

# INDEPENDENT COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION OF UNDP CONTRIBUTION **PHILIPPINES**



HUMAN DEVELOPMENT effectiveness COORDINATION  
efficiency COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIP sus  
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP relevance MANAGING FO  
sustainability MANAGING FOR RESULTS responsiveness  
DEVELOPMENT responsiveness NATIONAL OWNER  
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NATIONAL OWNERSHIP relevance MANAGING FO  
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HUMAN DEVELOPMENT effectiveness COORDINATION





*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

# INDEPENDENT COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION OF UNDP CONTRIBUTION **PHILIPPINES**

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### INDEPENDENT COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION: PHILIPPINES

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# FOREWORD

It is my pleasure to present the Independent Country Programme Evaluation (ICPE) for the Republic of the Philippines, the second country-level assessment conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) since 2009. This evaluation covers the programme period 2012 to 2018. It was carried out in close collaboration with the Government of the Philippines, UNDP Philippines country office, and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP).

The Philippines has continued to show strong economic and social development over the period of the country programme, with high levels of growth and reduced levels of poverty, though poverty and inequality remain high and a major concern for the country. Sadly, the period of the country programme has been marked by a number of natural disasters which proved devastating to a number of parts of the country leading to high losses of life, displacement and destruction, marked by the strongest recorded typhoon in 2013, Typhoon Yolanda. Peace in Mindanao and the establishment of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao has brought about greater stability to the region and country, though the country still faces pockets of conflict from rebel groups unaligned with the peace process.

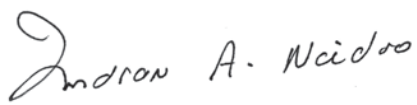
The evaluation found that during the period under review, UNDP focused its support to democratic governance, inclusive sustainable development and resilience and peacebuilding initiatives supporting a number of development needs across the country. The evaluation found UNDP to have been successful in partnering at the policy level as well as at local government level, working closely with communities across a range of its development interventions. At

the same time UNDP Philippines has also been highly reactive to emerging development needs across the country and has been quick to introduce new and innovative approaches to address development challenges. In response to Typhoon Yolanda, the most devastating disaster the country has seen which led to over 6,000 deaths, with thousands displaced, UNDP worked closely at all levels in response, recovery as well as strengthening communities' and local governments' approaches to disaster preparedness to limit impacts of any future disasters. Disaster risk management, climate change and support to the environment have been a strong pillar of UNDP's work in the country and UNDP has offered continued support to the Government and country during the country programme document period.

The evaluation found that UNDP Philippines has further strengthened its partnership with the Government of the Philippines and has become a critical player in the region for increased partnerships through government cost-sharing approaches or the National Acceleration Modality (NAM), as it is known in the Philippines. This approach offers the Government of the Philippines the opportunity to increase and speed up public service delivery while also partnering with UNDP to strengthen systems and building technical capacities. The opportunity also comes with challenges and the country office continues to strengthen its approach as it engages in new NAM projects across development areas. The work in the Philippines offers UNDP in the region and globally numerous lessons on methodology, design and implementation of government cost-sharing which needs to be captured further and shared.

I would like to thank the Government of the Philippines, the various national stakehold-

ers, and colleagues at the UNDP Philippines country office and the RBAP for their support throughout the evaluation. I hope that the findings, conclusions, and recommendations are useful in the formulation of the next country programme strategy.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Indran A. Naidoo". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Indran A. Naidoo  
Director  
Independent Evaluation Office

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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| ADR      | Assessment of Development Results                               |
| ARMM     | Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao                            |
| BBL      | Bangsamoro Basic Law  |
| BHRN     | Bangsamoro Human Rights Network                                 |
| BUB      | Bottom-up Budgeting project                                     |
| CAB      | Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro                       |
| CBDRM    | Community-Based Disaster Risk Management                        |
| CBMS     | Community-Based Monitoring System                               |
| CCA      | Climate Change Adaptation                                       |
| CCC      | Climate Change Commission                                       |
| CCVA     | Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment                         |
| CHRP     | Commission on Human Rights in the Philippines                   |
| CPD      | Country Programme Document                                      |
| CLUP     | Comprehensive Land Use Plan                                     |
| CSO      | Civil society organizations                                     |
| DepEd    | Department of Education   |
| DG       | Democratic governance   |
| DILG     | Department of the Interior and Local Government                 |
| DPC      | Direct Programme Costs  |
| DRA      | Disaster Risk Assessment  |
| DRM      | Disaster risk management  |
| DSWD     | Department of Social Welfare and Development                    |
| ENR      | Environment and natural resources                               |
| EU       | European Union  |
| FAB      | Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro                           |
| FASTRAC  | Facility for Advisory Support for Transition Capacities         |
| GCS      | Government Cost Sharing   |
| GEF      | Global Environment Facility                                     |
| GMS      | General Management Support                                      |
| HIV/AIDS | Human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome |
| ICPE     | Independent Country Programme Evaluation                        |
| ICT      | Information Communication Technology                            |
| IEO      | Independent Evaluation Office (UNDP)                            |
| ISD      | Integrated sustainable development                              |
| iWASH    | Integrated Water Sanitation and Hygiene Framework               |

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| JICA      | Japan International Cooperation Agency   |
| LDCs      | Local Development Councils   |
| LGBT      | Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender community   |
| LGU       | Local government unit  |
| MDG       | Millennium Development Goal  |
| MILF      | Moro Islamic Liberation Front  |
| MNLF      | Moro National Liberation Front   |
| NAM       | National Acceleration Modality   |
| NDRRMC    | National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council  |
| NEDA      | National Economic and Development Authority  |
| ODA       | Official Development Assistance  |
| PDP       | Philippine Development Plan  |
| PFM       | Public Financial Management  |
| PRO WATER | Promoting Integrated Safe Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Access, Integrity, Empowerment, Rights and Resiliency |
| RAPID     | Resilience and Preparedness for Inclusive Development  |
| RBAP      | Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (UNDP)  |
| RHRC      | Regional Human Rights Commission   |
| RPB       | Resilience and peace building  |
| SDG       | Sustainable Development Goal   |
| SSC       | South-South cooperation  |
| TPM/TPMT  | Third-party monitoring/third-party monitoring team   |
| UNCAC     | United Nations Convention Against Corruption   |
| UNDAF     | United Nations Development Assistance Framework  |
| UNDP      | United Nations Development Programme   |
| VAT       | Value-added tax  |
| WASH      | Water Sanitation and Hygiene   |

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Republic of the Philippines consists of an archipelago of over 7,000 islands in the Pacific Ocean and is ranked as a lower middle-income country. The Philippine economy has seen several years of robustness, with an average annual GDP growth of over 6 percent in recent years. The Philippines ranks 116th out of 188 countries in the Human Development Index (medium human development) and 96th in the Gender Inequality Index. The country also has one of the highest levels of inequality in South East Asia and, despite recent reductions, poverty stills stands at 21.6 percent, affecting 22 million people.

In addition, the Philippines faces numerous environmental and natural disaster challenges, and is ranked among countries most affected by climate change. In 2013, the country was hit by the largest typhoon on record, Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan) which killed 6,300 people and affected 15 million.

Poverty levels are highest in the conflict-hit region of Mindanao, which is now undergoing a peace process and moving towards autonomy under the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao.

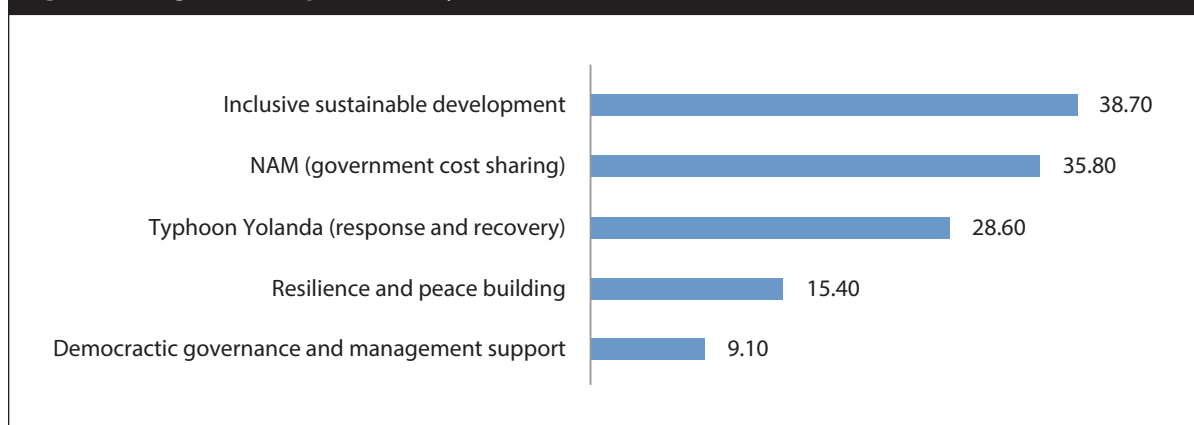
UNDP's country programme has focused on inclusive sustainable development, with a large environment portfolio, governance, and resilience and peace building. Following Typhoons Pablo (2012) and Yolanda (2013) and other natural disasters, UNDP has supported the Philippine Government in its response and recovery work. In recent years, UNDP has also partnered closely with the Government in public service delivery under a number of cost-sharing projects.

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered UNDP's development contribution in the Philippines from 2012 to 2017.

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

**UNDP activities and interventions have been strongly aligned with the Philippine Government's priorities and development plans over the Country Programme Document (CPD) period. UNDP has also ensured that these government priorities as well as the goals of UNDP have been strengthened at decentralized levels and within communities.** This is in no small

**Figure 1. Programme expenditure by thematic area, 2012-2016 (\$ million)**



part due to the strong oversight of official development assistance (ODA) given by the Government through the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the partnership UNDP has with NEDA in coordinating areas of development support.

**Typhoon Yolanda (2013) and several preceding disasters illustrated UNDP's positioning as a key partner for disaster response and recovery within the Philippines.** Support was coordinated in line with local government and community needs and saw a smooth move from response to recovery.

**The Philippines will continue to bear the brunt of the impact of climate change and has built strong central institutional capacity, coordination mechanisms and structures to address disaster risk management (DRM) issues and challenges.** There is still opportunity for UNDP to support and strengthen this area, bringing international and national experience in DRM to build stronger preparedness and response capacities.

UNDP, to its credit, has pursued, agreed and entered into initial government cost-sharing agreement projects quickly. In some cases, however, project prerequisites were not in place and a more detailed risk analysis or assessment was not undertaken, which has been highlighted by delays and issues once projects were implemented. UNDP has identified a considerable opportunity and need in its support to the Government of the Philippines in the accelerated delivery of a range of government services through the National Acceleration Modality and did well to secure the opportunity.

