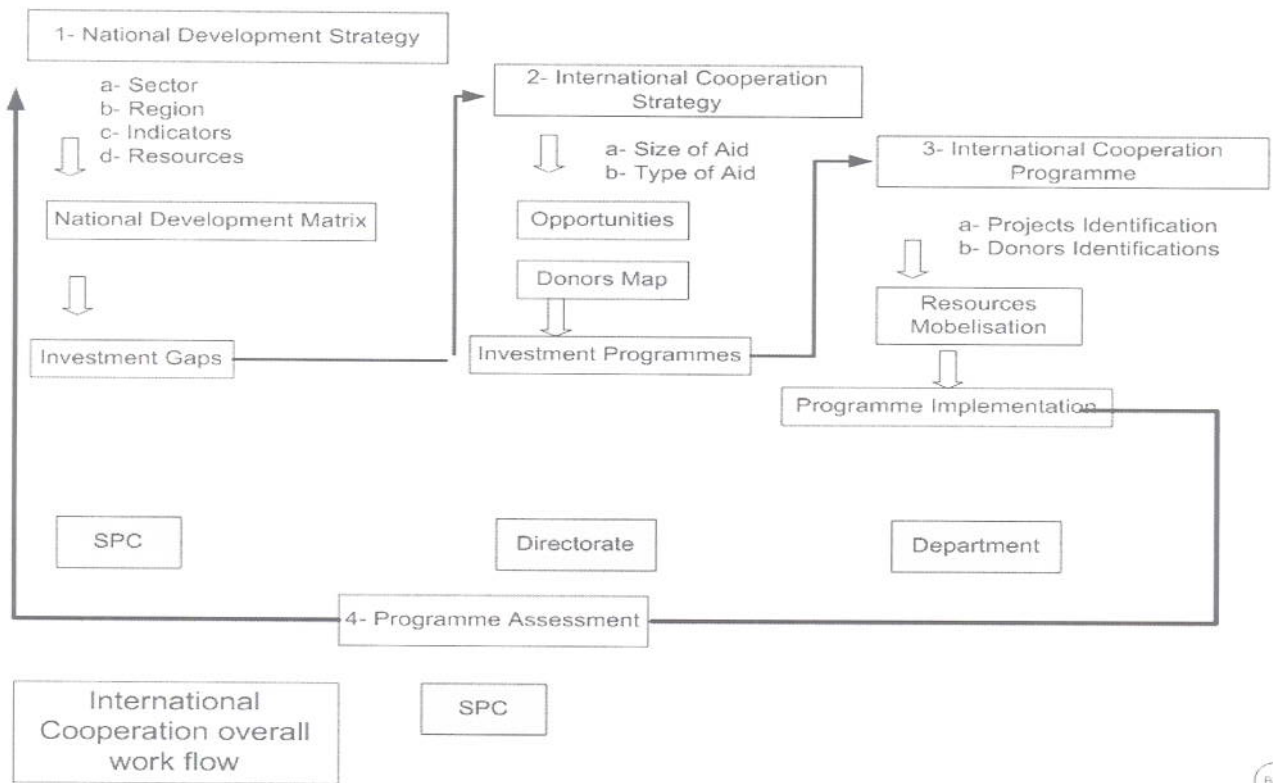
Projects are then submitted to an approval committee under the Prime Minister office and once the project documents are signed by donors and the implementing partners, they are entered in the ICIMS.

Requests from line ministries in line with the national development strategy (1) are entered in the ICIMS and investment gaps are identified. These are calculated from the funds requested and those available from the national budget. Gaps are then mapped (2) by each directorate according to the size and type of aid needed and an investment programme is drafted. The resulting international cooperation programme (3) allows, through dialogue with the international community, to tag projects to specific donors and initiate the prioritization process and the resource mobilization campaign. Funding is then identified and the priority programmes implemented and assessed (4). The cycle is closed back to the national development strategy for the following planning cycle, in which funding requests for new and ongoing programmes are processed. This business process allows for activities to be planned in reasonable advance and for donors to be alerted of upcoming financial needs in order to make their financial assistance more predictable.

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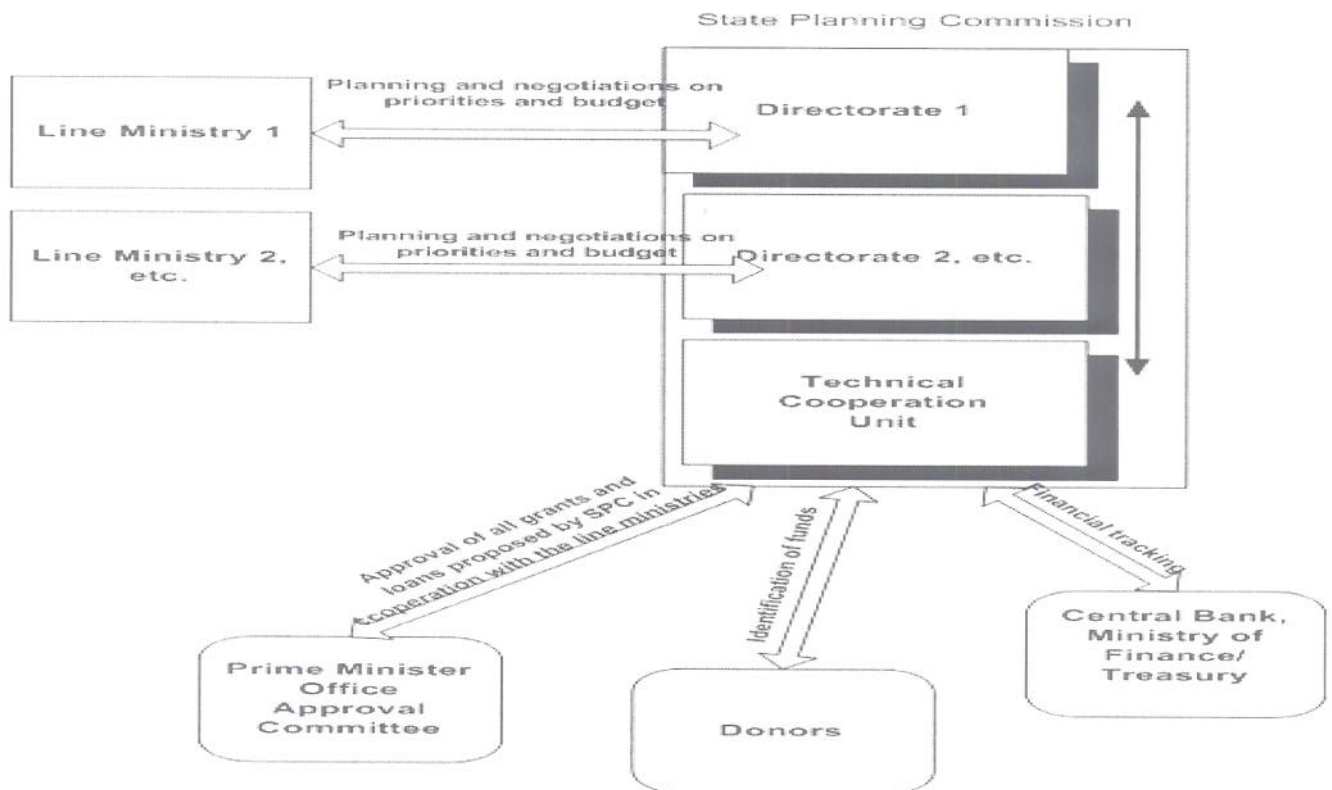
<sup>5</sup> Crystal Reports

<sup>6</sup> UNDP working paper #2, "Aid management systems standards and good practices", Gabriel Accascina, May 2006



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The relation within the SPC, line ministries, government and donors are illustrated below:



### **1.5 Mechanisms for reporting on aid and international cooperation**

In Syria, regular National Human Development Reports (NHDR) and Millennium Development Goals Reports (MDGR) were produced jointly by the Government and the UNCT and UNDP respectively. These reports refer to international cooperation and external aid, as they support Syrian progress in the vast field of human development.

The ICD has not produced regular analytical reports using ICMIS data, whereas these could provide invaluable background information for stakeholders involved planning and decision making processes. In addition, a strong government's commitment on reporting aid and international cooperation activities creates a virtuous circle reinforcing government's credibility and transparency towards donors, while mapping out donor's comparative involvement in Syria in their own countries and organisations.

### **1.6 Donor-government dialogue**

Syria hosted two coordination forums with existing and potential multilateral and bilateral donors and lenders. These forums took place at high political level. They were opportunities for the Government to present its work priorities and strategy for socio-economic development, and for international cooperation in particular.

The Second Coordination Forum in December 2005 generated an open and straight-forward dialogue between the government and the donors. At this occasion, the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs announced the future setting up of sectoral round tables to follow up more closely and technically development challenges and donors' interventions.

No sectoral round tables have been established yet; however, a series of technical coordination meetings, at ministerial level, took place in the first quarter of 2006, and sectoral groups were set up to coordinate the humanitarian response of the government and its international and non-governmental partners during the war in Lebanon in summer 2006. These are not yet sustainable enough dialogue mechanisms necessary to effectively and efficiently coordinate donors and monitor aid impact on socio-economic development.

### **1.7 Capacity and needs for capacity building**

With the view to implement the international cooperation strategy effectively, more is needed and emphasis should be placed on:

- Institutional development of international cooperation to ensure aid effectiveness and harmonization;
- Institutional capacity building of the human resources concerned with international cooperation activities programming and implementation.

In terms of institutional development, emphasis should be placed on upgrading national institutions absorption capacity through:

- Enhancing the capacity of focal points in line ministries;
- Enhancing monitoring and evaluation capacities of projects financed with the support of international cooperation partners
- Initiating of thematic/sectoral donor-government groups to ensure coordination and adequate management of projects funded by external aid;

In the field of human resources capacity building, SPC has put in place a Directorate for Human Resources and Training, with a budget of 20 million SYP in 2006, in charge of assessing the



training needs of personnel and proposing training programmes. However, the Directorate of Human Resources and Training at SPC need the support and technical assistance of donors in terms of exposing SPC staff to international experience. In this regard, the Directorate has consolidated a list of training area for the implementation of which donor assistance is sought.

This includes:

- Trade policy and instruments (WTO agreements; experience with the EU Association Agreement in other Arab countries; negotiation skills; foreign trade policy indicators and measurement);
- Economic and financial policies and instruments (macro economy; interrelationship among macro economic sectors; standard economy; inflation percentage and forecast; financial policy; policies of exchange rate; economic statistics; labor market; interrelationships between labor market and economic sectors; Indicators and standards of labor market; secondary national accounts; integrated use of water resources; standardization; micro credit best practice);
- Social policy and instruments (linking economic to social variables; human development concepts; poverty standards), including health (economics of health; UNFPA SPECTRUM programme (for monitoring and forecasting family planning and HIV/AIDS trends)) and education (education economics);
- Private sector development (Government's support to the private sector; monitoring and evaluation of the performance of private sector);
- Planning (Financial Programming; Strategic Planning; Regional planning);
- International cooperation (studying and analyzing project documents in accordance with the 10<sup>th</sup> FYP priorities; preparing project documents for cooperation with international organizations; discussing financial and technical agreements; development projects' life cycle and monitoring mechanisms; project accounting; resource mobilization);
- Work methods (team management).

