



ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT RESULTS EVALUATION OF UNDP CONTRIBUTION UNITED ARAB EMIRATES



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ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT RESULTS **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES** EVALUATION OF UNDP CONTRIBUTION

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ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT RESULTS: EVALUATION OF UNDP CONTRIBUTION – UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

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FOREWORD

As a core area of the work of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Evaluation Office (EO), an Assessment of Development Results (ADR) seeks to independently and systematically assess progress around key initiatives in countries that receive UNDP support. This ADR is the 69th EO evaluation, and the 9th conducted within Arab States. This is the first ADR conducted in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), taking place close to the end of the current 2008–2012 programming cycle.

In 1999, the UNDP Executive Board recognized the importance of UNDP support to net contributor countries in their pursuit of the objectives of sustainable human development. Since then, UNDP has been providing a range of development services to 69 middle- and high-income countries, including 46 net contributor countries. There are five net contributing countries in the Arab States region: Bahrain, Kuwait, Libya, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. The UNDP-UAE relationship is, therefore, structured around the UNDP definition of a net contributor country, which implies that the UAE government finances all programmes UNDP undertakes. The ADR examines how well UNDP responded to development priorities in the context of a net contributor and high-income country.

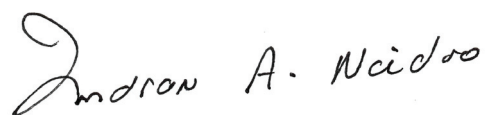
This evaluation found that the UNDP role over the past eight years has been relatively uniform, with the main focus on providing institutional and human resource development services required by the government. The country's net contributor status means that the UNDP programme responds to government agencies' demand for services. While policy engagement varied over the years, the evaluation found that UNDP programme strategies can be better adapted to respond to UAE development priorities.

The evaluation also raises important issues for UNDP programming in net contributing and high-income countries such as the UAE. Some of the issues discussed include: the framework that should guide substantive programme content; operational policies in net contributing countries; constraints in mobilizing resources; and the need for broader partnership strategies.

The evaluation concludes that continued UNDP presence in the UAE necessitates securing focused development partnerships and developing a medium-term programme strategy that aims at a more substantive engagement in the country's development discourse. In addition, the country programme should focus on addressing the human development disparity between the northern and southern emirates.

The evaluation recommends that UNDP leverage its organizational strength to strategically engage in key development issues and to further global development partnerships. UNDP needs to make a strong commitment to support northern emirates in addressing their development priorities, particularly by contributing to ongoing government efforts to bridge the developmental gap among the emirates.

It is our hope that this evaluation will help UNDP further leverage its strategic partnership with the Government of United Arab Emirates.



Indran A. Naidoo
Director, Evaluation Office

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	Assessment of Development Results
CO ₂	Carbon dioxide
GDP	Gross domestic product
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NIM	National Implementation Modality
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Evaluation Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducted an independent country-level evaluation in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Assessment of Development Results (ADR) analysed the UNDP role and contributions to development results in the UAE between 2002 and mid-2011. This period includes the previous (2002–2006) and the ongoing (2008–2012) UNDP country programmes. The ADR assesses the effectiveness of the UNDP strategy to facilitate and leverage national efforts to achieve development results and makes forward-looking recommendations for the next country programme.

The ADR assessed UNDP contributions to national efforts that addressed development challenges that encompass the social, economic and governance spheres, examining key intended and unintended outcomes of the UNDP programme. The evaluation included an analysis of the UNDP role and contributions to development efforts in the UAE through its programme outcomes and adopted strategies. This entailed systematic analyses of the UNDP place within the country's development and policy space, and of the strategies and approaches UNDP adopted to maximize its contributions. For each component, the evaluation used a set of evaluation criteria and a set of questions that are fundamental to assessing contributions to development initiatives and results. UNDP positioning and strategies were analysed from the perspective of the organization's mandate and the country's development priorities.

UNDP PROGRAMME

During the 30 years of UAE-UNDP cooperation, there have been eight country programmes (including the ongoing programme). Since 1992, the UAE government has funded UNDP country programmes, making the country a full net

contributor. UNDP treats net contributor countries as a separate group, which does not receive a core programme resource allocation but rather depends on funds from the programme country.

UNDP has, over the years, provided the government with services and technical assistance in the areas of institutional and human resource development, and operational and logistics support. Although structured around UNDP programme principles and mandates, the UAE country programme departs from the regular UNDP programming model. The country programmes have largely responded to UAE service needs in diverse areas, at times outside the scope of a typical corporate UNDP programme design.

The ADR reviewed two country programmes, 2002–2006 (extended to 2007) and 2008–2011 (extended to 2012). In both programmes, interventions responded to specific requests for UNDP services. UNDP also aimed to strengthen human and institutional capacities and to include policy advocacy as part of its technical cooperation with the government. The country programmes envisaged working with regional and subregional partners in the areas of governance, information and communication technology, HIV and AIDS, and gender. For its offices in least developed and crisis-affected countries, UNDP also mobilized resources from various UAE charity foundations.

The 2002–2007 UNDP country programme comprised three programme areas: institutional and human resources development; integration into the global economy; and protection, management and regeneration of natural resources and the environment. Proposed UNDP activities were largely focused on capacity building, policy advice and support to policy formulation, implementation, advocacy and awareness creation. Gender, sustainable governance, information

and communication technology, and knowledge management issues were considered to be cross-cutting. UNDP also intended to enhance policy-makers' access to information on relevant comparative experiences and best practices.

The 2008–2012 country programme had three key components: economic and social development, governance, and the environment. Across the three programme areas, seven outcomes were identified in line with national development priorities and the UNDP mandate. The primary intended services were policy advice and support to decision-making processes; institutional and human capacity development; and advocacy and awareness raising. In this country programme, UNDP aimed to use its global network to enhance government access to South-South cooperation in order to broaden its range of policy options, at both federal and emirate levels.

UNDP has no predetermined programming funds commitment from the government—for either the current programme cycle or annually. Between 2002 and 2007, UNDP received \$12.3 million, or an average of \$4 million per year. For the 2008–2011 programme period, UNDP received \$9.1 million.

FINDINGS

The UNDP position in the UAE is atypical compared to other countries, even within the subregion. National stakeholders value UN agencies for their neutrality and impartiality and have similar views about UNDP. However, there is little institutional memory about UNDP work and contributions to development results. Despite having a programme presence for two decades, UNDP did not capitalize on its accepted neutrality to position itself favourably to further UAE development objectives.

In both country programmes, projects with more substantive engagement have been limited, and UNDP has primarily provided administrative and logistical services. Similarly, in terms

of programme expenditures, the predominant spending is related to projects that are primarily administrative or logistical services. In the ongoing programme, human development reports in the emirates of Sharjah and Abu Dhabi have marginally increased the number of initiatives with more substantive engagement.

There were concerns about timely service delivery and financial reporting. Even the UNDP counterpart agency had misgivings about funding future UNDP operations in the country. In areas where UNDP has organizational expertise (e.g. gender mainstreaming, governance reforms and climate change), the government preferred to work with other agencies or consultancy firms. Several factors contributed to the UNDP inability to respond to service needs in the country. UNDP was short of professional staff who could prepare proposals or could ensure quality of the work of its consultants. For the same reason, the country office could not quickly network and mobilize the required services for the government. Absence of senior national staff who could liaise with the government continues to be a weakness. More importantly, UNDP did not develop partnerships with leading research and policy institutions in order to access expertise that may be required on short notice. It was evident that UNDP capacity to provide services was becoming unsuitable for the UAE level of development.

The uncertainty of its role and lack of long-term planning undermined UNDP strategic positioning. In the past five years, there have been significant decreases in the number of activities that involved UNDP substantive input. UNDP faced severe limitations in leveraging service-related interventions for a more strategic role in policy support and in strengthening institutions and human resources. UNDP lacked a structured approach to addressing service needs and engaging a wide range of government institutions.

In most other net contributor countries, UN and UNDP have maintained relevance due to the countries' regional aspirations (e.g.

EU accession or Gulf Cooperation Council integration processes). However, this does not seem to be the case of UNDP in the UAE.

Lack of visibility of either UNDP or its activities among government and other national stakeholders was evident from evaluation discussions. Even those who worked with UNDP were only aware of the activities they were directly involved with and were uncertain of the overall UNDP mandate or activities in the country. Many stakeholders were entirely unaware that UNDP still operated in the country. While there has been some improvement in visibility over the past year, it has not significantly changed the poor understanding of UNDP work and mandate. The few stakeholders who were familiar with UNDP construed the absence of core resources to represent a lack of interest in the country's development discourse. UNDP has not been successful in communicating its role in the net contributor country context.

UNDP did not establish partnerships with northern emirates, which have greater need for development services and support. In instances where official memorandums of understanding and agreements were established, much of what was promised or expected under these agreements was not fulfilled.

UNDP has also been detached from international and regional discourse in the UAE. The increasing UAE role in development and humanitarian aid focuses on both bilateral and multilateral aid. The UAE has made many efforts to systematize its aid. The UNDP role could have been important in facilitating cooperation with the global South, particularly in Africa and Asia.

UNDP also lacked the capacity for long-term and sustained engagement in the key areas of energy, environment and climate change, governance support to the northern emirates, public administration and gender equality. Further, country-office capacities did not allow regular high-level dialogue with government agencies.

A significant intervention in the ongoing programme is the Sharjah Human Development Report and the support to the human development report in Abu Dhabi. There were indications that emirate-level human development reports have generated interest, leading to an increase in the probability of producing a national human development report.

In many ways, the human development report is a flagship activity of UNDP UAE. The rigour of the Sharjah report had scope for improvement. The ADR noted that a high-quality Abu Dhabi human development report will also allay cynicism among some government representatives regarding the reports' usefulness. Better synergies with other UNDP initiatives, such as the Arab Knowledge Report project, were found to be needed, particularly for the human development reports initiative. This was not only essential for using the data collected for the Arab Knowledge Report and vice versa, but also for including topical issues in the human development report.

A significant component of UAE development aid supports Millennium Development Goals (MDG) achievement efforts in least developed and in-crisis countries. While some resources have been mobilized for programme support in other countries, comprehensive UNDP engagement was not evident.

The UNDP MDG mandate and its extensive presence in more than 135 countries has broad appeal and makes it an appropriate agency to be involved in development aid issues. However, UNDP has been ineffective in leveraging this organizational advantage.

The UAE has supported achieving the MDGs as a determining factor for maintaining world peace, security and prosperity. The government strongly believes that achieving the MDGs will require an effective global partnership within the framework of the recommendations of the Millennium Declaration and other conferences on development, particularly the Monterrey Consensus and

the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development. UAE development stakeholders were of the view that the UNDP MDG mandate placed it in an advantageous position to collaborate with the government in these areas, but UNDP failed to leverage this organizational strength. UNDP did not use an appropriate strategy to engage on the broader MDG agenda and missed opportunities to support UAE further its commitment to support global achievement of the MDGs.

UNDP has yet to explore the key development issue of sharing best practices from the UAE with other countries. Government stakeholders held the view that the country has a lot to share with Gulf Cooperation Council members and other countries. There is no systematic approach that identifies UAE best practices for replication in other countries. This is an area in which UNDP can establish a niche, and a concerted effort is needed to devise and enable some type of a system for sharing knowledge.

Resource mobilization was comparatively better in the earlier country programme of two programmes under review. There has been a gradual reduction in the UNDP-mobilized funds, particularly in the ongoing programme. Considering the scale of aid provided by local government and charitable foundations, fund mobilization by UNDP has been weak. UNDP has not been effective in playing the liaison role for mobilizing resources.

UNDP did not have systems in place for structured resource mobilization, coordinating project monitoring or providing periodic reports. The agency also lacked essential communication mechanisms to give visibility to charitable foundations' activities. While it has been contemplated for some time, UNDP has yet to establish a liaison unit for fund mobilization, with a team specifically responsible for coordinating with country offices or for providing periodic reporting and communications briefs.

Systematizing aid processes in the UAE requires UNDP to take a more structured approach to

resource mobilization. UNDP lacked a fund mobilization strategy tailored to Arab States and the region's four top international development and humanitarian assistance donors, which include Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia alongside UAE. Engaging with foundations and the government for resource mobilization is often beyond country-office capacity. For effective fund mobilization, UNDP requires a strategy that unites an effective presentation of UNDP work with systems for monitoring, reporting and communications.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1: An analysis of evaluation findings raises critical questions regarding the relevance of UNDP support in the UAE. The 2007 evaluation of the UNDP role in the net contributing countries of the Arab region noted that UNDP needs to change the approach to programming in the subregion. UNDP took a long time to address this challenge.

Conclusion 2: The programming context of the UAE required UNDP to take a purposeful and strategic approach to addressing the country's development challenges and priorities. It is key to UNDP success that its approach to programming is adapted to the expectations and development requirements of the UAE context and is driven by the UNDP fundamentals of sustainable human development.

Conclusion 3: Building national authorities' confidence in UNDP is the main programming challenge facing the agency. The absence of regular and predictable funding challenged UNDP effectiveness; this lack of predetermined support also constrained more structured programming. UNDP needs to break out of this trap if it is to develop long-term local relationships, contribute to national development and facilitate UAE aspirations to support development in countries where such support is needed and requested.

Conclusion 4: Programme fragmentation of undermined the scope and substance of UNDP

development contributions. A key factor affecting programme coherence was the lack of a clear understanding of the real value added by UNDP and a similar lack of a realistic assessment of the agency's comparative strengths in an increasingly competitive environment. UNDP should be cognizant of both its strengths and limitations, and thus be explicit about what it can and cannot deliver. Weak country-office capacity and the high costs of mobilizing human resources are major constraints on UNDP operations and contributions in the UAE.

Conclusion 5: The UNDP development contribution could have been significantly higher, had it not missed a number of key opportunities—most importantly, the opportunity to support national efforts aimed at strengthening governance, economic prosperity and service delivery in the northern emirates.

Conclusion 6: UNDP did not always demonstrate an understanding of the nature and diversity of UAE development aid. This is essential for UNDP to be able to strengthen global development partnerships.

Conclusion 7: There is immense potential for developing funding partnerships for the UNDP global programme, but UNDP did not leverage its physical presence in the country to develop such partnerships. The lack of a coherent corporate approach to fund mobilization contributed to UNDP underachievement.

Conclusion 8: Country-office staff lacked professional management and leadership, partly as a result of lacking continuity and stability among senior management. The lack of national staff in the country is a major issue, constraining efficiency and sustained engagement with the government and other national stakeholders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Leveraging its organizational strength, UNDP should demonstrate a

strong commitment to strategically engaging on key development issues and to furthering global development partnerships. Responsiveness to UAE expectations to provide services to government agencies is one option, but not necessarily the only option, given the UNDP comparative advantage in substantively responding to diverse country situations.

Recommendation 2: UNDP needs to make a strong commitment to support the northern emirates in addressing their development priorities and to contribute to bridging the developmental gap among the emirates. Specifically, UNDP should support a human development report for the northern emirates and work towards setting up a field presence there, if requested to do so by the emirates.

Recommendation 3: UNDP should strengthen the country office's capacities to fulfil high-quality service needs in the UAE. In addition to the core staff in the country, UNDP should build a network of professionals and use their expertise in delivering effective and timely services. The government's expectations of UNDP include services related to facilitating technical expertise and procurement.

Recommendation 4: UNDP should make it a priority strategic goal to attract and develop an experienced workforce of nationals in the country office, and to take the lead in the research, technical and advisory services that UNDP provides.

Recommendation 5: UNDP should develop a resource mobilization strategy tailored to the UAE. This strategy should include an effective presentation of UNDP work, areas that UNDP can support, and fund management systems for monitoring, reporting and communications.

Recommendation 6: The country office should realistically assess headquarters support, particularly when the UAE needs high-quality professional support at an accelerated pace. UNDP should make concerted efforts to build mutually beneficial and sustained partnerships with local

and regional research and policy institutions whose capabilities can be leveraged to improve UNDP country-office capacities. UNDP should seek opportunities to work together with other UN agencies to recognize comparative advantages of individual agencies and enhance overall UNDP contributions to development results.

Recommendation 7: UNDP should strengthen systems for programme management. This should include establishing clear guidelines for accountability and reporting within the country office and with clients. Engaging in global development partnerships also requires strengthening the country office's media and communications capacities.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

In 2011, the Evaluation Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducted an independent country-level evaluation in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Assessment of Development Results (ADR) analysed the UNDP role and its contributions to development results in UAE between 2002 and mid-2011. This period includes the previous (2002–2006) and the ongoing (2008–2012) UNDP country programmes. The ADR assessed the effectiveness of the UNDP strategy to facilitate and leverage national efforts to achieve development results and makes forward-looking recommendations for the next country programme.

The objectives of the ADR were to:

- Support the UNDP Administrator's accountability function in reporting to the UNDP Executive Board. The ADR will be made available to Executive Board members when the new United Arab Emirates country programme is presented in June 2012;
- Support greater UNDP accountability to national stakeholders and partners in the programme country; and
- Serve as a means of quality assurance for UNDP initiatives at the country level and to contribute to learning at the corporate, regional and country levels. The evaluation is intended to provide inputs to the 2013

UNDP country programme and its role in other United Nations programmes scheduled for the same year.

This is the first ADR conducted in the UAE, taking place towards the end of the current 2008–2012¹ UNDP programme cycle; and the ninth conducted in the Arab States.²

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The ADR assessed UNDP contributions to national efforts that addressed development challenges, encompassing the social, economic and governance spheres. It examined key intended and unintended outcomes of the UNDP programme. The evaluation included an analysis of the UNDP role and its contributions to development efforts in the United Arab Emirates through its programme outcomes, and the strategies UNDP has adopted (see Annex 1 for the ADR terms of reference). For each component, the evaluation used a set of evaluation criteria (see Box 1) and a set of questions that are fundamental to assessing contributions to development initiatives and results (see Annex 2 for the questions used to address each criterion).

The relatively modest scope and nature of substantive UNDP initiatives in UAE, particularly in the past three years, had implications for evaluation methodology, in terms of examining the contribution to development results in the country. Further, several initiatives provided administrative and logistics support,

1 The country programme was originally planned for 2008–2011 but was later extended to 2012.

2 The Evaluation Office has conducted ADRs in the past years in Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

Box 1. Evaluation criteria

Relevance: How relevant is UNDP to the national development challenges and priorities as identified by the government in line with best practices of development? What has been the degree of coherence of the UNDP programme to human development needs, the UNDP mandate, existing country strategies and policies, adequacy of financial/human resources, and according to standards and recognized good practices?

Effectiveness: How effective has UNDP been in achieving its objectives, specifically the outcomes contained in its programming documents, and whether results, positive or negative, intended or unintended, were generated. Did it set in dynamic changes and processes that have potential to contribute to long-term outcomes?

Efficiency: Has UNDP made good use of its financial and human resources? Could it have achieved more with the same resources or made the same contributions with fewer resources? Were there any identified synergies between UNDP initiatives that contributed to reducing costs while supporting results?

Promotion of United Nations values: Did UNDP promote its work from a human development perspective? Is UNDP in particular effectively supporting government efforts to promote strengthening policies, institutions and human resources? To what extent was the UNDP programme designed to appropriately incorporate into each outcome area contributions to the attainment of gender equality? Is UNDP considered capable of providing leadership and contributing to substantive and high-level policy dialogues on human development issues in the country, particularly on potentially sensitive issues?

Sustainability: Have the results to which UNDP contributes been sustainable? What is the probability of continued long-term benefits? Considering the nature of UNDP initiatives in UAE, different dimensions of sustainability were not used in this ADR.

which cannot be evaluated for effectiveness and sustainability. The ADR is aware about the limitations in linking such initiatives to development results in a high-income country such as UAE would have little significance. The analysis therefore primarily focuses on assessing the UNDP role within the context of development progress in the country and intended outcomes as stated in the country programme strategies. Strategies pursued by UNDP were evaluated for their consistency with the needs of the country in achieving development goals.

Analysis of outcomes and the projects (and non-project activities) that contribute to them formed the basis for evaluating the UNDP role and positioning in the UAE development context. Over the eight years being assessed, the programme portfolio comprised 45 projects and 9 non-project activities. UNDP positioning and strategies were analysed from the perspective of the organization's mandate³ and the country's development priorities. This entailed systematic analyses of the UNDP place within the country's

development and policy space, and the strategies and approaches UNDP adopted to maximize its contributions.

The ADR addressed significant cross-cutting factors, including gender equality, capacity development, HIV/AIDS, international cooperation, partnerships, and coordination among United Nations (UN) agencies. Some of these were included in the country programme documents as cross-cutting themes for the respective programme periods.

The evaluation process also identified key areas of contribution and factors that influenced UNDP performance. Key areas include:

- Strengthening human and institutional capacities
- Providing cutting-edge development services
- Promoting gender equality
- Using partnerships for development

3 For the UNDP Strategic Plan, see www.undp.org/execbrd/pdf/dp07-43Rev1.pdf.

- Facilitating informed international development cooperation
- Approaches to UNDP programming in a high-income/net contributor country
- Approaches to strengthening coordinated UN programming in a high income/net contributor country.
- Country programme documents and project documents for completed, ongoing or proposed UNDP projects, including preparatory phase documents, annual reports and financial data;
- Country office reviews of the two country programmes and annual reporting; and
- Independent research reports and academic publications on various subjects about the UAE.

1.2.1 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Evidence was triangulated using different methods and from collecting data from different sources (secondary and primary). Sources included a desk review of available documentation and information and data collected through interviews with key informants. Where information was only available from consultations, the evaluation team sought to corroborate opinions expressed and information given by posing the same questions to more than one interviewee. While collecting evaluative evidence to identify UNDP contributions, the approach adopted by the evaluation includes understanding the nature of UNDP initiatives (what did the interventions do exactly?) and document the nature of 'value addition' by UNDP initiatives (e.g. technical skills and expertise, conceptual frameworks and methods that were not present before).

Because some UNDP projects were in early stages of implementation, it was not always possible to determine their contribution to development results. In such cases, the evaluation team documented observable progress and, given the programme design and measures in place, tried to ascertain the likelihood of achieving the outcome.

In preparation for the ADR, the Evaluation Office identified an initial list of programme-related documents. A full list of key documents reviewed is provided in Annex 3. The following secondary data was reviewed:

- Background documents on the national context, including national strategies and policies prepared by the government and documents prepared by international partners during the period under review;

There was weak institutional memory regarding UNDP activities, their contributions during the previous programme, and cooperation in subsequent years. Poor documentation and reporting of UNDP activities was a challenge to verifying the extent of its contributions. The ADR made efforts to meet a wide range of stakeholders and programme partners to address the limitations pertaining programme documentation and monitoring.

Consultations, chiefly interviews, were held with 75 stakeholders (see Annex 4 for a list of persons met and consulted with), in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ras Al-khaimah, and Ajman. There were a few consultations in Fujairah, and Umm Al-Quwain. The evaluation involved a broad range of stakeholders, including government representatives of ministries and agencies, civil-society organizations, private-sector representatives, United Nations organizations and stakeholders that were not direct UNDP partners. The scoping mission for the evaluation took place during January 2011 and the evaluation data collection was carried out during June to August 2011. The draft report was presented to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Economy in April 2012.

1.2.2 PROCESS

The evaluation process comprised three phases. The preparation phase included the development of the terms of reference and the evaluation design. The Evaluation Office Task Manager carried out the scoping mission, which led to the outlining of the evaluation design. The Evaluation Office then

constituted the evaluation team, which comprised two Evaluation Office members (including the task manager) and a development professional based in Dubai.

The second phase comprised data collection and analysis. Data collection was guided by the evaluation framework. The assessment of programme outcomes enabled the evaluation team to make linkages to the overall development context and to UNDP contributions to national development results. After preliminary data analysis, the evaluation team presented initial observations and findings to the country office.

The third phase comprised further analysis and preparation of the evaluation report. Two external development professionals with considerable evaluation expertise and country, regional experience and understanding of UNDP programming peer reviewed the evaluation report. The final report incorporated comments received from the government, the Regional Bureau for the Arab States and the UNDP country office. The ADR will be presented to the UNDP Executive Board in June 2012.

The following chapter discusses the development context of the UAE to better locate UNDP programme approach and interventions.

Chapter 2

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT: UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

The UAE made significant development progress in the past four decades, achieving strong economic development and political stability. With about 10 percent of the current world reserves of crude oil located in the country, UAE has become a major economic force through investments of its sovereign wealth funds, large companies operating in the region and around the world and tourism. It has taken successful steps to diversify its economy, moving away from an oil-based economy. The UAE is a regional hub for numerous global business firms and hosts a large population of expatriates, which has been growing very rapidly over the past four decades. The UAE population increased from 180,000 in 1968 to 7.5 million in 2010; of which only 20 percent are Emiratis, with an average annual population growth rate of 5.6 percent.⁴

The UAE is a member of the United Nations and the Arab League and has established diplomatic relations with more than 60 countries. UAE enjoys strong and stable relationships with the other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, given the cultural, economic and geopolitical similarities among member countries. Since the Council's establishment in 1981, UAE has been an active member—it has chaired the Council's main meeting sessions and supporting other Council members when needed. The relationship between UAE and OPEC (the Organization for Petroleum and Exporting Countries) dates back to 1966 when Abu Dhabi was a member of the

Organization. When the UAE was established as a federation, OPEC membership was transferred to it automatically.

In the past four decades, the country has achieved significant progress in human development and globalization indicators. This chapter examines areas where UAE has made significant progress and areas where progress has been relatively slow.

2.1 THE POLITICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS

The provisional constitution of the UAE, initiated upon independence in 1971, became permanent in 1996. The Constitution states that the country is a federation of seven Constituent Emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Ras Al-Khaimah, Umm Al-Quwain, and Al-Fujairah; each enjoys economic and administrative sovereignty.⁵ The union is a decentralized federation; local governments in each emirate have the full responsibility of governmental operations and services. The federal government supervises policy-making and provides development support when necessary.