**Areas of cross-cutting and strategic focus of UNDP have not been adequately addressed during the CPD period.** UNDP has strengthened many external partnerships especially with civil society organizations and academia across a range of programmatic areas. South-South cooperation has been ad hoc in its implementation and has not been strategically focused in supporting the Philippines for learning from experience in the region or globally. Equally, the

Philippines offers numerous lessons for other countries in disaster preparedness and response and recovery as well as climate change and environment and natural resource management, which are valuable for others in the region and globally. The country office portfolio of programmes has not given strategic priority to gender equality and has not supported the gender focal point or programme officers in ensuring that programmes are gender responsive and transformative but has focused on gender inclusion, to some degree. Evaluations during the period have been primarily mandatory for environmental and natural resource management activities excluding a number of major portfolios.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1. National Acceleration Modality approaches need to be planned, entered into and implemented within an agreed memorandum of understanding between UNDP and the Government of the Philippines.** This should include a clear strategic understanding of technical assistance needs and focus with a strategic vision for UNDP moving out as a service delivery agent and the Government acting as primary delivery agent in the future.

**Recommendation 2. Experience from the response to and recovery from Typhoon Yolanda and other disasters over the period needs to be consolidated and documented and UNDP Philippines could ensure that this strengthens its own response plan and its coordination role for future disasters as well as feeds into existing and developing government response, recovery and preparedness work.**

**Recommendation 3. UNDP needs to give greater strategic focus to areas of crosscutting concern to UNDP as a whole including gender, South-South cooperation (SSC) as well its evaluation of programmes and projects.**

**Recommendation 4. UNDP in the Philippines needs to develop a more strategic approach in some areas of intervention, especially aspects**

of its governance work including human rights issues and support to responsible Philippine institutions, in order to ensure support is optimal and targeted and allows UNDP and Philippine partners to address challenges strategically and sustainably.

**Recommendation 5.** UNDP with the Government of the Philippines should review its cur-

rent and past interventions and support to the environment, natural resources and climate change, especially those financed through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), to ensure that the support is balanced and is addressing the main needs and priorities of current and future policy and strategy priorities, that interventions are meeting key needs and that gaps in support are not developing.



# INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducts Independent Country Programme Evaluations (ICPEs)<sup>1</sup> to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of UNDP's contributions 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. The purpose of the ICPE is to:

- Support the development of the next UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD).
- Strengthen accountability of UNDP to national stakeholders.
- Strengthen accountability of UNDP to the Executive Board.

The ICPE for the Philippines UNDP country office covers the CPD period 2012 to 2018<sup>2</sup> and is the second evaluation of UNDP Philippines activities<sup>3</sup>. Results of the ICPE will inform the development of the new country programme being developed in 2017. The ICPE was conducted in close collaboration with the Government of the Philippines, UNDP Philippines country office, and UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP).

### 1.2 COUNTRY CONTEXT

**Politics:** Since 1986 the Philippines has had an increasingly robust democratic system. In 2016, the Mayor of Davao City, Rodrigo Duterte, was elected President. On inauguration, President Duterte outlined new country priorities under a 0-10 (0 to 10) Point Socioeconomic Agenda<sup>4</sup> and also stated that his Government was committed to building on the gains of the previous Aquino Administration. These goals have now been integrated into the new Philippine Development Plan 2017 to 2022.<sup>5</sup>

The President has also committed to move the Philippines from a Unitary to a Federal State and bills for a Constituent Assembly or a Constitutional Convention to shape the change to the Constitution have been tabled. The President's considerable political capital has provided significant momentum to both the peace processes and the transition to federalism but whether that capital will be sufficient to manage an often-fractious legislature will become more evident in the period ahead.

**Poverty and Inequality:** Recently, poverty levels in the Philippines have seen a decline, falling from 25.2 percent to 21.6 percent between 2012 and 2015.<sup>6</sup> However, 21.9 million people continue to be considered poor under the Philippine Government's poverty line of US\$1.25 income

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1 Formerly the Assessments of Development Results.

2 The original CPD covered the period 2012 to 2016 but was extended in November 2015 to bring it into harmonization with the UNDAF for the Philippines as well as the Philippine Development Plan (DP/2016/3).

3 An Assessment of Development Results was undertaken in 2009, covering the 2002-2008 CPD period.

4 <http://www.doh.gov.ph/node/6750>.

5 National Economic and Development Authority, 2017, <http://www.neda.gov.ph/2017/02/21/neda-board-approves-philippine-development-plan-2017-2022/>.

6 The Philippines Statistics Authority, 2016, <https://psa.gov.ph/content/poverty-incidence-among-filipinos-registered-216-2015-psa>.

per day, while 8.2 million people were classified as extremely poor in 2015.<sup>7</sup> In the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, poverty levels are significantly higher and have been increasing, reaching 53.7 percent in 2015.<sup>8</sup>

The Philippine economy has seen several years of robust growth with average annual GDP increase of over 6 percent in recent years. Increasing growth and a broadening revenue base has also seen increased financial resources for government and public spending. The Philippines ranks 116th out of 188 countries in the Human Development Index (medium human development) and 96th in the Gender Inequality Index.<sup>9</sup> The country also has one of the highest levels of inequality in South East Asia with a Gini Coefficient of 0.4439 in 2015.<sup>10</sup>

**The Philippines and the MDGs/SDGs:** As the Millennium Development Goals came to an end in 2015 and the transition to the Sustainable Development Goals began, the Philippines has seen improvement in several areas and achievement of goals especially in equal access to education, reduced infant mortality rates, access to safe water and reversal of the prevalence of major diseases. Despite positive reductions in poverty and extreme poverty, the Philippines did not achieve its goal of halving poverty and hunger incidence or its goals related to maternal mortality or the spread of HIV/AIDS. The Philippines is committed to adopting and integrating the SDGs into its planning process and a number of SDG goals are included in the new Philippine Development Plan 2017 to 2022.<sup>11</sup>

**The Bangsamoro Peace Process:** Mindanao remains in a transition phase from prolonged conflict between the Government of the Philippines and armed Bangsamoro groups seeking self-determination. The peace process in Muslim Mindanao has progressed with some periodic stalling as conflict has sporadically arisen. In recent years, fundamentalist extremists and rebels connected and aligned to the so-called 'Islamic State' have become increasingly active and have taken hold in more remote areas of the Philippines with increased and more audacious attacks.

A Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro was signed in March 2014 between the Government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) for the establishment of an autonomous Bangsamoro region. A draft Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL) lays out the legal framework for this new autonomous region, four versions of which have been submitted to Congress but have not yet been approved.

**Natural Disasters:** The Philippines remains one of the countries at most risk to climate change and natural disasters. Hazards include earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, floods, and typhoons. More than 20 typhoons a year hit the Philippines with more than seven a year reaching land and causing considerable destruction.<sup>12</sup> The number and increased intensity of typhoons coupled with high poverty rates, especially in rural and coastal areas, means populations are often devastated by typhoons.

In November 2013, super Typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), the strongest typhoon in recorded history, hit the Philippines.<sup>13</sup> The typhoon and

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7 The Philippine Statistics Authority, 2016, <https://psa.gov.ph/poverty-press-releases>.

8 The Philippine Statistics Authority, <http://psa.gov.ph/poverty-press-releases/data>.

9 UNDP, 'Human Development Report 2016: Human Development for Everyone'.

10 The Philippines Statistics Authority, <https://psa.gov.ph/content/average-family-income-2015-estimated-22-thousand-pesos-monthly-results-2015-family-income>.

11 National Economic and Development Authority, 2017, <http://www.neda.gov.ph/2017/02/21/neda-board-approves-philippine-development-plan-2017-2022/>.

12 [http://ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/2926/Y\\_It\\_Happened.pdf](http://ndrrmc.gov.ph/attachments/article/2926/Y_It_Happened.pdf).

13 The super typhoon that hit the Philippines in November 2013 is known internationally as Typhoon Haiyan and within the Philippines as Typhoon Yolanda. Throughout this report, Yolanda will be used in reference to the typhoon.

the impending storm surge affected 15 million people, caused damage of \$2 billion and killed over 6,300 people. While the response from the Government and the international community was immediate and strong, many people remain displaced years later with many communities remaining highly vulnerable to further natural hazards and storms.

### 1.3 UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMME

UNDP's strategy in the Philippines is guided by the CPD 2012 to 2016 (extended to 2018)<sup>14</sup> and is aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the Philippines, 2012 to 2018.<sup>15</sup> Since the adoption of the CPD and the UNDAF, the UNDP country office has seen some adjustment to its focus

**Table 1. UN Development Assistance Framework and UNDP Country Programme Document Programmes, 2012-2016**

| UNDAF Outcomes<br>2012 to 2018  | UNDP CPD<br>2012 to 2016 (2018)   |
|---|---|
| Outcome Group 1: Universal Access to Quality Social Services, with Focus on the MDGs (6 sub-outcomes) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide policy advice and capacity-building through consultation, dialogues and training for stakeholders on MDG mainstreaming, poverty reduction and social protection.</li> <li>• Contribute to policy analysis and foster inclusive processes to increase resources for local development.</li> <li>• Strengthen capacities and promote multisector dialogues to improve local response to HIV.</li> </ul>  |
| Outcome Group 2: Decent and Productive Employment for Sustained, Greener Growth (2 sub-outcomes)      |   |
| Outcome Group 3: Democratic Governance and Peace (6 sub-outcomes)                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support for training, mentoring and technical assistance, for human rights, gender equality and democratic governance.</li> <li>• Provide policy advice and capacity development and support identification and implementation of tools and mechanisms to increase transparency and integrity in delivery of public services.</li> <li>• Support the development and implementation of peace-promoting policies, programmes and plans through dialogues and capacity development.</li> <li>• Support for policy development, planning and programming to address residual conflicts and gaps and eliminate overlaps through technical assistance.</li> </ul> |
| Outcome Group 4: Resilience towards Disasters and Climate Change (3 sub-outcomes)                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to strengthening consultative mechanisms, enhancement of models and strategic plans for energy and environmental management and implementation of the National Frameworks for Climate Change Adaptation and DRM.</li> <li>• Provide technical assistance to recovery, rehabilitation and development of disaster/conflict-affected areas.</li> </ul>  |

Source: UNDAF and CPD.

14 UNDP Philippines, CPD 2012 to 2016, <http://www.ph.undp.org/content/dam/philippines/docs/legalframeworks/Philippine%20Country%20Programme%20Document%202012-2016-final.pdf>.