In parallel, the ICD also set a training plan to enhance the capacities of its staff, which was shared with the Directorate of Human Resources and Training. The ICD training plan includes:

1. Communication skills and protocol
2. Negotiations skills
3. Individual skills (presentation skills, managing meetings and conferences...)
4. Leadership skills
5. Study tour to other countries to learn from their experience in the field of aid coordination
6. Studying agreements and project documents of cooperation in light of the new financing methods
7. Resources mobilization
8. Accounting
9. Formulating of project documents
10. Study tour to other countries to learn from their experience in the field of resource mobilization and capacity building of human resource.
11. IT training (office, internet browsing...)
12. English Language courses (normal and specialized)

The former SPC-UNDP aid coordination project (SYR/01/007) had implemented a training programme at ICD in the fields of basic professional training and advanced professional skills training for directors and technical personnel implemented. The former project team recommended that the new programme should focus on the following areas:

1. Training and coaching in the areas of project life cycle management (including formulation, resources mobilization and implementation)
2. Monitoring and evaluation capacity development
3. Communication and presentation capacity development

The said training and coaching should be diversified according to needs and would include formal training, on the job coaching and study tours. Furthermore, the target group of this training should be identified not only from within the ICD. Other SPC employees concerned with programmes and projects funded with external resources should be included in such training to ensure sustainability and ownership.

## **A. Previous and ongoing UNDP Interventions**

### **A.1. Support to Aid Management and Coordination in Syria (Project SYR/01/007)**

With a total budget of nearly 300, 000 USD running February 2003 to March 2006, this project aimed to support the Syrian Government in its efforts to strengthen its links with the donor/IFI community, thus generating greater external resources and improved use of those resources.

The project helped establishing the International Cooperation Department, including developing staff job description and work flow, and built the capacity of its staff in basic and advanced professional skills. Amongst project outputs relating to policy, an International Cooperation situation analysis was launched, an International Cooperation Matrix developed, International Cooperation Strategy outlines elaborated and integrated in the 10<sup>th</sup> FYP. In terms of coordination tools, two coordination forums were organised and the State Planning Commission website enhanced. A most critical project output was the setting up of the International Cooperation Management Information System, i.e. the aid database based at the ICD.

One of the major setbacks that affected the full achievement of the project activities consisted in the delays in the SPC reorganisation process, which negatively impacted in the areas of human resources development and in the introduction of the redefined overall business process in the department of International Cooperation.

The project identified the following challenges to be tackled by future projects:

- Institutional development of the international cooperation services to ensure right aid effectiveness and harmonisation
- Capacity building of the human resources in international cooperation activities programming and implementation
- Building information sharing environment within SPC to ensure the right implementation of the revised overall workflow in the institution and to maximise the benefit from the already established ICMIS

### **A.2 Capacity Development of the SPC and Assistance in the Formulation of the FYP (Project SYR/05/005)**

UNDP currently supports a project with the SPC for capacity development and the formulation of the 10<sup>th</sup> 5-year development plan. It targets (a) formulation of a national vision/ policy framework for economic reform; (b) analysis of sectoral policies; (c) development of policy environment conducive to investment; (d) framework for judicial reform and law modernization; (e) long term strategies for socio-economic revitalization; and (f) formulation of national regional and sectoral policies for employment generation and poverty reduction. The project also invested in capacity development of the SPC and line ministries through provision of training on modeling, macro-economic assessments, log frames, indicators, monitoring and evaluation.

### A.3. Technical and Logistical Support to the Implementation of the FYP (Preparatory Assistance SYR/05/018)

This Preparatory Assistance aims at supporting the planning institutions in the implementation of the transition process from a State-led to a social market economy, ensuring a close coordination with relevant Government bodies, and guaranteeing the participation of civil society to the political debate. It notably aims to provide qualified technical assistance in selected areas of reform and create four thematic dialogue forums for political discussion with the civil society. This PA should be followed up by a full-fledged Project Document, which may include some capacity building activities notably targeting SPC employees.

### A.4 Support to MDG-Based Strategies for Localizing the MDGs (Project SYR06/009)

The key objective of this project is to develop the capacity of government counterparts at both national and local levels to formulate and implement an MDG-based development plans. The project consists of five main components: (1) Localizing the MDGs in three governorates in the South of Syria and producing high level MDG reports (2) Capacity development for SPC at the national level and SPC local department on monitoring and evaluation (3) Capacity development on monitoring and evaluation at the central SPC level (4) Strengthening of socio-economic data analysis at the sub-governorate and village levels; (5) advocacy on the MDGs and MDG-based planning at the national and local levels based on the MDG+5 linked to the five year development plan targeting various stakeholders including the UN Country Team and donors coordination forums, and a communication strategy, including publications, media spots, etc. (6) Developing MDG based socio economic development plans for July 2007 – July 2010 for each governorate. The time frame for the project is September 2006 through February 2008.

### A.5. DevInfo

A Memorandum of Understanding to launch the DevInfo database in Syria was signed in December 2005 between the Government and the UN Country Team in Syria. The project is administratively and financially managed by UNDP, while technically managed UNICEF, in partnership with SPC and the Central Bureau of Statistics, among others.

DevInfo is an ICT-based presentation and analytical system, which offers simple and user-friendly features that can be used to produce tables, graphs and maps for inclusion in reports, presentations and advocacy materials. This will allow pinpointing and analyzing conditions for success and track best practices in achieving the MDGs. Regularly updated, the tool is meant to help decision makers monitor development indicators at national and sub-national level, analyze trends and orient decisions. The project will include training. Importantly, it will also create a single, unified data resource for all partners in Syria's push to meet the MDGs.

## **B. Ongoing Interventions of other donors**

B.1 The European Union is implementing a project at SPC entitled "Institutional and Sector Modernization Facility", ISMF, through which they are building management capacities on leadership skills. They are conducting capacity building trainings locally and by delegating some senior staff for a long term visits to learn from the experience of other countries. They are also implementing some courses on "Organizational Culture Change".

B.2 The German Technical Cooperation, GTZ, is also implementing a project at SPC which focuses on building capacities of high and middle management in different fields such as, (time and self management, communication and management skills, conflict and problem solving, methodology of decision making and following up, delegation of authorities, setting job descriptions, selection of new staff, performance evaluation, incentive and motivation system, meetings management, and work flows.)

B.3 The Japanese cooperation agency, JICA, also maintains an office at SPC, as well as WFP.

## **II. Strategy**

### **2.1 Government's strategy**

The Syrian Government has demonstrated a strong leadership and ownership of the country development process, while fostering tight and fruitful partnerships with donors and lenders to benefit from technical and financial support to implement the reform agenda.

Taking note of the changing global aid environment, the Government expects that endorsing the Paris Declaration will reinforce these partnerships, in terms of aid management efficiency as well as volume of aid flows. In joining the large group of signatories<sup>7</sup> of the Paris Declaration, Syria will participate in and possibly influence the ongoing global dialogue on aid architecture regulating the relationship between recipient and donor of financial assistance. It is a critical time to review the Government's policy on international cooperation and enhance the national aid management and coordination instruments, in the light of the Paris Declaration principles.

### **2.2 UNDP's strategy**

As the manager of the Resident Coordinator system and the chair of the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), UNDP is an important player and coordinator of activities working towards better management and allocation of aid, and in fostering national capacity and ownership for aid coordination.

Since 1991<sup>8</sup>, UNDP has identified the need to move beyond the institutional towards the political implications of aid coordination, taking account of donor attitudes, particularly towards capacity building, their openness and willingness to support government leadership and modify policies and practices accordingly. Since then, the strategic approach for UNDP (and the UN System) at country level consists of the following components:

- support to policy dialogue;
- support to the process of elaborating and implementing national programmes and related policies, and strategies which will include an identification of the key capacities required;
- help governments integrate aid coordination mechanisms within overall planning and economic management systems of recipient countries;
- support to national capacity development.

Therefore, UNDP has been facilitating dialogues, forums and exchanges on aid coordination in programme countries and on the alignment of donor assistance with country development

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<sup>7</sup> Originally, the Declaration was signed by more than 100 bilateral donors, financial and development organisations, recipient countries, including non OECD countries. From the Arab region, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Morocco, Tunisia have already endorsed the Paris Declaration.

<sup>8</sup> UNDP "Concept Paper on a Coordinated UNDP Strategy for Capacity Building, Aid Coordination and Programme Approach"

priorities, and provides capacity development. UNDP strategy for the implementation of the Paris Declaration focuses on the absorptive capacity of developing countries and their ability to manage ODA in a transparent and accountable fashion. Interventions target the development of country specific aid management tools, including reporting mechanisms, to monitor aid flows and ensure transparency.

The newly published report of the High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence stresses the importance to enhance ownership of the recipient governments over their assistance policies, and role of the UN System to support capacity building for this purpose and exercise "good donorship".

Capacity building for aid coordination remains a strategic priority for UNDP. UNDP defines capacity as "the ability of individuals, institutions and societies to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives in a sustainable manner." Capacity development is thereby the process through which the abilities to do so are obtained, strengthened, adapted and maintained over time. Capacity development is seen by UNDP as a primarily endogenous and domestically driven process. It is an inherently political and complex process that cannot be rushed, and outcomes cannot be expected to evolve in a controlled and linear fashion.

UNDP adopts a "best fit" rather than the "best practice" approach. Because there is no one-size-fits-all formula that could represent an operational recipe or blueprint, a number of action-oriented default principles for capacity development can serve as signposts and safeguards to help keep development efforts focused on capacity outcomes.

Upon the findings of a capacity assessment, the following capacity development strategies may be applied:

- Knowledge Services and Learning: Large group training. Technical and tertiary education, on-the job skills transfer, focus groups
- Leadership Development: One-on-one coaching, mentoring, management skills development
- Mutual Accountability Mechanisms: M & E processes, social watch, peer and partner reviews
- Multi-stakeholder Engagement Processes: Process facilitation, institutional twinning, e-networks, community dialogue spaces, integrated planning and problem analysis
- Institutional Reform and Change Management: Results-based management, performance management systems, functional reviews, PAR in transitions, procurement services
- Capacity Diagnostics: Needs and capacity assessments, measurement and monitoring, advisory services

UNDP can apply a combination of these above strategies, or elements and instruments of them (on-the-job skills transfer, process facilitation, etc.) to provide capacity development services in the areas where it has a comparative advantage through its policy expertise, knowledge base and on-the-ground programme experience.