At the federal level, the UAE decision-making structure is split into two executive bodies: the President-led Supreme Council of Rulers, comprised of the rulers of the seven emirates, and the Prime Minister-led Council of Ministers, comprised of appointed ministers. In practice, there is no separation of executive and legislative

4 The National Human Resources Development and Employment Authority – Tanmia, 2010.

5 Before the union, these emirates were autonomous tribal communities, each governed by a ruling family.

power. The Supreme Council and the Council of Ministers hold primary decision-making authority for all federal legislative and policy-making activity. As the highest federal authority, the Supreme Council can initiate policy, review and revoke ministerial law and make any changes it deems fit to the composition of the appointed half of the Federal National Council and the Council of Ministers. The administration of the federal government is carried out by the Council of Ministers (the de facto cabinet). The Council of Ministers is also responsible for formulating the bulk of UAE policies and oversees all federal regulations.⁶

Apart from the Supreme Council and the Council of Ministers, a third actor in the federal decision-making structure is the Federal National Council. The Constitution provides for this semi-legislative body, comprised of 20 ruler-appointed and 20 indirectly elected members for all seven emirates, based on population size. The Federal National Council was conceptualized as a way to incorporate the tradition of consultation or tribal consensus into the government decision-making process and to raise local issues and debate matters of public interest before responsible ministers. Over the years, the Federal National Council has served only an advisory and consultative role. It can discuss or review legislation directly referred to it by the Council of Ministers; its recommendations are then referred back to the relevant minister.⁷

The emirate-level decision making process is similar, but made far more complex by the existence of multiple and often duplicate government departments that conduct day-to-day affairs. The Ruler's Court controls the local government. Most

local governments contain their own departments for economic affairs, finance and other government core functions. The three largest emirates have their own executive councils, headed by the respective rulers and comprised of the heads of local government departments.

Although the current highly decentralized federal system made the unification and independence of the UAE in 1971 possible, it created difficulties in ensuring proper policy coordination, consistency and implementation. It also contributed to developmental gaps between the emirates of the north (Ajman, Ras Al-Khaimah, Al-Fujirah and Umm Al-Quwain) which are resource poor and the rich and well-developed emirates of the south (Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah). This existing development gap among the emirates affects the Federations' ability to obtain greater diversification of its economy, because northern emirates are relatively lagging behind in terms of infrastructure and resources for investment and innovation.⁸ This pattern reflects contributions to the national budget; only Abu Dhabi and Dubai have been the main contributors to the country's federal budget, and consequently hold veto power in the union. The economic resources, and to a great extent economic policies, vary from one emirate to another, as only Abu Dhabi and Dubai contained competitive quantities of oil.⁹

The quality of government institutions and the stability of government-society relations play a significant role in providing an enabling environment for sustainable economic and social development. The governance structure appears to suit the tribal legacy of the UAE and has avoided political upheavals similar to those other Arab nations have recently underwent. According to The World

6 UAE Yearbook 2007; Davidson, Christopher M., 2011, *Power and Politics in the Persian Gulf Monarchies*, London: Columbia University Press; Davidson, Christopher M., 2005, *The United Arab Emirates: A Study in Survival*, Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Press.

7 UAE Yearbook 2007; Davidson, 2011; Davidson, 2005.

8 Shihab, Mohamed, 2001, "Economic Development in the UAE", in *The United Arab Emirates: a New Perspective*, edited by Ibrahim Al Abed and Peter Hellyer, Trident Press, UK.

9 UAE Yearbook 2007.

Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators, the UAE has continued to maintain political stability; its indicator increased from 73 percent in 2000 to 81 percent in 2009—the highest country in the Middle East and North Africa Region (see Table on UAE governance indicators in Annexure 5). The UAE has continued to maintain political stability and control of corruption; its political stability indicator showed improvement in the period 2000–2009. However, indicators for the rule of law and regulatory quality decreased by about 10 percent for the same period. The indicator for government effectiveness remained relatively static.

The government has put in place measures for controlling corruption and enhancing government effectiveness and transparency. According to Transparency International, the UAE ranked 30th out of 180 countries in its Corruption Perception Index—one of the best rankings in the region.¹⁰ Transparency International data shows that freedom from corruption scores improved from 77 percent in 2000 to 79 percent in 2008.

2.1.1 UAE STRATEGIES AND POLICIES

UAE strategic priorities are comprehensive and cover a range of social, public, economic and environmental objectives. The government's strategic priorities include maintaining a cohesive society and preserving Emirati identity, providing first-rate education and health care systems, building a competitive knowledge economy, sustaining an effective and efficient public bureaucracy, implementing sustainable environment and infrastructure programmes, and establishing a strong standing in the global community.¹¹ The emphasis on these priorities reflects the unique context of the UAE, where 80 percent of the population is comprised of immigrants who form the backbone of many economic sectors. Hence, in pursuing

these priorities, the country is seeking greater sustainability by striking a balance between preserving national identity and social cohesion while promoting rapid economic growth and global competitiveness by utilizing a combination of foreign expertise and knowledge, international tourism and foreign investment.¹² The main principles and objectives underpinning the 2011–2013 UAE strategy reflect the federal government's national priorities and are responsive to the evolving needs of its people (see Box 2).

In the UAE Vision 2021 released by the UAE cabinet in 2011, UAE exhibited an ambitious and confident nation seeking to be “among the best countries in the world by 2021”. The vision contains four important components with detailed objectives related to national identity, economy, education and health. It seeks to make the UAE a land of ambitious and confident people who

Box 2. The seven general principles the UAE strategy addresses

1. Enhance the role of federal entities in devising effective regulations and integrated policies by successful planning and enforcement;
2. Enhance effective coordination and cooperation among federal entities and with local governments;
3. Focus on delivering high-quality, customer-centric and integrated government services;
4. Invest in human resource capabilities and develop leaders;
5. Promote efficient resource management within federal entities and leverage dynamic partnerships;
6. Pursue a culture of excellence through strategic thinking, continuous performance improvement and superior results; and
7. Enhance transparency and accountable governance mechanisms throughout federal entities.

Source: Government of UAE, 2011, 'United Arab Emirates Government Strategy'.

10 Transparency International Web site, 2011. Accessed online at: <http://www.transparency.org>.

11 Government of UAE, 2011, 'United Arab Emirates Government Strategy'.

12 Al-Yahya, Khalid, 2009, “Human Capital and Institutional Development Paradoxes”, in *Human Resources and Development in the Gulf*, The Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, Abu Dhabi.

hold on to their heritage; a strong federation; a competitive economy led by creative and knowledgeable Emiratis; and finally a high quality of life in a generous and sustainable environment. The UAE vision 2021 envisages development of a knowledge-based economy that will be diverse and flexible led by skilled professional Emiratis holding on to the past and current achievement, while looking forward to achieving more.¹³

In spite of the adoption of many well-articulated strategies by UAE government, strategic planning and implementation often takes place at the local level where most individual emirates have their own strategies which, in some cases, created some inconsistencies in policy making and implementation. Dubai and Abu Dhabi were pioneers; and in many ways were ahead of the federal government in introducing strategic planning. There have been ongoing efforts by the government to bridge the gap between local and federal government capabilities and to promote a more consistent and balanced approach to development planning.

To realize these objectives, the country continues to attract talent and investments from around the world while investing in its Emirati population by building their skills and encouraging their integration into the workforce. The shortage of adequate numbers of qualified nationals to undertake economic activities led the government to embark on various initiatives such as providing free education and skills development and granting scholarships to nationals to study abroad. The government has also been gradually facilitating Emirati's integration into economic sectors that are traditionally dominated by expatriates (e.g. insurance, banking and commerce).¹⁴

Emiratization policies push for the recruitment of Emirati nationals in both the public and private sectors, build their skills and capabilities, guarantee favourable working conditions and promote attractive employment benefits.¹⁵

In addition, the government adopted programmes to expand employment opportunities in order to support small- and medium-sized enterprises created and run by nationals.¹⁶ These programmes reduced unemployment among segments of population and fostered innovation and entrepreneurship. Two major entities operate in this field: the Khalifa Fund for Enterprise Development¹⁷ was launched in 2007, and the Mohammed Bin Rashid Establishment for Young Business Leaders¹⁸ was created in 2002. Both programmes aim to develop a new generation of Emirati entrepreneurs by instilling and enriching the culture of investment among young people, and by providing integrated programmes of finance and business development assistance to meet the needs and requirements of investors seeking to establish or expand investments.

2.2 THE ECONOMY

In 1996, the UAE adopted an open economy policy and became a member of the World Trade Organization. Consequently, many multinational companies were incentivized to open business headquarters in the UAE, which provide ample opportunities for employment (most of which went to expatriate workforce).

The decade from 2000 to 2010 witnessed fundamental changes in the UAE financial, economic, social and developmental strategies. These changes

13 Abu Dhabi Government, 2011. See <http://business.abudhabi.ae/>.

14 The National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority – Tanmia, 2011; Al-Yahya, 2009; Rees et al, 2007.

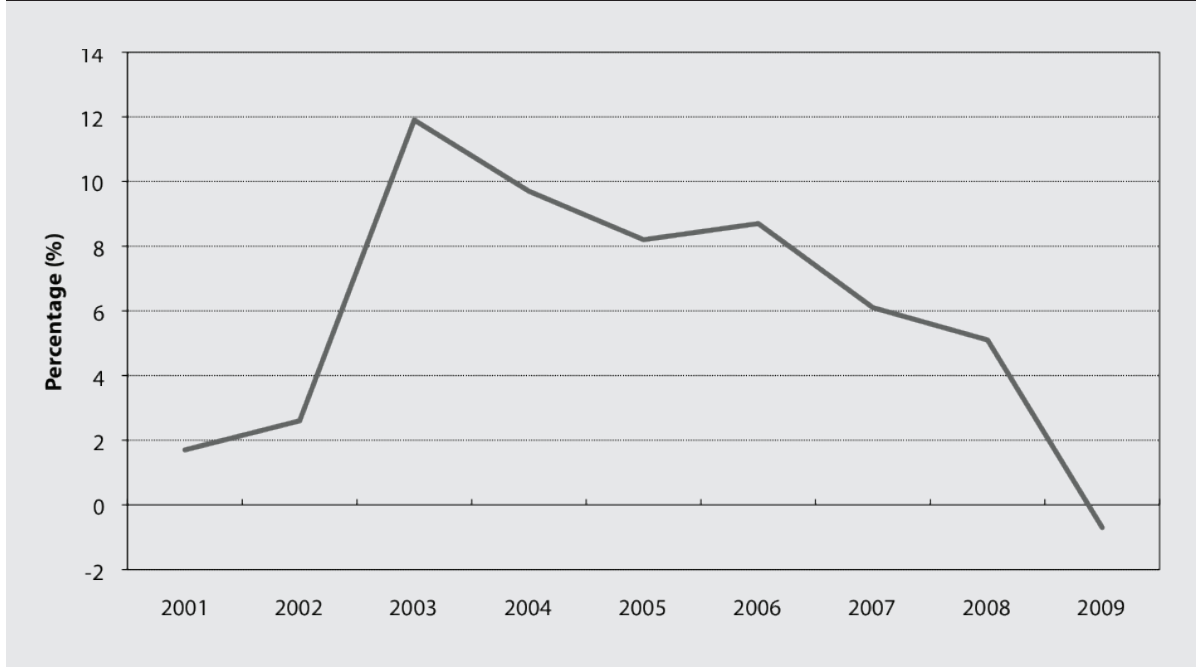
15 Tanmia, 2008.

16 Abu Dhabi Council for Economic Development, 2011, see <http://www.adced.ae/en/home/index.aspx>.

17 See <http://khalifafund.sdg.ae/Default.aspx>.

18 See <http://www.sme.ae/english/>.

Figure 1. GDP growth (annual) 2001-2009



Source: The World Bank's Data Bank, 2011.

resulted from numerous internal and external factors that influenced the country's direction and created opportunities and challenges. The early part of the decade saw vast economic development, primarily due to the rising prices of oil and the attraction of foreign direct investments in real estate, tourism, and some industries. Gross domestic product (GDP) grew at 12 percent in 2002 and remained above 8 percent until 2006 (see Figure 1). This created a booming investment climate and placed the UAE among the fastest growing economies in the world. However, the end of the decade witnessed a sharp decline in the country's economic performance resulting from the financial crisis and falling oil prices. GDP shrunk by more than 3 percent between 2008 and 2009 (see Figure 1).¹⁹ This added more impetus to the country's efforts to move away from reliance on oil to a more sustainable growth strategy. In

1974, oil revenues accounted for over 80 percent of gross domestic product; in 2008, oil-based utilities accounted for only 36 percent of GDP.²⁰

Among the economies of the Gulf Cooperation Council, the financial crisis affected the UAE the most. The Emirate of Dubai in particular suffered financial losses, primarily in the real estate sector, which underwent the world's largest price corrections during and after the subprime crisis. The Dubai equity market also suffered much more than those in other Council states; its index shed more than 40 percent since the beginning of 2008.²¹ The government responded by injecting large amounts of liquidity into banks and bailing out financial institutions that were severally affected. The government's ability to contain the crisis was enhanced by increasing prices of and demand for gas and oil (particularly in Asian

19 The World Bank Governance Indicators, 2011. Accessed online at: <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>.

20 Government of UAE, National Bureau of Statistics, 2008, 'Economic Activity Report'.

21 GRC Report 2008: Impact of the US Financial Crisis on GCC Countries; IMF data, 2011.

markets) and low global interest rates.²² The real GDP is projected to grow at a rate of 3.3 percent in 2011 and non-hydrocarbon GDP is expected to increase from its 2010 rate of 2.1 percent to 3.3 percent.²³

The financial crisis affected not only the domestic economy's performance, but also international traders' confidence in the UAE economy's resilience. In a foreign direct investment survey conducted by the Ministry of Economy, 91 percent of investors indicated that economic and political stability were the main drivers motivating them to consider the UAE as a place for their investments; 90 percent indicated the opportunities UAE provides for entrance into regional markets was also motivating factor.²⁴ The flow of foreign direct investment, which was boosted by the creation of various free zones in Dubai and other emirates, was affected during the crisis as investors thought that the UAE and Dubai were no longer an appealing or stable business climate. Between 2008 and 2009, foreign direct investment inflows dropped from \$13,700 million to \$4,003 million (see Figure on Foreign Direct Inflows in Annex 5).

However, domestic investments improved since 2008. In 2011, the Ministry of Economy reported that the UAE has recorded strong growth in the industrial sector in 2010, where the industrial investments increased by \$8 billion, an increase of 36 percent from the previous two years. Looking forward, the Ministry aims to develop the industrial sector's performance in order to increase its contribution to the GDP to 25 percent.²⁵

Overall, despite the financial pressures that stemmed from the economic crisis, the UAE government maintained relatively high levels of public expenditure. Government expenditures increased from 6 percent in 2008 to 9 percent in 2009.

2.2.1 REGIONAL ECONOMIC DISPARITIES

A persistent domestic challenge to economic development in the UAE is the disparity between each emirate's economic performance and its contribution to GDP. This difference in economic development contributes to the north-south dichotomy. The southern emirates, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, have been the major actors in the UAE economy. Abu Dhabi and Dubai have been the major players

Table 1. GDP per capita within the UAE seven Emirates

Emirate	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Abu Dhabi	160,640	162,255	181,560	221,902	280,081	290,807	262,104	263,495	219,228
Dubai	161,526	161,751	164,973	167,997	166,091	145,868	147,869	123,588	104,439
Sharjah	38,575	38,103	39,303	41,481	52,516	49,678	45,100	41,736	38,582
Ajman	28,178	28,240	32,225	36,637	42,050	43,323	40,308	35,520	33,556
Umm Al - Quwain	29,929	31,721	30,674	31,063	35,612	35,459	32,142	27,494	25,873
Ras Al - Khaimah	44,324	45,391	46,262	48,576	54,282	53,902	50,536	45,918	43,340
Fujairah	43,610	44,952	45,227	46,966	55,317	56,478	53,244	46,563	43,025

Source: Dubai's Bureau of Statistics, 2011.

22 IMF data, 2011.

23 IMF data, 2011.

24 See <http://www.economy.ae/english/Pages/default.aspx>.

25 Ministry of Economy, 2011.

in the UAE's economy with their GDP distribution reaching 60 per cent and 29.6 per cent respectively in 2009 (See Table on GDP distribution by the emirates in Annex 5). Sharjah contributes to the national GDP much less than Abu Dhabi and Dubai, but considerably compared to the other emirates of the north. Its contribution ranges from 5.9 per cent in 2001 to 6.1 per cent in 2009 making it the third largest contributor to the national GDP. The emirates of the north like Umm Al-Quwain, contributed as little as 0.3 per cent since 2001 which dropped to 0.2 per cent since 2007. The same thing applies Fujairah and Ras Al-Khaimah whose contribution to the national GDP does not exceed 1 per cent and 2 per cent respectively. These differences are associated with other dimensions of the developmental gap. They are illustrated in the following sections.

In terms of per capita income, people in Abu Dhabi and Dubai are the top earners. As Table 1 shows, GDP per capita in Abu Dhabi in 2009 is eight times that of Umm Al-Quwain which has the lowest GDP per capita compared to the other emirates.

2.3 KEY HUMAN DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

2.3.1 DEMOGRAPHY AND EMPLOYMENT

Another key challenge facing the UAE is the low ratio of native Emiratis to immigrants—immigrants comprise more than 80 percent of the

overall UAE population.²⁶ In addition, population growth has been declining since 2001, dropping from an average of 5 percent in 2001 to less than 3 percent in 2009. The proportion of the population under 5 years of age has been decreasing since 1980 and is projected to continue in this trend in the next four decades. The proportion of population between 5 and 14 year old was estimated at 15.3 percent in 1980; it increased to 17.7 percent in 1995 then decreased to 12.3 in 2005. It is projected to continue decreasing and reach 9.4 percent in 2050. The working-age group (15-64) has increased from 70.2 percent in 1980 to 79.3 percent in 2005; it is projected to reach a peak of 80.9 percent in 2030 (United Nations, World Population Policies, 2007).

Unemployment rate among nationals was 14 percent in 2009 (See Table 2). In the northern emirates, unemployment rates tend to be relatively higher due to either the limited resources or opportunities that these emirates are able to offer or the inability of Emiratis to compete with abundant skilled expatriates who accept lower salaries and work longer hours. Through various workforce nationalization initiatives, the UAE government has been taking steps to encourage the employment of Emirati nationals in private sector not only to create economic opportunities for locals but also to address demographic imbalance and sustainability challenges. For instance, federal and local governments established programmes to support Emirati small- and medium-sized enterprises by providing

Table 2. Unemployment rates by Emirate among locals

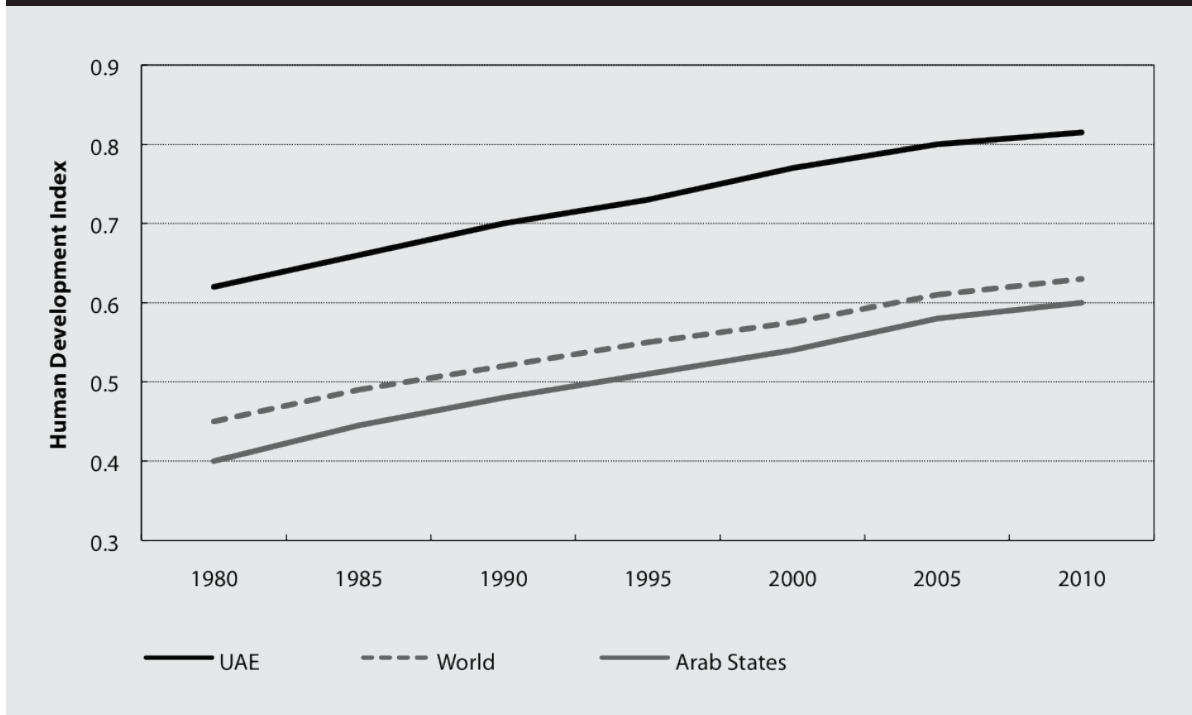
Year	Abu Dhabi	Dubai	Sharjah	Ajman	Umm Al Quwain	Ras Al Khaima	Fujairah	UAE
2009	15.3	8.7	15.3	7.3	6.3	16.2	20.6	14.0
2008	14.4	5.8	15.1	13.7	2.9	19.8	21.9	13.8

Source: UAE National Bureau of Statistics²⁷

26 Dubai's Bureau of Statistics, 2011, see <http://www.uaestatistics.gov.ae/EnglishHome/tabid/96/default.aspx>.

27 Government of UAE, National Bureau of Statistics, 2011, see <http://www.uaestatistics.gov.ae/EnglishHome/tabid/96/default.aspx>.

Figure 2. Human Development Index performance in the UAE



Source: Human Development Index, UNDP, 2011.

Table 3. Government expenditure on health sector (private and public as percent of GDP)

Health expenditure	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Private (percent of GDP)	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.8	0.9
Public (percent of government expenditure)	7.7	7.9	8.3	8.1	8.6	8.9	8.9	8.9	8.9
Total (percent of GDP)	3.7	3.4	3.2	2.9	2.7	2.6	2.7	2.5	2.8

Source: Department of Economic Statistics, National Accounts Division.

nationals with technical support (e.g. trainings on how to start a business) and financial assistance (e.g. interest free loans). There has been also an increase in the social assistance to some northern emirates to address the development and income gap (see Figure on social assistance by emirate in Annex 5).

Overall, the UAE government's human development index is one of the highest in the world (Figure 2) (UNDP Human Development Index, 2010; Arab Human Development Report, 2009).

The government's health and education expenditures are substantial percentages of GDP. Government has increased its spending on public health care increased from 7.7 percent of public expenditures in 2001 to 8.9 percent in 2009—almost 3 percent of the GDP (see Table 3). This is in addition to investments made by each emirate in human development. Moreover, the government spends considerably more on education, which in 2009 amounted to 23.3 percent of overall government expenditures (UAE Department of Economic Statistics).

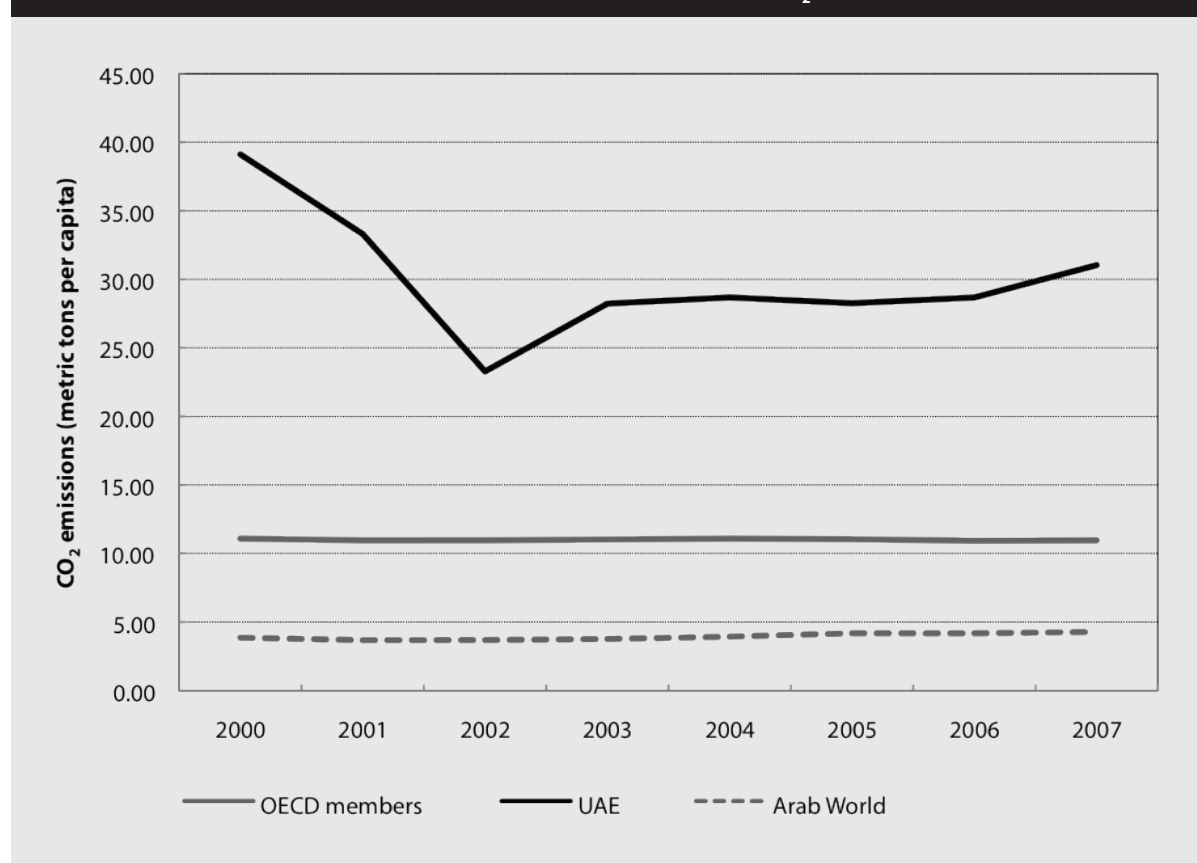
The government of the UAE has recently taken major steps to address the developmental challenges of the northern emirates. The President of the UAE ordered a visit to these emirates to conduct a clear identification of its incurring challenges. Accordingly, as a demonstration of its intention to address these challenges, in March 2011, the government announced the allocation of \$1.55 billion to provide water, electricity, houses, hospitals, and other facilities in the northern emirates²⁸. This is again in response to the greater needs in these areas. For example, the number of private hospitals available in Fujeira and Ras Al-Khaima is 2 for each. In Ajman, there is only one private hospital. Sharjah has 10 private

hospitals compared to 25 in Abu Dhabi 25 (See Table on private hospitals and its use in Annex 5).