15 UNDAF 2012 to 2018, [https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/portal-document/Philippines\\_UNDAF%202012-2018.pdf.pdf](https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/portal-document/Philippines_UNDAF%202012-2018.pdf.pdf).

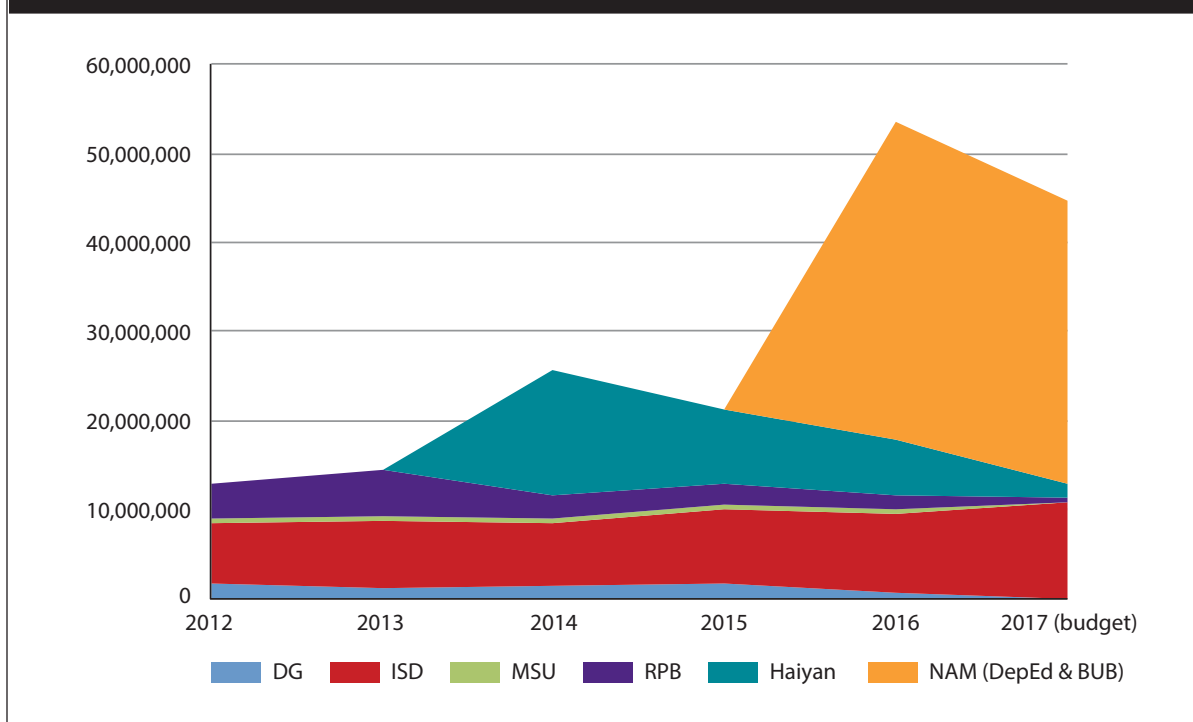
as needs and priorities of the Philippines have changed and also due to the adoption of a new Strategic Plan for UNDP in 2014 (to 2017).<sup>16</sup>

The UNDP country office has always been willing and able to support both disaster response and recovery efforts in times of crisis and has played a strong role in the response and recovery effort following Typhoon Yolanda, which also saw a number of long-term recovery programmes being integrated into the country programme.

Funding reductions from UN and non-UN sources has meant UNDP Philippines has had to seek alternative and more innovative funding approaches which recently has seen UNDP adopt a National Acceleration Modality (NAM) to deliver accelerated government services and programmes through UNDP's procurement and programme management systems.

Funding for projects is detailed below and in more detail in the annexes (available online). Between 2012 and 2016, the country office received \$149 million and disbursed \$128 million (86.6 percent). Funding for typhoon response and recovery efforts in 2012 and 2013 as well as recent NAM financing from the Government of the Philippines produced an increase over the period. The integrated sustainable development (ISD) outcome disbursed \$38.6 million between 2012 and 2016, predominantly Global Environment Facility-financed environment, natural resource, climate change and land use programmes. Democratic governance (DG) disbursed \$42.5 million over the same period, with NAM disbursement of \$35.7 million. Resilience and peace building (RPB) saw a large increase in funding and disbursement with \$44.3 million.<sup>17</sup>

**Figure 2. UNDP annual budgets, 2012-2017 (in \$)**



Source: UNDP Philippines

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/corporate/Changing\\_with\\_the\\_World\\_UNDP\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_2014\\_17.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/corporate/Changing_with_the_World_UNDP_Strategic_Plan_2014_17.html).

<sup>17</sup> All figures and the graph are based on disbursement and budget figures provided by the country office, which are detailed in the annexes (available online).

## 1.4 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

**Scope:** The ICPE examined the current country programme (2012-2018) and provides a set of forward-looking recommendations as the country office prepares its next CPD starting in 2019 (to 2023). Close attention was given to CPD 2012-2018 and the current programmatic structure and strategy under the country office's three thematic cluster areas – ISD, DG, and RPB – to assess the results obtained so far as well as constraints within the current structure. The evaluation covers the entirety of UNDP's activities in the country and therefore includes interventions funded by all sources of finance including core UNDP resources, donor funds and government funds.

**Methodology:** The evaluation methodology comprises two components: (i) assessment of UNDP's contribution by thematic/programme area (effectiveness), and (ii) assessment of the quality of this contribution (relevance, efficiency, and sustainability). The evaluation also looked at how specific factors contributed to UNDP's performance. Data was collected through a desk review of materials including programme, project and policy-related documents, reports, work plans and past evaluations, government reports and plans, and other related reports and information. In addition,

self-reported data from the country office was reviewed, including the Results-Oriented Annual Reports.

As part of the preparatory and data collection missions, interviews were held with staff of UNDP and other UN agencies, development partners, donors and stakeholders including government officials, implementers, managers, and programme and project beneficiaries. The evaluation team undertook field visits to key project and programme sites including Manila, Tacloban, Cotabato and Legazpi City.<sup>18</sup>

All findings are supported by a triangulated data-collection and verification process through interviews with UNDP staff, review of key supporting programme documents and interviews with government and implementing partners and beneficiaries during the field visits to programme sites.

**Evaluation Schedule:** The ICPE of the Philippines was officially started in January 2017 with a preparatory mission followed by a data-collection mission in March/April 2017. A draft report was produced in August and shared with the country office in September 2017 and the Government of the Philippines in December 2017.

**Table 2. Time-frame for the ICPE process**

| Activity  | Responsible party      | Proposed time-frame 2017-2018 |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Phase 1: Preparation</b>                                   |                        |                               |
| Preparatory mission   | IEO with support of CO |                               |
| Finalization of Terms of Reference                            | IEO                    | Early February 2017           |
| Selection and recruitment of external evaluation team members | IEO with support of CO | February 2017                 |

(continued)

18 Manila visits focused on meetings with UNDP, government partners, other donors and UN agencies; the Tacloban visit focused on Yolanda response and recovery and environmental interventions; visits to Cotabato, Mindanao, focused on peace and resilience efforts; and to Legazpi City focused on the DepEd project and third-party monitoring. Rebel activity in Samar during the data collection visit meant that a field visit to the area had to be cancelled and project sites were not visited.

(continued)

| <b>Table 2. Time-frame for the ICPE process</b>             |                          |                                      |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Activity</b>   | <b>Responsible party</b> | <b>Proposed time-frame 2017–2018</b> |
| <b>Phase 2: Data collection and analysis</b>                |                          |                                      |
| Preliminary analysis of available data and context analysis | Evaluation team          | March 2017                           |
| Data collection   | Evaluation team          | March/April (3-4 weeks) 2017         |
| Analysis and finalization of findings                       | Evaluation team          | June/July 2017                       |
| <b>Phase 3: Synthesis and report writing</b>                |                          |                                      |
| Synthesis   | IEO/Evaluation team      | By June 2017                         |
| Zero draft ICPE for clearance by IEO                        | IEO                      | By end June 2017                     |
| First draft ICPE for CO/RBAP review                         | IEO                      | End of July/August 2017              |
| Revision and second draft for national stakeholder review   | IEO                      | By August 2017                       |
| Draft management response                                   | CO                       | September 2017                       |
| Stakeholder workshop  | IEO/CO                   | September/October 2017               |
| <b>Phase 4: Production and follow-up</b>                    |                          |                                      |
| Report made available to the Executive Board                | IEO                      | September 2018                       |
| Dissemination of the final report                           | IEO/CO                   | September/October 2018               |

## 1.5 ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The ICPE report for UNDP Philippines has five chapters. Chapter 1 outlines the purpose and methodology of the evaluation. Chapter 2 goes into detail on the overall effectiveness of the UNDP country programme since 2012.

Chapter 3 evaluates the UNDP country programme relevance, efficiency and sustainability, followed by a review of cross-cutting interventions in chapter 4. Chapter 5 gives the report's conclusions, recommendations and management response from the country office.

## Chapter 2

# EFFECTIVENESS OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

This chapter outlines the effectiveness of UNDP's key development contributions in the Philippines in the three outcome areas, democratic governance, inclusive sustainable development and resilience and peace building, during the current country programme (2012 to 2018). Annex 2 (available online) outlines the projects and programmes implemented during the Country Programme Document period to reach the outcome goals of each these areas.

## 2.1 DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

### 2.1.1 OVERVIEW

The present CPD (2012 to 2018) as well as the current UNDAF (2012 to 2018) continue to identify democratic governance as a key area of focus for UNDP in the Philippines, especially in the promotion of accountability, ensuring rights and enabling the participation of the poor in all aspects of governance through the strengthening of local governance and communities through both national and policy-level support as well as work at the local level.

The country office has addressed democratic governance through a range of programmatic interventions. The largest intervention includes the continuous support for the provision of and access to water services at the community level, which has had a strong policy advocacy approach at the national level as well as close partnership with local government units in order to ensure improved, holistic and integrated water and sanitation service delivery.

More broadly, UNDP has supported a range of projects with government counterparts addressing a number of key governance challenges including the development of a culture of human rights and empowering citizens to deepen democracy (with the Commission for Human Rights), making justice work for the poor (Supreme Court of the Philippines), developing a corruption-intolerant society (Civil Service Commission), as well as protecting the rights of indigenous peoples (National Commission on Indigenous Peoples).