UNDP's capacity development strategies consist of the following key characteristics:

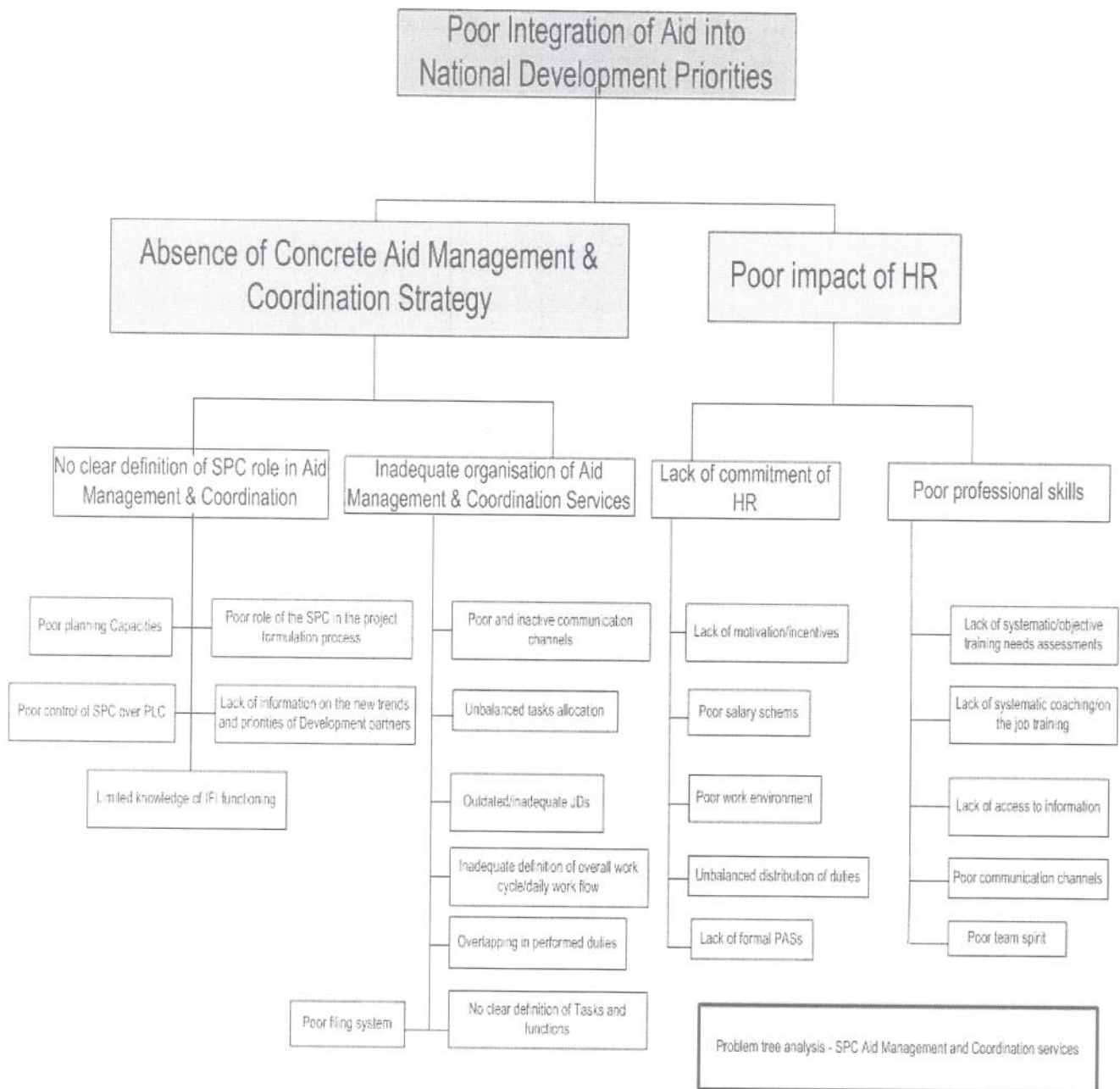
- They take a systemic approach to the capacity assets and needs ;
- They require the engagement of multiple stakeholders, often across sectors, for integrated development;
- They seed and support longer-term endogenous processes, and hence entail a mapping and understanding of endogenous capacities;

- They guide and systemically strengthen specific skill sets in a results-based management approach (be it in a local and national setting);
- They facilitate information and knowledge sharing in the public domain, particularly to facilitate innovation and engagement.

UNDP has been requested by the Government to provide technical and substantive assistance in setting-up the present project. UNDP is in a prime position to assist the Government through its ability to build partnerships, coordinate between the various parties involved, obtain knowledge from global sources and experiences, build capacities, and assist with fund raising efforts.

### **2.3 Problem tree**

The current shortcomings and deficiencies that the current situation in Syria presents is captured in the problem tree below:



Along with other partners pursuing separate though complementary projects, the present project will contribute addressing some of the challenges described above.

## 2.4 Target Beneficiaries

The target beneficiary is the Government of Syria as a whole, which will acquire new and better tools and skills for planning, monitoring and evaluating development process, taking into account the external assistance dimension. This should in turn benefit citizens targeted by development initiatives supported by foreign funds.

In particular, SPC and ICD staff as well as staff in line ministries dealing with international cooperation and Paris Declaration issues, as well as the donor community, will be primarily targeted by capacity building activities.

## A. Project Components

Based on the lessons learnt from the UNDP project on aid coordination and management and recommendations of the project team<sup>9</sup>, and in view of the compliance of Syria with the principles of the Paris Declaration, this project will focus on strengthening policy, technical and dialogue instruments, while developing capacity of relevant government's staff, within the ICD, but also within SPC and line ministries to understand the Paris Declaration principles and the new national policy and systems as well as to strengthen their professional skills for their daily tasks.

Indeed, comparative experiences have proven that leadership and ownership on the government side is probably the single most important success factor in the implementation of a robust and reliable aid management system, followed by appropriate policies regulating data exchanges within government and between government and donors<sup>10</sup>.

The project will focus on achieving the following objectives (refer to the Results and Resources Framework in Part VI):

### **1. [policy] Policy framework for greater aid effectiveness strengthened**

The Government needs to exercise strong and well-informed national leadership of the aid management process, which usually fosters a virtuous cycle, reinforcing credibility and transparency both internally within the government and externally across government and donors<sup>11</sup>.

This project component aims to support the ICD to create a proactive policy environment regarding the different aspects of aid coordination and management, reflecting the Paris Declaration principles, notably emphasizing on the harmonization and alignment processes.

First of all, an awareness raising campaign within the government and towards donors on the Paris Declaration will be put in place with the objective of building a consensus on the importance of joining efforts to implement it, and prepare grounds for necessary reforms.

Building on the existing international cooperation strategy outlines adopted in 2005, the ICD suggests developing three general policies focusing on:

- aid coordination, aiming at strengthening relations with the donor/lender community and, explore new potential international cooperation partners.
  - to clarify the role distribution amongst stakeholders, including SPC and the International Cooperation Directorate in particular, line ministries (reinforcement of international cooperation services within each line ministry), and donors.
  - to regulate data collection, including precise reporting responsibilities on the side of the donors, since a critical prerequisite to reliable aid management system is the disclosure of information related to financial assistance.

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<sup>9</sup>See Annex 2 - Concept Note on Aid Management and Coordination in SPC (Exit phase) by Project Team (27/02/2006) and Annex 3 - Notes of the TPR of Support to the Aid Management and Coordination in Syria (27/02/2006)

<sup>10</sup> UNDP working paper #2, "Aid management systems standards and good practices", Gabriel Accascina, May 2006

<sup>11</sup> UNDP working paper #2, "Aid management systems standards and good practices", Gabriel Accascina, May 2006



- to establish efficient coordination mechanisms between government and donors and define the level of discussion and frequency of meeting, as well as follow up procedures.
- aid management, looking at the role of the Government in monitoring, evaluating and reporting on projects financed with the support of international cooperation partners. This policy will create the necessary incentives for producing more factual and analytical reports using ICIMS data:
  - Regular bulletins reporting on the status of International Cooperation in Syria
  - Regular sectoral reports to facilitate discussions at the future sectoral round tables and the annual coordination forum meetings.
  - Large diffusion of the reports, notably to planning and decision support units as well as think tanks, at central and local levels. Reports will be made available online (SPC website).
  - ICIMS data and reports analyses to be integrated into national reports, such as NHDR and National MDGR.
- aid alignment, targeting the achievement of maximal impact of external resources on the national development priorities. In this field, it is desirable to explore the idea of joint donor-recipient country mechanisms for diagnostic reviews and performance assessment frameworks of national systems, particularly the procurement system.

Such policy framework will take the shape of a National Action Plan (NAP) for the Implementation of the Paris Declaration. The development and implementation of the NAP will involve the international cooperation partners.

The project will provide technical and legal assistance, as well as political advice for conducting a policy needs assessment and then for policy/ formulation; notably using regional resources and experts and certainly international consultants on the Paris Declaration implementation at the country level and organizing study tours in countries of similar socio-economic development and aid level, in priority in the Arab region, where similar political processes have taken place. Study tours will also expose Government officials to best practices in the area of donor coordination/dialogue mechanisms.

## **2. [instruments] Upgraded and sustainable instruments in place for coordinating and managing international cooperation partners' assistance**

This project component focuses on instruments for aid management and coordination. These include monitoring database, reporting tools and dialogue mechanisms.

### **2.1 Systems for aid monitoring, management and reporting reinforced**

In order for the ICIMS to enable Syria to reach new levels of transparency and effectiveness in turning financial aid into measurable poverty reduction and development results, some upgrading operations will be carried out.

ICIMS that allows reporting on aid provided and planned is an instrument of mutual accountability of donors and recipients. Factual and analytical reports are the natural and critical by-products of any IT-based aid management tools.

OECD explains that strong connections can be established between an aid management information system (AIMS), such as the Syrian ICIMS, and poverty reduction through efficient aid deliver. Indeed, AIMS can:

- play a critical role in decision-making on the allocation of resources by providing an overall picture of aid flows, arranged according to customizable criteria;
- assist in identifying funding gaps, alerting both government and donors to upcoming financial needs<sup>12</sup>;
- support MDGs by making information relative to flows contributing to specific indicators available for cost analysis<sup>13</sup>;
- directly support Public Financial Management by interfacing with the national budget and contributing to its preparations;
- foster transparency and accountability by recording and tracking projects and financial flows<sup>14</sup>;
- present the international community with accurate and up-to-date information of the status of aid activities in a country through online web-based reporting;
- potentially, through planning and management tools, allow government to process higher levels of aid than ever before, while making aid more effective and decreasing duplication or overlaps of aid-funded activities; and
- assist in multi-year programming through providing a clear picture of pledges and commitment juxtaposed against future needs<sup>15</sup>.