2.3.2 ENVIRONMENT

In the area of environment, current UAE strategy supports international efforts to address climate change and achieve environmental sustainability. Aware of the impact of global climate change and the environmental impact of its rapidly growing economic and industrial activities, the UAE took several measures to adhere to international obligations, such as introducing a series of environmental regulations for waste management, domestic CO₂ emissions and radioactive materials.²⁹

Figure 3. Comparison between UAE and the rest of the world's CO₂ emissions



Source: The World Bank's Data Bank, 2011.

28 See <http://www.thenational.ae/business/economy/northern-emirates-to-be-given-priority-for-jobs-and-infrastructure>.

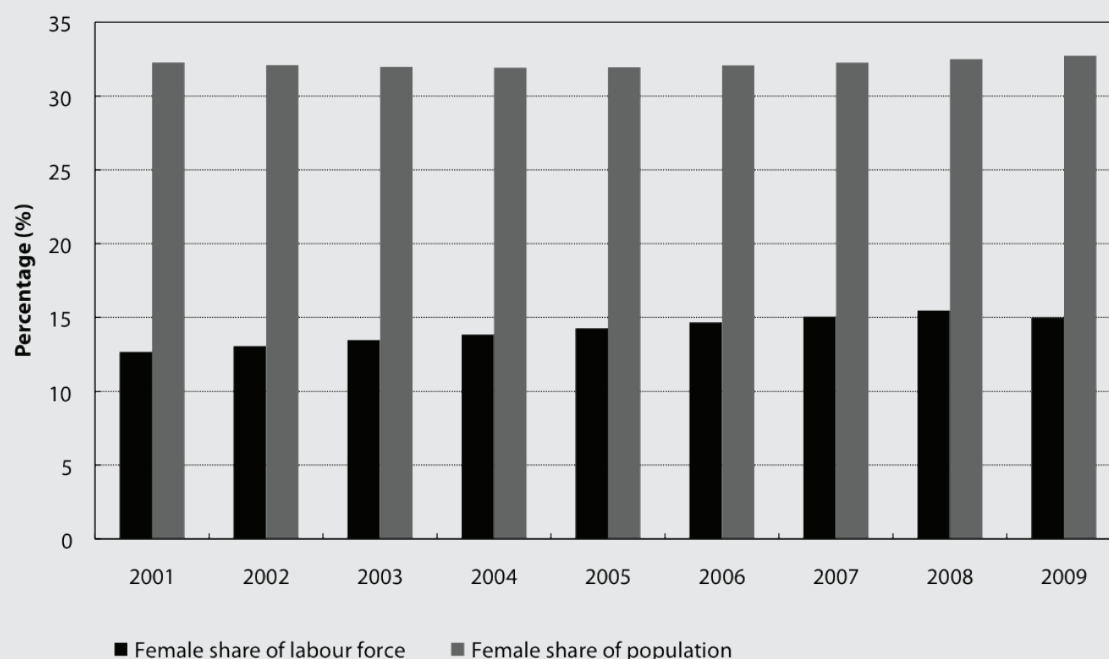
29 Government of UAE, Ministry of Environment and Water, 2011, *Environmental Laws Bulletin*.

Recently, conserving the environment emerged as one a UAE priority as the government started to implement ambitious plans to reduce its relatively high greenhouse gas emissions.³⁰ Until recently, the UAE had one of the highest per capita level of CO₂ emissions in the world. In 2000, the UAE produced four times more CO₂ emissions per capita than the rest of the world in order to generate enough energy to support its highly developing economy. The main source of the greenhouse gas emissions is energy production and consumption, which constituted around 95 percent of total CO₂ emissions.³¹ Since 2001, the country's CO₂ emission rate dropped to 23 metric tons per

capita, which is still very high compared to OECD, countries where it has never exceeded 12 metric tons per capita (see Figure 3).

To address environmental issues, the UAE made numerous efforts such as establishing both federal- and emirate-level environmental agencies; drafting a 'National Environment Strategy' and a 'National Environment Action' plan in 2000; enacting environmental laws, including a 1999 law for the "protection and development of the environment"³²; and developing the 'National Action Program and Strategy' for decreasing the effects of desertification.³³ Moreover, the Abu Dhabi government established Masdar city, an

Figure 4. Women population and women as a percentage of the UAE labour force



Source: The World Bank's Data Bank, 2011.

30 Ministry of Energy, 2006.

31 Ministry of Energy, 2006.

32 Federal Law No. 24.

33 Ministry of Energy, 2006, 'Initial National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change', see: <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/natc/arenc1.pdf>.

34 See <http://www.masdarcity.ae/en/27/what-is-masdar-city-/>.

innovative project to create a hub where businesses rely on renewable energy.³⁴

2.3.3 GENDER ISSUES AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

Since its formation, the UAE government focused on developing and empowering Emirati women by increasing their access to education, the job market and recently, politics. The UAE has made significant progress in gender parity in education attainment, wages for similar work and health. A recent study conducted by the Dubai School of Government cited important progress over the years to enhance gender equality in education, politics, public administration and the judiciary.³⁵ This contributed to the increase in women's participation in the Federal National Council after the 2006 elections.³⁶ According to the Ministry of State for Federal National Council Affairs³⁷, women occupied 23 percent of Federal National Council seats, which is above the Arab world's average of 9 percent and the world average of 17 percent.³⁸

In tertiary education, women have repeatedly outperformed men. Since 2001, the ratio of women to males in tertiary education exceeded 280 percent, though it fell to 188 percent in 2009. Moreover, in 2007–2008, 46 percent of UAE graduates from international universities were women; 38 percent received master degrees and 55 percent received PhDs.³⁹

Though women comprised 32 percent of the total population (including expatriates) in 2009 and

were well-integrated into the educational system, their workforce participation is still very small and almost non-existent in some segments of the private sector. From 2001 to 2009, their contribution to the workforce never exceeded 15 percent. Further, unemployment among women rose from 7 percent in 2005 to 12 percent in 2008 (see Figure 4). Though UAE Constitution upholds the principle of equal treatment of all citizens, it does not specifically address some social norms and business practices that limit the scope of jobs that women can take.

2.4 UAE AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Since its establishment, the country has proactively provided development assistance and humanitarian aid to poor countries. Dubai also hosts the International Humanitarian City, one of the world's largest hubs for international humanitarian operations. The UAE strives to be "internationally recognized as one of the world's top donors to humanitarian response and sustainable development."⁴⁰ The government invests in national and international projects and endorse the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and assist other countries achieve them. According to latest UAE Foreign Aid 2010 Report, the UAE disbursed a total of \$762.2 million in grants and loans to development, humanitarian and charity programs worldwide. In addition, UAE donors committed another \$765.3 million (Table 4). In 2009, UAE Government and other donor organizations in the UAE gave a total \$2.43 billion.⁴¹

35 Abdulah, Fatma and Natasha Ridge, 2009, "Where are All the Men? Gender, Participation and Higher Education in the United Arab Emirates", in Lamine, B. (ed), *Towards an Arab Higher Education Space: International Challenges and Societal Responsibilities*, Beirut: UNESCO.

36 Government of UAE, Ministry of State for Federal National Council Affairs. 'Women in the United Arab Emirates: A Portrait of Progress'. See https://www.uae-embassy.org/sites/default/files/Women_in_the_UAE_Eng.pdf.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Ibid.

40 Government of UAE, Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid Web site, 2011, see <http://www.ocfa.gov.ae/EN/AboutOCFA/Pages/OCFA%20Background.aspx>.

41 Government of UAE, Office for Coordination and Foreign Aid, 2009.

Table 4. UAE foreign aid contributions by donor, 2010	
Donor	US dollars
Government	272,784,622
Abu Dhabi Fund For Development	217,471,261
UAE Red Crescent Authority	99,142,036
Khalifa Foundation	73,450,810
Zayed Foundation	19,847,930
Al Maktoum Foundation	17,930,887
Sharjah Charity Association	17,501,236
Dubai Cares	12,544,170
Dubai Charity Association	8,328,987
UAE International Humanitarian Mobile Hospital	6,806,425
International Humanitarian City	4,842,686
Sharjah Charity House 13.51 (0.48%)	3,678,367
Mohammed Bin Rashid Establishment	3,635,388
Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund	2,791,537
Emirates Airline Foundation	877,142
Etisalat	3,540,001
Gulf Pharmaceutical Industries (Julphar)	21,183
Noor Dubai Foundation	43,561
Total	762,161,130

Source: United Arab Emirates, Foreign Aid 2010, UAE Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid.

Aid in the UAE took many forms, such as development assistance, humanitarian aid and charitable donations. These came mainly from five sources within the UAE: projects directly sponsored by the federal government; local governments; authorities such as the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development and the UAE Red Crescent Authority; foundations such as the Khalifa Bin Sultan Al-Nahyan Foundation and the Al-Maktoum Foundation; and non-governmental organizations such as Dubai Charity, Dubai Cares and the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al-Maktoum Foundation (see Table 4).

The following chapters discusses UNDP programme in the UAE and its contribution to furthering development results in the country.

Chapter 3

UNDP RESPONSE

3.1 THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE UAE

The UAE became a member of the United Nations in 1971 and has committed itself implementing the principles of the 'Charter of the United Nations' and what it stands for: respect of human rights, international cooperation for the maintenance of peace and security, solidarity with the poor and the disadvantaged, justice, human development and prosperity for all. The UAE permanent representation to the United Nations (UN) in New York and Geneva facilitates coordination with the UN and UN agencies. The UAE is (or has been) a full member of specialized agencies such as the International Civil Aviation Organization; International Labour Organization; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; Universal Postal Union; World Health Organization; and the World Intellectual Property Organization. The UAE is a member of the International Renewable Energy Agency, and hosts its headquarters at Abu Dhabi. The country is a signatory to a number of UN conventions and inter-government resolutions.⁴² More recently, the UAE has joined the 'Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development'.

The UAE has been committed to addressing challenges in the area of international peace and security, stabilization of economic recovery, achievement of sustainable development, attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, combating the negative impact of climate change, responding to natural disasters, countering

terrorism and regional instability, achievement of peace in the middle east, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and disarmament. The UAE financially contributes to UN agencies, funds and programmes as part of its foreign policy strategy towards helping developing countries' governments improve their economic and social and development conditions. The UAE supports several development and humanitarian projects through UN as well as bilateral support. In addition, the Government of the United Arab Emirates has contributed about \$7 million to the UN, for a number of development programmes during the year 2011 and pledged \$10 million for the year 2012.

The UN presence in the UAE began in 1977 and the UNDP country office was established the same year. Until 2000, the UNDP was the sole resident UN agency. Since 2000 other UN agencies have set up operations in the country. Fourteen UN agencies, located in Abu Dhabi and the Dubai Humanitarian City, have offices and/or programmes in the UAE (See Box 3). Most agencies located in Dubai mainly serve other countries in the region. Non-resident UN agencies have activities in the country (e.g. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, UN Women⁴³), and have direct partnerships with the government and or other agencies. Some of the UN agencies are operating under the UNDP Standard Basic Agreement with the UAE Government.⁴⁴ UNDP provides administrative services to all UN agencies except World Food Programme.

42 UAE Treaties and Conventions. See <http://www.un.int/wcm/content/site/uae/home/pid/19807>.

43 Until 2010, it was UNIFEM.

44 Agreement between the Government of United Arab Emirates and the United Nations Development Programme, 1977.

Box 3. UN Agencies located in Abu Dhabi and Dubai

Abu Dhabi

Food and Agriculture Organization
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Children's Fund
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
United Nations Environment Programme
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Dubai

Development Support Services
Integrated Regional Information Network
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
World Food Programme
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
United Nations University
United Nations Department of Safety and Security
International Finance Corporation
(The World Bank Group)

The country's high income status and eagerness to actively participate in regional and international affairs provide the backdrop for the UN system's expansion in the country. Unlike in most other countries the UN country team in UAE does not have a common programme framework or UNDAF, which is also not required for a Net Contributor Country. While the potential for mobilization of resources to fund its programmes creates an environment of competitiveness among UN agencies, a lack of UN cohesiveness in response to government initiatives remains a challenge. More recently efforts to develop a common programme framework for UN agencies, and this is yet to manifest. The UAE is a unique context for UN country team as most agencies located in the UAE serve other countries in the region and elsewhere, and the perceived need for a common programme framework is not high.

3.2 THE UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMME

During the 30 years that UAE and UNDP have been cooperating, there have been eight country programmes (including the on-going

programme). Since 1992, the UAE government has funded the UNDP country programmes and has been a full net contributor country. Net contributor countries are treated in UNDP as separate group of countries that are not part of the core programme resource allocation, but depend on funds from the programme country.

UNDP has, over the years, provided services and technical assistance to the government in the areas of institutional and human resource development and operational and logistics support. Although structured around UNDP programme principles and mandates, the UAE country programme departs from the regular UNDP programming model. The country programmes have largely responded to UAE service needs in diverse areas, at times outside the scope of a typical corporate UNDP programme design.

The past three UNDP country programmes, since 1997, have emphasized strengthening the government's capacities to address environmental impacts due to urbanization and natural resource management; revitalizing public sector management, particularly in the northern emirates; and supporting education sector activities (e.g. creating a system of vocational and technical training and reorienting the educational system to meet the challenges of a diversified economy).

The ADR reviewed two country programmes, 2002–2006 (extended to 2007) and 2008–2011 (extended to 2012). In both country programmes, the initiatives responded to specific requests for UNDP services. UNDP also aimed to strengthen human and institutional capacities and to include policy advocacy as part of its technical cooperation with the government. The country programmes envisaged working with regional and subregional partners in the areas of governance, information and communication technology, HIV/AIDS and gender. UNDP has provided services at both the federal and emirates level.

In both country programmes, UNDP services aimed to align with national development plans and strategies. UNDP-initiated activities

Box 4. UNDP country programme (2002-2006): results by programme area

Institutional and human resource development at the federal and emirate levels

1. Implementation of quality management and ISO certification in most public administrations;
2. Introduction of programme and performance-based budgeting;
3. Reform of government procurement systems;
4. Implementation of an e-government strategy for the federal ministries;
5. Strengthened national statistics for policy formulation and public expenditure management;
6. Strengthened organizational management and national capacity within at least three emirate-level government organizations;
7. A needs assessment for the government organizations of the northern emirates,
8. At least one project designed and resources mobilized for implementation of institutional and human resource development within the northern emirates;
9. At least one nationwide seminar a year on either governance/public sector reform or human resources development, resulting in broad participation of stakeholders, opportunities for UNDP partnership building, and strengthened commitment to implementation of initiatives arising from policy advice;
10. Partnership with the National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority,
11. A central data base for national human resources, including up-to-date information on education, training and employment sectors, and a gender disaggregated employment and skills survey to identify the skill set of the national workforce; and
12. Increased access of national businessmen and businesswomen to training opportunities in business, management and ecommerce.

Integration into the global economy

13. Strengthened national capacity within government and the private sector in analyzing and understanding World Trade Organization issues and their implications;
14. Strengthened trade negotiation skills within the Ministry of Economy and Commerce;
15. Operational units established within the Ministry of Economy and Commerce to follow up and implement World Trade Organization agreements and provide expertise and information on global best practices in trade-related fields;
16. A national seminar held in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy and Trade as a preliminary step towards the formulation of the national economic vision;
17. A national economic vision formulated, using a participatory approach;
18. Policy analysis carried out on how the private sector can best position itself to capitalize on the opportunities and face the challenges of World Trade Organization;
19. Increased access to information and training on World Trade Organization issues for SMEs through partnership with chambers of commerce; and
20. At least one partnership agreement signed between UNDP and the private sector to jointly research and advocate the application of ICT for development.

Protection, management and regeneration of natural resources and the environment

21. Technical advisory services mobilized for the implementation of selected priority areas of the National Environmental Action Plan;
22. Strengthened coordination among all agencies of the federal government and individual emirates as well as NGOs and academia;
23. Strengthened capacity of environmental authorities in enforcement of environmental standards;
24. Needs assessment of the environmental capacity-building requirements of the northern emirates, and at least one capacity-building initiative implemented in one of the northern emirates;
25. Partnership with the Office of H.H. the President, as well as government organizations in individual
26. Emirates, to prepare water strategies and action plans for their implementation;
27. One workshop per year aimed at strengthening capacity and skills of NGOs; and
28. Environmental management seminars in partnership with, and targeted at, the business and industry sectors.

include the human development report, HIV/AIDS awareness training and gender mainstreaming. In the 2002–07 country programme, UNDP supported preparation of MDG reports. UNDP supported Arab Human Development Report and the Arab Knowledge Report and this was the initiative of the Regional centre and Regional bureau for the Arab States in New York. In addition to implementing the country programme, the country office supports the Resident Coordinator's Office in managing a few programmes in Oman and Qatar.

3.2.1 THE 2002–2007 COUNTRY PROGRAMME

The 2002–2007 UNDP country programme⁴⁵ comprised three programme areas: institutional and human resources development; integration into the global economy; and protection, management and regeneration of natural resources and the environment. Under these programme areas, 27 results were outlined. The proposed UNDP activities were largely focused on capacity building and on policy advice and support to policy formulation and implementation, advocacy and awareness creation. Gender, sustainable governance, information and communication technology, and knowledge management issues were considered as cross-cutting issues. UNDP also intended to enhance policy-makers' access to information on relevant comparative experiences and best practices.

The country programme aimed to work with northern emirates. The country programme proposed that UNDP would help to develop a shared regional agenda where appropriate, and would help ensure that feedback from local development programmes was communicated to the regional level. Pilot activities were intended to be used to promote regional, subregional, national and sub-national policy reforms.

There were no clearly stated outcomes for the 2002–2007 country programme period, and most of the proposed results were at the output level (see Table, Annex 6). The UNDP programme carried out 27 projects. A majority of these projects corresponded to the results (outputs) proposed; 8 projects continued into the next programme period (see Box 4). The projects carried out include three projects in Oman and Qatar.

Larger projects included administrative services (e.g. logistics, procurement and recruitment support) provided to the meteorological service, the date palm project, and services provided to the Ministry of Economy. The nature of these UNDP projects followed from its limited flexibility in proposing areas for joint work. While the activities can be broadly classified under the three broad themes identified by the country programme, it is difficult to establish linkages in terms of results related to capacity development or integration into the global economy or environment and natural resource management.

UNDP activities responded to important UAE service needs, particularly projects such as supporting meteorological services and recruiting technical experts for government agencies. For the majority of activities, however, UNDP contributions did not correspond to the depth or substantiveness of engagement required in the three thematic country programme areas or to UNDP capacities. This is further discussed in the following chapter.

Of the 27 projects, only three had substantive engagement (raising awareness of HIV and AIDS, gender mainstreaming training, and supporting the UAE curriculum). A large majority of the projects were related to services to the federal government. Support to the Date Palm Research Centre was important, although UNDP did not have any engagement or contribute in any significant way to the centre's activities.

45 UNDP. 2002. 'Annual Session, Second Country Cooperation Framework for the United Arab Emirates (2002–2006)'. Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund, New York, DP/CCF/UAE/2.

3.2.2 THE 2008–2012 COUNTRY PROGRAMME

The 2008–2012 country programme had three key components: economic and social development, governance, and environment. Across the three programme areas, seven outcomes were identified in line with national development priorities and the UNDP mandate (see Box 5). The main intended services are policy advice and support to decision-making processes; institutional and human capacity development; and advocacy and awareness-raising. In this country programme, UNDP aimed to use its global network to enhance government access to South-South cooperation in order to broaden its range of policy options, at both the federal and emirate levels.

Five out of the seven outcomes emphasize developing government institutions' capacities at the federal and emirate levels. However, the outcomes are too broad; lack specific outputs and activities, and three outcomes are poorly stated. Similarly, there are no indicators at the outcome level, which makes it difficult to ascertain what UNDP intended to accomplish during the programme period or to assess programmes' performance against stated outcomes.

Since 2008, UNDP has implemented 26 projects of different scales and scopes, including three projects in Qatar. With the exception of seven projects, the majority were working with the federal government. The larger projects are those related to providing administrative services (e.g. logistics and recruitment support) to the Ministry of Economy (formerly the Ministry of Economic Planning). This is followed by services provided to Meteorological Department, support to the Date Palm Research Centre and the Abu Dhabi Human Development Report. Among the wide range of activities that UNDP undertook, a large number were 'services' related to procurement and to recruiting technical experts.

The areas of UNDP projects and services broadly concur with the government's national priorities and needs. However limited scope of UNDP activities makes such associations less significant (see Table, Annex 7). A review of the 2002–2006 country programme conducted in 2005⁴⁶ noted that the national context in terms of UAE priorities and the UNDP role within the UAE during the 2001 preparation of the programme had not changed significantly.⁴⁷ The review found that the priorities and challenges for the UAE

Box 5. UNDP country programme (2008–2011): focus areas and outcomes

Economic and social development

1. Enhanced national capacity to analyse, design and monitor development policies in areas of national priority;
2. Strengthened national capacity in supporting economic diversification and private sector development; and
3. HIV/AIDS outreach programmes.

Governance

4. Improved capacity of federal and emirate level institutions in strategic planning, resource management and service delivery;
5. Strengthened democratic governance institutions and functions; and
6. Gender mainstreaming and empowerment.

Environment

7. Enhanced capacity of federal and local governments in implementing the National Environmental Action Plan and enforcement of environmental regulations.

Source: 2008–2011 UNDP country programme.

46 UNDP. 2007. 'Draft Country programme document for the United Arab Emirates (2008–2011), Annual Session', Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund, New York, DP/DCP/ARE/1.

government remained valid considerations for designing the 2008–2011 programme. Challenges discussed in the 2005 review included: uncertainty within oil markets and prices and the associated effects on the country's fiscal situation; changing scenarios in production and trade due to accelerating globalization and sharp worldwide economic competition; heavy dependence on foreign labour; and critical shortages of national technical and managerial personnel. The ADR analysis found that most of the challenges have implications for UAE development, but in terms of UNDP programme or services, a more deliberate analysis of actual areas of engagement was needed. However, the 2008–2011 country programme did not outline specific UNDP contributions to address these challenges.

The ongoing country programme intended to use the UNDP global network to facilitate federal- and emirate-level global development partnerships access to South-South cooperation in order to broaden their range of policy options. However, it was not evident how UNDP intended to accomplish this or what the parameters for achieving this were.

Table 5. Resource mobilization by UNDP UAE for other UNDP offices, 2006-2009

Country	Year	Funds in US\$
Indonesia	2006	5,000,000
Palestine	2007	3,500,000
Myanmar	2008	1,000,000
Palestine	2008	1,000,000
Palestine	2008	500,000
Afghanistan	2008	50,000
Comoros	2008	50,000
Iraq	2009	974,991
Sudan	2009	250,000
Total		12,324,991

While gender and HIV/AIDS are outcomes on their own, they are also considered to be cross-cutting dimension of the programme. With some exceptions (e.g. human development report preparation and training and awareness projects), UNDP activities—largely pertaining to recruiting technical experts—provided limited scope to include cross-cutting issues.

Most activities of UNDP are demand-driven and respond to the priorities of the respective government institution. In the case of more substantive initiatives (e.g. human development report preparation or gender mainstreaming training), the projects are jointly developed, implemented and monitored with the respective national authorities or entities. In the past, UNDP received invitations to tender from a government agency and successfully bid for projects. This practice is discontinued, rightly, as UNDP is not allowed to do so.

For its offices in least developed countries and those affected by crisis, UNDP mobilized resources from various charity foundations in the UAE. Since 2006, the country office facilitated the funding of projects exceeding \$12 million to nine countries (see Table 5). The country office did not play a monitoring or liaison role to report progress on funds utilization, although there have been some efforts towards this more recently. The lack of close engagement of UNDP with donor foundations contributed to far less resource mobilization than perceived to be achieved, as many UAE foundations are expanding their operations globally. Although foundations have channelled limited funds through the country office in the last three years, UAE foundations interviewed during the evaluation noted that the UNDP expertise and global aid network is still admired and considered of functional utility. The hesitation to channel funds through the country office stems from the perception that the country office lacks staff and adequate responsiveness.

47 Mahmoud Abdel Fadel, Khalid Abu-Ismael, Mamoun Chebib, 2006. 'Country Programme Review and Suggestions for the next Country Cooperation Framework', UNDP, United Arab Emirates.

3.3 FINANCING UNDP PRESENCE AND PROGRAMMES

As a net contributor country, the UAE government is expected to support UNDP efforts to achieve its mission and goals. Government support for continuing country office operations include:

- Full financial support necessary to allow UNDP to undertake its activities. This includes paying full salaries of UNDP officers and the experts it hires;
- Adequate space (with related clerical and support services) to base UNDP officials and experts in the UAE;
- Full access to relevant documents, information and data necessary for the UNDP and its experts to perform their functions; and
- Facilitated access to UAE government officials as necessary.