More recently, UNDP Philippines has entered into agreements with the Government as a project manager and service provider using UNDP procurement and administrative systems to accelerate the provision of services from government agencies which have been delayed due to bottlenecks within the government planning, budgeting and procurement systems. This government cost-sharing (GCS) approach is the National Acceleration Modality (NAM) in the Philippines. In addition to the accelerated implementation approach, central to the process is also technical assistance and capacity-building support, financed through project savings or a technical assistance fund (2 percent of project funds) as well as a third-party monitoring approach that engages citizens in overseeing project implementation and ensuring accountability.<sup>19</sup> The use of UNDP systems and procurement expertise was also hoped to bring about savings through a more competitive tendering process as well as VAT-free procurement.

Two projects are currently being implemented under NAM. The first, with the Department for Education, is the Development Support Services

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19 A-I-M tracks of engagement. Accelerated delivery of goods and services through the short-term use of UNDP systems. Institutional reforms and capacity building for government in the long term and Monitoring by engaged citizens for accountability.

2016 K to 12 Basic Education Programme of the Philippines Department of Education (DepEd project) to deliver \$63 million of information, communication and technology (ICT) equipment to over 5,000 schools across the Philippines in 2016 and 2017. The majority of the schools are in remote and disadvantaged areas. The initiative is coupled with third-party monitoring by local civil society organizations (CSO) to ensure full delivery and community participation. A public finance management (PFM) assessment and training package is being designed to strengthen current PFM systems and procurement approaches. This DepEd ICT project is part of a broader strategy by the Government of the Philippines to strengthen and improve the K-12 education system.<sup>20</sup>

A second project with the Department for Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) saw UNDP engaged in providing procurement and management services to implement a portfolio of 555 projects (over 1,000 smaller projects), valued in total at over \$11 million and part of the Government's 'bottom-up budgeting' (BUB) nationwide programme.<sup>21</sup> The portfolio under the BUB project included small infrastructure projects such as community and training centres and the provision of wheelchairs and other assistive devices.

UNDP Philippines is now actively pursuing a number of NAM projects with several government agencies. The current portfolio is important to the country office going forward and the proposed portfolio is financially large. Moreover, such government cost-sharing agreements are being aggressively pursued by UNDP globally as well as in the region. The evaluation therefore looked closely at current experience in implementation.<sup>22</sup>

GCS approaches are in line with a general shift within UNDP from being perceived as a donor towards linking with governments as development partners and supporting them in overcoming poor government service delivery and implementation through UNDP systems and UNDP's proven track record in development.

## 2.1.2 EFFECTIVENESS OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

**Finding 1. UNDP has played a strong role in the improved provision of services, especially integrated water and sanitation, through the introduction of more comprehensive, integrated and coordinated governance approaches for service delivery. This has included the introduction of regional hub approaches to governance structures, improving levels of participatory governance and collaboration that are in turn replicable across a range of service delivery areas, and governance interventions.**

UNDP has a long history of supporting the Philippine Government across a range of governance support interventions that has included upstream policy support and downstream interventions and local governance support. One continued area of support across the CPD period has been the development of improved and integrated water and sanitation support and governance, primarily through the Promoting of Water and Sanitation Project, where UNDP, through a highly collaborative and multi-partner approach has demonstrated the need for strong and integrated governance in order to successfully deliver key government services.

The programme was implemented jointly by UNDP and three other UN agencies, UNICEF, WHO and UN Women, along with two main

20 <https://ph.news.yahoo.com/pnoy-launches-k-12-program-092701405.html>.

21 <http://openbub.gov.ph/>. The BUB project was established by the previous Aquino administration in 2012 with the aim of making budgets and planning more responsive to local needs by allocating funds for LGUs to develop activities and interventions through the participation of communities and CSOs. In 2016, the BUB project was disbursing PHP24 billion (\$474 million) for LGU activities across a range of government agencies under the management of the Department of the Interior and Local Governance as the main project management office.

22 In 2015, the Asia Pacific region had GCS agreements covering 3 percent of programme funds. A two-year target was set to raise this to 10 percent. In 2017, the target was revised to 15 percent (public and private funding).

government partners, the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG) and the Department of Health (DoH), and has developed a number of regional water and sanitation hubs in 15 of the 17 administrative regions of the Philippines. The hubs bring together local academic institutions, CSOs and service providers to ensure that planning and financing for water and sanitation is brought together and considered holistically across government agencies, communities and all involved agencies.

As the multi-partner water and sanitation programme comes to an end in 2017, the DILG is moving towards adopting the approach positively. The department has started integrating it into water and sanitation programmes under its mandate to ensure more holistic and integrated planning for optimal access of services. The DILG is also considering the inclusion of UNDP support to ensure that lessons from the iWASH programme are integrated into the Government's flagship safe water provision programme, Salintubig.

**Finding 2. UNDP support to regional human rights issues and the development of a Regional Human Rights Commission (RHRC) in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) was the first of its kind in the Philippines and was in many ways ground breaking, providing access to human rights services for remote groups who would not normally have access to such services.**

The support that UNDP was able to give to the development of the Bangsamoro Human Rights Commission (BHRC) and the development of field offices and human rights monitoring centres (HRMC) in the remote islands of Basilan, Sulu and Tawi Tawi broadened access to human rights services in the ARMM region enabling remote communities facing considerable challenges and pressures to access human rights and legal services amid the ongoing conflict in the area.

The structures established under the UNDP interventions (Strengthening Institutions for

Peace and Human Rights), included training and support which led to 4,524 people having their cases docketed with the RHRC via the three HRMC, over little more than a two-year period, including support to those imprisoned from the islands. The initiative included the participation of gender groups enabling them to lodge a number of human rights abuse cases with the programme helping to end a 'culture of silence' that had endured in the area.

Work during the project period also ensured that the RHRC architecture and structures were more widely reflected in the Bangsamoro Basic Law, although challenges emerged from further conflicts in 2015 and because of delays in the approval of the law. As the HRMCs were absorbed into the administration of the ARMM, their future has become uncertain. They face reduced financial resource commitments and staffing cuts (from seven to three), which have in turn led to a decline in the number of cases being brought to the RHRC. This comes at a key time for the peace process in Mindanao with the resubmission of the draft Bangsamoro Basic Law and increased pressures on human rights from groups unaligned to the peace process.

**Finding 3. UNDP has developed a number of programmes targeting and supporting a range of vulnerable groups including the poor, female migrants, women, indigenous groups and groups impacted by HIV and AIDS. Activities and interventions remain somewhat limited in nature and lack a medium to long-term strategic plan or sustainability focus. At the same time, synergies across interventions and targeting of vulnerable groups could have been further explored.**

UNDP has continued to target and has been responsive to the needs of marginalized groups across the Philippines and has tried to address their needs and access to services and support throughout projects across all outcome areas. This has included support to HIV and AIDS-affected groups, mostly men, through the Scaling-up Effective & Sustained HIV & AIDS Response

initiative; work with indigenous groups through the Protecting Indigenous People's Rights and Indigenous Communities Conserved Areas programmes under the DG and ISD portfolios; support to female migrants and their families through the Overseas Filipinos Remittances for Development project; and support to the poor through the Making Justice Work for the Poor project. Other programmes and projects, such as the Yolanda Typhoon response and recovery interventions, supported minority groups.

All these interventions have had policy-level interventions working closely with the Government in their respective areas to ensure that government policy, strategies and programmes targeted at vulnerable groups are responsive to their needs. They have also worked closely with communities to improve their access to services. This has included increased understanding among indigenous groups of their environmental justice, human and democratic rights through the Empowering Citizens to Deepen Democracy programme with the Commission on Human Rights and the Making Justice Work for the Poor programme with the Supreme Court of the Philippines.

**Finding 4. UNDP has recently expanded its governance operations into new service delivery areas acting as a delivery agent for the Government under NAM starting with two large projects in 2016. More NAM projects with several government agencies are in the pipeline for 2017 and beyond. The transition was challenging to a degree for the country office and programme design, risk assessment, partnership development, financing and management arrangements, reporting structures and implementation modalities have all come under pressure.**

The NAM approach is structured to enable the Government to accelerate public service delivery and avoid costly delays in programme implementation through the use of UNDP's mature and transparent procurement and programme management systems.

Central to the NAM partnership has been the recognition and promise of technical assistance and capacity-building activities from UNDP to address weaknesses in the Government service delivery structure. Activities and studies to address these weaknesses along with associated project management costs are to be financed from savings through the use of UNDP's procurement system and approach which enables in some part more competitive bidding and to a degree lower prices. Further savings are also available from UNDP's VAT-free status for procurement. These savings will also support third-party monitoring systems that engage CSOs and communities in overseeing the delivery of public services. Ultimately, the arrangement ensured that promised government services were delivered to communities in an accelerated and timelier manner.

At the time of the evaluation, the two NAM projects under implementation had had varied experiences. The two projects are very different in structure as detailed above and faced issues in design and planning. UNDP found, on adoption of the projects, issues in the structure, budgeting and readiness of both projects. As a result, UNDP had to redesign and restructure parts of the projects, primarily in the Bottom-up-Budgeting project with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). A desire to move quickly on agreement by both parties at the design and approval stages of the projects meant that project documents often lacked the level of detail normally required. At the same time, some presumptions did not hold once programmes went into implementation. A change in administration following the May 2016 elections also led to some delays and implementation issues, as the approach had to be further discussed and agreed with government partners and leaders.

The Development Support Services 2016 K to 12 Basic Education Programme of the Philippines Department of Education (DepEd) project supplying ICT equipment to schools across the country has seen successful implementation. It is close to completion as designed, especially in the accelerated procurement and disbursement of

a considerable amount of ICT equipment across the Philippines, despite some challenges not unexpected in a project of this size. Over 5,000 schools have received ICT packages of computers and monitors, servers, LCD projectors, solar energy systems and other equipment to better serve their schools and which is central to the delivery of curricula for the new K-12 approach. As part of project implementation, \$500,000 in UNDP regional pipeline support was provided to an innovative third-party monitoring (TPM) system as well as PFM assessments. Under the TPM system, UNDP partnered with over 240 CSOs and community-based groups across the Philippines in overseeing the delivery and installation of ICT equipment at the school level, often in very remote locations. The TPM approach was important to ensure that full packages of ICT equipment were delivered to schools and if items were missing or broken, providers replaced them quickly. It also ensured that there was no misappropriation of equipment.

Although the DepEd project has seen successful implementation, it did face challenges initially. When the agreement was signed, numerous schools were not ready for the new ICT equipment. Some lacked facilities to house ICT labs or had inadequate access to electricity and even plug sockets to use the computers. At the time of the first project board meeting in January 2017, the TPM groups reported that half of schools assessed (162/332) were still not ready for the delivery of ICT equipment.<sup>23</sup> Many schools are very remote, making delivery extremely difficult and often requiring ICT equipment to be unpackaged for transportation. Safety was also a concern, especially in the case of schools in conflict areas, where the TPM groups were central to ensuring safe delivery.