Therefore, this Project will focus on the following:

1. Upgrading the functionality and features of the existing ICIMS:
  - to include completed projects (the existing system being limited to projects in the pipeline and under implementation)
  - to track projects to 10<sup>th</sup> FYP sections
  - to track expenditures not only to MDGs indicators but also to Paris Declaration indicators. Indeed, some Paris Declaration Indicators<sup>16</sup> can be built into the database, with the purpose to generalize good practice and ease the reporting burden. ICIMS can be used for MDG reporting and costing; data from ICIMS can be juxtaposed to data coming from DevInfo to map out the amount disbursed to support specific indicators.

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<sup>12</sup> The participation of donors in planning makes their assistance more predictable.

<sup>13</sup> Some AIMS tag each project entry with the relevant MDG indicators, and calculate the amount of funds being allocated to each indicator.

<sup>14</sup> This is particularly important today as it is often a requirement for increasing funding levels.

<sup>15</sup> The performance of AIMS as a predictability tool is strictly linked to the compliance of donors to timely and accurate disclosure of information on present and future financial aid availability.

<sup>16</sup> These include:

- Indicator 3: Percentage of aid flows to the government sector that is reported on partners' national budgets
- Indicator 4: Percent of donor capacity-development support provided through coordinated programmes consistent with partners' national development strategies
- Indicator 5a (i and ii): Percent of donors and aid flows that use public financial management systems
- Indicator 6: Use of parallel Project Implementation Units
- Indicator 7: Percent of aid disbursement released according to agreed schedules in annual or multi-year frameworks
- Indicator 9: Percent of aid provided as programme-based approaches
- Indicator 10: Percent of (a) field missions and/or (b) country analytical work, including diagnostic work, that are joint.

- to indicate which projects make use of public financial management systems and procurement systems to monitor progress towards alignment.
  - to integrate Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping. This allows providing a snapshot of the geographic allocation of aid flows.
  - by reviewing the existing sector and coding systems to ensure accuracy and compatibility with the DAC best practice. ICIMS must use international standards in the data collection process, such as the OECD purpose codes for development sectors<sup>17</sup> and the ISO codes for data fields such as dates, currencies, etc.
2. Linking the ICIMS with existing portals in order to make information available for international cooperation partners. The linkage of the ICIMS with the Development Gateway is particularly important. The project team will endeavor partnering with the WB Development Gateway to develop Syria's own Gateway. An assessment and necessary actions will be taken to establish connection between ICIMS and DevInfo.
  3. Reviewing the data collection tools (questionnaires, forms or spreadsheets) and the communication channels between ICD and the donors and ICD and the rest of the Government to ensure more regular inputs and reliable data. Data collection must be jointly conducted by both donors and partner governments.
  4. Establishing the informative, communication and technical grounds to ensure that reports based on ICIMS data are comprehensive and have a great impact, especially in the field of policy planning:
    - ICD to monitor of the place of Syria in different international classifications in order to ensure the right visibility of Syria in the donor community maps.
    - Creating communication channels with planning and decision support units as well as think tanks, at central and local levels. These include the Decision Unit Centre at the Prime Minister's Office, as well as with the teams drafting the NHDR and the National MDGR.
    - SPC website to be expanded to host ICD Reports.

The Project will provide the necessary IT technical expertise to upgrade the database. The Project team will help with the assessment and improvement of the data collection and reporting tools and establishing the necessary communication channels with the different stakeholders mentioned.

Besides recording aid activities, aid information management systems have proven to be extremely useful in planning and decision making. For this, it is advisable to enhance the aid information management system as to link it to the budget process<sup>18</sup>. A new generation of aid management system is now profiling on the horizon, where tighter, financial-level interface with the national budget will bring them closer and integrate them to the public finance management

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<sup>17</sup> In the OECD DAC/Creditor Reporting System (CRS), data on the sector of destination are recorded using 5-digit purpose codes. The first three digits refer to the corresponding DAC5 sector or category. Each CRS code belongs to one and only one DAC5 category. The last two digits of the CRS purpose code are sequential and not hierarchical, i.e. each CRS code stands for itself and can be selected individually or grouped to create sub-sectors.

<sup>18</sup> OECD/DAC Working Party on aid effectiveness Room document 6, "Role of aid Information Management Systems in Implementing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness at the Country Level", Gabriel Accascina, Aidan Cox, Jörg Nadoll, Dasa Silovic, Brian Hammond and Rudolphe Petras, July 2006

family of applications<sup>19</sup>. Direct interaction with the national budget is seen as important as comprehensive support to the planning cycle and to public investment programmes compilation. A study will be carried out to assess the feasibility, need and constraints to establish such an interface between ICIMS and public financial management system.

An additional instrument to strengthen the information management system at ICD/SPC is the **archive**. At the moment, papers, documents and correspondence relating to international cooperation partners and donors are scattered. This makes it difficult to process rapidly some requests and to follow up donor agreements' implementation.

The Project will help the ICD to organize and maintain an effective archiving system using international filing system and establishing connection with the ICIMS. The system will be based on paper, first; then a digitalization process may take place, starting with the most important and relevant documents, which may be accessible from the ICIMS database.

## **2.2 Government-Donors dialogue further institutionalized and strengthened**

The quality and the value of any aid information and management system relies on the level of dialogue between the government and donors and on their policies and good practices. Open dialogue reinforces mutual accountability and the alignment and harmonization process, while strengthening relations between the two parties.

At the last Coordination Forum in December 2005, the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs expressed his willingness to establish, beside the Syrian Coordination Forum, some sectoral round tables. Both processes aim to foster policy dialogue between governments and their development partners, with the goal of reaching realistic agreements on development policies and strategies, and defining the level and type of required external support. These dialogue mechanisms will bring more understanding and cohesion among donors (harmonization) and in relation to the government (alignment). According to the Paris Declaration, these processes should also involve the civil society and the private sector.

The Project will support the implementation of the government's policy/strategy on aid coordination which will define the dialogue mechanisms (Forum, Development Assistance Group (DAG), sectoral round tables, technical working groups) and provide technical and logistical assistance for the organisation of the meetings and follow-up with line ministries and the donor community.

In addition, the Project will support the participation of Syrian practitioners in relevant aid effectiveness and harmonization venues and meetings, especially those related to the Paris Declaration, through advice on which events to attend and how to contribute to them.

## **3. [capacity] Capacity building of SPC and line ministries staff for aid effectiveness, coordination and management reinforced**

A comprehensive capacity building programme should be designed and implemented for the ICD staff in priority, but also including other services within SPC that manage projects funded with external aid, as well as the international cooperation services/focal points within each line ministry. The programme design, which will look in both human resources and institutional development, will follow a thorough needs assessment.

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<sup>19</sup> UNDP working paper #2, "Aid management systems standards and good practices", Gabriel Accascina, May 2006

Based on the recommendations of the Directorate of Human Resources and Training at SPC and those of the ICD as well as on the lessons learned of the former UNDP-SPC project (SYR/01/007), the capacity programme may include the following areas:

- **Personal and professional skills** in the fields of protocol, negotiations, communication & presentation, team work and team management, time management, reporting, etc.
- **International development and donor politics**, including project life cycle management (including formulation, analyzing project documents in accordance with the 10<sup>th</sup> FYP priorities, resource mobilization, projects' accounting, monitoring and evaluation) and donors' policies and procedures
- **Issues related to Paris Declaration**, including introduction to Paris Declaration concepts such as harmonization, alignment, leadership, ownership, aid effectiveness, aid coordination, mutual accountability, results based management, and skills for monitoring and reporting on the Paris Declaration indicators.

Specifically on the Paris Declaration, this capacity building programme targeting Government officials will follow an awareness raising campaign for the wider stakeholders' community, including donors, Parliamentarians, local authorities, the civil society and private sector (output 1).

The Project will provide technical assistance and identify highly qualified trainers. Study tours may be organized accordingly to the National Planning Institutes in countries such as Egypt or Tunisia and other relevant places. Efforts will be made to include civil servant trainees (for example students of the National Institute of Public Administration, INA) in the project's training events in order to prepare them to deal with issues of aid and international cooperation. Training events should always serve to raise awareness and the profile of the ICIMS, so that it is more largely used by stakeholders.

The Project will also contribute to **build the capacity of the SPC Directorate of Human Resources and Training**, in order to reinforce the staff capacity to conduct training needs assessment, organise trainings and mobilize resources.

This Project will coordinate with other related UNDP projects<sup>20</sup> and may contribute implementing other related trainings, in the fields of trade policy and instruments, economic and financial policies and instruments, social policy and instruments, private sector development, and planning, as identified by the Directorate of Human Resources and Training at SPC.

## **B. Expected Deliverables and Results:**

The specific deliverables of this project are as follows:

- Thematic preparatory policy papers and three strategies for aid coordination, aid management and aid alignment endorsed by SPC
- Upgraded ICIMS database
- Regular comprehensive and sectoral, factual and analytical reports on the status and impact of international cooperation

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<sup>20</sup> Namely: projects on "Capacity development of the SPC and assistance in the formulation of the FYP" (SYR/05/005), "Technical and logistical support to the implementation of the FYP" (SYR/05/018), "Syria 2025" (SYR/05/015), "Enhance the investment environment" (SYR/05/014), "Towards changing the competitiveness mindset" (SYR/05/006), and the future project on "Support to Syria's trade policy reform and negotiation of trade agreements" (to be signed soon)

- An assessment study and recommendations regarding linking ICIMS to public financial management systems
- A capacity building needs assessment in the fields of international cooperation and aid effectiveness
- A capacity building programme for ICD, SPC and line ministries staff in the fields of project life cycle management, personal and professional skills, economic and financial planning and management, and issues related to the Paris Declaration.
- At least five Syrian trainers trained on the issues related to the Paris Declaration
- At least one study tour for key Government officials focusing on the implementation of the Paris Declaration
- At least 3 seminars on the Paris Declaration to raise awareness of government, the donor community and other stakeholders
- An information kit in Arabic on the Paris Declaration
- One general high-level coordination forum and at least three sectoral technical coordination meetings per year.
- Syria is represented in at least 2 international / regional events on aid effectiveness.

### C. Time Frame

Project activities will be initiated in April 2007 through to April 2009. The attached Strategic Results Framework (please see Part VI) lists the various intended activities that will be undertaken over the project cycle.

## III. Management Arrangements

SPC is designed as the Implementing Partner. The implementing partner will be responsible for the overall implementation of the project and the production of the outputs in accordance with the work plan. It will also be responsible for supervising project staff and consultants in coordination with UNDP, ensuring the proper equipment is in place and coordination of events. The implementing partner will be responsible for providing in kind contribution of office space. Staff of the implementing partner will support the project as part of capacity development requirements. The implementing partner will also be responsible for providing in kind contribution of office space. Staff of the implementing partner will support the project as part of capacity development requirements

### ***Project Board***

The Project Board will be established to generate consensus basis management decisions for the project when guidance is required by the Project Director. Based on the approved annual work plan (AWP), the Project Board reviews and approves project stage plans and authorizes any major deviation from these agreed stage plans. It is the authority that signs off on the completion of each stage plan as well as authorizes the start of the next stage plan. It ensures that required resources are committed and arbitrates any conflicts within the project or negotiates a solution to any problems between the project and external bodies.