For the two programme cycles assessed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Economy are the

government counterparts for UNDP. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the key UN counterpart in the UAE, the UNDP programme is approved by Ministry of Economy. While the Ministry of Economy has its own service expectations from UNDP, it does not coordinate the government activities carried out by UNDP. Considering the federal government structure UNDP is expected to have consultation with line ministries and other government agencies for mobilising resources and monitoring of the services. Until 2002, Ministry of Economic Planning was the counterpart of UNDP. In 2002, there was a realignment of the functions of the Ministry of Economic Planning, which lead to the formation of Ministry of Economy, and the subsequent change in the counterpart government agency for UNDP. One of the most noticeable impacts of this change was the reduction in the funds received by UNDP from the government. From the point of UNDP this change has contributed to weakened relations with the government, particularly in terms of powerful counterpart and predictable resources. Discussions with the government representatives point that the main

Figure 5. UNDP UAE budget and expenditure, 2004-2011

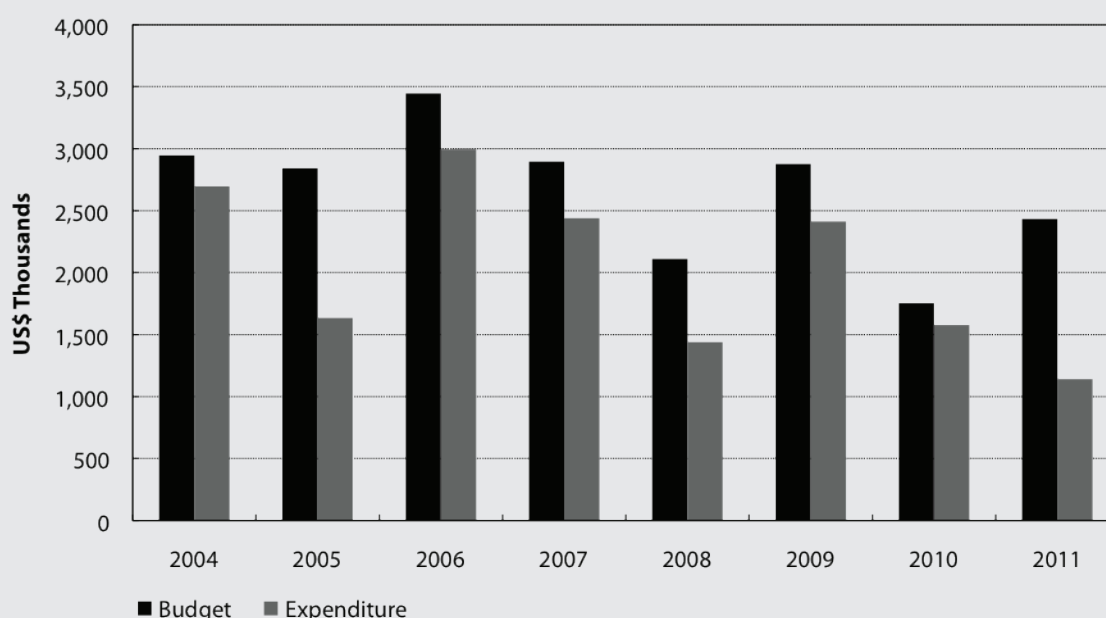
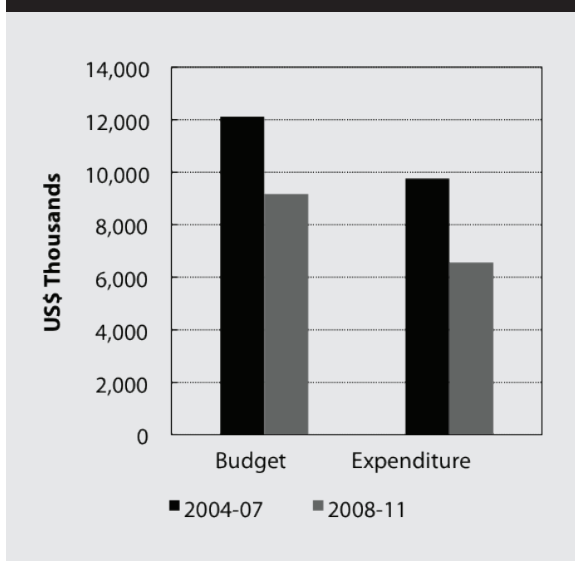


Figure 6. UNDP UAE budget and expenditure by programme period



reason for the reduction in funding to UNDP was that the expectation of services by Ministry of Economy varied from its predecessor.

UNDP has no predetermined funds commitment from the government for programming or commitment for either the current programme cycle or annual funding. Between 2002 and 2007, UNDP received \$12.3 million an average of \$ 4 million per year. For the 2008–2011 programme period, UNDP received \$9.1 million (see Figure 6). At the time of the ADR the information on the funds allocated for the year 2012 was not available. In June 2010 the office had extra budgetary reserves of \$1.1 million.

There has been a decrease in the funds UNDP received from the government in the current programme compared to the programme period of 2004–07. In terms of resource mobilisation targets set in the country programme (past and ongoing), UNDP has underperformed. For 2002 and 2007, the resource mobilization target was \$20 million. Of this, UNDP mobilized \$12.3 million; about 40 percent less than the funds mobilized for the 1997–2002 country programme (which were approximately \$20 million). For the

2008–2011 programme period, allocations were \$9 million, which is 26 percent less than the previous country programme. There has been under spending across years, and it has been more significant in 2005, 2008, and 2011 compared to other years (see Figures 5 and 6). One of the reasons for under spending according to the country office is under allocation of resources from the government. This raises questions such about the reasons for allocation not made as committed. The evaluation findings also indicate that ensuring proper resource management and adherence to UNDP operational procedures. In the past year there have been ongoing efforts to improve programme and resource management.

The ratio of UNDP fund mobilization to the government local office costs is approximately 3:1. On an average, UNDP received \$1 million annually towards office costs. Representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were of the view that this was high cost, as the contribution of UNDP was not at the level expected by the government agencies. From the perspective of the country office, maintaining an office in Abu Dhabi meant that hardly any resources were left for programming. UNDP also had the difficult task to balance the expectations from various government agencies that UNDP should provide services on a no cost basis as it is receiving funds from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The contribution of government towards local office costs is presented in Annex 6.

3.4 PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The office was operating in a National Implementation Modality (NIM) using the direct payment method. The Government therefore assumes responsibility for the contracting process and signs the contract in accordance with its own procedures, and UNDP makes payments on behalf of the government as per instructions it receives. UNDP assumed the responsibility of contracting process (by issuing UNDP contracts) although it was not fully involved in recruitment or procurement. This differs from the situation, in which

the country office provides support services in accordance with UNDP procedures and assumes responsibility for the contracting process.

In hiring technical experts or seeking procurement support, government agencies' clear expectation is that UNDP will provide services related to issuing of contracts and payment of salaries. While there is Memorandum of Understanding for most projects the procedural and accountability issues are yet to be dealt with. The discussion with programme partners brought to the fore the anomaly such a situation can cause for UNDP. There is awareness now about the inconsistencies that may arise by not following appropriate NIM procedures and efforts to rectify them. Efforts in communicate this to UNDP partners seeking its services had limitations. A more fundamental issue about the need for a proper agreement with the government about underlying procedures while providing services should be developed. As of now there is no agreement with the government on programme or providing services. The country programme is not jointly agreed with the government, in the sense that the government is not a signatory to the country programme.

3.4.1 HUMAN RESOURCES

The UNDP staff capacity at the time of the evaluation was 13, which includes 3 programme staff (including the gender advisor who joined in mid-2011). The Resident Representative (who also serves a dual position as the Resident Coordinator) leads the country office, and is supported by an executive assistant and the Deputy Resident Representative. The Deputy Resident Representative, who joined in June 2011, leads the country programme team and operations team. The operations team comprises an operations associate and assistants with responsibilities for human resources, finance and common services. Due to insufficient funds, the country office is too small and understaffed, particularly with professional cadres. The country office lacked professional management, continuity and stability of its personnel.

The staff positions of the office remained approximately the same in the past years. There was however a variation in the actual number of staff on board at a given point of time. For example, during 2006 to 2007, five staff members resigned. Although there was a position of Assistant Resident Representative for Operations the staff member was on prolonged leave. While staff was recruited to fill positions there was lack of a coherent team. In 2005 there were 12 staff member and in 2010 there were nine, largely junior level staff with the exception of the Resident Representative or officer in charge.

The country office leadership was consistent from 2001 to 2009, with Resident Representatives for the period 2001 to 2005 and 2006-2009, with a short period when there was an officer in charge. However for the period September 2009 to May 2010 there was a prolonged period without accountable leadership and there were two officers in charge for short durations (from October 2009 to January 2010, and February 2010 to May 2010 respectively), until the current Resident Representative assumed office in June 2010. The highly intermittent presence of the Resident Representatives was seen as an important factor in the lack of a robust partnership with the government and other national stakeholders. This also negatively affected programme, staff, and resource management.

One of the key issues over the years has been lack of adequate professional staff particularly with those with expertise in the area of programme requirements in the UAE. The DRR position has been intermittent, with the post being filled from 1991 to 1999, 2008 to 2009 and more recently from June 2011. Government representatives the evaluation team met repeatedly voiced concerns regarding the lack of capacity in the UNDP office and the high costs of using consultants to compensate for this. The professional capacities of the country office have been recently strengthened, mid 2011, with the joining of the Deputy Resident Representative who is an environment expert and the gender advisor.

Lack of national staff is another major issue for the country office, constraining efficient and sustained engagement with the government and national stakeholders. The office mainly comprised international and expatriate UAE staff; the country office was not successful in retaining the few Emirati staff it attracted. The UNDP was of the view that efforts were made on their part to recruit national staff, but there were no one willing to accept UNDP positions at the present salary level which was comparatively less than the government salaries and benefits. Government as well as other national stakeholders were not in agreement with the difficulties expressed by UNDP in recruiting national staff. In voicing concern over national staff retention, government representatives noted that qualified national candidates were available, particularly as the targeted number is small due to the country office's size. In addition, government stakeholders considered the lack of national staff as an additional factor hampering long-term engagement between UNDP and the UAE. Further, lack of Arabic language skills among senior programme staff has practical implications (with the exception of the Resident Representative/ Resident Coordinator), for example, in quality-assuring key UNDP products such as national and emirate human development reports.

The senior country office management staff is and has been mostly from countries outside the Gulf Cooperation Council member states. This is in accordance with UNDP policies, which support the recruitment of senior country office management from a wide and varied pool of global staff, regardless of their region of origin. While this in principle is not contested, the lack of nationals among the staff has been a contentious issue and the perception that there could at least be senior staff from Gulf Cooperation Council countries. This is a unique challenge, given the importance the region attaches to personal and informal communication in the public sector culture.

Furthermore, Gulf Cooperation Council countries share concerns about national identity, demographic imbalances and over-reliance on expatriate manpower—both Arab and non-Arab.

There is a strong perception that Gulf Cooperation Council nationals are under-represented in the UN and UNDP. It was brought to the attention of the evaluation team that there was only one UAE national working in the entire UNDP (and who has since left UNDP). While there is appreciation for international professionals' contributions to UAE development, there are also concerns about over-reliance on expatriate and international expertise. A few government representatives also mentioned that although the UAE and Gulf Cooperation Council members make significant contributions to the UN, very few nationals from these countries work in either the UN or UNDP.

3.4.2 PROGRAMME MONITORING

The two country programmes reviewed did not have measurable results or outcomes for monitoring and reporting UNDP programme performance. Considering the small size of the office, there was no dedicated staff or resources for project monitoring, and project documentation was weak. The country office made specific efforts to collect project information for the evaluation. Though financial information is available from 2004, descriptions of activities for projects were lacking. The country office made efforts to collate financial and project information for the ADR. However, inconsistencies and lack of detailed project information has been a challenge for the evaluation. The financial information was not always complete or scrutinised for consistency. The country office relied on Memorandum of Understanding as a basis for project implementation which was inadequate, and there were no project documents. In the absence of monitoring and evaluation systems, periodic reviews of the project there was no information on programme process, implementation and progress.

In the absence of fixed funds from the government for programming and in the face of uncertainty of service demands from the government, the evaluation understands the challenges for UNDP to outline measurable results and indicators. However, since the country programme

documents were prepared after considerable negotiation with the government, the mismatch between the outcomes and UNDP activities seems less justifiable. Ideally, service-related activities should be a single country programme outcome and not permeate all the outcomes—as is the case in the ongoing country programme. The unrealistic country programme framework also points to the need for an approach that differs from the ‘regular’ UNDP country programme model.

There was limited project and output monitoring and UNDP was less than successful in implementing Results Based Management. This negatively affected the UNDP ability to provide services for the government agencies. In addition, the lack of monitoring of the funds provided to other UNDP country offices has been a major issue for many philanthropic foundations that provided those funds. The foundations expect periodic monitoring reports and reports on the funded projects’ contributions to development results. For this reason, some foundations do not see any value addition in providing development and humanitarian aid through the country office.

A related issue is the need for enhanced corporate oversight for countries with contexts similar to the UAE. The oversight of net contributor countries in the Regional Bureau for the Arab States has considerably improved in the past years. There is need, however, for further monitoring and oversight.

A widely reported inefficiency was poor communications with the partners and timely responsiveness. Some operations took much longer than they should have, and government stakeholders had to wait for long periods to be updated on the status of their activities with UNDP. It was reported that this causes problems for government agencies that are expected to adhere to strict government requirements of efficiency, accountability and annual reporting on project progress. Similar views were expressed by philanthropic foundations, as in the case of aid projects with the Red Crescent and the Zayed Bin Sultan Foundation. Stakeholders also shared several instances where UNDP was unresponsive to service requests.

For example, the National Bureau of Statistics has expressed interest in UNDP supporting an assessment the Millennium Development Goals in the UAE, and indicated that there has been no follow-up on this from UNDP. Subsequent to the evaluation, the UNDP Country Office has now responded to this request for assistance.

3.4.3 ACCOUNTABILITY AND MEASUREMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Country programme documents were not a useful management and accountability tool for the UAE country office, due to the uncoordinated, activity-driven nature of the country programme. The country programme document approved by the Executive Board of UNDP was not followed by a country programme action plan agreed by both government and UNDP. Lack of a programme agreement makes accountability on both sides obscure. Problems for the country office arose because projects were requested, designed and signed on with federal or emirate government agencies without any central coordination or unified monitoring and evaluation procedures. For example, it is difficult to develop an annual work plan for the office because service demand may come at any time and outside the scope of original plan. To develop synergies between interventions, designing horizontal cross-ministry public administration initiatives or using the country programme document as a management and accountability tool, the evaluation points that it is imperative for UNDP to involve its government counterpart in the individual partnerships it enters with various government and ministries. This has not been the practice of UNDP, and in the absence of annual programme and finance reporting the government counterpart is not aware of all the initiatives of UNDP in the country.

UNDP programme strategy is not adapted to the requirement where a multi-pronged approach to programme partnerships and accountability is required. There is no long-standing, systematic evaluation and documentation tradition in the government and no government body has responsibility for evaluation and monitoring activities.

The scope of UNDP makes programme accountability less viable as well as less visible.

In addition to normal UNDP corporate accountability and performance measurement systems (e.g. results-oriented annual report/Resident Coordinator's annual report), the evaluations specific to UNDP activities in the UAE are the two Country Programme Reviews (May 2000 and December 2006) and an evaluation of the Palm Oil Project. Considering that the UAE government finances the projects, this approach

to evaluation means that the costs of undertaking an evaluation are not included, even for large projects. Efforts to further evaluation culture on the part of UNDP have been limited. Although there was an evaluation plan for the previous programme it was not fully implemented. The ongoing programme does not have an evaluation plan. There have been efforts more recently to rectify this. The country programme has included a budget line for monitoring and evaluation one of its recent projects.

Chapter 4

UNDP CONTRIBUTIONS TO NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The UAE government is making significant efforts to address development needs in areas of economic diversification, social policy formulation, governance, national human capital development and employment, environment and reducing regional disparities within the country. The ADR examined UNDP engagement in supporting the national development efforts.

Given the difficulties in establishing a clear relationship between UNDP activities and their contributions to development results, it would be problematic to categorize UNDP activities according to country programme areas. Most activities were ad hoc, lasted for a short duration or were out of their programme areas' scope. In some cases, for example, in the area of environment, hardly any activities had started by the time the evaluation took place.

Table 6. Classification of projects according to the nature of engagement, 2002-2011

Nature of engagement	2002–2007	2008–2011
Substantive engagement	5	6
Primarily administrative or logistics support	18	15

Based on the nature of engagement and UNDP contributions, the projects are broadly classified into two categories: primarily administrative or logistics support and substantive engagement. The first category includes projects that pertained to hiring technical experts and procurement and had very little engagement in terms of their inputs or contributions to their respective government agencies. Projects that are classified as 'substantive engagement' are those in which UNDP played a greater role in design, implementation and quality assurance.

In both country programmes, projects with more substantive engagement have been limited (see Table 6), and UNDP has primarily provided administrative and logistical services. Similarly, in terms of programme expenditures, the predominant spending is related to projects that are primarily administrative or logistical services (see Table 7). In the ongoing programme, the human development reports in two emirates (in Sharjah and Abu Dhabi) have marginally increased the number of projects with more substantive engagement. The ADR also took note of an environment project that has commenced after the data collection for the evaluation.

Table 7. Expenditure by type of programme (US\$ Thousands)

Nature of engagement	2002–2007		2008–2011	
	Allocations	Expenditure	Allocations	Expenditure
Substantive engagement	499	521	1,538	887
Primarily administrative or logistics	10,281	8,595	7,349	5,616

4.1 PROCUREMENT AND RECRUITMENT SERVICES

In the two country programmes reviewed, services delivered by UNDP were related to recruiting technical experts for institutional development, research, organizing workshops and knowledge transfer and management; procurement of equipment; and logistics support. UNDP had limited accountability regarding the technical experts' contributions, as UNDP exercised limited choice in recruiting technical experts; the relevant government agency drove the process.

UNDP engaged with some agencies over longer periods, such as projects with the Date Palm Research Centre, the Ministry of Finance and Industry, the Ministry of Economy, and the UAE Armed Forces. UNDP has facilitated logistics and hiring for the Date Palm Research Centre for over ten years, and in conjunction with the United Nations Office for Project Services, UNDP facilitated the transportation of date palm saplings. UNDP has worked to support meteorological services to the UAE Armed Forces for the past five years. Activities include assisting in recruiting the personnel management team and procuring a geo-hydro meteorological data system. For the Ministries of Economic Development and Finance and Industry, UNDP facilitated recruitment of technical experts.

Between 2002 and 2007, the country programme was activity-oriented and did not include outcomes against which progress could be assessed. UNDP provided services to the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Ministry of Finance and Industry, the National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority, the Ministry of Finance, the Federal National Council, Dubai Customs, and the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry. UNDP facilitated organizing several seminars, conference and workshops for federal and emirate government entities, such as the Executive Council, the Dubai Economic Department, the Dubai Municipality and the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In addition, UNDP facilitated securing

experts for deliver workshops such as Economic Policy Making and Introduction to Computable Equilibrium Models. Due to UNDP and government staff turnover, the evaluation team could not ascertain the effectiveness and efficiency of these activities.

During the current programme, UNDP assisted the Federal National Council prepare for the 2008 elections by providing personnel for technical and advisory services. In addition, UNDP continued to provide services to the Ministry of Economy, UAE armed forces and the Date Palm Research Centre. While the proposed projects were carried out and outputs achieved, very little progress has been made in terms of the outcomes outlined in the country programme. For example:

- In the environment component of the programme, UNDP aimed to achieve *“enhanced capacity of federal and local governments in implementing the ‘National Environmental Action Plan’ and enforcement of environmental regulations.”* However, UNDP’s role in facilitating logistics for the Date Palm Research Centre and providing administrative support to the UAE armed forces to set up meteorological systems does not contribute to the stated outcome. The partnership with Dubai Carbon Centre of Excellence, which possibly would contribute to this outcome, only commenced in the third quarter of 2011.
- In the governance component, the outcomes were *“strengthened democratic governance institutions and functions ... improved capacity of federal and emirate level institutions in strategic planning resource management and service delivery ... [and] gender mainstreaming and empowerment.”* The activities included for the first two outcomes involved facilitating technical support to the UAE Federal National Council (human resources for capacity-building for Federal National Council members and staff in order to support parliamentary development), Ministry of Finance and Industry (modernizing public

resources management and increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of federal government spending), and the Ministry of Foreign Trade (personnel for capacity building to enable entry of UAE to the World Trade Organization). UNDP did not provide technical support or professional expertise for any of these activities. It would not, therefore, be logical to make linkages between UNDP activities and the proposed outcomes. Similarly, it would not be rational to link UNDP activities to the results of the respective ministries to whom services were provided.

Perceptions of UNDP effectiveness in contributing to services have been mixed. Some federal government agencies were satisfied with UNDP services, as they tend to be much faster and less cumbersome than government procedures. There were however, several instances of considerable delays in providing services.

With some exceptions there has been a lack of continuity in most government agencies seeking UNDP services. In most cases (14 of 19 activities analysed), UNDP provided one-off services of short duration. Since June of 2011, UNDP is not providing any services to Date Palm Research Centre. To retain service related partnerships with agencies such as UAE Armed forces, further efforts on the part of UNDP were found to be needed.

UNDP was not in a position to respond to some service requests, or its services have been weak in areas outside of its core strengths (e.g. in the areas of fiscal analysis or consumer protection laws). Government stakeholders noted instances in which UNDP was not able to provide good candidates for technical support. In addition, there were considerable delays in identifying and recruiting technical experts. Poor networking with other UN agencies and lack of partnerships with expert networks and research and policy institutions (either internal or external to the UAE) constrained UNDP's ability to provide services outside of its regular programme areas.

UNDP did not provide policy advice—even in areas where UNDP has a comparative advantage, such as sustainable environment, governance and public administration, social development policy, and promoting gender equality. For example, in supporting the Date Palm Research Centre there was considerable scope to expand the UNDP role beyond logistics; in promoting date palm cultivation as a viable economic activity, particularly in northern emirates. Another missed opportunity was replicating the best practices of the Centre, particularly date palm cultivation for poverty alleviation and income generation in developing countries that have large arid areas. The government were inclined to support initiatives that enabled sharing UAEs best practices.

Although UNDP activities in the ongoing programme appeared to be relevant to the UAE context, many interviewed stakeholders suggested that UNDP could improve its involvement in the UAE by making greater efforts to provide timely professional services. Some observers considered UNDP development activities and services to be more suitable to the northern emirates. However, the country office did not seem to make the northern emirates a priority or focus area. The country office has made programme scoping visits to the northern emirates in 2010 and 2011. Lack of necessary funding was cited as the key reason for not carrying out programmes in northern emirates. Most official meetings conducted by the country office were targeted at the larger emirates of Abu Dhabi and Dubai. This approach by UNDP appears inconsistent with the reality, as these two emirates often rely on alternative providers that have better capabilities and are more responsive and attentive to the governments' needs. Across the emirates, interviewees noted that it is easier to hold private sector providers responsible if government clients deem services provided unsatisfactory. Some respondents suggested that using local and global consultancy and service providers is cheaper and more efficient than using the UNDP services. Even when costs are comparable, the expected delays and lack of post-service follow-up raise the costs of using UNDP relative to other providers.

Fees from services provided (overheads) were not adequate for funding substantive activities. The ADR findings point that UNDP was not always the preferred agency for providing services. About \$6 million over the period of four years is low in a country where the government regularly uses the services of over 150 consultancy firms and multilaterals (e.g. The World Bank). According to UNDP, the presence of a large number of professional consultancy firms in the UAE constrained its ability to mobilize a sizable portfolio; the number of consultancy firms creates a highly competitive area of technical and policy services. Unlike the country office, the consultancy firms have the human resources and capacity to mobilize technical expertise in a short notice. However, this is true only to the extent that there is demand in the country for quality and timely services and for services from firms, institutions and organizations that have an international reputation.

To capitalize on UAE development opportunities required better professionalism on the part of UNDP; and using services related activities to strengthen more substantive development partnerships. UNDP was short of a structured approach to addressing service needs and engaging a wide range of government institutions. There were concerns about timely service delivery and financial reporting. Even the UNDP counterpart agency had misgivings about funding future UNDP operations in the country. In areas where UNDP has organizational expertise (e.g. gender mainstreaming, governance reforms and climate change), the government preferred to work with other agencies or consultancy firms. Several factors contributed to UNDP's inability to respond to service needs in the country. UNDP was short of professional staff who could prepare proposals or could quality-assure the work of its consultants. For the same reason the country office could not quickly network and mobilize the required services for the government. Absence of senior national staff who could liaison with the government continues to be a weakness. More importantly, UNDP did not develop partnerships

with leading research and policy institutions in order to access the required expertise on short notice. It was evident that UNDP capacity to provide services has been becoming less suitable for the developed emirates.

Government stakeholders further pointed out that UNDP should be more astute in identifying service needs and in convincing the respective agency about cost effectiveness, efficiency and value of UNDP services. When UNDP did submit proposals for technical support (e.g. with the Ministry for Economy), they were considered poor in quality and not reflective of the Ministry's needs and expectations.

4.2 MAKING A SUBSTANTIVE DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTION

Compared to the previous country programme, the ongoing country programme spends a much higher portion of funds on substantive activities. During the previous programme, 5.7 percent of the total funds were spent on substantive engagement, while in the current programme it has been 13.6 percent. The higher spending was mainly due to the Sharjah and Abu Dhabi Human Development Reports. The following sections discuss activities that involved UNDP technical and policy inputs during the two country programmes.

4.2.1 ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Rapid economic growth and urbanization intensify UAE vulnerabilities to environmental and climate change impacts, and exacerbates the challenges of managing these risks. The city of Dubai has one of the highest per capita carbon footprints in the world, mainly attributed to fossil fuel consumption for desalinization and providing environmental services to high-rise buildings. The federal government and the Abu Dhabi and Dubai emirates have made environment and renewable energy issues a priority. There have been ongoing efforts in these two emirates towards reducing carbon footprints. Abu Dhabi has made significant efforts towards promoting

more sustainable use of energy (for example, the Masdar city initiative) and hosts the International Renewable Energy Agency.⁴⁸ During a 2011 UN Secretary General's visit, environment issues were part of deliberations with the government.

In 1999 UNDP along with UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia supported the formulation of the second part of the National Environmental Strategy and the National Action Plan, an initiative of the Federal Environmental Agency.⁴⁹ The Strategy adopted in 2002 is comprehensive, covering the availability of fresh water, air and water pollution, conserving the marine and urban environments, land resources and degradation, and biodiversity. UNDP, in coordination with the Economic and Social Commission, also provided policy advice on water resources management at the federal and emirate level.

Since 2002, UNDP has not significantly engaged in the urbanization, environment or climate change areas. UNDP is yet to tap into its corporate expertise or mobilizing support to engage in high-level environment and climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts in UAE. UNDP faced considerable competition in this area from other UN agencies and private consultancy firms and institutions.

Despite the importance of environment issues, there were limited activities undertaken to contribute to the environment outcome in the current country programme, particularly related to capacity development in environmental monitoring and law enforcement or facilitate the support of specialized agencies. In early 2011,

UNDP entered into a partnership with the Dubai Carbon Centre of Excellence.⁵⁰ There were some institutional challenges in commencing the project. The implementation has started in the third quarter of 2011 and according to the country office it has supported the development of seven carbon projects of UAE that have been or are being submitted to the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism. Since this is after the evaluation data collection period, it was not possible for the ADR to provide other stakeholder perspective on the possible contribution of this project. This is a good opportunity for UNDP to more substantively engage in and contribute to this key issue. The country office has also made efforts to strengthen staff capacities in the area of environment and the Deputy Resident Representative who was recruited in mid-2011, brings this expertise.