In the case of the implementation of the Bottom-up-Budgeting project, UNDP faced challenges from the outset. The BUB project saw UNDP take implementation responsibility for 555 projects<sup>24</sup> valued at \$11 million across a number of local government units (LGUs) which had struggled with the initial implementation of agreed BUB projects prior to UNDP's involvement. Assurances were given on the signing of the project document that all projects had the correct supporting documentation (budgets, project design documents etc.) to aid their immediate implementation. However, when implementation started it was realized that over a 175 small construction projects and several small procurement projects (such as the purchase of assistive devices including wheelchairs) contained in the project document were not ready for implementation and lacked adequate supporting documentation. This forced UNDP to restart the planning and budgeting process with a number of local communities and LGUs and led to a more than 12-month delay in bringing many projects to just the tendering position.<sup>25</sup>

The BUB team spent considerable time putting the projects on track in cooperation with LGUs and the DSWD. Despite placing a programme management team from the beginning of the BUB project (at some expense), no actual construction work had started by the third quarter of 2017, although some procurement had been undertaken and disbursed to LGUs. By the third quarter, 2017, 55 projects, or 10 percent, had been delivered to LGUs and communities with the project due for completion in November 2017.<sup>26</sup> At transfer to UNDP, the list of 555 initiatives to be implemented under the BUB project included several activities UNDP could not undertake (such as cash grants to communities). UNDP's own system in hiring, providing

23 UNDP, Minutes of the DepEd Project Board, 2017.

24 UNDP, Third Quarter Report to DSWD, 2017. On unpacking the transferred projects, it was found that under the 555 agreed projects were 1,093 distinct sub-projects.

25 At the point of the data collection mission, April 2017, tendering for batches of small infrastructure projects, was just undergoing a tendering process.

26 BUB Project Board Meeting minutes and presentation, May 2017.

security approval for staff travel and the procurement system itself (which best provides cost savings under a package tendering structure) led to more delays. Communications and reporting between the DSWD and UNDP was also problematic, leading to further misunderstandings and some further delays.

The evaluators understand the challenges faced and the need for entering into the BUB project (and DepEd project) quickly. However, these could have been consolidated and recorded more clearly, to aid future learning and to strengthen the proposed portfolio of NAM projects under negotiation and design. A more tentative approach should have been taken when entering into NAM projects. When issues were found early in the implementation of the BUB project, a renegotiation of project parameters should have been undertaken quickly. Poor planning on both sides meant that costs were incurred and delays seen, which have led to a straining of relations between UNDP and government partners (the DSWD and LGUs) which at the time of the evaluation had not yet received the majority of agreed projects in the case of the BUB project.

In both cases, the projects were approved and signed under the previous government administration. Elections in May 2016 and the change of administration brought new under-secretaries and staff across ministries. The new administration had several questions and needed further clarification of the NAM projects and approach before it felt comfortable with the arrangement. The approach has also led to some questions from the Philippine Commission on Audit as to its legality and who has authority to audit the projects given that it is government funds (UNDP Office of Audit and Investigation or the Philippine Commission on Audit).<sup>27</sup> However, the legality of the arrangement is documented and Government Procurement Policy Board and

the Commission on Audit both acknowledge the legality of the approach.

Improved financial and implementation reporting, and more regular project board meetings could have helped overcome some of this uncertainty. Reports and meetings have not been held regularly and are often delayed, leading to delayed planning, decision making and implementation. A further challenge to NAM projects, given that they have underlined the financial savings through the approach, has been the numerous implementation costs and UNDP administrative and implementation charges assigned to project funds, including: i) a three percent general management support cost, ii) project staff costs, iii) UNDP direct programme cost recovery, and iv) a technical assistant fund cost of two percent. At the same time, savings due to UNDP's VAT-exempt status are not yet apparent in the BUB project and are likely not forthcoming. In the DepEd project, an underestimation of initial costs when the project was transferred to UNDP meant that overall savings did not reach the levels hoped, which in turn could impact levels of capacity-building. Worrisomely, in the case of the BUB project, some outcome scaling back may be needed to ensure the project is brought within budget.

Central to the agreement for NAM projects is the accumulation of funds for technical assistance (two percent of programme funds) and to support capacity development to improve the Philippines' procurement system and other agreed areas to ensure the Government can better deliver services itself without the need for support from UNDP. This is also essential to ensure sustainability of the approach. In the DepEd project, initially UNDP regional pipeline funds were used to start a PFM assessment and some training has started and will be financed in the future from accumulated savings and the 2 percent techni-

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27 The legality of UNDP's VAT-free status and the authority of the UN over Philippine laws, including audit requirements, is based on the Convention of the Privileges and Immunities of the UN of 1946, which was acceded to by the Philippines in October 1947 and the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement, which was entered into between the Government of the Philippines and UNDP in July 1977.

cal assistance funds.<sup>28</sup> In the BUB project other than on job support, it is unlikely that any technical support or system assessment will be carried out or that funds will be available for more PFM-focused support. At the time of the evaluation, the technical assistance approach was not clear and, as a result, it was unclear if funds accrued were adequate to cover the needed levels of technical assistance and support. Partners were also unclear as to the use of accrued technical assistance funds and further negotiations may be needed in the future.

**Finding 5. UNDP has continued to support a range of interventions and programmes in human rights, democratic governance, anti-corruption and access to justice in partnership with key government partners in these areas. These interventions would have been better served under improved strategic planning approaches with partners and stakeholders. UNDP Philippines continues to operate a large number of small annually planned and funded projects and activities in this area with little or no strategic focus evident or medium-to long-term strategic plan, which limits overall impact as well as the opportunity to leverage funds for broader interventions in existing and emerging areas of need.**

These key governance areas have been central to much of the democratic governance work of the country office over the period of the CPD. The office has developed strong partnerships with a number of key government stakeholders in areas such as human rights, the deepening of democracy (the Commission on Human Rights), anti-corruption (Office of the Ombudsman) and access to justice for marginalized groups (Supreme Court of the Philippines). Accumulatively, six of these programmes have disbursed over \$2.5 million over the CPD period.

These projects constitute important areas of support for the Philippines as well as in key UNDP focus areas in general. They have contributed to numerous activities during the CPD period and have supported a diverse range of outputs and activities, all of which are important to the strengthening of access to justice, human rights, the deepening of democracy and the ending of corruption. However, the support has been financially small and marked by unclear and fluctuating annual funding that is often late in disbursement to the country office due to UNDP approval and distribution processes. Moreover, it has not been strategic in leveraging the limited funding with more targeted approaches that in turn might attract further support from other donors to enable greater impact.

UNDP has supported two programmes with the Commission on Human Rights in the Philippines (CHRP): the Empowering Citizens to Deepen Democracy (2012-2016) and the Nurturing a Culture of Human Rights programme (2012-2016). Both programmes have undertaken similar activities in integration and growth in understanding of human rights and the advancement of democracy. For both programmes, there is some minor consistency of focus from year to year, though in many cases intervention support is ad hoc and even one-off in nature. Both projects have also suffered from varied annual funding that has made it difficult to plan appropriately.<sup>29</sup> One constant area of support has been activities in support of the Philippines' human rights commitments under various treaties and work to ensure that these commitments are integrated nationally. This has included financial, technical and logistical support to the CHRP for the Universal Periodic Review.

Support from the Corruption Intolerant Society programme (2013-2016) and the Making

28 In August 2017, Department of Education officials and staff undertook a four-day training, Introductory Certificate in Public Procurement, supported by UNDP Global Procurement hub in Kuala Lumpur.

29 The planned budget for the Culture of Human Rights Programme has varied considerably as follows: \$177,000 (2012), \$130,000 (2013), \$109,000 (2014), \$120,000 (2015), and \$57,500 (2016). The Deepening Democracy programme has seen even greater variance in planned budgets: \$120,000 (2012), \$257,000 (2013), \$60,000 (2014), \$265,000 (2015), and \$57,500 (2016).

Justice Work for the Poor project (2012-2016) with the Office of the Ombudsman and the Supreme Court of the Philippines, respectively, have had a central environmental justice focus. In addition, they have strengthened their ability to hear environmental complaints, especially against LGUs and solid waste disposal in the case of the Ombudsman and addressing issues of environmental justice in general and especially for indigenous people in the case of the Supreme Court. However, other activities appear small in nature and somewhat ad hoc in design, again possibly due to variations in budgets.

**Finding 6. UNDP has always worked towards ensuring strong partnerships and participation in programme and project implementation among Government, UNDP, implementing partners, civil society organizations, communities and a broad range of stakeholders. This approach has strengthened project implementation with the Government, service delivery through NAM projects and within other outcome areas, which can be replicated across other interventions.**

Across outcome areas and programmes, UNDP has always strongly engaged with CSOs, communities and other stakeholders in its development work. This can be seen in the innovative regional hub approach detailed above for service delivery, especially for water and sanitation services.

In disaster risk management (DRM), examined in more detail later in this evaluation, UNDP has placed community planning and participation in DRM preparedness planning central to its endeavours. Equally, disaster response and recovery work has engaged and worked closely with communities in enabling them to respond and recover from disasters. This is outlined in detail further in the report.

UNDP has used a third-party monitoring approach to ensure ownership of a number of programmes. This included an independent third-party monitoring team (TPMT) to oversee the implementation of the Peace Agreement

under the comprehensive agreement in Bangsamoro. Recently UNDP has used the TPM approach with considerable success to ensure disbursement of ICT equipment to schools under the DepEd project.

UNDP has clearly developed comparative strength in TPM approaches and the engagement of CSOs to oversee and monitor implementation of a variety of activities and programme aspects. However, this remains very much a programmatic approach. In the case of the DepEd project, the TPM was central to the disbursement of ICT equipment, ensuring engagement with communities. Without it, UNDP may have had to invest in a larger programme implementation staff team. While the trial funding for the TPM was provided by the UNDP regional hub, subsequent financing has come directly from savings made by the DepEd project.

## **2.2 INCLUSIVE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

### **2.2.1 OVERVIEW**

Support for ISD in pursuit of the UNDAF's outcome 4 has focused on interventions in support of DRM as well as a strong focus on environment and natural resource management.