In addition, it approves the appointment and responsibilities of the Project Director and the Project Assurance responsibility to the UNDP Country Office.

The Project board will be composed of:

- Representative(s) of the SPC
- Representative(s) of UNDP
- Representative(s) of SDC/Embassy of Switzerland

- The National Project Director

Other stakeholders may be invited on an *ad hoc* basis.

### **Project Management Team**

The project management team will consist of a National Project Director (NPD), who is expected to be specialized in Policy Making and Aid Coordination (Terms of Reference in Annex 4), two output managers in the fields of capacity building and IT would be recruited, Project Assistant, Accountant (TOR to be defined by NPD). International and national consultants supervised by the NPD will undertake part of the project activities, according to the workplan. All staff and other short-term staff hired if needed, will be recruited by UNDP according to its rules and regulations.

City Councils will appoint four Project Assistants (2 in each city, bilingual municipality staff / English and Arabic).

The Project Director has the authority to run the project on a day-to-day basis on behalf of the Project Board within the constraints laid down by the Project Board. The Project Manager is responsible for day-to-day management and decision-making for the project, to ensure that the expected results are achieved to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost, according to the Annual Work Plan.

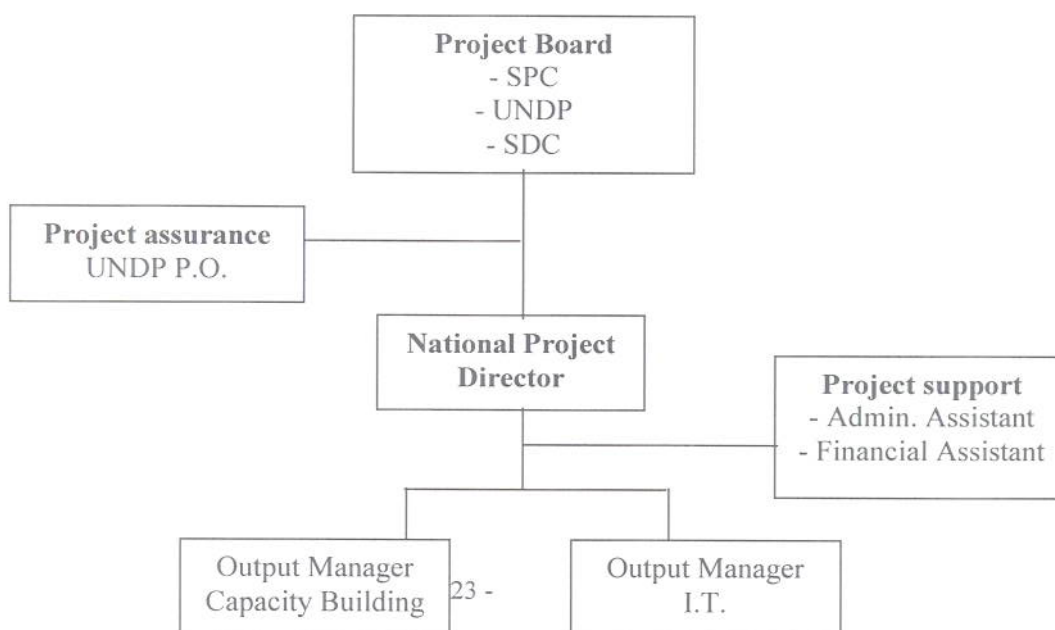
Under the leadership of the Project Director, the project management team prepares Annual Work Plans, Quarterly Work Plans and progress reports, and maintains up-to-date all communication and monitoring plans and logs. The team remains in constant communication with the UNDP team.

### **Project Assurance**

The UNDP Syria Country Office will play the role of project assurance by carrying out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions. This role ensures appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed.

UNDP CO will support the Project by coordinating the activities of AECI and possibly other UN agencies involved in the implementation of the project and ensuring the effective participation of all the concerned parties in order to achieve the desired results. UNDP, through its technical wing UNDP SURF-Arab States, will also play an advisory role and provide technical backstopping and referrals on comparative experiences and lessons learned.

The above project management structure can be illustrated as follows:



## IV. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is a continuous function that aims primarily to provide project stakeholders with early indications of the quality, quantity and timeliness of progress towards delivering intended results, in accordance with the Annual Work Plan.

Monitoring indicators are determined in the project **Communication and Monitoring Plan**. The CMP should articulate the types of communications and associated scheduling required during the project, as well as methods of communications with stakeholders.

In carrying out such monitoring activities, a number of tools are created and updated in different timeframes:

### Within the annual cycle:

**Quality Log:** Progress and quality of the deliverables being produced will be assessed based on the quality criteria established in the indicators and deliverable Description and planned schedule and recorded in the Quality Log. If changes are required, the Deliverable Description and/or schedule will be updated.

**Issues Log:** Any project issues will be recorded in the Issues Log to facilitate tracking and resolution.

**Risks Log:** The Risks Log will be updated by reviewing the external environment that effects the project implementation, and associated risk management plans.

**Annual Work Plan Monitoring Tool:** Together with project issue/ risk logs, a AWP Monitoring Tool should be used for the project review purpose.

**Project Quarterly Progress Report:** Quarterly monitoring progress reports will be submitted by the Project Director to Project Assurance. Such progress reports should form a basis for decisions regarding further disbursement of UNDP resources to the Implementing Partner (SPC).

**Annual Project Report:** APR will be submitted along with the new AWP to the Project Board.

**Lessons Learned Log:** Project lessons learned should be actively captured to ensure ongoing learning and adaptation within the organisation.

Additional reports may be requested, if necessary, during the project.

### Annually:

**Annual Review:** An annual project review will be conducted by the Project Board during the fourth quarter of year as a basis for assessing the performance of the project. Such review is done in the context of the UNDAF Annual Review. This review will involve all key project stakeholders and the Implementing Partner (SPC), and focus on the extent to which progress is being made towards outputs, and that these remain aligned to appropriate outcomes. This review should update output targets and results achieved.

An independent (external) evaluation will be conducted at the end of the project.

### ***Risks and opportunities:***

Successful implementation of this national project will depend in large part on establishing close and collaborative working partnerships between SPC/ICD and the different line ministries, as



well as with the donor community. Success is also very much linked with the appropriate availability of human resources in the ICD and the progress of the SPC structure revision. In terms of capacity building,

Risks Associated with implementation can be identified as follows:

- Operational: the processes of recruitment and procurement are time consuming and may cause delays in implementation.
- Organizational: special efforts will need to be made to coordinate closely with other stakeholders involved in capacity building at SPC and line ministries.
- Political: delays in defining the policy framework will negatively impact the impact some project activities.
- Human resources: there may be some problems to identify national experts on certain issues, especially regarding the Paris Declaration.

## V. Legal Context

This project document shall be the instrument referred to as such in Article 1 of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement between the Government of Syrian Arab Republic (S.A.R.) and the United Nations Development Programme, signed by the parties on 12 March 1981. The host-country implementing unit shall, for the purpose of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement, refer to the government cooperating agency described in that agreement.

The following types of revisions may be made to this project document with the signature of the UNDP Resident Representative only, provided he has assured that the other signatories of the project document have no objections to the proposed changes:

- Revisions in, or additions of, any of the annexes of the project document; and
- Revisions, which do not involve significant changes in the immediate objectives, outputs or activities of the project, but are necessitated by the rearrangement of inputs already agreed to, or by cost increases due to inflation; and mandatory annual revisions, which re-phase the delivery of agreed project inputs or expert or other costs due to inflation or take into account expenditure flexibility.

If major changes (whether to increase or limit the project) are needed then a Substantive Revision Document will be prepared detailing the changes and all their implications. The Substantive Revision Document needs to be signed by all parties to the original project document.

## VI. Strategic Results and Resources Framework Matrix

<b><i>Intended Outcome:</i></b> Policy and decision-making supported by quality information and analyses, especially in the fields of aid and international cooperation			
<b><i>Outcome Indicator:</i></b> Dimensions of aid and international cooperation integrated in public policies			
<b><i>Applicable MYFF Strategic Area of Support:</i></b> 2.1 Policy support for democratic governance			
<b><i>Intended Outputs</i></b>	<b><i>Output Indicators</i></b>	<b><i>Indicative Activities</i></b>	<b><i>Inputs</i></b>
<b>1. Policy framework for greater aid effectiveness in Syria strengthened</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Senior officials and government staff involved in international cooperation matters familiarized with the Paris Declaration</li> </ul>	<p><b>Awareness raising campaign on the Paris Declaration and the impact on Syria:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organisation of three informative seminars with government, donors, parliamentarians, local authorities, civil society and private sector, in Damascus and in governorates</li> <li>2. Production of an information kit in Arabic on the Paris Declaration in the Syrian context</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNDP CO</li> <li>The project team and team members of SPC</li> <li>National consultant: US\$ 3,000 (40 working days)</li> <li>Translation and Publication costs: US\$ 10,000</li> <li>workshop costs: 3* 5,000= US\$ 15,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-total: US\$ 28,000</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policies on aid coordination, aid management and aid alignment (strategy for the implementation of the Paris Declaration) adopted and implemented (B: strategy outline; T: implementation plan adopted)</li> </ul>	<p><b>New policies related to aid coordination and management developed:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Policy needs assessment</li> <li>2. Technical and legal assistance to policy formulation</li> <li>3. Study tours abroad (Arab region) for government officials on policy regarding the implementation of the Paris Declaration and donor coordination/dialogue mechanisms.</li> <li>4. Meetings between ICD and focal points/units for international cooperation in line ministries to discuss policies and implementation strategy at mid-management and senior levels</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNDP CO</li> <li>The project team and team</li> <li>Sub-regional joint initiative</li> <li>International consultant : 500*40 working days=US\$ 20,000</li> <li>Travel expenses for intl const: US\$ 1,100</li> <li>Travel expenses for study tours: US\$ 20,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-total: US\$ 41,100</b></p>
<b>Policy</b>			<b>Total: US\$ 69,100</b>