Considering the enormity of the issue in the emirates, reducing carbon footprint and renewable energy is on the top of the agenda. Stakeholders however noted the equal importance of other environment issues, such as water management, wild- and marine life protection and desertification, particularly in northern emirates. Compared to climate change mitigation, these issues were perceived as much easier areas for UNDP to contribute to. In Ras Al Khaimah, Fujairah, and Umm Al-Quwain, for example, senior government officials cited environmental protection and sustainability, protecting wild- and marine life and water management as potential areas for collaboration. UNDP has yet to make efforts to work on these issues with the northern emirates.

48 Initiated in 2007 by the government of Abu Dhabi, the Masdar City, a custom-designed settlement is intended to be "the world's first zero-carbon city." It aims to rely entirely on renewable energy — mostly solar — and would produce zero waste. See <http://www.masdarcity.ae/en/>.

49 Government of UAE, Federal Environment Agency, 2002, 'National Environmental Strategy and the National Action Plan', Abu Dhabi.

50 The Centre aims to reduce Dubai's per capita carbon footprint to the lowest in the Gulf Cooperation Council and create the region's leading knowledge repository on carbon matters. The repository is intended to be widely accessible and help establish a climate change venture capital fund. The purpose of the venture capital fund is to provide resources and incentives sufficient to attract leading global technology companies to Dubai to help achieve carbon-neutrality.

4.2.2 MDG REPORT

The UAE ratified the UN Millennium Declaration underpinning their commitment to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in the country as well as help achieve them in the least developed and countries in crisis. The UAE outlined its concept for achieving the MDGs in the first follow-up Report, prepared in 2004 by the Ministry of Economy, with the collaboration of the UNDP. The Second MDG report was prepared in 2007 by the Ministry of Economy with the support of UNDP.

While the MDG report is not seen crucial to informing policies in areas such as the environment, women's empowerment or reducing regional disparities, the government is making significant efforts to address these issues based on specific assessments on the subject. The UAE government has been planning to prepare the next MDG report. The evaluation found that the UNDP can be more proactive in collaborating on this. Some stakeholders noted that UNDP association with the MDG reports, in the UAE and other Gulf Cooperation Council members, is essential for authentication of the reporting. In a high income context with continuing issues in some areas of human development, support to MDG reporting should also be associated with policy engagement in select areas. UNDP work in this area is limited and scattered and needs better consolidation and focus.

A significant component of UAE development aid supports MDG achievement efforts in least developed countries and countries in crisis. While some resources have been mobilized for programme support in other countries, it was not evident that UNDP comprehensively engaged these issues. During the two country programmes, UNDP contributions to furthering the MDGs in the UAE were limited. This was mainly due to a lack of long-term engagement in areas such as economic diversification, furthering employment opportunities in the northern emirates, reducing regional disparities between the northern and southern emirates, women's empowerment and environment sustainability.

The UAE has supported achieving the MDGs as a determining factor for maintaining world peace, security and prosperity. The government strongly believes that achieving the MDGs will require an effective global partnership within the framework of the recommendations of the Millennium Declaration and other conferences on development, particularly the 'Monterey Consensus' and the 'Doha Declaration on Financing for Development'. UAE development stakeholders were of the view that given its MDG mandate, UNDP is in an advantageous position to collaborate with the government on this—but failed to leverage this organizational strength. UNDP did not use an appropriate strategy to engage on broader agenda of MDGs and the missed opportunities to support UAE further its commitment to support global achievement of the MDGs.

4.2.3 GENDER EQUALITY

Addressing gender-related issues by UNDP was comparatively better in the 2002–2007 programme, although no specific activities related to gender equality or women's empowerment were proposed in the programme. In 2006, UNDP along with UNIFEM, supported developing the 'National Strategy for the Advancement of Women', which is now being implemented. UNDP facilitated training for women entrepreneurs in partnership with the General Women's Union and UNIFEM (now part of UN Women) and organized a symposium on Enhancing the Role of Arab Women Parliamentarians in Public Life in Abu Dhabi. A similar partnership was forged in a UNDP regional programme for capacity development for women parliamentarians in Arab regions, in which the UAE participated.

To facilitate further the implementation of the 'Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women', UNDP and the General Women's Union formulated the 'National Gender Mainstreaming Initiative.' With the support of British embassy, UNDP carried out a short initiative to further gender mainstreaming in development planning. UNDP facilitated the Economic and Social Commission

for Western Asia advisory missions to the Abu Dhabi Department of Planning in order to strengthen capacities in using population census results for planning the Department of Planning's activities in general, and on gender in particular.

In the ongoing programme, UNDP included an outcome to achieve "gender mainstreaming and empowerment." With the exception of a one-off gender mainstreaming training, UNDP did not engage in any activities to contribute to the outcome. Identifying a need for a more coherent response in this important area UNDP has recently taken steps to develop a strategy for UNDP engagement in furthering gender equality and women's empowerment. The strategy has yet to be discussed with the government and finalised at the time of the evaluation.

Overall, UNDP participation in and support for furthering gender equality and women's empowerment was limited and did not match UAE national needs—despite the government's significant efforts. Addressing gender as a cross-cutting issue was also not effective. Discussions suggest that the General Women's Union in Abu Dhabi is in the process of developing a gender strategy for the next five years. Some of the priority issues for the General Women's Union that came up during discussion include strengthening the capacities of the national statistical centre in Abu Dhabi on sex-disaggregated data; addressing gender issues related to youth; conducting a study to identify areas for action to address needs of the working women; and following up on the gender assessment of policies and legislations carried out OECD study to support gender responsive legislation. It was also evident that the General Women's Union was seeking not only technical support and collaboration for policy analysis, but also support for information management and training for strengthening staff capacities.

UNDP did not respond to these needs in a either a strategic or a sustained manner. UNDP was also unsuccessful in getting headquarters' or the regional centre's support to improve country office capacities. In addition, technical collaboration with the UNIFEM/UN Women regional

and global office was limited. Considering that, the country office recruited a gender adviser in June 2011 and is pursuing a systematic engagement on these issues.

There was also ambivalence to engaging in issues related to gender equality and women's rights due to the perception of possible sensitivities related to these issues. Considering that gender equality is a priority issue in UAE and the government is systematically addressing these issues there does not seem to be any justification for hesitating to proactively work on them.

In early 2011, the government, with the support of OECD, carried a gender analysis of UAE legislation, policies and strategies. There are ongoing efforts to develop gender-responsive legislations and policies. The government is aware that although the UAE is ahead of other Middle East and North African countries in terms of gender indicators, it is behind globally. The government is making concerted efforts to raise the status of its gender-adjusted human development index. Despite this context, UNDP did not capitalize on the momentum to facilitate the government's efforts in carrying out studies and reviews and related reforms.

UNDP had minimal partnerships with non-governmental organizations working on women's empowerment. Some non-governmental organizations cited as impediments to collaborating with UNDP the high formality, official protocol requirements, and logistical and bureaucratic procedures needed to approach the country office. While some of these perceptions are not substantiated, UNDP needed to allay these perceptions about working with UNDP by strengthening its communications with the NGO sector.

4.2.4 HIV AND AIDS

In the area of HIV/AIDS UNDP held awareness-raising activities in both country programmes; UNDP, along with UNICEF and the World Health Organization supported the Ministry of Health and the UAE Red Crescent Society held activities that included orientation sessions and

training workshops for high schools, university students and medical professionals. The scope and scale of these activities have been modest. Because participation was not documented, it was not possible to analyse the project's effectiveness. In the current programme, the outcome on HIV and AIDS is at the activity level ("HIV/AIDS outreach programmes"), though activities towards achieving this have been limited. The ADR found that the scale of UNDP efforts in the area of HIV and AIDS was too limited to make any meaningful contribution in terms of policy or government practice.

4.2.5 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORTS

A significant initiative in the ongoing programme is the launch of UNDP-supported human development reports in Abu Dhabi and Sharjah. The Sharjah report was published in April 2011. The Abu Dhabi human development report is ongoing. There were indications that emirate-level human development reports have generated interest, leading to an increase in the probability of launching a national human development report.

The Department of Economic Development initiated the ongoing Abu Dhabi human development report and has considerable ownership in it. At the time this evaluation was conducted, draft chapters had been prepared. It was too early for the ADR to determine the quality or adherence to overall methodology. Lack of Arabic language skills among senior professional staff (barring the Resident Coordinator) is a challenge in ensuring the quality of the report.

There were considerable delays in the completion of the Sharjah Human Development Report on time. The report has had extensive delays and quality issues. The government agency responsible for coordinating the report raised concerns about the country office's approach and its response to various drafts of the report. While some of the delay was due to the change in country office leadership, the general perception was that the UNDP lacked consistency in its approach and process. There was also a lack of UNDP

guidance on methodology or using the opportunity to explore incorporating new aspects such as modified education and knowledge indicators and participation. The rigour of Sharjah report had scope for improvement and did not send the right message to national stakeholders, and some of the federal government ministries are pessimistic about the usefulness of human development reports. The country office has indicated that the Sharjah government has approached UNDP for the next human development report. This is a good indication that at the federal level there is interest in preparing the reports.

The human development report is in many ways a flagship activity of UNDP UAE, and much depends on its quality. A quality Abu Dhabi human development report will also allay cynicism among some government representatives regarding the reports' usefulness. Better synergies with UNDP initiatives such as Arab Knowledge Report' project were found to be needed particularly for human reports initiative. This was not only essential for using the data collected for the 'Arab Knowledge Report' (and vice versa), but also for including topical issues in the human development report.

4.3 SUPPORTING STRONGER GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

4.3.1 FACILITATING GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

The robustness of UAE humanitarian and development cooperation provides considerable opportunities to inform the country's aid agenda. While there is scope for UNDP to share lessons from its long development experience in many parts of the world, very little has been done to engage in this process. There is no specific outcome in the two country programmes related to supporting global partnerships, although there is mention of efforts that would be made to further MDG 8 (develop a global partnership for development) by mobilizing resources for UNDP programmes in other countries.

Contrary to the perception of the UAE as an “emerging donor”, the country has a long history of development cooperation and humanitarian aid in both bilateral aid and direct assistance provided by traditional aid agencies and philanthropic foundations. UAE foreign aid during the last four decades is estimated at \$38 billion. The external aid provided by the UAE surpassed the UN target of 0.7 percent of the country’s gross national income—the \$2.5 billion in 2009 provided to 92 countries is about 1 percent of the country’s gross national income.⁵¹ Particularly in the past two years, UNDP did not use the opportunity to inform the UAE development cooperation, to advocate for MDG achievement or to bring crisis prevention into the UAE agenda.

In recent years, the UAE government has made efforts to adopt a systematic approach to development and humanitarian aid. Aid was not only considered as a foreign policy instrument, but also as an opportunity to expand the country’s role and engagement in multilateral global development cooperation. The UAE has taken measures to increase the visibility of its aid. A significant effort was the 2009 establishment of Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid. Measures are underway to ensure greater clarity of aid parameters and areas of emphasis. Discussions during the evaluation indicate that the UAE has prioritized providing aid to MDG 1 and 2 and for humanitarian support.

The UNDP MDG mandate and its extensive presence in over 135 countries has a broad appeal and makes it an appropriate agency to be involved in development aid issues. However, UNDP has been ineffective in leveraging this organizational advantage. UNDP could not secure headquarters support (either the Regional Bureau for the Arab States or the Bureau for Partnership) to put a

well-structured system in place in order to inform international cooperation and to mobilize resources for UNDP programmes in other countries.

UAE efforts towards transparency on aid flows are also important from the perspectives of the 2005 ‘Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness’ and the 2008 ‘Accra Agenda for Action’. There are areas where the UAE wants to hone its perspective on development aid. It is evident that UAE largely affirms the need for aid harmonization, national ownership, and alignment with country-specific needs as a primary concern. Although UAE agrees with the ‘Paris Declaration’ and the ‘Accra Agenda’, there is a perceived need in the country to ensure that the global aid architecture is sufficiently nuanced to reflect the Arab regional perspective. UNDP was unresponsive to the ongoing discussions and lacked perspective on these issues. Position papers were needed, particularly in preparation for the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness meeting in Busan, South Korea. The government approached Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to prepare background paper of the Busan conference. Although UNDP explored the possibility of engaging on this issue it was not successful in securing the collaboration of the Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid on this. Besides lack of speedy follow-up, the project oriented approach for contributing to efforts such as this, appears to be a factor constraining UNDP participation. This in many ways is a lost opportunity to inform government perspective.

Though the government is the major contributor of external aid, philanthropic foundations and non-governmental organizations in the UAE contributed \$23 million of the \$498 million of total aid in 2009.⁵² Government and non-government aid is closely linked in the UAE. Foundations and

51 Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid, 2010 report.

52 Key non-governmental organizations that extended aid were the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development, Al Maktoum Foundation, Dubai Cares, Dubai Charity Association, International Humanitarian City, Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan Foundation, Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Humanitarian and Charity Establishment, Noor Dubai, Sharjah Charity Association, Sheikhha Fatima bint Mubarak Fund for Refugee Women, the UAE Red Crescent Authority, Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan Charitable and Humanitarian Foundation and the Zayed Foundation for Charitable and Humanitarian Aid.

NGOs have their preferred funding areas and are engaged in both humanitarian and development support. There is considerable scope for UNDP to facilitate more informed choices of the foundations and mobilize funds for UNDP programmes. UNDP established partnerships with only three foundations, and has yet to explore the full potential of engaging these institutions.

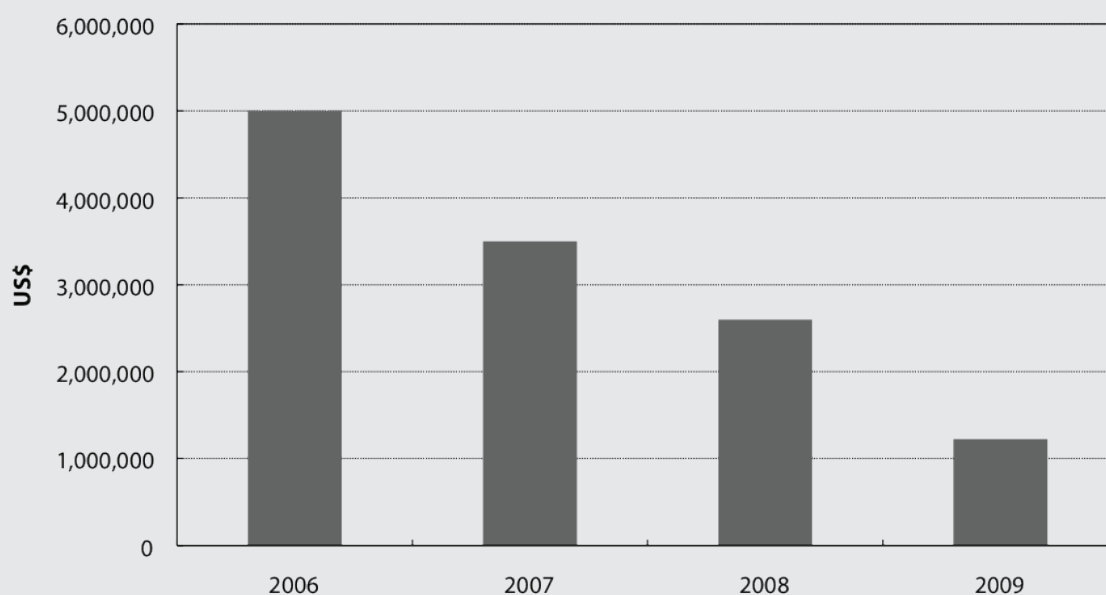
UNDP has yet to explore the key development issue of sharing best practices from the UAE with other countries. Government stakeholders held the view that the UAE has a lot to share with Gulf Cooperation Council members and other countries. Discussions indicate that there is no systematic approach that identifies best practices of UAE for replication in other countries. This is an area in which UNDP can establish a niche; UNDP needs to make concerted efforts in order to enable this.

4.3.2 MOBILIZING RESOURCES FOR UNDP

Since 2006, UNDP has mobilized approximately \$12 million from the Bin Zayed Foundation, Khalifa Foundation and the Red Crescent (see Figure 7).⁵³ Countries that received support include Afghanistan, Comoros, Indonesia, Iraq, Myanmar, Palestine, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen. According the 2006 review of the UNDP programme, UNDP facilitated the mobilization of funds for a regional UNIFEM/UN Women project for Arab Women Parliamentarians, a UNICEF project in Indonesia to build 25 maternal health clinics and a UN-HABITAT project in Sri Lanka.⁵⁴

Resource mobilization was comparatively better in the previous country programme. There has been a gradual reduction in the funds mobilized by UNDP, particularly in the ongoing programme.

Figure 7. Funds mobilized during 2006-2009



53 There have been inconsistencies in the reporting and data provided to the evaluation team. According to country office data, \$12 million to \$14 million has been mobilized so far. However, a review of the country office programme puts the figure at \$16 million. See Mahmoud Abdel Fadel et.al, 2006.

54 Ibid.

Considering the scale of aid provided by the UAE government and the foundations, funds mobilization by UNDP has been weak. UNDP has not been effective in playing the liaison role for mobilizing resources.

The foundations that channelled funds through UNDP to other countries had the expectation of periodic programme and financial reports, monitoring timely implementation of the projects by the recipient UNDP offices and media coverage of the activities supported. UNDP has not been effective in coordinating the progress of projects funded by the foundations to other UNDP countries. Donor interviews reveal considerable and widespread dissatisfaction with progress reporting and implementation delays. Though the latter is beyond the purview of UNDP UAE, there was lack of coordination with the recipient countries to provide finance and progress reports. There were serious disagreements at least in a few cases, to the extent that one of the foundations wanted to suspend funding and ask for reimbursement of the grant provided. In addition, the UNDP country office did not respond to foundations' repeated enquiries. As a result, the foundations do not see the benefit of channelling funds through UNDP UAE and thus current partnerships may be lost.

Interviews with the foundations indicate a shift towards bilateral support. Some foundations foresee a monitoring role of UNDP offices in the recipient country. UNDP needs to strengthen its capacities to play an effective liaison role as a channel for funds to other countries. UNDP did not have systems in place for structured resource mobilization, coordinating project monitoring or providing periodic reports. UNDP lacked essential communication mechanisms to give visibility to foundations' activities. While it has been contemplated for some time, UNDP has yet to establish a liaison unit for fund mobilization with a team specifically responsible for

coordinating with country offices or for providing periodic reporting and communications briefs.

Systemizing aid processes in the UAE requires that UNDP take a more structured approach to resource mobilization. UNDP lacked a fund mobilization strategy tailored to the Arab region that includes four of the top international development and humanitarian assistance donors—Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait and Qatar. Engaging with foundations and the government for resource mobilization is often beyond the country office's capacity. For effective fund mobilization in UAE, UNDP requires a strategy that includes an effective presentation of UNDP work and systems for monitoring, reporting and communications. UNDP should clarify what it will offer to prospective partnerships in terms of knowledge and human resources. The approach should also incorporate cultural sensitivities.

4.3.3 LINKAGES WITH REGIONAL PROGRAMMES

The two country programmes under review refer to optimizing regional initiatives in order to access expertise, there, however, are limited indications of significant engagement. The country office and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia collaborated to provide advisory support to the Foundation. The country office did not leverage on the ongoing regional initiatives. For example, UNDP country office did not leverage on the Arab Knowledge Report programme. The Arab Knowledge Report, a regional programme funded by the Al Maktoum Foundation, has successfully produced two reports so far (the more recent one ready to be published). There is limited engagement between the country office and the Dubai-based regional programme office. Better consolidation of programmes of UNDP located in UAE has the possibility of strengthening the capacities of the country office as well as its profile.

Chapter 5

STRATEGIC POSITIONING OF UNDP IN A NET CONTRIBUTOR COUNTRY

In 1999, the UNDP Executive Board recognized the “important contribution that UNDP brings to supporting net contributor countries ... in their pursuit of the objectives of sustainable human development” and considered net contributor countries “as a separate group of programme countries outside of the [target for resources assignment from the core] distribution model.”⁵⁵ UNDP since has been providing a range of development services to 69 middle- and high-income countries, which includes 46 net contributing countries.⁵⁶ There are five net contributing countries in the Regional Bureau for Arab States region: Bahrain, Kuwait, Libya, Saudi Arabia and the UAE. There are variations among these net contributing countries, from high-income countries to middle-income countries. There are also variations in terms of achievement of the MDGs, democratic governance, institutional capacities and justice and security. Therefore, there is no common programming approach for UNDP to take in these countries, and each

country’s country programme is expected to adapt to the context and priorities.

There have been several assessments and corporate policy discussions, outlining the areas in which UNDP should participate in middle-income and net contributor countries, and also suggesting possible ways forward for programming these countries.⁵⁷ A related discussion at the UNDP corporate level has been about the universality of the UNDP presence and the need for a programme presence in net contributor countries.⁵⁸ An important addition to this discussion is the Secretary General’s report on promoting development in middle-income countries.⁵⁹ The report raises important issues for UN programming in middle-income and net contributing countries, and is also relevant in high-income countries such as the UAE. The issues include: there is no well-defined agenda that guides its substantive programme content; the need to harmonize the operational policies and procedures of the UN in net contributing countries; the lack of and the

55 UNDP Executive Board decision 99/2. Also the role of UNDP in recipient and developing countries – including upper-tier middle-income country and NCCs — has been stated in various legislation and supporting EB documentation viz., DP/1992/6, DP/1999/CRP.3).

56 The “why” and the “what” of UNDP in middle-income countries — looking forward, UNDP, undated note.

57 Lemaesquier, Thierry, 2008, ‘Context and options: contribution to a strategic policy approach’, written the Task Force on UNDP’s Role in Middle-Income and Net Contributor Countries; United Nations Country Team in Mexico, 2010, ‘UNCT Mexico Response to the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations’; United Nations Regional Directors Team, 2009, ‘Joint RDT Review of MICs’, New York; United Nations General Assembly, 2009, ‘Globalization and Interdependence: Role of the United Nations in Promoting Development in the Context of Globalization and Interdependence – Development Cooperation with Middle-Income Countries’, Report of the Secretary-General, 64th Session; UNDP, 2003, ‘Net Contributor and Middle-income Countries, Toward a Corporate Strategy’, Discussion Paper, Office of Corporate Planning and Office of Budget Resources, Bureau of Management, New York.

58 UNDP, n.d., ‘Universality and UNDP: Towards a Strong Comparative Strategy’, internal.

59 United Nations General Assembly, 2009, ‘Globalization and Interdependence: Role of the United Nations in Promoting Development in the Context of Globalization and Interdependence – Development Cooperation with Middle-Income Countries’, Report of the Secretary-General, 64th Session.

difficulty in mobilizing resources; and the responsiveness to the specific needs of middle-income countries that requires adequate operational systems remain in place.⁶⁰

The point of departure for an evaluation of UNDP programmes in UAE is, however, to look at how UNDP in UAE adapted to the twin specificities of the UAE programme context—the country is both a net contributor country and a high-income country. Another relevant question is how the UNDP strategy contributed to maintaining its relevance in a highly competitive environment with a demand for innovative and high quality services.

The relationship between the UNDP and the UAE is structured around the UNDP definition of a net contributor country, which implies that the UAE does not receive UNDP core funding. Rather, the UAE government finances any programmes UNDP undertakes.⁶¹ UNDP initiatives in the UAE rely primarily on government demand and typically proceed on a contractual basis. There is, however, considerable opportunity for substantive UNDP engagement in key development areas. The added value of UNDP in the UAE lies in furthering the human development perspective and leveraging service-related activities to facilitate agenda-setting in the areas of environment and climate change, gender equality, coordinated governance and knowledge management.

The UAE is an important contributor to global development and humanitarian aid. Given its extensive presence at the country level, UNDP is in a strong position to contribute to the country's aid agenda. The following sections examine how UNDP maximized its organizational expertise and experience, positioned itself to respond to the development needs in UAE and facilitated global development partnerships.

5.1 BALANCING DIFFERENT ROLES: SUSTAINABLE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND SERVICES

National stakeholders noted that UAE development challenges are similar to those experienced in other net contributor countries. UNDP programme areas encompass several of these development challenges, including: diversification and competitiveness of the economy, creating employment opportunities (particularly for the national population), building local capacity for policy-making and service delivery, public administration and governance, promoting gender equality, protecting the environment and strengthening the country's global outreach and influence. Addressing them not only requires UNDP to be more selective in choosing areas for long-term engagement, but also requires a more nuanced approach to these issues.

In the two country programmes, the UNDP role has been relatively uniform in terms of a larger focus on providing services required by the government. Given the country's net contributor status, the UNDP programme responds to direct demand from the government agencies for services. Issues of national ownership may not seem particularly obvious to discuss, because all activities are fully financed by the government; presumably, activities are fully aligned to its needs.

There have been significant reductions in policy engagement over the years, particularly in the ongoing programme. UNDP policy engagement was far greater in the late 1990s and 2000. For example, UNDP supported the preparation of the 'Dubai Strategic Plan 1996–2000,' the 'Abu Dhabi Strategic Development Programme 2000–2010,' and the 'Ras Al-Khaimah Development Vision 2000–2009'. These strategies were guiding

60 See also: United Nations General Assembly, 2009, 'Globalization and Interdependence: Role of the United Nations in Promoting Development in the Context of Globalization and Interdependence – Development Cooperation with Middle-Income Countries', Report of the Secretary-General, 64th Session; UNDP, n.d., 'Universality and UNDP: Towards a Strong Comparative Strategy', internal.

61 Above the threshold of per capita GDP \$5,500, programme countries are considered to have graduated and are no longer eligible for core programme funding or budget support.

tools for development planning to build human and institutional capacities in achieving the envisioned developmental outcomes.

The uncertainty of its role and lack of long-term planning undermined UNDP strategic positioning. In the past five years, there have been significant decreases in the number of activities that involved UNDP substantive input. UNDP faced severe limitations in leveraging service-related activities for a more strategic role in policy support and in strengthening institutions and human resources.

The UNDP position in the UAE is atypical compared to other countries, even within the subregion. National stakeholders value UN agencies for their neutrality and impartiality and have similar views about UNDP. However, there is little institutional memory about UNDP work and contributions to development results. Despite having a programme presence for two decades, UNDP did not capitalize on its accepted neutrality to position itself favourably to further UAE development objectives.