#### **Disaster Risk Management**

Each year, the Philippines is hit by several typhoons causing considerable damage to agriculture and infrastructure. The Government has a strong inter-agency DRM structure illustrated by the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC), overseen by the Office of Civil Defence (OCD), as well as the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Plan (NDRRMP) (2011-2028). The UNDP CC/DRM portfolio is strongly aligned to these goals and aims to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity through integration of climate change and disaster risk reduction into development planning, human capacity and mobilizing resources for disaster risk reduction, climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation.

## Environment and Natural Resources

In recent years, the Philippines has made a number of gains in environment and natural resources (ENR) management and has developed an active legislative programme. The country met its MDG targets for improved sanitation and for safe water supply. It has set even higher targets in its latest development plan and recorded improvements in some natural resource indicators including a small recent increase in forested area after a long and substantial decline; an increase in the number of protected areas; a substantial decline in ozone-depleting chlorofluorocarbons; and a reduction in household solid fuel use.

Despite these achievements, environmental challenges persist across the Philippines and require urgent attention. These include major environmental issues such as challenges to habitat and land use from logging, mining and over-harvesting of resources, increasing population and land conversion for farming, housing and infrastructure, and limited land tenure rights. Though the country has a strong environmental policy and legislative foundation, enforcement remains a challenge.

UNDP Philippines' ENR portfolio continues to be one of the key pillars of the organization's work, making up the largest share of programmes and financing (when excluding disaster response and recovery work and NAM programmes). Most, if not all, environmental work has been funded through the GEF vertical fund and is managed and implemented by government partners, especially the Department for Natural Resources. The environment and natural resource strategy and portfolio was designed to align with the Philippine Government's priorities for development as well as UNDP's.

### 2.2.2 EFFECTIVENESS OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

**Finding 7. UNDP has developed comparative strengths and strong value added in its DRM support, developing a broad range of interven-**

**tions and support to better prepare LGUs and communities for possible natural disasters.**

National agencies and the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council have strong levels of coordination and cooperation in mainstreaming DRM and climate change into national planning. UNDP has been highly active on connecting this national level policy and planning work with LGUs and community-level practices ensuring that upstream work is being integrated downstream into LGU development plans.

Most UNDP DRM programmes have focused on the improvement of LGU planning, land-use planning and the inclusion of DRM within plans. The interventions have also ensured that plans are driven and informed by community plans and the programmes have worked with LGUs to develop community and barangay plans that include a DRM consideration. The Australian and New Zealand Governments have been highly supportive of UNDP in this area and have recognized its experience.

Programmes supporting LGUs and communities to be better prepared for natural disasters have included hazards mapping and assessment for effective community risk management (READY) (2006 to 2015), which worked to institutionalize DRM at the national level and support the development of tools to assist LGUs to develop their development plans and integrate DRM as well as coordinate with central governments. The Integrated Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation in Local Development Planning and Decision Making Processes (2009-2015) programme similarly worked with LGUs to develop risk and land-use maps and integrate DRM into development plans across a number of LGUs. The Twin Phoenix Project (2012-2016), which has been expanded in response to Typhoon Yolanda under the Resilience and Preparedness Towards Inclusive Development (RAPID) (2014-2015) programme under the management of the Climate Change Commission, has also sought to

support LGUs and communities in their DRM planning, with mixed results.

The Enhancing Greater Metro Manila Institutional Capacities for Effective Disaster/Climate Risk Management towards Sustainable Development (GMMA READY) (2011-2016) and the Resilience Capacity-Building for Cities and Municipalities to Reduce Disaster Risks from Climate Change and Natural Hazards (ReBuILD) (2012-2016) programmes supported more urban LGUs and community capacity-building and DRM planning and knowledge management systems.

Overall, UNDP's approach to DRM has recognized the strengths in the national system and has supported and aligned interventions with the plans of the Government and the NDRRMC members supporting upstream policy work where possible. This has included support to a sunset review of the DRR law 2010, in 2015 to identify adjustment needs and institutional gaps following five years of implementation and following the experience of Typhoon Yolanda.

**Finding 8. DRM, preparedness and planning support and subsequent disaster response work, despite the successes outlined above, were not well coordinated within the UNDP country office, with two outcome areas, ISD and RPB implementing DRM work with little knowledge sharing and some duplication of activities and products.**

Disaster response and recovery work and disaster preparedness support to LGUs have operated under two separate outcome areas in the UNDP Philippines country office. The support in DRM under the ISD cluster has been well coordinated and has built on its experience across a range of work over the years and has developed tools and approaches that are easily adjusted for location and adoption and integration by LGUs. However, the linkage and coordination of this support to similar interventions being undertaken under the RPB cluster is not apparent. This was clear during the recovery phase from Typhoon Yolanda

where programmes under the response element and those existing under DRM preparedness did not leverage or maximize the learning from the experience available within UNDP in DRM. Rather, they started the process afresh without using the internal experience, expertise and comparative strengths of UNDP.

This continues to be apparent despite recognition of previous coordination challenges and measures being put in place to improve coordination. The Australian-financed and Climate Change Commission-implemented RAPID programme has undergone delays recently due to implementing partner leadership and technical staff changes, which has required the programme to adjust its work plan. The adjusted work plan appears unrealistic in the limited time left in the programme and has not considered or coordinated with existing DRM projects responding to Typhoon Yolanda in the same area, including the UNDP/EU-financed programme which has had considerable success in LGU disaster risk management and community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) approaches.

The RAPID programme aims to build DRM and CBDRM capacity in 150 barangays in 12 municipalities over a very short time-frame, not recognizing that CBDRM in particular requires long-term engagement to gain trust and understanding. UNDP has considerable experience in this area through its past engagement with LGUs and communities. Sharing between the EU/UNDP recovery and RAPID project should have been facilitated, including participation of other non-Yolanda DRM programme staff. The EU/UNDP recovery project did not develop an exit strategy to ensure that important learning from earlier projects was not lost in developing operational guidelines for CBDRM.

DRM coordination and management issues were acknowledged by the country office and structural changes were being implemented at the time of the evaluation to address these issues and ensure improvements in the future.

**Finding 9. UNDP's environmental portfolio builds on the organization's comparative strengths in institutional capacity-building and has successfully supported the implementation of a range of environmental and natural resource activities in partnership with the Philippine Government which has had a balanced mix of upstream and downstream impacts that are strongly aligned to national priorities and commitments as well as UNDP's own strategic priorities.**

The ENR portfolio is largely financed by the GEF. Under GEF 5, the Philippines received a total allocation of \$39.38 million with \$30.5 million (77.45 percent) allocated for biodiversity, \$7.47 million (18.97 percent) for climate change activities, and \$1.36 million (3.4 percent) for land-use activities. The support in general takes the form of capacity-building (i.e., trainings, local and abroad/regional), preparation of plans, and pilot testing of strategies in select areas, among others. The environment portfolio is designed to contribute to the national development plan as the overarching guiding framework with a focus on production and growth.

The largest of the biodiversity interventions include: Partnerships for Biodiversity Conservation (2010-2017); Expanding and Diversifying the National System of Terrestrial Protected Areas in the Philippines (2009-2016); Strengthening the Marine-Protected Area System to Conserve Marine Key Biodiversity Areas (2014-2019); Sulu Celebes Seas Sustainable Fisheries Management (2009-2016); Sustainable Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stock (2014-2017); and Support to Eligible Parties to Produce the Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CDB) 2011-2020 (2012-2016). There are a number of smaller interventions.

These programmes have supported biodiversity management across the Philippines, including a policy and management review for biodiversity

and environment under the environment framework plan and the Philippines Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan as well as detailed financial needs assessment. Biodiversity support also enabled the establishment of new conservation areas and strengthened the management of existing parks and conservation areas.<sup>30</sup> Policy support was also given to ensure the mainstreaming and inclusion of biodiversity in land-use plans across 1,634 LGUs as well as the production of tools to promote biodiversity-friendly businesses.

UNDP has continued to support the Philippines in climate change adaptation and mitigation and has long worked in partnership with the Government on this. UNDP has supported both upstream work to strengthen the Philippines' participation in international treaties through support to the second national communication on climate change as well as other guidance and support.

Downstream, UNDP supported the scaling-up of risk transfer mechanisms for climate-vulnerable agriculture-based communities in Mindanao (2014-2017), which introduced a weather-index-based insurance system (WIBI) protecting and insuring farmers' crops from weather-based losses. The WIBI pilot in Mindanao saw 2,413 farmers insured against weather-based crop losses for rice and corn crops and established a payment system that benefited 178 farmers for losses valued at \$29,700. Another significant success was support to the formulation of a bill within the Philippine House of Representatives and Senate that mandated the Philippines Crop Insurance Corporation to offer (weather) index-based insurance coverage and reinsurance. The WIBI approach will likely be expanded across the Philippines and into new crop areas, providing considerable financial support to farmers affected by adverse weather. The expansion will be complicated and will require continued support, possibly through a follow-up programme of support.

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30 Including Samar Island National Park, Local Conservation Areas and Indigenous Communities Conserved Areas covering 43,000 hectares.

**Finding 10. UNDP is well positioned to help the Government of the Philippines further support the entire government environmental system and management structure in a way that addresses continuing bottlenecks. At the same time, support to the environment is tied to current funding channels and remains mostly programmatic. While individual projects and programmes have seen upstream and downstream success, this could have been coordinated to produce greater synergies across programmes to leverage success for greater impact.**

The ENR portfolio has focused on both upstream policy and downstream demonstration models, with considerable success within individual programmes. However, despite the high level of financial and technical support, there remains a number of institutional level and capacity development bottlenecks for environmental management.

Though aligned with the Government's environmental and natural resource strategies and policies, the portfolio remains programmatic and single intervention based, with only some follow-up through either second phase programmes. This is both a weakness and opportunity for the work undertaken in that the overall portfolio both meets the needs of the Philippines and its environmental challenges but could have better drawn on programmatic synergies to be more strategic in addressing these needs across the portfolio of environmental programmes, prioritizing and leveraging impact and results. Programmes open, close and are then evaluated but there is little evidence of ongoing sustainability and impact beyond the project.

In the past, UNDP has supported the Government of the Philippines and stakeholders and partners in undertaking a situation analysis, including a national capacity assessment to meet the Philippines' obligations to three UN conventions<sup>31</sup> (2005) and a programme to strengthen coordina-

tion mechanisms for effective environmental management (STREEM) in the Philippines (2009). More recently, UNDP has supported a sunset review of DRM and climate change policies and strategies in the Philippines (2015).

## **2.3 RESILIENCE AND PEACE BUILDING**

### **2.3.1 OVERVIEW**

#### **Peace Building**

Over the CPD period, UNDP continued to support the peace process in Bangsamoro, building on the work undertaken during the previous CPD cycle. Following peace talks and the signing of a Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro in October 2012, UNDP has continued resilience and resettlement support to communities displaced and impacted by violence. Despite some upheavals in the peace process and delays in the passing of the Bangsamoro Basic Law, UNDP has continued to be a strong supporter of the process, assisting the ARMM administration, the Philippine Government, the Office of the Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, communities and CSOs.