<p><b>2. Upgraded and sustainable instruments in place for coordinating and managing international cooperation partners' assistance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ICIMS reflecting international standards and best practice</li> <li>• ICIMS linked to external portals (B: 0; T:2)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Systems for aid monitoring and management reinforced:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Upgrading of the functionality and features of the existing ICIMS; software programming</li> <li>2. Assessment study and action plan to develop Syria's own Gateway, in partnership with the WB Development Gateway</li> <li>3. Assessment study and action plan to establish a connection between ICIMS and DevInfo</li> <li>4. Review and improvement of the input data collection tools (questionnaires, forms or spreadsheets)</li> <li>5. Study on adequate system for M&amp;E of international cooperation (introduction of impact assessment of partners)</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project team and team members of SPC</li> <li>• IT output manager</li> <li>• Sub-regional joint initiative</li> <li>• National consultant on M&amp;E: US\$ 1,500</li> <li>• IT equipment: US\$ 4,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-total: US\$ 5,500</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular reports issued on aid management using data from ICIMS database (B:0; T: 2/y)</li> <li>• Official and independent reports and policies using ICIMS generated reports (T: sectoral FYP, NHDR, NMDGR)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Added-value and impact of ICIMS reports maximized especially for policy planning:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitoring mechanism designed and implemented within ICD to track the place of Syria in different international classifications</li> <li>2. Preparation and dissemination of reports</li> <li>3. Promotion and demonstration of ICIMS to government's planning and decision support units, and think tanks, at central and local levels, including the PM Decision Unit Centre, NHDR and National MDGR drafting units</li> <li>4. Creation of a section for ICD reports on SPC website</li> <li>5. Assessment study of feasibility, need and constraints to establish an interface between ICIMS and public financial management system.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project team and team members of SPC</li> <li>• Travel expenses: US\$ 4,500</li> <li>• National consultant for report edition: US\$ 1,500</li> <li>• National consultant for assessment study: US\$ 1,500</li> <li>• Translation and publication costs: US\$ 5,200</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-total: US\$ 12,700</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy access to donor-related official documents for SPC/ICD staff</li> </ul>	<p><b>Archiving and library facility in place at the ICD:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collecting and filing official documents relating to relations with donors, using international filing system and in establishing connection with the ICIMS</li> <li>2. Digitalizing most important documents and integrating in ICIMS</li> <li>3. Acquiring essential reference books and documents, and subscription to useful databases</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNDP CO</li> <li>• The project team and team members of SPC</li> <li>• IT output manager</li> <li>• Interns</li> <li>• Books, doc and database costs: US\$ 5,000</li> <li>• Archiving space and adequate furniture US\$ 3,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-total: US\$ 8,000</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainable dialogue &amp; coordination mechanisms in use (B: inconsistent coordination forum; T: 2 coordination fora/year + quarterly sectoral round tables)</li> <li>Syria represented in international meetings dealing with new aid environment (B:0; T:2)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Government-Donors dialogue further institutionalized and strengthened:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Technical and logistical assistance for the organisation of the forum and sectoral meetings</li> <li>2. Technical assistance for the meeting follow-up with line ministries and donors</li> <li>3. Creation of an online calendar of upcoming of aid effectiveness and harmonisation venues and meetings, especially those related to the Paris Declaration</li> <li>4. Facilitating the participation of Syrian practitioners</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNDP CO</li> <li>The project team and team members of SPC</li> <li>Administrative support: US\$ 1,000</li> <li>Translation and Publication costs: US\$ 9,333</li> <li>Travel expenses: \$US 25,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-total: US\$ 35,333</b></p>
<b>Instruments</b>			<b>Total: US\$ 61,200</b>

<p><b>3. Capacity building of SPC and line ministries staff in aid effectiveness, coordination and management reinforced</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Better understanding of and confidence in handling international cooperation – related issues from government officials</li> <li>Efficient team dedicated to international cooperation within SPC and focal points in line ministries</li> </ul>	<p><b>Building personal and professional skills: protocol, negotiations, communication &amp; presentation, team work and team management, time management, reporting, evaluation, etc.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formulate training module plans</li> <li>2. Training materials developed</li> <li>3. Identify facilitators/institutions to conduct the training</li> <li>4. Finalize the training material/guides</li> <li>5. Conduct training sessions</li> <li>6. Prepare training evaluation and final report for replication</li> <li>7. Discuss with counterparts institutionalization of training plans.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CB output manager</li> <li>The project team and team members of SPC</li> <li>National trainers: US\$ 3,000</li> <li>Training costs: 5*5,000= US\$ 25,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-total: US\$ 28,000</b></p>
		<p><b>Building knowledge and skills on international development and donor politics: project life cycle management, donors' policies and procedures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formulate training module plans</li> <li>2. Training materials developed</li> <li>3. Identify facilitators/institutions to conduct the training</li> <li>4. Finalize the training material/guides</li> <li>5. Conduct training sessions</li> <li>6. Prepare training evaluation and final report for replication</li> <li>7. Discuss with counterparts institutionalization of training plans.</li> <li>8. Participation in training abroad</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project team and team members of SPC</li> <li>CB output manager</li> <li>Sub-regional joint initiative</li> <li>National trainers: US\$ 3,000</li> <li>Training costs: 6*5,000=US\$ 30,000</li> <li>Training abroad: US\$ 20,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-total: US\$ 53,000</b></p>
		<p><b>Building knowledge and skills on issues related to Paris Declaration (includes training of trainers): ownership, alignment, monitoring and reporting on PD indicators</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Formulate training module plans</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project team and team members of SPC</li> <li>CB output manager</li> <li>Int. consultant: US\$ 500*40 working days= US\$ 20,000</li> </ul>

		<p>(training of trainers and training for officials)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Training materials developed</li> <li>3. Identify international consultant to conduct the training</li> <li>4. Finalize the training material/guides</li> <li>5. Conduct training sessions</li> <li>6. Prepare training evaluation and final report for replication</li> <li>7. Discuss with counterparts institutionalization of training plans.</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel expenses for intl constl: US\$ 2*1,100= US\$ 2,200</li> <li>• Training costs: 5*5,000= US\$ 25,000</li> <li>• Training abroad: US\$ 20,000</li> </ul> <p><b>Sub-total: US\$ 67,200</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Comprehensive Training programme for SPC officials developed and funded</li> </ul>	<p><b>Capacity building for the SPC Directorate of Human Resources and Training in areas of training needs assessment, training organization, resource mobilisation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. On-the-job training and coaching</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project team and team members of SPC</li> <li>• CB output manager</li> <li>• National trainer for coaching staff (6 months P/T): <b>US\$ 4,500</b></li> </ul>
<b>Capacity Building</b>			<b>Total: US\$ 152,700</b>

<b>Activities</b>	<b>US\$ 283,333</b>
<b>Project Management</b> 1 NPD, 1CB output manager, 1IT output manager, 1 admin-fi asst	<b>US\$ 150,000</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>US\$ 433,333</b>

# ANNEXES

## Annex 1: UNDP Syria technical note of the benefits and constraints for Syria endorsing the Paris Declaration (January 2006)

### 1. Background and scope of Paris Declaration

On March 2, 2005, over one hundred countries, from the wealthiest to the poorest, as well as development institutions, signed the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness. By endorsing it, they decided to take far-reaching and monitorable actions to reform the way aid is delivered and managed.

The signers concretize their will by taking some *50 un-prioritized Partnership Commitments*<sup>21</sup> which are expected to reinforce the key drivers of aid effectiveness, namely: *ownership*, or leadership, of the partner countries of the development process, *harmonisation, alignment, and management for results*. They also agreed to implement them in a spirit of *mutual accountability* and to measure progress against *12 specific indicators with targets set for 2010*.

### 2. The Partnership Commitments

The Paris Declaration intends to increase effectiveness of aid, in terms of transparency, accountability and achievement of expected results, through the realization of a series of specific commitments which are either specific – i.e. concerning the partner country or the donor – or common to both parties. *Attention*: Paris Declaration specifies (paragraphs **13 and xxx**) that:

- partnership commitments should be interpreted in line with the specific situation of each country
- indicators and targets are designed to track and encourage progress over time at the global level.

#### 2.1 Main commitments of partner countries

Partner countries will exercise leadership in defining and implementing operational development strategies (indicator 1), including the aid coordination aspect.

In addition, they commit to strengthen their development capacity (ability to plan, manage, monitor evaluate and account for results of policies and programmes), especially public financial management capacity, to reinforce national systems and procedures (with main concern for national procurement systems) and to conduct the associated reforms.

The Paris Declaration stresses *two aspects* of the empowerment process:

- the necessity, for partner countries, to strengthen the parliamentary role in national development strategies and/or budget and to encourage the participation of civil society and private sector (paragraphs 14 & 48)
- the need to translate the national development strategies into prioritized results-oriented operational programs which are integrated into the budgetary process (paragraphs 14 & 44).

#### 2.2 Main commitments of donors

In addition to the general commitment of respecting ownership of the partner country and helping them to strengthen it, several other commitments are agreed in the fields of alignment and harmonization. Donors will distribute aid, according to partner countries' strategy, to government sectors reported in the budget (indicator 3) or - in case of technical cooperation - through coordinated programs (indicator 4). They will do so in strengthening national capacity and systems, especially in the field of financial management and procurement, and in harmonizing their requirements and procedures (indicators 9 and 10). In addition, donors commit to increasingly use national systems and procedures (indicators 5 and 6) and to enhance aid predictability (indicator 7).

#### 2.3 Joint commitments

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<sup>21</sup> For an exhaustive view of the Partnership Commitments and associated indicators and targets, see Annex to this technical note.

Common commitments are mainly related to the monitoring and assessment of aid management; both parties expressing their will to work together to establish mutually agreed frameworks.

#### 2.4 The question of conditionality

The subject is treated in very general terms. Conditions should be “*drawn whenever possible, from the partner national development strategy or its annual review of progress in implementing this strategy. Other conditions would be included only when a sound justification exists...*”<sup>10</sup>. And if donors are allowed to impose different conditions, they should derive them “*from a common streamlined framework...*” (paragraph 16).

### 3. Benefits and risks

#### 3.1 Benefits: promising opportunities

OUTPUTS	ADVANTAGES
<p>Strengthening of partner country's public sector capacity.</p> <p>Greater involvement of Parliament and civil society through application of reinforced consultative process &amp; participatory approaches.</p> <p>Increased utilization of partner country's systems and procedures.</p>	<p>Facilitate implementation of necessary reforms.</p> <p>Encourage sustainability by building a large support in favor of national development strategies &amp; policies.</p> <p>Consolidate them &amp; foster institutional development. In particular, it underscores the budget's role as statement &amp; tool of government policy.</p>
<p>Better alignment and harmonization of procedures at all stages of aid process.</p>	<p>Allow to benefits from the advantages resulting from economies of scale (reduction of transaction costs and of administrative burden supported by partner country, better organization of work between donors...) and increases transparency and efficiency of aid.</p>
<p>Emphasis on achieving the expected results.</p>	<p>Greater efficiency in fund allocation in the overall budget and aid funding.</p>
<p>Better co-ordination of aid between donors and between donors and partners countries.</p>	<p>Create opportunities for streamlining conditions of aid</p> <p>Enhanced transparency and predictability of aid</p>

#### 3.2 Risks/ Reserves

The risks could be assessed in terms of possibility that :

- the benefits of increased aid effectiveness and reduced costs will not be immediate, as it will take time for human and institutional capacity building and better fund allocation to be achieved.
- the multiple processes on harmonisation, alignment, and managing for results generate a growing number of time consuming discussion groups.
- Under special circumstances, the increased negotiation power resulting from improved co-ordination between donors could be use to impose extended conditionality or could result in reduced aid flows' predictability (risk maximum is a collective suspension of funding).