UNDP faces the strategy question of whether it should be seen as a competitor or an alternative for consultancy firms. UNDP corporate policy did not allow country offices to compete directly with consultancy firms by submitting competing proposals or bids. The reason generally given is that UNDP has an unfair cost advantage in that UNDP is subsidized by donor funds, compared to consulting firms that UNDP would be bidding against. This however does not apply in the context of UAE where UNDP has to use its own funds and human resources to prepare proposals and compete against private consultancy firms that are predominantly from other countries. The larger point for UNDP in terms of expanding the portfolio is that the consultancy firms have financial and human resources to prepare proposals, and have a comparative advantage in securing assignments. How UNDP remains relevant in a context such as this largely depends on its strategy to build on its advantage as a UN agency while at the same time developing capacities to provide cutting edge services.

In a highly competitive environment the demand is for services that meet international standards. Government stakeholders note that they would prefer UNDP to consultancy firms—if services meet the quality requirement (such as quickly and systematically providing suitable solutions). They also see a value addition when UN agencies provide services that bring the ‘principles of the UN’. The evaluation team’s analysis concluded that the existence of consultancy firms cannot be an excuse for UNDP non- or underperformance. Supporting the government in furthering a human development approach can only be maximized through engagement in a variety of services, particularly consultancy services that involve substantive contributions to position itself favourably to further UAE development objectives.

UNDP did not have the professionalism crucial to capitalizing on the enormous opportunities for development services. More importantly, fund mobilization through service-related activities is essential for engaging in policy discussions and other substantive activities for which there may not be immediate funding.

A highly regarded UNDP strength is its international reputation as a credible and neutral organization. This uniquely positions UNDP in the UAE, more than the private consultancy firms, to engage in policy dialogues—even on issues that are often perceived as sensitive in the UAE. With few exceptions, there was limited policy engagement. The UAE government has been revisiting policies in areas that are usually perceived by UNDP as contentious issues in the UAE; areas such as gender equality, strengthening human resources, labour issues and federal/emirate-level coordination. There were several lost opportunities, and the UNDP approach did not entail a proactive engagement on some of these issues. It was also not evident that UNDP used human development reports to engage in policy discussions.

In most other net contributor countries, UN and UNDP have maintained relevance for the countries’ regional aspirations (e.g. EU

accession or Gulf Cooperation Council integration processes). However, this does not seem to be the case of UNDP in the UAE. UNDP has been somehow detached from international and regional discourse in the UAE. The increasing role of the UAE in development and humanitarian aid focuses on both bilateral and multilateral aid. The UAE has made many efforts to systematize its aid. The UNDP role could have been important in facilitating cooperation with the global South, particularly in Africa and Asia.

Lack of visibility of UNDP or its activities among the government and other national stakeholders was evident from the evaluation discussions. Even those who worked with UNDP were only aware of those activities they were directly involved with, and were uncertain of the UNDP mandate and activities in the country—many stakeholders were unaware that UNDP still operated in the country. While there has been some improvement in visibility over the past year, it has not significantly changed the poor understanding of UNDP work or its mandate. The few stakeholders who were familiar with UNDP construed the absence of core resources as a lack of interest in the country's development discourse. UNDP has not been successful in communicating its role in the net contributor country context.

5.2 PARTNERSHIPS

UNDP activities in the UAE entailed partnerships with federal and emirate governments, philanthropic foundations, universities and the private sector. Bilateral and multilateral funding for UNDP programmes is minimal, with the exception of a small amount of funding from the British embassy. The nature of partnerships has largely been vertical, providing services with limited horizontal partnerships that maximized UNDP strengths. UNDP depends on service-related partnerships to continue its presence in the UAE. The partnerships' with philanthropic foundations that involved resource mobilization for other UNDP country offices had immense potential but lacked systematic engagement.

5.2.1 GOVERNMENT PARTNERSHIPS

UNDP engagement with the government appeared tenuous. Although not fully successful, the focus of UNDP partnerships has largely been on the federal government and the Abu Dhabi and Dubai emirates.

The Ministry of Economy has been the UNDP programme counterpart, while Ministry of Finance has been the funding counterpart. According to the country office, since the last quarter of 2011, Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the funding and programme counterpart agency for UNDP. The immediate implications of such changes could not be ascertained by the ADR.

The ADR noted certain limitation in engaging with the Ministry of Economy and in building strategic partnerships with the Government institutions. Besides the Standard Basic Agreement with the UAE Government UNDP does not have a programme agreement with the government. Most initiatives have been based on memorandum of understanding without project documents outlining the process and what the contribution of UNDP entailed. Considering the federal system of governance in UAE the Ministry of Economy was not involved in coordinating the activities of UNDP with other government agencies. The issue however has been that there was no periodic reporting or annual programme reviews organised with Ministry of Economy. As a result the Ministry did not have a complete picture of UNDP activities in the country. In working with government agencies UNDP has to constantly approach different ministries and departments on a one-to-one basis to explore opportunities for services and establishing substantive, horizontal partnerships. UNDP lacked a partnership strategy for engaging with the federal or emirate governments; and for putting in place an approach which keeps the counterpart agencies informed about the various activities of UNDP.

UNDP did not establish partnerships with northern emirates that have greater need for development services and support. Even where

official memorandums of understanding and agreements were established, much of what was promised or expected in these agreements was not fulfilled.

There was a lack of clarity on the nature of engagement that was possible—i.e. areas where UNDP has organizational expertise and can build horizontal partnerships or partnerships that are primarily related to providing administrative services. UNDP engagement with the government agencies was typically driven by the availability of funds for services, which did not require UNDP professional expertise. An opportunity in which UNDP has comparative strength and could have made substantive contributions is the new law for the ‘third sector’ (non-profit) that the Dubai Government is considering. Similarly, UNDP was not the choice of the federal government for carrying out gender analysis of policies and legislations, and this analysis was carried out by OECD.

5.2.2 COLLABORATION WITH PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS

In the past six years, UNDP has had partnerships with three prominent philanthropic foundations in the UAE and has mobilized over \$12 million for UNDP programmes in ten countries, most of them in crisis. However, UNDP partnerships with the foundations have stagnated in the past three years. The country office did not fulfil foundations’ specific expectations for the UNDP liaison role. Some of the foundations do not see the added value in partnering with UNDP UAE.

Foundations in UAE are required to spend a minimum of 35 to 50 percent of their funds for development activities in UAE. Some have sizeable development programmes in the northern emirates. More concerted efforts are required in order to build strong partnerships with the foundations working in the northern emirates.

Though it could have reduced many of the country office’s human resource insufficiencies, there was minimal collaboration with research and policy institutions in the UAE or the region. In addition to research and policy institutions, there are national and regional experts’ networks with better access and local knowledge that can be quickly mobilized. It is necessary for UNDP to collaborate with these institutions in order to capitalize on their strengths and bridge UNDP capacity, human resource and technical resource gaps. Collaborating with local research institutions and universities to provide development services would open further opportunities in the areas of policy advice, knowledge transfer, capacity building, institution strengthening and in working with the northern emirates. Such partnerships are also essential in providing faster services to the government. Government agencies were more in favour of UNDP using human resources from the country and other Gulf Cooperation Council members.

5.2.3 PARTNERSHIPS WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UNDP has not systematically pursued partnerships with civil society or the non-profit sector. Civil society agencies consulted have limited knowledge of UNDP work. UNDP is in good position to engage with civil society, to build on their strengths and to act as an interface between government and civil society. In areas such as promoting gender equality, there are local non-governmental organizations (some with government patronage) working on equal rights for women and gender-based violence. Partnering with such organizations would facilitate UNDP work moving the gender equality agenda forward. The same can be said about NGOs in environment sector. In the previous programme, UNDP collaborated with environmental non-governmental organizations⁶² but there were limitations in strengthening such partnerships.

62 UNDP, 2008, ‘Evaluation of the Role of UNDP in Net Contributor Countries of Arab Region’, Evaluation Office, New York.

The UAE also has a large private sector. The Ministry of Social Affairs and agencies such as the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce have been making efforts to promote corporate social responsibility. In the previous programme, there were a few joint initiatives as part of corporate social responsibility. For example, Royal Dutch Shell in partnership with UNDP organized the first Middle East corporate social responsibility forum, attended by representatives from the UN Global Compact.⁶³ UNDP has had limited success in establishing private sector partnerships for fund mobilization in the current programme, although there have been discussions with the Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce on corporate social responsibility issues. In the later part of 2011 UNDP developed a private sector strategy to guide its work. This should facilitate to forge partnerships with the private sector in the future.

5.2.4 COORDINATION WITH OTHER UN AGENCIES

The UN agencies in the UAE do not operate as a country team in the UAE, and coordination among UN agencies has been limited. Considering that most other UN agency's offices serve more than one country, over the years coordinating UN activities was not seen as a priority. There is, however, considerable scope for a more coordinated approach among UN agencies to maximize contributions to development results. The present Resident Coordinator's office has made efforts towards a more coordinated UN programme in the past year, particularly in developing a common programme framework, but the outcome of such efforts was not evident.

Substantive interactions between UNDP and UN agencies have been weak. While intermittent UNDP leadership in the UAE and small country offices are contributing factors to the lack of interaction and collaboration with other UN agencies, strengthening collaborations among UN agencies is an important factor for enhancing both UN

and UNDP contributions to development results. The country office senior management were of the view that the interaction among the UN agencies has improved in the past year. The ADR however found that managing stakeholders' perceptions, particularly the government's, about less congenial interactions among UN agencies remains a challenge. Many of the stakeholders consulted noted that there is considerable disengagement and competition among UN agencies. Competition among UN agencies to mobilize resources for their work in the UAE and other countries results in challenges to effective inter-agency coordination. This competition has not only been confusing from a governmental point of view, but also seen as counterproductive for UN efforts to provide services and assist the UAE development aid agenda. The Resident Coordinator's office is often perceived as UNDP.

The peculiar UN system arrangements in the UAE present both challenges and opportunities for UNDP. Appearing one of the few agencies with a country focus is an advantage, though it is a challenge to systematically engage with other UN agencies' and to leverage on their strengths. Coordinating with other UN agencies will be beneficial to UNDP, particularly in providing services that are outside of typical UNDP areas. The dual role to mobilize resources to implement the country programme, and to mobilize resources needed for activities in third countries, has not been easy for UNDP with the present country office capacities.

The UN in the UAE can maximize its strengths by devising a joint strategy for fund mobilization for least developed countries and countries in crisis, and by increasing internal coordination for supporting government efforts to promote sustainable human development. UNDP was of the view that UN agencies in the past year are more in favour of common strategic framework for UN support in UAE.

63 Mahmoud Abdel Fadil, et. al. 2006.

5.3 MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

A number of missed opportunities have already been identified in the previous chapter, for example economic diversification for income generation and further gender responsive legal frameworks and policies. Although UNDP has made significant efforts in the two country programmes to assist government agencies meet their developmental goals, recent years have seen a relative decline in UNDP contributions to national development. Discussions with government and non-government stakeholders point to many missed opportunities to maximize UNDP contributions and build more sustainable relationships. Key issues such as better coordination among federal and emirate governments, human resource development and social and economic development in northern emirates, repeatedly came up during interviews with the government and non-government stakeholders. These issues are also of great relevance to the UNDP mandate and comparative advantages. Some of the missed opportunities are discussed in the following sections, with the view that it will inform future programme of UNDP. The evaluation however found that the government was willing to accept proposals for engagement with UNDP, thus providing UNDP the space to be proactive.

5.3.1 STRENGTHENING GOVERNANCE IN NORTHERN EMIRATES

Reducing the development gap among emirates is an important issue for a more sustainable human development. UNDP missed an opportunity to work in the areas of governance, economic diversification and environment in the northern emirates, where there was considerable scope for developing such niches. While there were short-term initiatives in some northern emirates, UNDP focused largely on working with developed emirates and at the federal level. The northern emirates needed the basic bureaucratic structures to run their governments compared to southern emirates that are more sophisticated in terms of service delivery and economic development. Ajman, Ras Alkhaimah, Fujairah, and Umm Al-Quwain were found to have a greater need for the UNDP support than the southern

emirates. There was no framework to systematically work in northern emirates, where most stakeholders consulted saw a role for UNDP.

5.3.2 FACILITATING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE

Knowledge management and centres of excellence are a top priority for the UAE government. As Gulf Cooperation Council governments are transitioning away from ad hoc advisory services and outsourced consultant-derived advice to multisectoral strategies and more inclusive approaches, the UAE government recognizes the importance of building effective and sustainable evidence-based policies. This requires better data collection tools and the analytical capacity to turn information into useful and pragmatic policy advice. UNDP has made significant contributions in other net contributor and middle-income countries (e.g. the International Poverty Centre in Brazil and the Istanbul International Center for Private Sector in Development). However, UNDP contributions in these areas in the UAE have been minimal (though the recent partnership with Dubai Carbon Centre of Excellence is a small but important step in this direction).

UNDP has yet to capitalize on its corporate capacity to facilitate knowledge exchange. Government agencies have capacity gaps in information management and policy analysis. The National Bureau of Statistics, for example, has requested UNDP help to strengthen the national statistical and data management system. It also requested UNDP assistance in preparing a proposal for a new MDG evaluation report, including the services of a UNDP expert. The Ministry of Economy also raised its need for periodic economic analysis; UNDP has yet to systematically respond to such needs.

5.3.3 EDUCATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

Despite considerable investments in education, and human resource development and improvements in the availability and quality of national human capital resources, the UAE still requires a more focused and strategic approach to the

development of its human capital. This extends to areas of high importance such as knowledge transfer and management. In light of the recent economic and financial crisis, which poses new challenges such as shrinking budgetary allocations for major expansion and human resource development projects, there is increasing emphasis on nationalizing the workforce and providing greater employment opportunities for nationals. Vocational training for nationals in sectors such as health care, social services, economic and financial analysis, environmental studies and transportation are high importance items in the UAE human capital development agenda.

5.3.4 CROSS-SECTORAL COLLABORATION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Effective and well-balanced networks and partnerships among government, private sector, non-governmental organizations and foundations are essential for more inclusive development activities. This is a less developed area, as government—the sole provider of social services—is moving from needs-based policies to an integrated social development approach in which progress and sustainability are defined in terms of a participatory and inclusive approach to human development. For example, the Ministry of Social Affairs recognises the need to promote networks and partnerships among the Ministry, private-sector providers, and non-profit and charitable organizations in order to develop capacities in the non-governmental social service sector. As these networks develop, the Ministry will be able to use them as a new model for service delivery.

5.3.5 REGIONAL ISSUES

At the regional level, UNDP Headquarters in partnership with the Al Maktoum Foundation has been involved in publishing the 'Arab Knowledge Report', which presents important analysis of the conditions of knowledge in the Arab region (including in the UAE). Synergies with this initiative are extremely important for related activities such as the emirate-level human development reports supported by the country office.

Considering the projectised approach to engagement UNDP is yet to build on the synergies with other UNDP initiatives, and respond to broader issues through publications and facilitation.

5.4 FACTORS CONSTRAINING STRATEGIC POSITIONING

Understanding UNDP as a service provider and not as a multilateral organization for policy and technical cooperation with UAE is in many ways central to the constraining factors. The UAE government values the principles of UN and the added value of UNDP services that underscore those principles. There is a great deal of mutual alignment between UAE priorities and the UNDP mandate and its comparative strengths. However, the government expected high quality services, something similar to what it has been receiving from the sophisticated and astute consultancy firms operating in the region. UNDP had serious limitations in keeping up to these expectations. Those who had worked with UNDP had strong views about its lack of adequate human and technical capacities that are necessary to address the challenges facing the UAE. UNDP lacked the capacities for long-term and sustained engagement in key areas such as energy, environment and climate change, governance support to the northern emirates, public administration and gender equality. Further, country office capacities did not allow regular high-level dialogue with government agencies.

UNDP lacked a strategic approach to programming in the UAE, and has not sufficiently adapted itself to suit UAE development requirements. Considering that UNDP is a decentralized organization, there is considerable leeway for the country office to develop an appropriate strategy suitable for a more meaningful engagement beyond providing ad hoc services. The UNDP reputation and its capacity for adding value were lost in negotiations for ad hoc projects to sustain the country office. UNDP did not communicate its position or articulate its views through policy and discussion notes on issues relevant to UAE

development. The government and other agencies expect concrete proposals for action rather than just needs assessments.

The lack of predetermined funds from the government for programming is a key limitation in developing a coherent programme and in confining UNDP to short term and ad hoc service support. The country office had to follow up with each government department to seek funding for the sustainability of the office and there was limited focus on areas where UNDP could have made more substantive contributions. It was evident that the country office regularly engages in consultation with the UAE government (ministries at the federal level; departments at the emirate level) and other national entities in order to identify areas for UNDP support and services. Given the UAE's highly decentralized and fragmented federal administration system, pursuing the broad national strategic objectives identified in the early stages of country programme agenda-setting, without a commitment of funds, represents a challenge to UNDP.

The absence of senior-level national staff negatively affected the dynamics of UNDP—government

relations. Some government representatives were forthcoming to help UNDP identify national staff, and there was a willingness to fund comparable government salaries for them. While UNDP justification has been that it is difficult to identify national staff interested in working for UNDP and retain qualified national staff, many national stakeholders found this unacceptable. In the previous country programme, national government staff was deputed to UNDP, which facilitated good relations with the government. Some government institutions were able to attract national staff, though not always at higher salaries. There was a strong perception among a section of government stakeholders that UNDP did not invest in or employ khaligjis (nationals of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries) despite that Gulf Cooperation Council countries pay a large portion of the UN system budget. From the perspective of strengthening national capacities, a programming principle of UNDP, not having national staff in the country office contradicts these principles. UNDP needs to make more concerted efforts to address this issue.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusions and recommendations provided below are based on the wealth of findings discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. The conclusions should be seen as mutually reinforcing, conveying an overall sense of UNDP strengths and challenges in contribution to national development results in UAE. The recommendations highlight the most critical areas in which UNDP could strengthen its developmental contribution bearing in mind its comparative strengths.

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1. An analysis of evaluation findings raises critical questions regarding the relevance of UNDP support in the UAE. The 2007 evaluation of the UNDP role in the net contributing countries of the Arab region noted that UNDP needs to change the approach to programming in the subregion. UNDP took a long time to address this challenge.

Considering that UNDP managed to play a useful role until 2000, and has uninterruptedly benefited from national authorities' positive view on the UNDP role in the UAE, addressing the factors contributing to downward trend of UNDP role needs concerted attention. That government, business and civil society in the UAE have ample access to alternative sources of policy and technical advice and services, which points to the need to revisit UNDP corporate strategy for countries similar to the UAE. The programme strategy, should be informed by the technical and competitive feasibility of programming in the country while complying with the corporate mandate of facilitating the human development.

There are many advantages for UNDP in having an office in the UAE, both from the point of contributing to development results and acting as a liaison office for channelling development and humanitarian funds to other UNDP programmes. It is important, however, that UNDP capitalizes on its presence in the country in order to effectively contribute to the development mandate. Given the contraction of UNDP resources, it may not be possible to depend on headquarters to substitute its capacities or to provide additional staff.

The continued UNDP presence in the UAE necessitates bridging the trust gap with the government, securing focused development partnerships and partnerships with research and policy institutes, and developing a medium-term programme strategy that aims at a more substantive engagement in the country's development discourse. In addition, the country programme focus should unquestionably be on addressing the human development disparity between the northern and southern emirates.

Conclusion 2: The programming context of the UAE required UNDP to take a purposeful and strategic approach to addressing the country's development challenges and priorities. It is key to UNDP success that its approach to programming is adapted to the expectations and development requirements of the UAE context and is driven by UNDP fundamentals—sustainable human development.

Most UNDP activities in the UAE did not match the context (high-income status, significant achievements in human development indicators and capacities to access top-notch development

services), development needs or priorities of country—or the reputation of UNDP. In the ongoing country programme, UNDP had difficulties maintaining its relevance when responding to demand for high quality and timely development services. It underperformed with respect to providing world-class development experience to the UAE and disseminating the country's good development practices in countries where such experience may be needed.

UNDP, equipped with the technical apparatus of the United Nations and the organizational expertise to leverage on, is unable to respond, despite the openness of the development space available in the UAE to engage in key development areas. While a UNDP presence can be justified based on the universality principle of UNDP operations and its mandate to promote human development by particularly addressing inequalities and regional disparities, the UNDP role and capacities in the UAE do not justify an office in the country. A weak UNDP office without the capacities to make meaningful contributions to human development appears to be counterproductive for the organizational image of UNDP.

The country office, the government and stakeholders did not share a common understanding of the nature of the UNDP role in the country. Challenges remain in determining the appropriate balance between the twin expectations of providing recruitment and procurement services to the government and simultaneously furthering the human development agenda. UNDP required a programming model that articulated a human development paradigm suited for either the country's high-income context or its market context with substantial private-sector competition. For UNDP to remain relevant in the UAE, it will need to adopt a coherent approach to programming and partnerships and to establish a rational dialogue with the government on the role of UNDP in the country, particularly towards developing a country programme action plan.

Conclusion 3: Building national authorities' confidence in UNDP is the main programming challenge facing the agency. The absence

of regular and predictable funding challenged UNDP effectiveness; this lack of predetermined support also constrained more structured programming. UNDP needs to break out of this trap if it is to develop a long-term relationship in the country, contribute to national development and facilitate UAE aspirations to support development in countries where support is needed and requested.

Despite the fact that areas of the UNDP programme require considerable strengthening, the government seems to have attached significant political importance to maintaining a permanent UNDP presence. This makes it more imperative for UNDP to have a coherent programming approach in one of the few high-income countries that wishes to remain a net contributor country. On the part of the government, a more assured funding stream and an acknowledgement of a greater role for UNDP in development support is important to UNDP efforts to consolidate its presence in the country.

A highly regarded UNDP strength is its international reputation as a credible and neutral organization, particularly when compared to other agencies. UNDP did not leverage this advantage to secure reliable partnerships. UNDP visibility and government trust in the country office's potential to deliver quality development services are critical for enhanced UNDP participation and securing regular, fixed support.

The services provided by UNDP were useful; they were transparent and minimized human resource intensive and lengthy government procedures in procurement and personnel recruitment. However, the service requirements were not predetermined, and were provided on a one-to-one basis. In addition, though funds from the portfolio of services were sufficient to sustain the country office, they were insufficient to engage in more substantive activities. This context was self-reinforcing: the lack of predetermined funds from the government for programming contributed to short term and ad hoc service support, which constrained developing a coherent programme. In addition, UNDP did not have tangible products

apart from the services to secure predetermined funds from the government for programming. The Resident Coordinator's/Resident Representative's intermittent presence contributed to the lack of robust partnerships with the government and national stakeholders. This negatively affected mobilizing funds for the UNDP programme. Corporate UNDP has to work out ways to strengthen country office capacities in order to be of relevance in UAE.

Conclusion 4: The fragmentation of programme undermined the scope and substance of UNDP development contributions. A key factor undermining programme coherence was lack of clear understanding of UNDP real value added and a realistic assessment of the agency's comparative strengths in an increasingly competitive environment. The UNDP should be cognizant of both its own strengths and limitations, and thus be explicit about what it can and cannot deliver. Weak capacity in the country office and the high costs of mobilizing human resources are major constraints on UNDP operations and contributions in the UAE.

UNDP was not sufficiently equipped to match the quality or speed of a large private sector that was well equipped to provide policy and technical support. Further, the lack of substantial and long-term engagements in areas where UNDP had a comparative advantage undermined UNDP contributions to development results and its efforts to build a niche in its core programme areas.

UNDP activities largely fulfilled requests made by national agencies. Because these activities were unrelated to the country programme's proposed outcomes, the outcomes were not achieved. Despite UAE development service needs spanning a wide range of areas, UNDP did not judiciously choose areas in which it could make informed contributions, which resulted in a lack of focus and a programme too widespread to make a significant contribution.

There are expectations that UNDP will coordinate services and monitor technical inputs. The country office did not adequately leverage

on corporate expertise to engage in areas such as trade, macroeconomic policy, and economic analysis areas where government expected UNDP services. Minimal attention was paid to areas where UNDP has comparative advantage, for example, governance capacities of northern emirates, economic diversification, energy and climate change mitigation, coordination between federal government and emirates, gender equality and social development policy.

UNDP promised more than it can deliver and needs to be more realistic. The country office's focus remained on mobilizing funding for its sustainability; limited attention was paid to areas in which UNDP could have entered into long-term engagements. UNDP could not follow up on many requests by government due to lack of capacity, further undermining its credibility to deliver. The lack of adequate professional staff and network of professionals UNDP can readily access is a key challenge for the UNDP ability to provide services and engage in substantive issues.

Conclusion 5: UNDP development contribution could have been significantly higher had it not missed a number of key opportunities. Most importantly the opportunity to support national efforts aimed at strengthen governance, economic prosperity and service delivery in the Northern Emirates.

UNDP initiatives and efforts were largely aimed at establishing partnerships with the southern emirates. UNDP lacked a systematic approach to supporting development needs in the northern emirates, particularly Ajman, Fujairah, Ras Al-Khaimah and Umm Al-Quwain, which have greater need for UNDP technical and policy support and strengthening services delivery.

Conclusion 6: UNDP did not always demonstrate an understanding of the nature and diversity of UAE development aid. This is essential for UNDP to be able to strengthen global development partnerships.

In the past two years, the UAE has taken significant measures towards a more systematic approach to development and humanitarian aid.

The government has achieved greater clarity of the parameters of aid and areas of emphasis, and it has emphasized transparency and accountability in aid distribution. In order to ensure better ownership, the government prefers bilateral aid rather than channelling aid through multilateral agencies. UNDP engagement with the transformative process of aid structure and systems in the UAE was critically limited, as was its efforts to inform UAE contributions to global development partnerships.

As an agency mandated to support achieving the MDGs and with a programme presence in over 135 countries, UNDP is uniquely positioned and has the credibility to facilitate regional and global development partnerships to achieve the MDGs. UNDP is yet to leverage on this advantage to develop a structured approach to engage in development aid discourse in the UAE. There were several missed opportunities where UNDP could have contributed to a global aid discourse that was responsive to the aspirations of the countries in the Arab region.

Conclusion 7: There is immense potential to develop funding partnerships for the UNDP corporate programme. UNDP did not leverage its physical presence in the country to develop partnerships. The lack of a coherent corporate approach to fund mobilization contributed to UNDP underachievement.

The absence of a fund mobilization strategy and tenuous partnerships with the government and philanthropic foundations limited UNDP progress in mobilizing resources for programmes in other countries.

Where funds were mobilized, the country office's lack of capacities contributed to poor coordination in reporting on the projects' progress in recipient countries. In order for the government and foundations to channel development funds through UNDP, the country office will need adequate systems for monitoring and reporting.