#### **Resilience Building**

The CPD period has been a turbulent one for the Philippines with three of the largest typhoons the country has ever seen hitting in succession, starting with Typhoon Pablo (Bopha) in November 2012, followed by super Typhoon Yolanda in November 2013 (Haiyan), and then Typhoon Glenda (Rammasun) in July 2014. They were in addition to the numerous typhoons and tropical storms that hit the Philippines annually.

The storms and typhoons as well as the annual monsoon rains often lead to considerable flooding across Manila and other cities. In addition to high-intensity storms and typhoons, the Philippines is also at risk from a high number of earthquakes annually, which has included the 7.2-Richter scale Bohol earthquake in October

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31 UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, UN Convention on Biological Diversity, UN Convention to Combat Desertification.

2013 and the 6.7-magnitude Visayas earthquake in February 2012, which caused considerable damage and loss of life.

The Philippine Government has considerable experience in monitoring, tracking and responding to natural disasters and has put in place a strong response mechanism under the NDRRMC, which developed a comprehensive National Disaster Response Plan. The Government rarely calls for external assistance in response due to this strong system, though the sheer scale of Typhoon Yolanda led the Philippines to accept assistance from a wide range of bilateral and multilateral agencies including UN agencies.

### 2.3.2 EFFECTIVENESS OF UNDP'S INTERVENTION

**Finding 11. UNDP's continued presence and experience in disaster response, recovery and preparedness in the country has enabled it to be a strong partner with local and national governments. UNDP has built valuable experience and knowledge of the needs of communities during the response stages of disasters and the transition to recovery as well as strengthened preparedness to address any future disasters. At several times, UNDP has been a leader in response and recovery work and has set construction benchmarks for housing and evacuation centres.**

At the start of this CPD cycle, UNDP was in the middle of a large (\$3.6 million) EU/UNDP-funded comprehensive recovery and rehabilitation programme for internally displaced persons and communities in conflict-affected and conflict-vulnerable areas in Mindanao (2011-2014). The EU/UNDP-funded programme focused on the return or resettlement of communities displaced by conflict and supported them in access to health and education facilities, improved livelihood opportunities and training as well as supporting and strengthening the capabilities of LGUs and local disaster coordinating councils (LDCCs). The programme worked closely with CSOs in the region to help communities

to return or resettle and improve their access to health, education and water, while aligning interventions and community support to the developing peace process.

Typhoon Pablo (Bopha) in November 2012 devastated eastern Mindanao and displaced almost 1 million people, killed 1,900 and caused considerable damage. UNDP responded quickly with a time-critical debris management programme in Pablo-affected areas focusing on immediate clearance work, creating employment for 5,000 people through cash-for-work activities.

The immediate aftermath of the 7.2-Richter-scale Bohol earthquake in October 2013 saw a comprehensive response from UNDP financially supported by the Australian and Japanese governments. That effort focused on: i) debris management and emergency livelihoods, ii) income recovery, and iii) strengthening government institutions for disaster risk reduction and management.

When super Typhoon Yolanda hit the Philippines the following month, UNDP was already actively engaged in responses to three disasters, all of a different nature. Despite this, in preparation for Typhoon Yolanda and before it made landfall in Tacloban, UNDP was able to put people on the ground to ensure a rapid assessment of the nature and severity of the disaster. The devastation and death toll were unprecedented, and the country office was immediately involved in a multi-sector rapid assessment (MSRA). It was able to mobilize additional staff from ongoing crisis programmes in Mindanao and elsewhere to support and coordinate a response.

A SURGE team arrived in the country quickly with a full team in place within two weeks of the disaster. The team rapidly developed a response plan that included: i) debris removal, ii) LGU capacity restoration, iii) livelihood restoration and stabilization, and iv) contribution to the rehabilitation of critical community infrastructure. While initial funding for immediate work did not reach the country as quickly as planned,

the country office did access over \$40 million for response and longer term recovery from UN agencies, the EU, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.

The debris removal phase engaged a considerable number of local people in cash-for-work projects as well as light and heavy machinery to help in the initial clearance. This not only ensured prompt debris removal but also injected much-needed funds into communities and provided work for survivors, both men and women. The country office signed long-term agreements with suppliers to ensure the availability of machinery and materials for the clearance work. As cash payment, distribution and contract signing in such a time-sensitive situation had to move quickly, normal guidelines and procedures, and even fast-track procedures, were often overridden by the country office.

Though UNDP ultimately raised close to the required resources and moved from response to recovery with relative ease, subsequent evaluations found initial coordination between the SURGE team and the UNDP country office not to have been smooth.<sup>32</sup>

UNDP/EU supported the move from response to recovery through a comprehensive programme focusing on four key results. First, infrastructure rebuilding was envisaged in a disaster-resilient way and to higher standards including model public buildings and construction of evacuation centres. Here the programme has been quite successful with 11 evacuation centres built to international standards and with a multi-function purpose including as DRM coordination centres. The programme also successfully constructed and assigned 165 permanent shelters to relocate families in temporary housing and acted as a model for others. Many other donor and government projects at the time of the evaluation, some three-and-a-half years after Typhoon Yolanda struck, were still not completed.

A second goal of the programme was to work with LGUs to introduce land management modelling approaches and shelter construction models to ensure the safe relocation of displaced people and communities. While this was somewhat successful, it is not clear if the models for housing and evaluation centres developed are financially viable for LGUs to implement themselves, as the costs are above the budgets assigned by many government programmes. Some LGUs also reported that they had implemented land-use planning and knew of communities that were still displaced or were located in areas vulnerable to future storms and typhoons. However, they lacked land and/or funds for relocation or faced reluctance from communities to move despite understanding the dangers.

Third, the programme worked with communities to restore sustainable livelihood and employment. Again, the programme undertook a very thorough approach, assisting a range of communities, including farmers and fishermen, to return to their original employment and income levels. It also provided them with market access and production and process capacity support. This also included the construction of markets in the permanent shelter area and some small business support. However, given that these communities were often poor or close to poor and continue to be vulnerable, the programme could have introduced new opportunities of livelihood support rather than reinforcing previous income streams, often not sustainable and vulnerable. Equally, interventions such as the new market constructed did not appear to have been fully thought through; with limited access to customers, it may not be sustainable.

Finally, the programme worked closely with LGUs to develop their disaster-response capabilities and linkages to national systems. Given the experience of LGUs and communities during Typhoon Yolanda, Government DRM staff were highly supportive of the capacity-building component and felt they were better positioned to

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32 Ohiorhenuan and Mahapatra, 'After Action Review for Philippines Haiyan Typhoon', 2014.

respond to any future typhoons. Provincial-level staff also felt they were in a better position and were better equipped to coordinate responses across the area. The project implementation approach was monitored locally through a joint supportive role to local governments. It built capacity for community-based DRM during the process, including by encouraging integrated problem solving around disaster resilience and building partnership on planning and actions between local governments and communities.

**Finding 12. UNDP remains a trusted partner in the Bangsamoro peace process, working closely with the ARMM administration, the Philippine Government and the Office of the Presidential Adviser to the Peace Process as well as local communities. It supports the Peace Process, the Bangsamoro Framework agreement, ARMM and the Bangsamoro Basic Law as well as communities that have suffered from upheaval and displacement due to the conflict.**

UNDP continued its support to the peace process and communities in conflict-affected areas in the move towards greater peace and the transition to the Bangsamoro Basic Law. UNDP worked closely with communities, outlined above, through its recovery and rehabilitation programme following displacement due to conflict. While this was primarily a recovery programme, it also integrated a strong element of peace working with CSOs and communities to outline and increase understanding of what the peace agreement would mean for communities that had been living with conflict for decades.

Work with communities has continued as the peace process transitioned to the adoption of the Framework agreement and the drafting of the Bangsamoro Basic Law. All programmes have supported communities and worked with them to ensure they understand the transition to ARMM and the Bangsamoro Basic Law. This has included the programme Increasing Public Confidence and Participation in Support of Implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (2015-2016), which both advocated for the

peace process and also worked with communities and LGUs to ensure that peace and recovery were central to their development plans. This and other programmes also targeted youth, internally displaced persons and women in an effort to bring them into the peace process and ensure their needs were reflected throughout.

Other programmes throughout the cycle have focused on strengthening the peace process through the Strengthening the National Peace Infrastructure Programme (2012-2016) and the Facility for the Advisory Support for Transition Capacities (FASTRAC) (2013-2016) supported by several donors, which promoted people-centred security within the security sector as well as the institutionalization of peace within national agencies and LGUs. The FASTRAC programme also gave technical advice on political autonomy, justice and security, basic rights, social justice, culture and indigenous peoples as well as transitory arrangements supporting the drafting of the Bangsamoro Basic Law.

These programmes are illustrative of the ongoing effort to support all sides of the peace process and the movement towards an autonomous region. They were highly inclusive, working with Government institutions and LGUs, and had a strong focus on ensuring communities are not left out of the process and understood what peace and autonomy would mean for them. UNDP has most recently engaged in the project Supporting an Enabling Environment for Sustainable Peace in the Bangsamoro, which continues to support the peace process and the move to autonomy and long-term peace. The project includes continued support to TPMTs to regularly oversee the implementation of the agreements between the Government and the MILF.

**Finding 13. UNDP is well positioned to continue to support the ARMM, the transition and adoption of the Bangsamoro Basic Law in any format. UNDP's role in the implementation of the new Mindanao Peace and Development Financing Facility (seen in draft format) reflects this.**

Many of the ongoing programmes outlined above are ending soon. While funding options are becoming more constrained, UNDP has looked to continue its support to the peace process and the adoption of the Bangsamoro Basic Law and the strengthening of institutions and communities during the transition. The establishment of the Mindanao Peace and Development Financing Facility offers a financial platform for continued support for the transition to the Bangsamoro Basic Law as well as broader development needs in Mindanao.

A similar multi-donor facility for Mindanao reconstruction and development managed by the World Bank is approaching completion. UNDP will support the secretariat of the facility while the UN Multi Partner Trust Fund (UN MPTF) will act as administrative agent. Given UNDP's strong experience in supporting peace and reconstruction in Mindanao and working with LGUs, CSOs and communities, it is well placed to support the new facility as well as be a recipient of funds for development work in the area.