## Annex 2: Concept Note on Aid Management and Coordination in SPC (Exit phase) by Project Team (27/02/2006)

Date: 27 February, 2006

### File Note

**Subject: Aid Management and Coordination in SPC – Exit phase**

Author: Bassel Kaghadou,  
Consultant

#### Background information

- Launch Date: Feb. 2003
- Initial Budget: USD 200 000
- 1st TPR: May 2004
- Budget Revised and new Work Plan approved with budget extension of approx. USD 70.000
- 2<sup>nd</sup> TPR: July 2005
- Budget extension of approx. USD 200 000 to implement additional activities
- (preliminary agreement with the Islamic Development Bank to grant the Syrian government USD 206 000 to be managed by the project to implement additional activities
- End Date: March 2006
- Project overall objective: Support the Syrian Government in its efforts to Strengthen its links with the Donor and International Funding Institutions, thus generating a greater flow of external resources and, an improved use of those resources

#### Implemented activities

- New International Cooperation Department established; directors appointed; desk officers to be nominated
- Revised work flow, strategy formulation process and IC coordination and management mechanisms developed;
- International Cooperation Matrix developed and diffused;
- Framework for communication within SPC and Information sharing requirement identified
- International Cooperation situation analysis launched
- Training programmes are designed; implementation process launched
- International Cooperation Strategy outlines developed, a chapter for international cooperation will be included in the Xth FYP
- Two coordination *FORA* organised with outcomes to empower the process of aid management and coordination capacities in Syria

#### Setbacks

- The initial project document provided rather broad and non concrete objectives. The project team (consultant and UNDP) had to elaborate the work plan in various occasions in order to ensure a positive impact of the project on the performance of international cooperation services.
- The delays in implementation of certain activities, mainly in the areas of training and coaching impacting negatively the project pre-defined implementation activities
- The absence of leadership in SPC International Cooperation in particular and the whole institution in general hindered the implementation of project activities, mainly in the areas of Human Resources development (appointment of Desk Officers) and in the overall business process of the department
- Although the project could be positively assessed in terms of deliverables and impact on the international cooperation capacity in the SPC in general, challenges to ensure its sustainability are still to overcome

### Challenges

- Ensure the right shift of project ownership to the target group by integrating the project outputs into the International Cooperation Department business process
- Ensure the sustainability of the reorganisation process of international cooperation services, the project expected outputs and activities should be approached as one fully integrated part of the overall reform process of the whole institution

The main challenge however consists in designing an exit strategy that would lead to a new project of support to SPC international cooperation efficiency by focusing on the following elements:

- 1- Institutional capacity building of the Human resources concerned with International Cooperation activities programming and implementation.
- 2- Institutional development of the International Cooperation to ensure the aid effectiveness and harmonisation.
- 3- Building information sharing environment within SPC to ensure the right implementation of the revised overall workflow in the institution and to maximise the benefit from the already established ICMIS

### **International Cooperation Strategy**

The newly developed draft international cooperation strategy focuses on two elements:

- A- Support the creation of enabling environment to place Syria on investment maps (both domestic and foreign) in the region
- B- Support the transfer of knowledge

In order to implement the said strategy, International Cooperation Department at SPC suggested with the support of the project the following policies:

- 2- Strengthen existing relations with IFI and donor Community and, explore new potential international cooperation partners
- 3- Empower monitoring and evaluation capacities of projects financed with the support of international cooperation partners
- 4- Maximise the impact of external resources on the national development priorities

These three general policies are linked with set of detailed policies and activities to be implemented during the period of the Xth FYP.

### Human resources capacity building

Human resources capacity building should be approached taking into consideration the existing situation analysis of International Cooperation, the suggested policies to implement the above mentioned strategy and the already implemented by the project activities. Human resources development is suggested to focus on the following areas:

4. Training and coaching in the areas of project life cycle management (including formulation, resources mobilisation and implementation)
5. Monitoring and evaluation capacity development
6. Communication and presentation capacity development

The said training and coaching should be diversified according to needs and would vary between formal training, on the job coaching and study tours (a detailed project document is required to address all issues). Furthermore, the target group of this training should be identified not only from within the International Cooperation Department. Other SPC employees concerned with programmes and projects funded with external resources should be included in such training to ensure sustainability and ownership.

#### Aid effectiveness and harmonisation

One major issue negatively impacting the aid effectiveness in Syria consists in the poor absorption capacity of beneficiary institutions. Whereas this poor absorption capacity is due greatly to non serious involvement of beneficiary institutions in the project formulation, other equally important factors significantly affect this poor absorption capacity and could be addressed jointly with SPC International Cooperation services:

- 1- Poor institutional infrastructure to host and implement projects with existing in-house capacity
- 2- Inconsistency of the applied procedures during implementation of project with foreign resources
- 3- The Absence of Syria in all aid effectiveness and aid harmonisation venues leaving international cooperation behind all knowledge of donor community trends

The next phase of the project should primarily address these issues in order to upgrade national institutions absorption capacity (concrete intervention plan is to be included in the project document). On more concrete terms the intervention logic should emphasize on the following elements:

- 1- Initiation of a development assistance group on themes/sectors basis to ensure coordination and adequate management of projects funded by donors.
- 2- Identification of focal points in line ministries, suggest adequate capacity building activities and support the mobilisation of resources from other development partners to co-finance the suggested training programmes.
- 3- Building on the outcomes and recommendations formulated during the last Coordination Forum, support the SPC capacity in developing and implementing aid coordination and harmonisation mechanisms that reflect best practices in the area.
- 4- Link the existing International Cooperation Management Information System with existing portals in order to make information available for international cooperation partners. The linkage of the ICMIS with the Development Gateway is particularly important. The project team should be ideally capable of generating a joint project with the WB Development Gateway to develop Syria's own Gateway.
- 5- Upgrade the existing ICMIS to generate more reports and include finished projects (the existing system being limited to projects in the pipeline and under implementation). Review the existing sector and coding systems to ensure accuracy and compatibility with the DAC best practices.
- 6- Support the participation of Syrian practitioners in relevant to aid effectiveness and harmonisation venues and meetings. Provide necessary advice on which and how contribute to such events.
- 7- Ensure the right visibility of Syria in the donor community maps by following up the place of Syria in different international classifications and by publishing regular bulletins reporting the status of International Cooperation in Syria.

#### Creation of Information Flow environment

Finalise work plan as suggested in the agreement with the Islamic Development Bank.

#### **Estimated budget and duration**

The budget of the project should be of approx. USD 300 000 to be mobilised from the government and the UNDP. Additional activities could be ideally funded with the support of other development partners. The project should be able to deliver required results after 24 months.

## Annex 3: Notes of the TPR of Support to the Aid Management and Coordination in Syria (27/02/2006)

### Tripartite Review Meeting of Project SYR/01/007 – Support to Aid Management and Coordination in Syria

#### Names of Participants:

##### A. State Planning Commission:

Dr. Talal Bakfalouni	Deputy Head of State Planning Commission
Mr. Nadir Shiekh Ali	International Cooperation Department
Mr. Mouhsin Smindar	Cooperation with International Organizations Dept.
Mr. Tarek Safar	SPC
Ms. Nibal Sheikhabzof	SPC

##### B. United Nations Development Programme:

Ms. Fumiko Fukuoka	Deputy Resident Representative
Mr. Ghimar Deeb	Governance Team Leader
Ms. Arwa Miftah	Programme Assistant

##### C. Project Management:

Ms. Ghada Taghlibi	National Project Director
Mr. Bassel Kaghadou	National Consultant
Ms. Banan Kiki	Aid Management and Coordination Unit (AMIS)
Ms. Ruba Khanji	Aid Management and Coordination Unit (AMIS)

## TRIPITITE REVIEW MEETING REPORT

### **I. Development after the 2<sup>nd</sup> TPR of June 2005**

- This is the third TPR organized for this project.
- Upon the second TPR, the evaluators agreed on 6 month extension of the project duration resources and on the revision of its overall and annual work plans.
- The project played crucial role in supporting reforms in SPC by providing case studies for institution building and reorganization. In addition, the project contributed in placing the UNDP in the core of the process of administrative reform in the country.
- State Planning Commission has the principal responsibility for coordination of aid programs/ projects distributed and managed among different ministries and itself on the basis of national strategies and priorities, using all types of external assistance including ones provided by other multilateral organizations to integrate effectively into its development process. Meanwhile, to ensure effectiveness, the project team will start by one ministry.

The Project Team identifies the concrete objectives at the end of the project as the following:

- Formulate aid coordination strategy that reflects national development priorities
- Develop aid coordination policies to ensure effective aid management of the resources.
- Set-up necessary structures to manage and monitor implementation of aid management and coordination activities

- Develop and maintain an Aid Management Information System (Develop database to receive the information from other ministries).

#### **Donor Meetings:**

One donor meeting was organized during the period covered by the report:

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Syria coordination forum organized with the support of the UNDP. The Forum organized on high political level of all donors (existing and potential). The X<sup>th</sup> FYP was presented during the session with the active support of a “UNDP” project: “Support to the Preparation of the FYP”.

#### **Situation Analysis:**

The project director addressed that there is no solid program for monitoring and identifying data resources to review the work flow in the international cooperation department at SPC. The project consultant presented a problem tree analysis (of international cooperation department), according to which, the project concrete objectives were developed (see page 14). In more concrete terms, the core problems facing International Cooperation revolves around the poor Integration of aid programs into National Development Priorities.

The following reasons were identified:

- Absence of Concrete Aid Management and Coordination Strategy
  - No clear definition of the role of SPC in aid management and coordination process
  - Inadequate organization of aid management and coordination services
- Poor impact of Human Resources
  - Lack of commitment.
  - Poor professional skills (lack of training and orientation for the new comers).

Based on the problem tree analysis, the consultant explained key interventions as follows:

- Support the development of concrete international cooperation strategy: to define *The profile and size of External Resources*
- Support the development of efficient policies to ensure the best use of external resources: to reorganize the *Structures and mechanisms to manage External Resources*

## **II. Conclusions of the Review**

### **① Project Activities:**

Reform of International Cooperation services through modernizing the Directorate of the International Cooperation Department at SPC, by (i) elaborating adequate mechanisms to efficiently coordinate management of aid resources with both the donors community and the stakeholders and, (ii) reviewing the business process (and related workflows and the structures) of International Cooperation Department. Efficient and modernized international cooperation functions and services will positively impact the implementation of the National Development Strategy by the government. The National Project Director provided an overview of the conducted activities of the project during the reporting period and summarized intervention on three levels:

- Policy level
- Institution level
- Human resources level
- Policy level
  - Support the definition of revised international cooperation strategy formulation cycle.
  - Support the development of International Cooperation Strategy
  - Support the development of revised coordination and management policies & mechanisms of external resources
- The Institution
  - Support the definition of the role and key functions of International Cooperation in SPC

- The development of revised work flow for International Cooperation services (involving relations with other departments at SPC especially Macro-Economic) and thereafter,
- The design of new organization structure to ensure an efficient management of programs funded with external resources
- Support the development of a corporate image of SPC
- Human Resources
  - The development of human resources training needs requirements
  - The development and implementation of human resources training program
- Other Activities
  - Support the process of the overall re-engineering of SPC.
  - Support SPC in the preparation of the X<sup>th</sup> FYP - international cooperation chapter (help in introducing chapters on international coordination strategy into the Xth FYP ).