Conclusion 8: The country office staff lacked professional management and leadership, partly as a result of poor continuity and stability

of senior management. The lack of national staff in the country is a major issue, constraining efficient and sustained engagement with the government and other national stakeholders.

Frequent changes country office staff capacity, lack of adequate professional staff and intermittent leadership further weakened UNDP ability to respond effectively to the development needs of UAE. Project documentation and monitoring efforts were minimal and the country programme design lacked measurable outcomes and indicators. Weak project and finance monitoring and poor documentation have been a factor in the lack of effectiveness of the UNDP programme.

Stakeholders repeatedly reinforced the need to hire Emiratis and strengthen national human resources. Lack of national staff in senior positions in the office is a factor hampering long-term engagement between UNDP and the UAE government.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Leveraging on its organizational strength, UNDP should demonstrate a strong commitment to strategically engaging key development issues and to furthering global development partnerships. Responsiveness to UAE expectations to provide services to government agencies is one option, but not necessarily the only one given the UNDP comparative advantage in substantively responding to diverse country situations.

UAE development priorities are closely aligned with the UNDP organizational mandate. Significant development achievements in the UAE combined with development needs in certain areas requires a nuanced positioning and well thought-out engagement on key development issues. The UAE government has outlined the country's development goals; UNDP should identify those areas in which it can make meaningful contributions. Maintaining a direct presence (country office and country programme) in the UAE requires a great deal of clarification on both corporate UNDP's and the government's part.

In addition to providing services to government agencies (which should be a single outcome), the UNDP programme should include three key areas: 1) UNDP should focus on key priorities that will address strengthening institutions and human resources and will further national capacity development. UNDP should initially focus on a few high-impact initiatives that will demonstrate the added value of working with UNDP. 2) UNDP should maintain a focus on facilitating the country's global development partnerships. UNDP should develop a systematic approach to engaging in international aid discourse in the country and the Arab region. UNDP should pay specific attention to facilitate knowledge exchange among the UAE, the Gulf Cooperation Council states and the global South. 3) UNDP should develop a persuasive strategy for mobilizing resources for UNDP programmes in least developed countries and countries in crisis.

Recommendation 2: UNDP needs to make a strong commitment to support the northern emirates in addressing their development priorities and contribute to bridging the developmental gap among the emirates. Specifically, UNDP should support a human development report for the northern emirates and work towards setting up a field presence there if requested to do so by the emirates.

Future UNDP efforts should focus on northern emirates development issues, particularly those of Ajman, Fujairah, Ras Al-Khaimah and Umm Al-Quwain. Particularized needs of the northern emirates include technical and policy support in service delivery, strengthening institutions, economic diversification and environment issues. UNDP should orient its activities to emirates and communities where it is needed the most. Such measures will also help address the perception of UNDP as being as profit-seeking service provider similar to other consultancy firms in the country.

UNDP should reaffirm and communicate its principles and values to distinguish itself from private sector firms providing similar advisory and consultancy services. UNDP should take immediate measures to allay the perception that UNDP is a profit-seeking consultancy seeking projects.

Recommendation 3: UNDP should strengthen the country office's capacities to fulfil high quality service needs in the UAE. In addition to the core staff in the country, UNDP should build a network of professionals to use their expertise in delivering effective and timely services.

The government's expectations of UNDP include services related to facilitating technical expertise and procurement. UNDP needs a clear strategy to address service needs in the UAE country context—a federal structure with a highly decentralized government system. UNDP should incorporate mechanisms to periodically assess government agencies' service needs and to ascertain the most appropriate areas for UNDP. UNDP should also establish systems for regular government interaction so that UNDP is considered for services.

To engage in more substantive activities, resources generated from a services portfolio will be crucial. UNDP should expand the scope and scale of its services portfolio. In addition to the services it has provided, UNDP should explore opportunities for more substantial engagement in areas that are within its mandate.

Recommendation 4: UNDP should make it a priority strategic goal to attract and develop an experienced workforce of Emirati nationals in the country office to take the lead in the research, technical and advisory services that UNDP provides.

UNDP should prioritize increasing the number of nationals in the country office. UNDP should send a clear signal to the government that it is serious about engaging local institutions where nationals are often employed. Work teams composed of local experts are more likely to succeed in sustaining relationships with the government.

Nationalization and indigenization of sources of knowledge and talent is a major concern for policy makers and citizens, particularly in a country where nationals comprise less than 20 percent of the population. Sending nationals to UNDP headquarters for internships and short study trips to prepare them to take positions in the UAE can

help advance their managerial and leadership skills and build their loyalty to the organization. To retain nationals, UNDP should provide better incentives and seek government subsidization of employment costs (e.g. housing benefits). UNDP should revive the Junior Programme Officers scheme.

Recommendation 5: UNDP should develop a resource mobilization strategy tailored to the UAE. This strategy should include an effective presentation of UNDP work, areas that UNDP can support and fund management systems for monitoring, reporting and communications.

There is recognition in UNDP that UAE is an important donor. Sufficient measures however need to be taken to demonstrate this. The country office and UNDP headquarters need better coordination in order for UNDP to strengthen its position as an agency facilitating informed global development cooperation in the region. Improved coordination will also help mobilize development funds for UNDP activities in least developed countries. Engaging with foundations and the government will require appropriate country-level leadership, and further efforts are needed to strengthen this.

Mobilizing resources for UNDP global development programme should be one of the key priorities for the country office. Systemizing aid processes in the UAE would entail that UNDP takes a more structured approach to resource mobilization.

Recommendation 6: The country office should realistically assess its headquarters support, particularly when the UAE needs high quality professional support at an accelerated pace.

UNDP should make concerted efforts to build mutually beneficial and sustained partnerships with local and regional research and policy institutions whose capabilities can be leveraged to improve UNDP country office capacities.

UNDP should seek opportunities to work together with other UN agencies to recognize

comparative advantages of individual agencies and enhance overall UNDP contributions to development results.

There are many research and policy institutions and expert networks in the UAE and the Gulf Cooperation Council states. These institutions should be viewed as credible partners whose expertise can be quickly mobilized to meet the high quality service requirements in the UAE. The local institutions and non-governmental organizations often have better access, resources and understanding of context-specific needs. Such partnerships not only enhance the UNDP ability to respond to government service requests in a timely manner, but also strengthen local research and knowledge transfer.

Recommendation 7: UNDP should strengthen systems for programme management. This should include establishing clear guidelines for accountability and reporting within the country office and with clients. Engaging in global development partnerships also requires strengthening the country office's media and communications capacities.

Immediate measures should be taken to systematize programme implementation, which will require maintaining a results focus (with the exception of services-related activities), systematic record keeping and financial and programme monitoring. UNDP should put in place mechanisms for programme reviews with the government counterpart, which will also strengthen the relation of UNDP with the counterpart agencies. Periodic programme and financial reports should be made a requisite.

To play an effective liaison role in mobilizing resources for other country offices, UNDP should have robust finance and programme documentation systems. UNDP should periodically develop communication materials in coordination with the recipient countries.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

I INTRODUCTION

The Evaluation Office (EO) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) conducts country evaluations called Assessments of Development Results (ADRs) to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of UNDP's contribution to development results at the country level, as well as the effectiveness of UNDP's strategy in facilitating and leveraging national effort for achieving development results. ADRs are independent evaluations carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy.⁶⁴ Based on the principle of national ownership, EO seeks to conduct ADRs in collaboration with the national Government whenever agreed and possible. The purpose of an ADR is to:

- Provide substantive support to the Administrator's accountability function in reporting to the Executive Board
- Support greater UNDP accountability to national stakeholders and partners in the programme country
- Serve as a means of quality assurance for UNDP initiatives at the country level
- Contribute to learning at corporate, regional and country levels

The ADR in United Arab Emirates will be conducted in 2011 towards the end of the current UNDP programme cycle of 2008-2011, with a view to contributing to the preparation of the new UNDP country programme starting from 2012.

II COUNTRY CONTEXT

United Arab Emirates (UAE) achieved significant development in the past five decades, with forceful economic development and political stability. With about 10 percent of the current world reserves of crude oil located in the country UAE has become a major economic force in investments through its sovereign wealth funds, large companies and tourism. It has been successful in moving away from oil based economy, which accounted for over 80 percent of GDP in 1974 to a more diversified economy where oil based utilities accounts for 36 percent of GDP in 2008. In terms of per capita GDP UAE is one of the richest nations, usually ranking among the top five. The GDP was USD 113.77 billion in 2010 and the GDP (PPP) per capita was US\$ 36,973. The economy has grown at an average of roughly 6.1 percent over the past two decades. UAE ranks 45 among countries with very high human development (Human Development Indicators, 2010). In terms Global Gender Gap Index it is ahead in the MENA region, while ranks 103 with a score of 0.640 on the global index.

An area of development priority for UAE in the past decade has been economic diversification and strengthening its position in world economy particularly in the area of trade, financial services, technologies and tourism. Economic diversification has varied across emirates ranging from service economy, to tourism, financial and re-exports sector. UAE has been successful in

64 See www.undp.org/eo/documents/Evaluation-Policy.pdf. The ADR will also be conducted in adherence to the Norms and the Standards and the Ethical Code of Conduct established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (see www.uneval.org).

attracting cutting-edge international expertise and human capital for its economic transformation. National investments in the country are aimed to counter the future down turns in economy. There are also efforts by the government to expand economic and employment opportunities to reduce inequalities among citizens.

Notwithstanding the notable progress in human and economic development, there are areas where progress has been rather slow. The national development strategies recognize this and there are ongoing efforts both at the federal and Emirate level to address them. First, given the small population size (which is about four million), the UAE had to rely on a huge number of unskilled and low paid labour largely from Asia. In terms of social and economic levels the large immigrant labour pose a striking picture of contradictions. There have been reports of extreme working conditions, very low wages, and lack of social security. The immigration and labour policy in UAE is more oriented to allow as much labour into the country as was needed. A major concern, however, is the stability of a society where the majority of the residents did not have citizenship rights and who are also at the bottom of the economic ladder. This is an area which is receiving increased attention of the government.

Second, UAE has a combination of traditional and modern political system and the functioning of federal and Emirate governments, which in many ways contributed to national stability and laid the foundation for development. One of the areas where there is a perceived need for strengthening is the coordination between federal system and the emirates.

Third, UAE has made significant achievements in gender parity in education attainment, wages for similar work, and health. Despite high attainment in higher education for females, the low attainment levels for males has been a matter of concern. There have been important efforts by the government over the years to enhance gender equality in politics, administration and judiciary. In the past four years there has been an increase

in the participation of women in UAE's Federal National Council. The amendment of UAE law to allow women to serve in the judiciary has enhanced the participation of women in judicial positions. Despite such efforts and being ahead on several gender indicators in the MENA region, UAE is relatively low in global rankings. The Constitution of the UAE upholds the principle of equal treatment of all citizens, but does not specifically address gender-based discrimination. There are ongoing efforts by the government to have more gender responsive laws and national policies.

Fourth, the local infrastructure in some of the emirates has been strained with the high pace of development and urbanisation. A related issue has been concerns related to energy, environment and water management and climate change. The urbanization has also increased the need for better disaster risk management. These have been priority areas for UAE with considerable focus of the government aimed to address key issues related to urbanisation and environment.

III UNDP IN UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Since 1992 UNDP provided technical assistance to the Government of United Arab Emirates (UAE) in the area of institutional and human resource development. UAE is classified as Net Contributor Country (NCC). The net contributing countries are treated in UNDP as separate group of countries that are not part of the core programme resource allocation, and depend on the funds from the programme country. Although structured around broad thematic areas of corporate UNDP, the programme in UAE is a departure from regular programming model of UNDP. The programme largely responded to service needs of UAE in diverse areas, often not within the scope of programming design of UNDP.

The two country programmes included in the ADR are 2002-2006 (extended to 2007) and 2008-2011. In both the country programmes the initiatives are aimed in areas where there is national demand for its services, and where it can provide policy

advice and strengthen human capacity. UNDP has provided services at the federal and emirates level. The country programme during 2002-2006 comprised three programme areas: (a) institutional and human resources development; (b) integration into the global economy; and (c) protection,

management and regeneration of natural resources and the environment.

The ongoing country programme (2008-2011) comprises projects and services in three areas the area of (a) governance; (b) economic and social

Table A1. Projects carried out by UNDP in UAE

No.	Programme area	Projects	Timeframe
1	Democratic Governance	Qatar Advisory Services	2006
2		PIMS 2147 CC EA: Int. Nat. Com.	2007-10
3		Introducing the Oracle Financial ERP, Phase II	2007-09
4		Developing Housing Strategy in UAE, Phase I	2008-09
5		Capacity Building – Ministry of Foreign Trade	2009-10
6		Study and Research – Ministry of Foreign Trade	2009-10
7		Modern Methods of Legislation Drafting	2009-10
8		Strengthening the Capacity of the UAE Federal National Council	2007
1	Poverty Reduction and MDGs achievement	Qatar – National Human Development Report 2009	2008-09
2		Capacity Building of Ministry of Foreign Trade	2005-10
3		Desk Study on Models of Comprehensive and Sustainable Area	2009
4		Enhancing National Capacity – MOE	2009-10
5		First Human Development Report for Abu Dhabi Emirate	2009-10
6		Review Qatar MDG report	2010
7		Abu Dhabi First Human Development Report	2010-11
8		Quatar HIV and AIDS	2007-09
9		Transforming HIV Response in a Rapidly Developing Society	2008-11
10		Training and Capacity Building	2007
11		Assist MOE in Consumer Protection	2007-09
12		Planning for Conferences, Workshops and Seminars for MOE	2008
13		Support on HIV and AIDS to Abu Dhabi Health Authority	2006-09
14		UAE Nat'l Gender Mainstreaming Initiative: CB of GWU	2008
1	Environment and Sustainable Development	Strengthening the Met Services of Al Dhafra	N/A
2		Meteorological Database & Prediction Model	2003-09
3		Date Palm Research and Development Programme, Phase II	2004-08
4		Date Palm Research and Development Programme, Phase III	2008-12
5		Sustainable Date Palm Improvement and Rehabilitation Programme	2009-10

development; and (c) environment. Across these three areas, seven outcomes have been identified in line with national development priorities and the UNDP mandate. While gender and HIV/AIDS are outcomes on their own, they are also considered as cross-cutting dimension of the programme. The seven outcomes and country programme activities contributing them are as follows:

1. Enhanced national capacity to analyze, design and monitor development policies in areas of national priority
2. Strengthened national capacity in supporting economic diversification and private sector development
3. HIV/AIDS outreach programmes
4. Improved capacity of federal and emirate level institutions in strategic planning, resource management and service delivery
5. Strengthened democratic governance institutions and functions
6. Gender mainstreaming and empowerment
7. Enhanced capacity of federal and local governments in implementing the National Environmental Action Plan and enforcement of environmental regulations

In both the country programmes under review strengthening the human and institutional capacity development and policy advocacy is considered as the central aspect of the technical cooperation provided by UNDP. The programmes also intended to work with sub-regional and regional partners in the areas of Governance, Information and Communication Technology for Development in Arab Region, HIV/AIDS, and gender. In the ongoing programme UNDP aimed to use its global network to enhance Government access to South-South cooperation to broaden their range of policy options, both at the federal and Emirate levels.

The specific projects carried out by UNDP are detailed in Table A1.

State charity foundations in UAE provide aid to countries affected by crisis. UNDP in UAE has been acting as a liaison office for UNDP country offices in the recipient countries who received funds for crisis prevention and recovery from the foundations. The recipient countries include Sudan, Myanmar, Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, Union of Comoros, and Indonesia. UNDP UAE also manages projects in Oman and Qatar.

The total expenditure of UNDP UAE during 2004-2010 was US\$ 16.8 million. For the programme period 2008 to 2011 the allocations has been US\$ 10.4 million. A large component of the funds in the past two years has been from state charity foundations. The funds allocated for environment governance programme in Qatar is US\$ 10.4 million for the period 2008-2013.

IV SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

This is the first ADR in UAE and the period covered by the evaluation will include the ongoing country programme (2008-2011) and the previous country programme (2002-2006 extended to 2007). While the emphasis will be on the ongoing country programme, the ADR will cover ongoing projects that started in the previous one and the analysis may take a longer term perspective where appropriate. It will cover all UNDP activities in the country including non-project activities and engagement through regional and global initiatives.

The evaluation has two main components; (a) the analysis of the UNDP's contribution to development results through its programme outcomes, and (b) the strategy UNDP has followed to respond to specific service demands in UAE while at the same time advocating the agenda of human development; and operationalising the recommendations of the Arab Human Development Report that are relevant for UAE. The ADR recognises that the context of UAE is unique from the other programming countries of UNDP, and the programme approach has to be adapted to the context and priorities of the country. For each

component, the ADR will present its findings and assessment according to the set criteria provided below. Further elaboration of the criteria will be found in *ADR Manual 2010*.

A) UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION THROUGH DIFFERENT INTERVENTIONS CARRIED OUT DURING THE ADR PERIOD:

Analysis will be made on the contribution of UNDP to development results of UAE through its programme activities. The analysis will be based on the following criteria:

- Relevance of UNDP's projects, outputs and outcomes
- Effectiveness of UNDP initiatives in terms of achieving stated goals
- Efficiency of UNDP's initiatives in terms of use of human and financial resources
- Sustainability of the results to which UNDP contributes

Key questions

- What has been the role of UNDP in contributing to human and technical capacity requirements of UAE, based on the comparative strengths that UNDP brings to the country?
- Did UNDP respond appropriately to the national priorities by adapting its role and approach? How successful was UNDP in providing cutting-edge services in a timely manner to meet the service requirements of UAE?
- How did UNDP address national capacity requirements particularly in advocating human development approach?
- What is UNDP contribution to governance reforms, gender responsive development, and sustainable urbanization and environment management and climate change?

- What is the value addition of UNDP in providing technical assistance in areas such as World Trade Organization negotiations, economic analysis and forecasting, and performance based budgeting?

B) UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION THROUGH ITS POSITIONING AND STRATEGIES

The positioning and strategies of UNDP are analyzed both from the perspective of the organisation's mandate⁶⁵ and the development priorities in the country as agreed and as they emerged. This would entail systematic analyses of UNDP's place and niche within the development and policy space in the country, as well as strategies used by UNDP to maximize its contribution through adopting relevant strategies and approaches.

The following criteria will be applied:

- Relevance and responsiveness of the county programme as a whole
- Enhancing comparative strengths
- Promoting UN values from Human Development perspective

Key questions

It was evident during the preparatory mission of the ADR that programme funding is not a constraint for UNDP in UAE. The issue for UNDP is working in a highly competitive environment, where the government can acquire high quality expertise it wants, and staying relevant.

- What are the long-term strategic objectives of UNDP vs. short-term initiatives in UAE? How did UNDP balance the need to promote human development approach and the reality where UNDP has to compete with consultancy firms who have capacity to provide timely and cutting-edge services on a range of topics?

65 For UNDP's Strategic Plan, see www.undp.org/execbrd/pdf/dp07-43Rev1.pdf.

- While providing non-programme services how did UNDP leverage this to support substantial policy issues.
- How did UNDP capitalise on initiatives such as Human Development Report to take further government interest in this area?
- How strategic was UNDP in venturing into areas where there can be limited corporate support? Was there coordination with other UN agencies in taking up activities in areas such as World Trade Organization?

The ADR will address programme principles important to UNDP, which include gender equality, partnerships for development cooperation, and coordination of UN efforts.

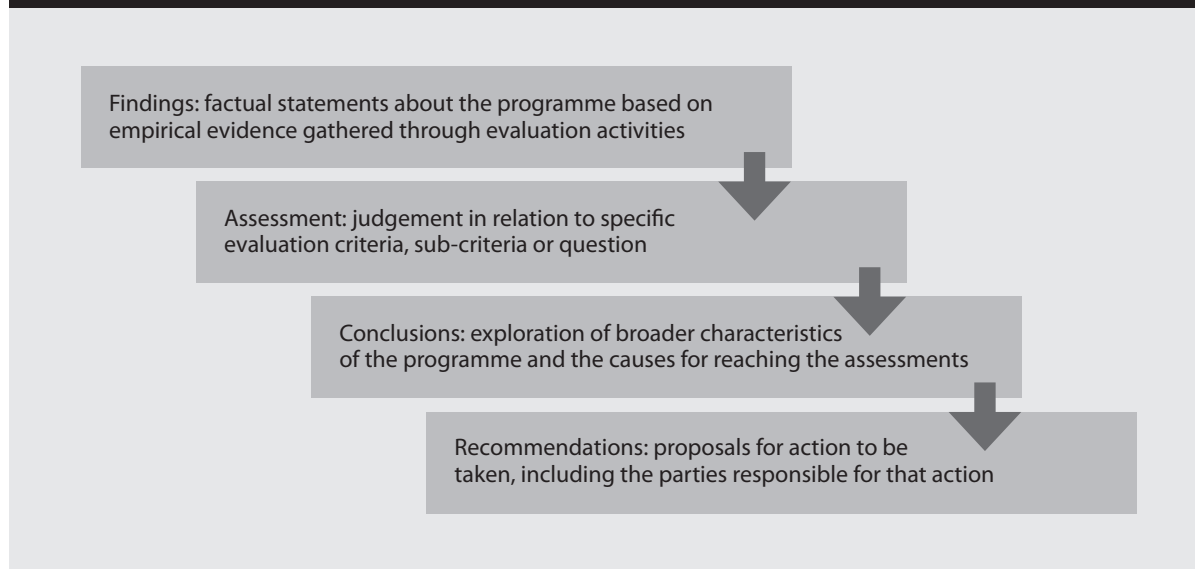
- How effective was UNDP in liaising UAE assistance to countries affected by crisis. Did UNDP facilitate UAE cooperation with countries in the south?
- To what extent UNDP supported coordination of UN programmes through Resident Coordinators office?
- How was the coordination among UN agencies in mobilising resources for

national programmes in furthering human development approach in UAE?

There have been several initiatives at the corporate level to address the specific needs of net contributing countries and have a strategic programming approach. In this context:

- What has been the corporate approach to programming in high-income countries and net contributing countries? What are the measures taken at the corporate level to sustain the credibility and relevance of UNDP in high-income countries which are in a position to access high quality services?
- What is the specific support provided by the headquarters and regional centre to the human resource constrained programme in UAE, particularly to facilitate dialogue with national stakeholders about UNDP mandate and identifying and following up on strategic entry points?
- Considering increased momentum toward one UN programme, what is the strategy followed for more coordinated UN programming in high income-net contributing countries?

Figure A1. From findings to recommendations



Although a judgement is made using the criteria above, the ADR process will also identify how various factors have influenced UNDP's performance. The evaluation criteria form the basis of the ADR methodological process. Evaluators generate findings within the scope of the evaluation and use the criteria to make assessments. In turn the findings and assessment are used to identify the conclusions from the evaluation and to draw recommendations. The process is illustrated in Figure A1. The above questions will be further elaborated in the inception report.

V EVALUATION PROCESS

ADR process is set out in five phases as follows, representing a specific set of achievements and activities that should be normally completed before the next phase can begin.

1. Preparation phase
2. Main evaluation phase
3. Report writing phase
4. Dissemination and follow-up phase

PHASE 1: PREPARATION

The EO has carried out preliminary research to prepare for the evaluation and will upload relevant document to a special website for the evaluation team. The Task Manager has undertaken a preparatory mission and held discussion with key stakeholders prior to the preparation of this Terms of Reference for the evaluation. The Evaluation Office is in the process of constituting the evaluation team. The evaluation Team Leader in coordination with the Task Manager will prepare the Inception Report outlining the evaluation design.

PHASE 2: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Data collection – Based on the Terms of Reference and the research and documentation carried out for the ADR, the team will carry out the evaluation by collecting data.

- The field visits and observations should normally be arranged through CO.
- The team will collect data according to the principles set out in Section 6 of this ToR and inception report.
- All interviews will be conducted based on indicative interview protocols, and (electronic/WORD) summaries of each interview will be prepared based on an agreed structure to be defined in the evaluation design's qualitative data analysis approach;

Data analysis – The evaluation team will analyze the data collected to reach preliminary assessments, conclusions and recommendations.

- Once the data is collected, the evaluation team should dedicate some time (up to four days) to its analysis. TM will join the team during this phase to assist in the analysis and validation;
- Where possible, the evaluation team should develop data displays to illustrate key findings;
- The outcome of the data analysis will be preliminary assessments for each evaluation criterion/question, general conclusions, and strategic and operational recommendations;
- Once the preliminary assessments, conclusions and recommendations are thus formulated, the evaluation team will debrief CO to obtain feedback so as to avoid factual inaccuracies and gross misinterpretation.

Feedback workshop – A validation workshop will be organized at the end of the data collection and analysis phase to present preliminary findings, assessments, conclusions and, possibly, emerging recommendations to the evaluation reference group and other key stakeholders, and to obtain their feedback to be incorporated in the early drafts of the report.

PHASE 4: DRAFTING AND REVIEWS

First draft and the quality assurance – The Team Leader will submit a complete draft of the report to the EO within three weeks after the

feedback workshop. The EO will accept the report as a first draft when it is in compliance with the Terms of Reference, the ADR Manual and other established guidelines, and satisfies basic quality standards. The draft is also subject to a quality assurance process through an external review.

Second draft and the verification and stakeholder comments – The first draft will be revised by the Team Leader to incorporate the feedback from the external review process. Once satisfactory revisions to the draft are made, it becomes the second draft. The second draft will be forwarded by the EO to UNDP CO and the Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS) for factual verification and identification of any errors of omission and/or interpretation. The draft evaluation report will also be forwarded to the evaluation reference group for comments and inputs. The Team Leader will revise the second draft accordingly, preparing an audit trail that indicates changes that are made to the draft, and submit it as the Final Draft. EO may request further revisions if it considers it necessary.

Stakeholder workshop – A meeting with the key national stakeholders will be organized to present the results of the evaluation and examine ways forward in UAE. The main purpose of the meeting is to facilitate greater buy-in by national stakeholders in taking the lessons and recommendations from the report forward and to strengthen the national ownership of development process and the necessary accountability of UNDP initiatives at country level. It may be necessary to incorporate some significant comments into the final evaluation report.

PHASE 5: FOLLOW-UP

Management response – UNDP UAE will prepare a management response to the ADR under the oversight of RBAS. RBAS will be responsible for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of follow-up actions in the Evaluation Resource Centre.⁶⁶

⁶⁶ See <http://erc.undp.org/>.

⁶⁷ See www.undp.org/eo/.