## ② Project Achievements:

It is necessary to highlight the fact that not all activities were fully implemented due to the elements exposed in details in the setbacks points. However, the project produced several outputs in line with its intervention logic (as explained above):

- Policy
  - International Cooperation Management Information System developed
  - International Cooperation Matrix developed and diffused
  - International Cooperation strategy developed and reflected in the Xth FYP
  - Aid Coordination mechanisms developed
  - Dialogue with International Cooperation partners launched
- Institution
  - New role and functions of International Cooperation services developed
  - New International Cooperation Department established which helped in avoiding the overlapping at the department.
  - Job descriptions for staff members developed
  - Revised business process developed; Internal work flow identified
  - Framework of communication within SPC and Information sharing requirement identified
  - The development of [www.planning.gov.sy](http://www.planning.gov.sy)
- Human resources
  - Training program implemented:
    - Basic professional training
    - Advanced professional skills training for directors and technical personnel implemented
- Other achievements
  - The project offered spectacular example of genuine donor coordination with other existing in SPC donor funded projects
  - Project played crucial role in supporting reforms in SPC by providing case studies for institution building and reorganisation
  - The project contributed in placing the UNDP in the core of the process of administrative reform in the Country

## ③ Project setbacks:

The project team highlighted the fact that the project outputs were not fully integrated into the regular workflow of the department of International Cooperation. Such setback draw its origins to the fact that the re-organization process of SPC is unfinished.

The major setbacks that affected the achievement of the project activities consisted in the following areas:

- The poor integration of the project outputs into the International Cooperation Department business process. The initial project document provided rather broad and non-concrete objectives. Re-elaboration of the work plan in various occasions was required
- The SPC reorganization process marked delays in implementing newly defined structures negatively impacted the full implementation of project activities, mainly in the areas of human resources development and in the introduction of the redefined overall business process in the department of International Cooperation. The international cooperation department can't bring more desk officers from other departments because the reorganization is still in the process of development.
- The delays in implementing certain activities, mainly in the areas of training and coaching negatively impacted the achievement of some of the project results. Some training delays occur because of the delay in procurement process and budgeting.
- The project management team was not fully familiar with the reviewed rules and regulations for procurement operations as applied by UNDP Office in Damascus. This element contributed to the delays of certain procurement activities programmed by the project. Therefore, the project consultant suggested that UNDP should tailor trainings on Atlas system, budget and financial issues to the project's management team.
- The market of national consultants and/or experts in areas related to aid management and coordination is rather limited. The project management encountered difficulties in identifying such consultants. The absence of such service negatively impacted the achievement of certain project planned results.

#### ④ **Project challenges:**

From the beginning, the project was facing many challenges to be fully achieved and executed. These challenges are:

- Institutional development of the international cooperation services to ensure right aid effectiveness and harmonisation
- Institutional capacity building of the human resources in international cooperation activities programming and implementation
- Building information sharing environment within SPC to ensure the right implementation of the revised overall workflow in the institution and to maximise the benefit from the already established ICNIS

### III. **Recommendations**

To resolve the problems and the issues that face the affective aid management as articulated in the previous section, several actions were recommended in two areas:

#### - **Relations with donors:**

Strengthen existing relations with donor community and, maximize the impact of external resources on the national development priorities through:

- Identification of development assistance groups with international cooperation partners on thematic basis to ensure the creation of an enabling environment for dialogue
- Support the participation of Syrian practitioners in relevant to aid effectiveness and harmonisation venues and meetings. Provide necessary advice on which and how contribute to such events
- Link the existing international cooperation management information system with existing portals in order to make information available for international cooperation partners
- Ensure the right visibility of Syria in the donor community maps by following up the place of Syria in different international classifications and by publishing regular bulletins reporting the status of International Cooperation in Syria

#### - **Institutional Capacity Building:**



Empower institutional capacities to maximize absorption capacities of beneficiary institutions, Ensure efficient and effective aid management and Empower monitoring and evaluation capacities of projects financed with the support of international cooperation partners through the:

- Identification of focal points in line ministries, suggest adequate capacity building activities and support the mobilisation of resources from other development partners to co-finance the suggested training programmes
- Training and coaching in the areas of project life cycle management (including formulation, resources mobilisation and implementation)
- Capacity development in the areas of monitoring and evaluation
- Communication and presentation capacity development

#### **IV. Remaining Activities**

The project will be completed as planned at end March 2006. The following are the remaining activities that will be achieved in the remaining period:

- Finalize the agreement with the Islamic Development Bank providing technical assistance to develop an ICT infrastructure to SPC (the agreement is already signed).
- Finalize the manuals of preparation and follow up of joint committees. (by NPD)
- Finalize the manual of work for international training courses and grants. Develop a web based format and applications for candidates. (by NPD)
- Continuous upgrade of ICMIS and SPC Web Site.
- Finalize the ongoing directors' training programme.
- Formulate a new project document with new objectives. A consultant will be recruited during March to formulate a new project document in close consultation with SPC.
- SPC will revert back to UNDP with comments to be done on the proposed concept note as a basis of drafting a new project document.

#### **V. Thoughts for future (Work plan)**

See attached Concept Note prepared in collaboration between SPC and UNDP.

## Annex 4: Terms of Reference of the National Project Director

### I. Background:

The project on enhancing aid coordination and effectiveness in Syria aims at building the capacity of the State Planning Commission in its coordination role and in playing a catalyst role in promoting Syria's interactions and initiatives within the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness. It has three components respectively focusing on policy frameworks, instruments and tools, and capacity building.

### II. Objective:

The National Project Director (NPD), working in close cooperation with the SPC (the implementing partner) and UNDP, is responsible for the delivery of the project outputs as per the Project Document and in accordance with UNDP rules and regulations.

### III. Responsibilities:

#### 1) Overall responsibilities:

- a) Assume overall responsibility for the successful execution and implementation of the project towards achieving the outputs as per the Project Document.
- b) Represent the project at Steering Committee Meetings and Tripartite Reviews.
- c) Ensure the adherence of project activities to the approved project work plan.
- d) Ensure the proper use of project resources.
- e) Ensure that UNDP rules and regulations for nationally executed projects are implemented in all project activities, including procurement and recruitment.
- f) Represent the national executing agency at project and annual reviews.
- g) Support resource mobilization efforts to increase resources in cases where additional outputs are required;

The National Project Director will be assisted by a two Output Managers (capacity building and IT) in fulfilling the following responsibilities:

#### 2) Management:

- a) Supervise the work of the Output Managers, project team, consultants, and sub-contractors.
- b) Manage the project's financial resources to achieve the completion of project outputs.
- c) Manage the project's material resources, ensuring that vehicles, office equipment, furniture, etc are properly maintained and used correctly for implementation of project activities.
- d) Ensure that the required work plan is prepared and updated in consultation and agreement with UNDP and distributed to the Government (Counterpart Ministry).
- e) Initiate and administer the mobilization of project inputs under the responsibility of the Implementing Partner.
- f) Support to media/communications work of the project;
- g) Ensure that UNDP is invited to all stakeholder meetings.

#### 3) Technical:

- a) Identify and locate, in consultation with UNDP, the services needed to move the project along, and prepare terms of reference and contracts according to UNDP authorized procedures.
- b) Arrange, in consultation with UNDP, the recruitment of project professional and support staff in line with approved recruitment processes.
- c) Prepare annual and detailed quarterly work plans;

- d) Obtain approval from UNDP on annual and quarterly work plans during their preparation and present the final work plans to the Project Steering Committee for approval.
- e) Prepare papers for the project steering committee.
- f) Prepare funding proposals if required.
- g) Draft technical and other documents as required.
- h) Share with UNDP draft document and outputs for comments, as well as final products.
- i) Develop mechanisms for updating stakeholders on progress of project.
- j) Participate in all project meetings and annual reviews.

#### 4) **Facilitation:**

- a) Ensure that UNDP's name is mentioned in all publications, workshops, and project's activities;
- b) Serve as the focal point of the project for coordination of the project activities with UNDP, the Government (including SPC) and other partners on behalf of the project.
- c) Ensure that the Government inputs for the project are available;
- d) Liaise with the UNDP Programme Officer on weekly basis to ensure proper monitoring and realization of results.
- e) Liaise with UNDP staff to organize the annual review, evaluation missions and project visits.
- f) Liaise with various stakeholders (academic, media, government, donors, etc).
- g) Lead efforts to build partnerships for the support of outcomes indicated in the project document.
- h) Support resource mobilization efforts to increase resources in cases where additional outputs and outcomes are required.

#### 5) **Financial**

- a) Act on behalf of the executing agency in preparing and adjusting commitments and expenditures.
- b) Act as the sole authorizing officer for all project financial transactions (i.e. approve all financial expenditures and sign all direct payments.)
- c) Authorize commitments of resources and expenditures for inputs including staff, consultants, goods and services and training
- d) Hold Responsibility for delivery of project's services and achieving annual financial delivery targets;
- e) Manage the project resources e.g. vehicles, office equipment, furniture and stationery procured under the project and maintain asset register;
- f) Ensure that appropriate accounting records are kept and organized;
- g) Facilitate and cooperate with audit requirements at all times, as required.

#### 6) **Reporting**

- a) Progress towards achieving outputs :
  - Quarterly reports of progress on project activities for each of the activities listed for that quarter in the annual and quarterly workplans.'
  - Annual project reports (APRs).
  - A Terminal Report at the end of the project, in the approved UNDP format.
  - Technical, policy and briefing papers as requested by UNDP and the executing agency.
  - Any reports requested by UNDP for the TPR meeting (Tripartite Review).
- b) Financial reporting:
  - Quarterly financial reports, in the approved UNDP format.
  - Annual financial reports, in the approved UNDP format.
  - Final financial report at the end of the project, in the approved UNDP format.

**IV. Reporting Line:**

Contractually to the UNDP Resident Representative and technically to both UNDP and the State Planning Commission.

**V. Evaluation:**

The renewal of contract will be based on satisfactory midterm and final performance evaluation by UNDP and the executing agency.

**VI. Duration of Contract:** Annual contract, subject to confirmation after three months.

**VII: Qualifications:**

The NPD should be a Syrian National with

- at least 10 years management experience, including 5 years experience managing policy oriented projects;
- management experiences should preferably be in development work or at least in working with governments of developing countries;
- experience in managing projects with a strong IT and/or capacity building component highly desirable;
- a higher university degree in humanities, development studies or international relations, preferably from a reputable overseas university;
- and have excellent spoken and written English, in addition to Arabic.

**VIII: Salary:**

The salary will be based on UNDP salary scales.