Communication – The ADR report and brief will be widely distributed in both hard and electronic versions. The evaluation report will be made available to UNDP Executive Board by the time of approving a new Country Programme Document. It will be widely distributed by the EO and at UNDP headquarters, to evaluation outfits of other international organisations, and to evaluation societies and research institutions in the region. The UAE CO and the Ministry of Economy will disseminate to stakeholders in the country. The report and the management response will be published on the UNDP website⁶⁷ as well as in the Evaluation Resource Centre.

VI EVALUATION MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

UNDP EVALUATION OFFICE (EO)

UNDP EO will conduct the ADR in collaboration with the Ministry of Economy, Government of United Arab Emirates.

Two members of the EO will participate in conducting the ADR. Besides the Task Manager of the ADR this will include Senior Evaluation Advisor from EO will participate in the main mission and will contribute to analysis and report writing.

The EO Task Manager (TM) will provide overall management of and technical backstopping to the evaluation. The TM will set the Terms of Reference for the evaluation, select the evaluation team, review the inception report, provide guidance to the conduct of evaluation, organize feedback sessions and a stakeholder meeting, receive the first draft of the report and decide on its acceptability, and manages the review and follow-up processes. The TM will along with the EO team member will outline the scope,

the process, the approach and the methodology of ADR, and participate in collecting of data, analysis and report writing. The EO will meet all costs directly related to the conduct of the ADR.

GOVERNMENT COUNTERPART IN UAE

The Ministry of Economy is the government counterpart of UNDP in UAE. The ministry will facilitate the conduct of ADR by the evaluation team by: providing necessary access to information source within Government of UAE, safeguard the independence of the evaluation, and jointly organize the stakeholder meeting with EO.

UNDP COUNTRY OFFICE IN UAE

The CO will support the evaluation team in liaison with key partners and other stakeholders, make available to the team all necessary information regarding UNDP's programmes, projects and activities in the country, and provide factual verifications of the draft report. The CO will provide the evaluation team support in kind (e.g. arranging meetings with project staff and beneficiaries; or assistance for the project site visits). To ensure the independence of the views expressed in interviews and meetings with stakeholders held for data collection purposes, however, the CO will not participate in them.

During the entire Evaluation process and particularly during the main mission, the country office will cooperate with the ADR team and respect its independence and need to freely access data, information and people that are relevant to the exercise. The Country Office will ensure timely dispatch of written comments on the draft evaluation report. From its side, the ADR team will act in a transparent manner; will interact regularly with the UNDP country office and national Government counterparts at critical junctures.

VII THE EVALUATION TEAM

The Evaluation Team will be responsible for conducting the evaluation as described in section 5. This will entail, *inter alia*, preparing the inception report, conducting data collection, structured data documentation and analysis, presenting preliminary findings, conclusions and recommendations at debriefings and the stakeholder workshop, and preparing the first, second and final drafts of the ADR report as well as a draft Evaluation Brief.

The EO established a team comprising a Team Specialist based in United Arab Emirates and two EO evaluators to undertake the ADR.

VIII TIMEFRAME

The timeframe and responsibilities for the evaluation process are detailed in Table A2. The timeframe is indicative of the process and deadlines and does not imply full-time engagement of the evaluation team during the period.

IX EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The expected outputs from the evaluation team in particular are:

- An inception report, providing the evaluation matrix as specified in sections 4 and 5 of this document (maximum 10 pages without annexes)
- The first, second and final drafts of the report "Assessment of Development Results – UAE" (approximately 55 pages for the main text)
- Draft for the Evaluation Brief (2 pages)
- Presentations at the feedback and stakeholder meetings

The final report of the ADR will follow the standard structure outlined in the *ADR Manual 2011*, and all drafts will be provided in English.

Table A2. Evaluation timeframe and responsibilities

Activity	Responsible	Estimated timeframe
ADR initiation and preparatory work	EO	November 2010
Preparatory mission	EO	February 2011
Selection of the evaluation team	EO/CO	April 2011
Inception Report	EO/TL	End April
Data collection – Main mission	ET	May -June
Data analysis	ET/EO	May –June
Validation workshop	Ministry of Economy, CO, EO & ET	June
Submission of the first draft	TL/ET	August
External review	EO	August
Submission of the second draft	TL/ET	September-November
Government	Government	December
Submission of the final draft	TL/ET	March2012
Stakeholder workshop	EO	March
Editing and formatting	EO	March
Issuance of the final report and Evaluation Brief	EO	April
Dissemination of the final report and Evaluation Brief	EO, Ministry of Economy & CO	April

Annex 2

EVALUATION MATRIX

Evaluation criteria and sub-criteria for assessing contribution to development results	
General definitions	Sub-criteria definitions
A.1 Relevance (R) Degree of coherence with human development needs, UNDP's mandate, existing country strategies and policies, adequacy of financial/human resources, and according to standards and recognized good practices.	A.1a Relevance of objectives Relationship with existing needs, UNDP's mandate and strategy, national strategies and other similar initiatives in the country. A.1b Relevance of approaches used Quality of design, applicability to UAE context; mobilisation of resources, integration of available knowledge/experience and adherence to national or international standards.
A.2 Effectiveness (E) Extent to which intended results of UNDP interventions have been attained, & whether unintended results (+ or -, direct/indirect) were generated.	A.2a Achievement of planned outcomes Achievement of outputs (interim/short-term results) & contribution to longer-term outcomes A.2b Effectiveness of outreach Federal and emirate level support A.2c Effectiveness of equity strategies Did the programme include support to gender equality strategies and activities of the government?
A.3 Efficiency (EF) Programme: management cost ratio, and/or degree of ease/difficulty with which inputs are converted into results	A. 3a Managerial efficiency Timeliness, timeframes, use of human resources, use of MIS, other balanced scorecard or managerial issues. A.3b Programmatic efficiency Prioritization/concentration versus diversity
A.4 Sustainability (S) The probability of continued long-term benefits. Considering the nature of UNDP interventions in UAE different dimensions of sustainability was not used in this ADR.	Replication or up-scaling of substantive pilot or catalytic activities

Evaluation criteria and sub-criteria for assessing contribution to development results	
General definitions	Sub-criteria definitions
<p>B.1 Strategic relevance & responsiveness of UNDP (SRR)</p> <p>Support for national development priorities and strategies in line with the main development challenges of the country.</p>	<p>B.1a Relevance against the national development challenges and priorities</p> <p>Coherence with national strategies and policies</p> <p>B.1b Relevance of UNDP approaches</p> <p>Complimentary and facilitative roles/activities</p> <p>B.1c Responsiveness to changes</p> <p>Reactions to shifts and external conditions</p> <p>B.1d Balancing logistic support and more substantive programming</p> <p>Relationship between short-term procurement related assistance and longer-term strategic programming</p>
<p>B.2 Comparative strengths of UNDP (C)</p> <p>Demonstration and promotion of UNDP corporate values and strengths</p>	<p>B.2a Corporate networks and expertise</p> <p>Access to UNDP global network of expertise and experiences</p> <p>B.2b Coordination and role sharing within the UN system,</p> <p>Programmatic coordination and role-sharing among UN agencies via through a common UN framework..</p> <p>B.2c Assisting Government in international and regional role as development use external partnerships and international and regional cooperation</p> <p>Facilitation of international and regional role of UAE in development cooperation; and facilitation/brokering of external expertise for government</p>
<p>B.3 Promotion of UN values (UN)</p> <p>Support for the MDGs and supporting values/issues</p>	<p>B.3a UNDP's role in supporting policy dialogue on human development issues</p> <p>Reputation/role of UNDP in policy dialogue on human development issues in the country and on sensitive issues</p> <p>B.3b Contribution to gender equality</p> <p>Incorporation of gender equality within/across thematic areas in the programme</p> <p>B.3c Addressing equity issues</p> <p>Identification of & strategy to address the needs of vulnerable groups</p>

A. Evaluation questions: Development results		
Criteria/Sub-criteria	Main questions to be addressed by ADR	Specific questions for interviews
A.1 RELEVANCE		
Relevance of the objectives	Are UNDP activities aligned with national strategies? Are they consistent with human development priorities ?	<p>Did proper analysis of the context and priorities inform programme/project design?</p> <p>How does UNDP supported activities align with national priorities?</p> <p>Does UNDP programme frame respond to the NCC and HIC context of UAE?</p> <p>Did UNDP respond appropriately to the evolving country situation and national priorities by adapting its role and approaches?</p> <p>How did UNDP supported activities address the human development priorities of the country?</p>
A.2 EFFECTIVENESS		
<p>Did UNDP programme accomplish its intended objectives and planned results?</p> <p>What is UNDP contribution to strengthening national capacities?</p>	<p>Did the project or programme implementation contribute toward the stated outcome?</p> <p>Did it set in dynamic changes and processes that have potential to contribute to long-term outcomes?</p> <p>Are UNDP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework relevant to achieve planned outcomes?</p>	<p>What outputs/outcomes has the project achieved?</p> <p>Which are the outcome areas where there is limited/ no progress?</p> <p>What changes can be observed as a result of these outcomes?</p> <p>Did UNDP initiatives strengthen institutional and human capacities?</p> <p>What were the unintended results (positive/negative) of UNDP projects?</p> <p>Are the resources allocated sufficient to achieve the objectives of the project?</p>
Scope of coverage	How broad are the outcomes (e.g. federal and Emirate level)?	<p>Did UNDP support activities at different levels of the government?</p> <p>Did UNDP have projects in emirates that are relatively less developed?</p>
Addressing gender and other equity issues	How did UNDP programme address gender issues in UAE?	<p>What is nature of engagement to support policy?</p> <p>What was the engagement in capacity development?</p> <p>Is UNDP linking with regional programmes to access the expertise?</p>
A.3 EFFICIENCY		
Managerial Efficiency	<p>Has the project or programme been implemented within deadline and cost estimates?</p> <p>Have UNDP and its partners taken prompt actions to solve implementation issues?</p> <p>What are the efforts towards coordination with other UN agencies for better efficiency UNDP programme?</p>	<p>Have there been time extensions on the project?</p> <p>What were the circumstances giving rise to need for time extension?</p> <p>Has there been over expenditure or under expenditure on the project?</p> <p>What mechanisms does UNDP have in place to monitor programme implementation? Are these working?</p> <p>How is UNDP's timeliness perceived by programme partners, particularly in transfer of funds, procurement?</p> <p>What are the management implications of small office?</p> <p>How is UNDP addressing the issue of NCC situation?</p>
Programmatic efficiency	<p>Were UNDP resources focused on the set of activities that were expected to produce significant results?</p> <p>Was there any identified synergy between UNDP interventions that contributed to reducing costs while supporting results?</p>	<p>What are the factors that guided programming?</p> <p>Has UNDP mobilise sufficient funds for priority programme areas?</p> <p>What are the measures taken by UNDP to maximise use of resources and programme outcome? Does UNDP have a resource mobilisation strategy? Are these measures sufficient to for better programme management?</p>

A. Evaluation questions: Development results		
Criteria/Sub-criteria	Main questions to be addressed by ADR	Specific questions for interviews
A.4 SUSTAINABILITY		
<p>Programme design to enhance sustainability</p> <p>Did UNDP appropriately respond to capacity needs (institutional and human) at the national and emirate levels?</p>	<p>Were initiatives designed to have long lasting outcomes / results given the identifiable risks?</p>	<p>Does UNDP programmes address substantial issues of governance and human development?</p> <p>Are UNDP programme strategies provide scope for contribution to long-lasting outcomes.</p>
<p>Issues for sustainability at the implementation level</p>	<p>What issues emerged during implementation as a threat to sustainability?</p>	<p>What unanticipated sustainability threats emerged during programme implementation?</p> <p>What corrective measures did UNDP take?</p> <p>To what extent to the lessons learned from the initiatives integrate or advance available knowledge and local capacities; and inform the design of new initiatives?</p>
<p>Scaling up of pilot initiatives and catalytic initiatives (for example, Human Development Report)</p>	<p>Is/was there a plan for scaling up pilot initiative if successful?</p>	<p>What actions have been taken to scale up the project if it is a pilot initiative?</p>

B. Evaluation questions: Strategic positioning		
Criteria/Sub-Criteria	Main questions to be addressed by the ADR	Specific questions for interviews
STRATEGIC RELEVANCE AND RESPONSIVENESS		
Supporting key national priorities	<p>Did UNDP address the development challenges and priorities and support the national strategies and priorities?</p> <p>How did UNDP position itself to address the national priorities in a HIC context?</p>	<p>Which national strategies does the programme address?</p> <p>How do UNDP activities contribute to national capacities and overall development results?</p>
Leveraging the implementation of national strategies and policies	<p>Did the UNDP's programme facilitate the implementation of the national development strategies and policies and play a complementary role to the Government?</p>	<p>Provide an example of how UNDP's programme complements efforts of Government. What role does UNDP play?:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> technical adviser facilitate dialogue facilitate operations facilitate access to knowledge build institutional and human capacity <p>Facilitate international and regional role of the government in development cooperation</p>
UNDP approaches	<p>Is there a balance between national and emirate initiatives?</p> <p>Balance between policy and conceptual models and implementation support?</p>	<p>What are the perceptions about UNDP's programme approach?</p> <p>Is there a balance between national and emirate level activities?</p> <p>What is the proportion of programmes at national and sub-national level and is this justified?</p> <p>How does UNDP mediate tension between short term demands and long-term goals?</p>
Programme evolution and responding to the context	<p>Was UNDP responsive to the evolution over time of development challenges and the priorities?</p> <p>Did UNDP have adequate mechanisms to respond to significant changes in the country situation, in particular in crises and emergencies?</p>	<p>How has UNDP responded to the context in UAE for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High capacities of the government in terms of clarity of what they need? Government ability to pay for high quality services? The role of UAE as a internal and regional actor in development cooperation assertiveness of government Gaps in governance
USING COMPARATIVE STRENGTHS		
Corporate and comparative strengths	<p>Was the UNDP strategy designed to maximize the use of its corporate and comparative strengths? Expertise, Networks and Contacts?</p>	<p>Give examples of UNDP using its networks and expertise in contributing to national results?</p>
Coordination among UN agencies	<p>What is the nature of coordination among UN agencies in UAE?</p> <p>What are the lessons for developing a common UN programme framework?</p>	<p>How does UNDP deal with actual or potential overlaps with other agencies?</p> <p>What are the perceptions of the national stakeholders and donors about UN and the role of UNDP.</p> <p>What are the implications for partnerships for UNDP (funding as well as programme) with other UN agencies?</p>

B. Evaluation questions: Strategic positioning		
Criteria/Sub-Criteria	Main questions to be addressed by the ADR	Specific questions for interviews
Facilitating Government role in international and regional development cooperation	Did UNDP use its network to facilitate government role in international and regional development cooperation	Provide example(s) where UNDP has assisted Government in international and regional development cooperation using UNDP's own networks and experiences in other countries. What are the results?
PROMOTION OF UNITED NATIONS VALUES FROM A HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PERSPECTIVE		
Support to achieve MDGs	Is UNDP in particular effectively supporting the Government efforts to promote MDGs in developing countries?	What assistance has UNDP provided to support Government in supported activities related to MDGs in other countries? UAE—what is the nature of support provided to preparation of MDG report?
Contribution to gender equality	The extent to which the UNDP programme is designed to appropriately incorporate in each outcome area contributions to attainment of gender equality? Extent to which UNDP supported positive changes in terms of gender equality and were there any unintended effects?	Provide example(s) of how the programme contributes to gender equality. Can results of programme be disaggregated by gender?
Addressing equity issues	Did UNDP programme take into account the plight and needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged to promote social equity?	Provide example(s) of how the programme takes into account the needs of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.
Reducing HIV/AIDS risk	Did UNDP programme address reducing HIV/AIDS as a cross cutting issue	Provide example(s) of how the programme addressed HIV/AIDS as a cross cutting dimension, besides having specific initiatives.
Credibility of UNDP	Is UNDP considered capable of providing leadership and contributing to substantive and high level policy dialogue on human development issues in the country, particularly on potentially sensitive issues?	Describe an example of UNDP contribution to high level or substantive policy dialogue. What was the outcome? How would you rate UNDP's leadership in this particular area (theme/programme)?

Annex 3

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Annex 4

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Annex 5

ECONOMIC TRENDS

GDP distribution by the seven emirates									
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Abu Dhabi	48.9	48.4	50	53.6	57.8	60.3	57.5	61	60.1
Ajman	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.4
Dubai	40.4	40.9	39.7	36.6	31.9	29.5	32.7	29.7	29.6
Fujairah	1.1	1.2	1.1	1	1	1	1	0.9	0.9
Ras Al-Khaimah	2.1	2.1	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.6
Sharjah	5.9	5.9	5.7	5.5	6.1	5.9	5.7	5.6	6.1
Umm Al-Quwain	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2

Source: Department of Economic Statistics, National Accounts Division.

UAE governance indicators					
Year	Control of Corruption	Rule of law	Regulatory quality	Government Effectiveness	Political stability
2009	81.0	64.6	68.6	77.1	80.7
2008	82.6	66.0	71.5	78.3	71.3
2007	82.6	61.4	71.8	79.2	79.8
2006	79.1	61.4	70.2	75.2	74
2005	81.1	63.8	64.9	69.4	67.3
2004	85.4	70.0	76.6	76.7	67.8
2003	85.0	71.0	75.1	76.7	74.5
2002	83.5	71.4	83.4	78.2	72.6
2000	69.9	74.8	73.7	77.2	72.6

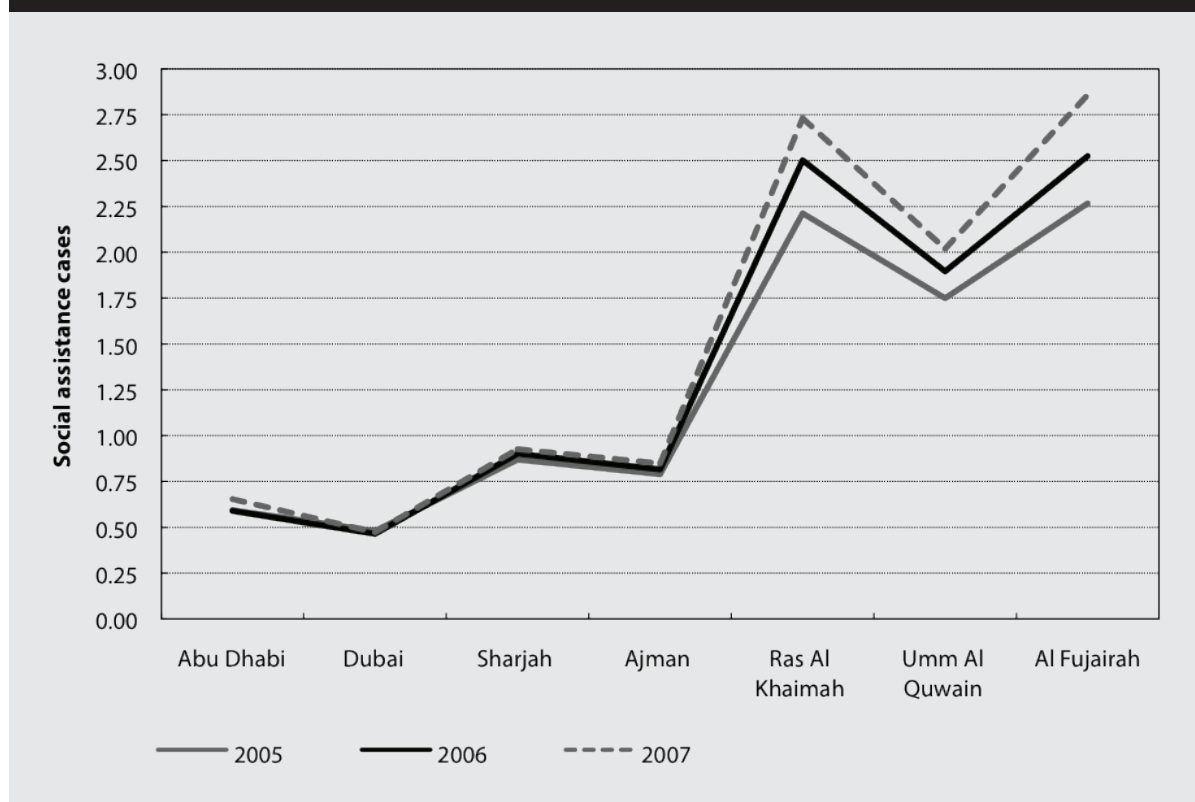
Source: The World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators, 2011.

Private hospitals, medical staff, outpatients and admission by medical district, 2008

Medical District	Medical Staff								Admissions
	Hospitals	Beds	Physicians	Dentists	Nurses	Tech	Admin	Total	
Abu Dhabi	25	562	946	83	691	208	651	2,579	66,000
Dubai	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sharjah	10	253	356	28	577	161	1,108	2,230	22,799
Ajman	1	110	56	4	49	14	155	278	9,525
Ras Al - Khaima	2	75	49	5	108	19	146	327	3,112
Fujeira	2	19	18	2	36	6	77	139	1,968
Total	40	1,019	1,425	122	1,461	408	2,137	5,553	103,404

Source: UAE National Bureau of Statistics⁶⁸

Average of social assistance cases by emirate (2005–2007)



Source: Dubai's Bureau of Statistics, 2011.

68 See <http://www.uaestatistics.gov.ae/EnglishHome/tabid/96/default.aspx>.

Annex 6

UNDP PROGRAMME AND FINANCIAL PORTFOLIO

UNDP programme and financial portfolio, 2004-2007										
List of projects	Budget for the period 2004-07 (in USD thousands)									
	Allocations					Expenditure				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Strategic Development Programme	25	65	42	0	132	42	13	-8	0	47
Date Palm Programme	244	0	0	0	244	244	0	0	0	244
Follow-up of World Trade Organization agreements	180	101	39	20	340	180	61	20	5	266
Strengthening the Met Services	470	299	994	554	2,317	482	198	896	470	2,046
Establishment of Weather Radar	19	0	9	0	28	19	0	0	0	19
Oman Biodiversity Action Plan	0	149	149	0	298	0	0	149	0	149
Meteorological Database and Pred	1,551	690	372	202	2,815	1,287	329	233	78	1,927
Introduction of Strategic Budget	451	450	37	0	938	437	259	37	0	733
Date Palm R&D II	5	354	233	233	825	5	222	239	210	676
Awareness raising on HIV/AIDS	0	31	11	0	42	0	39	11	0	50
Strengthening Capacities	0	50	0	0	50	0	49	0	0	49
Economic Policy Analysis at TE	0	132	47	0	179	0	132	47	0	179
C. Building moepint. nag.	0	102	297	311	710	0	102	282	290	674
Ins. Support to Dubai Municipal	0	57	0	0	57	0	0	0	0	0
UAE Univ. UAE/92/004	0	177	0	74	251	0	0	0	0	0
HR Development Strategy – dept	0	36	0	0	36	0	36	0	0	36
FMIS Implementation in the Fed	0	88	243	132	463	0	88	220	132	440
Strategic Budgeting in the Fed	0	60	170	104	334	0	106	275	104	485
Database of Foreign Direct Investment	0	0	40	0	40	0	0	40	0	40
Khalifa City Project - Indonesia	0	0	64	493	557	0	0	52	493	545
Capacity Building of UAE General	0	0	301	283	584	0	0	173	282	455
Economic Policy Formulation	0	0	123	92	215	0	0	117	92	209
Qatar ICNRD	0	0	274	2	276	0	0	211	2	213
Dubai Statistics Centre	0	0	0	130	130	0	0	0	125	125
Training and Capacity Building	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assist MOE in Consumer Protection	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Strengthening Capacity	0	0	0	50	50	0	0	0	50	50
Qatar HIV and AIDS	0	0	0	78	78	0	0	0	10	10
Introducing the Oracle Financial	0	0	0	137	137	0	0	0	96	96
Total	2,945	2,841	3,445	2,895	12,126	2,696	1,634	2,994	2,439	9,763

UNDP programme and financial portfolio, 2008-2011

List of projects	Budget for the period 2008-11 (in USD thousands)									
	Allocations					Expenditure				
	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
Strengthening Meteorological Services	375	336	348	0	1,059	262	272	347	0	881
Meteorological Database	124	65	0	0	189	61	65	0	0	126
Date Palm R&D II	107	0	0	0	107	133	0	0	0	133
Capacity building MOEP	747	578	369	399	2,093	488	530	370	136	1,524
Institutional Support to Dubai	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
UAE Univ.	0	0			0	-74	0	0	0	-74
Capacity building: UAE Gender	125	28	0	0	153	97	28	0	0	125
Strengthening capacity	62	0	0	0	62	0	0	0	0	0
QAT HIV/AIDs	89	105	0	0	194	51	18	0	0	69
Intro Oracle	242	147	0	0	389	239	146	0	0	385
HIV/AIDS in Abu Dhabi	4	0		0	4	3	0	0	0	3
RBAS (Outcome 10)	0	37	0	0	37	0	31	0	0	31
Date Palm Research	145	354	312	251	1,062	125	278	305	64	772
Qatar - NHDR 2009	0	49	0	0	49	0	35	0	0	35
Transforming - HIV Response	72	99	43	0	214	37	36	18	0	91
Housing Strategy	18	1	0	0	19	17	1	0	0	18
Capacity Building - Ministry	0	166	455	0	621	0	153	456	0	609
Study and Research	0	119	19	0	138	0	115	5	0	120
Sustainable Date Palm	0	639	0	0	639	0	627	0	0	627
Desk Study	0	43	0	0	43	0	39	0	0	39
Modern Methods of Legislation	0	77	34	0	111	0	38	25	0	63
Enhancing of National Capacity	0	0	0	350	350	0	0	0	52	52
Strategic Gender Mainstream	0	32	32	0	64	0	0	20	0	20
First HDR	0	1	112	0	113	0	0	2	0	2
Review Qatar MDG report	0	0	6	0	6	0	0	5	0	5
Abu Dhabi First HDR	0	0	24	966	990	0	0	24	622	646
Support and Capacity Development	0	0	0	467	467	0	0	0	267	267
Total	2,110	2,876	1,754	2,433	9,173	1,439	2,412	1,577	1,141	6,569

Government Local Office Costs to UNDP

Year	Costs (US\$)
2004	980,258.68
2005	980,258.68
2006	980,258.68
2007	1,361,470.39
2008	1,361,470.39
2009	1,361,470.39
2010	1,361,470.39
2011	1,361,470.39
2012	1,769,911.50



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