# QUALITY OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION – RELEVANCE, EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

### 3.1 RELEVANCE OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

**Finding 14.** UNDP continues to align itself closely with the Philippine Development Plan, initially with the 2011 to 2016 plan and more recently with the 2017 to 2022 plan, and harmonizes its partnerships with the Government's development focus. The country office has also strongly supported the Government in addressing its global commitments and treaty ratifications.

UNDP has been quick to support the Philippines in its most difficult time, i.e. amid the considerable devastation wrought by Typhoon Yolanda. With its rapid move from response to recovery, UNDP has also ensured that its support has a longer term vision.

UNDP's support to DRM and to the environment through the GEF programmes is also illustrative of its continued relevance to the Philippines as the country faces numerous climate change and natural disaster threats.

UNDP Philippines has also been quick to identify new needs and opportunities reflected through the multi-donor trust fund to support the peace process as well as the National Acceleration Modality for service delivery where the country office has aligned its own comparative strengths and value added with the needs of the Government and vulnerable groups.

### 3.2 EFFICIENCY OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

**Finding 15.** The Philippines country office has made a number of changes to address previ-

ous Assessment of Development Results recommendations as well as those of the Office of Audit and Investigation (OAI), which had identified inefficiencies in the programme portfolio where the country office was seen as operating too many small and medium-sized programmes with high implementation and operational costs.

The country office has actively taken measures to reduce the number of small projects under annual operation and financing and is in the process of developing a longer view strategy with more of a portfolio approach, especially in governance. This needs to be further embedded into the new CPD. Such an approach would also be helped by a longer financial funding window for core-funds by UNDP itself, beyond an annual core-funding cycle.

Disbursement rates have been high over the period for all outcome areas, averaging around 84 percent and reaching as high as 95 percent in some years. This is especially encouraging given that the country office has implemented a number of time-sensitive disaster response and recovery programmes as well as the new NAM approach.

It should also be noted that the period has seen considerable management upheaval within UNDP Philippines, with four country directors serving between 2012 and 2015 and four UN resident representatives between 2012 and 2017.

**Finding 16.** The country office has shown strong commitment to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and has ensured in recent years that a dedicated M&E focal point is in place. Implementation of the evaluation plan for the

period reflects mostly mandatory evaluations (GEF) over others. This means much of the work under the CPD period has not been evaluated and little evidence is available to support the ICPE and the new CPD.

The current evaluation plan favours mandatory evaluations over all other types with seven GEF terminal and mid-term evaluations, and just four non-GEF evaluations. Three outcome evaluations will no longer be carried out. Donors also have conducted their own evaluations of UNDP's work. Any future evaluation plan would benefit from a structure that is more reflective of the proposed programme portfolio enabling all aspects of the country office work to show some level of evaluative evidence to inform their work. At the same time, evaluation and requisite budgets need to be built into programme structures and agreements to ensure the availability of funds. This is especially the case with large programmes such as those in area of disaster response and the new NAM approaches.

**Finding 17. At the time of the evaluation, the country office was restructuring its programme areas, bringing the DRM teams in ISD and RPB together to increase coordination, improve use of resources, and strengthen greater synergies across the office's work.**

The country office could have increased its efficiency gains during the last CPD period by bringing the two disparate DRM teams together sooner. Doing so would have combined the experience of the DRM team working on preparedness under the ISD umbrella with that of the RPB team involved in the response and recovery work in the aftermath of Yolanda and disasters. This was an opportunity lost.

However, the country office is adjusting its organizational structure to address this at the time of the evaluation and transitioning into the new CPD period.

**Finding 18. The country office's move to a large procurement and service delivery programme portfolio for the Philippine Government, which could dwarf the existing programme portfolio financially, has understandably been a challenge, whose scale has varied by NAM project. The new approach was adopted and implemented within the existing office structure and democratic governance outcome area, putting a strain on existing human resources, though additional resources were available to the outcome team in implementation.**

The process of designing the current NAM programmes, the signing of programme documents and initial implementation moved very quickly, to the degree where many programme prerequisites, levels of analysis and clear agreements with the Government as well as detailed risk assessments were not put in place.<sup>33</sup> This has impacted the efficiency of the programmes' implementation as well as increasing insecurity and risk in implementation. It could also damage partnerships with Government and institutional reputation and have financial implications for UNDP if not managed.

At the same time, existing programme and operational staff took on the new modality in new areas and at a scale not yet undertaken, placing them under increased pressure. This required greater support and human resources capacity development, which was forthcoming to a degree. However, issues and capacity gaps, especially in the BUB project, have not been addressed well. The project management team of the BUB project, the programme management staff of the democratic governance unit as well as the UNDP operations team have room to improve coordination in order to avoid adversely impacting the overall management of the project.

In the design of new NAM projects, the country office has addressed the need for thematic knowledge by leveraging expertise from elsewhere in

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33 Project documents for draft NAM projects under discussion detail a more comprehensive planning and risk assessment approach.

UNDP and has also ensured more detailed planning and risk assessments. As more NAM programmes are undertaken, a cohort of dedicated staff with the appropriate skills should be put in place. Also required are detailed standard operating procedures for NAM programmes that cover design, programme document content, communication with partners, implementation and financial reporting and a varied risk analysis covering financial, implementation and reputational risk for UNDP.<sup>34</sup>

As a service provider and development partner, UNDP should not incur costs on projects it has not helped design, budget or plan, especially due to issues in the design of those projects and programmes. Agreements with the Government of the Philippines need to be clear on this and time spent and cost recovery clearly explained, detailed, reported and understood by government partners. These may need to be simplified as the costs currently incurred are causing confusion and concern.

Where UNDP introduces a new approach, such as the TPM system for the DepEd project, and makes a financial commitment against this approach, monitoring and evaluation should be built in in order to show the government partners the cost and benefits of the approach.

### 3.3 SUSTAINABILITY OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

**Finding 19. There is an expectation that NAM projects currently being implemented and developed will have a strong technical assistance component that will strengthen procurement and monitoring systems, so that in the future the Government will not have to rely on UN systems for procurement and service delivery.**

While the NAM programme documents stress a capacity-building and system-strengthening focus financed from funds allocated through a two percent technical assistance fund, at the time of the evaluation it was unclear what those technical services will look like. Nor was it clear whether funding was adequate to meet all or some of the needs or whether they would be implemented before the end of the current NAM projects. The experience of the DepEd project illustrates that the availability of technical assistance funding is determined some way through project implementation (once final bids are known and contracts assigned). Therefore, a capacity-building plan can be developed and implemented only after that point. Delays in the BUB project illustrate how implementation delays could eat away funds that could – and should – be used for capacity-building, thereby entailing no real improvement in the system.

The funding and structure of technical capacity services need to be given greater focus and planning in future NAM programmes.<sup>35</sup> Programme documents, work plans and reports detail the two percent technical assistance fund but have yet to identify how these funds would be used.

**Finding 20. Several areas of UNDP's work have been viewed very positively by the Philippine Government and are being integrated into larger programmes or as parts of existing government programmes.**

A number of Philippine Government partners have recognized positive aspects of UNDP's work and are considering implementing some of these approaches in larger government programmes. This includes the weather-index-based insurance system developed and piloted by UNDP with GEF financing, which the Philippines

34 UNDP, 'Joint Assessment of the Institutional Effectiveness of UNDP', Independent Evaluation Office & Office of Audit and Investigations, New York, 2017, p.40: "When UNDP relies heavily on government cost sharing, there could be some reputational risk, since there is additional pressure on staff to mobilize resources and they may feel compelled to negotiate projects that do not align with UNDP priorities."

35 A new draft NAM project in the pipeline states that "additional technical support, systems reform and capacity development" will be financed from a 12 percent VAT savings due to UNDP's VAT exemption.

Crop Insurance Corporation is strongly considering introducing nationally and for a wider range of crops.

The Department for the Interior and Local Government is planning to adopt the approaches undertaken by UNDP in the development of integrated water and sanitation service, including

the adoption of the regional hub development approach in its Salintubig water provision programme. Equally, UNDP's comprehensive disaster preparedness planning and integration work with LGUs and communities across the Philippines has established a number of tools for continued use and integration of DRM issues into LGU plans in the foreseeable future.

# STRATEGIC POSITIONING AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

### 4.1 GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

**Finding 21. UNDP Philippines has not placed a priority on gender mainstreaming in the office during the CPD period. There is no gender equality strategy in place, and the 'gender focal point' responsibility in the office has always been a part-time role undertaken by one of the programme officers, who has other responsibilities.**

The current gender focal point took up the role only recently (beginning 2017) and has received little to no training for the role. In terms of the distribution of staff, females (57.59 percent) significantly outnumber males (42.41 percent). However, the gender distribution by grade reflects more females in the junior national officer and service contract holder categories than males, whereas senior management positions are still dominated by males.

The gender marker, a tool launched in 2009, requires all UNDP-supported projects to be rated (at design) against a four-point scale, indicating its contribution towards the achievement of gender equality. Data on gender markers show that only 17 percent of expenditures in the current programme cycle has had a significant focus on gender programming (projects rated as GEN2 or GEN3) and that a large proportion of programme expenditure (83 percent) has been concentrated in the GEN0 and GEN1 categories. This indicates respectively that projects are not contributing to gender equality or are contributing in a limited way but not significantly. When analysing the GEN breakdown by different programme areas, the highest proportion of GEN3 and GEN2 within a programme area was in the ISD portfolio. In the RPB portfolio, most of

the projects are GEN1 and in the DG portfolio, most of the projects are GEN0.

One of the reasons for the relatively weak gender marker ratings is the absence of an established process in the office for the review of draft project documents to ensure the incorporation of gender-related concerns in the design of projects. There are many entry points to make UNDP projects more gender-focused, and if a thorough process is put in place, there is potential for UNDP to improve its gender marker ratings.

Every year, the office is required to submit a report on gender responsiveness of its projects to the National Economic and Development Authority. The report discusses the gender issues identified in the projects during the reporting period, how the projects address these issues, and the results of gender equality and women's empowerment efforts. It also provides ratings for each project by year, and where they have changed, discusses the reasons for the improvement/decline.

The office has not gone through the Gender Seal Certification process. Though this is not mandatory, such a process will help to establish a supportive environment for gender equality, and verify the investment the office has made in the gender area. The country office reported that efforts to strengthen gender were under way following the evaluation, including the establishment of a gender team and country office-wide gender training.

### 4.2 PARTNERSHIPS AND COORDINATION

**Finding 22. The United Nations in the Philippines has some way to go in coordinating its activities, working jointly as requested by**

**the Government in the past and has made little progress towards becoming a ‘Delivering as One’ (DAO) country.**

Though UNDAF 2012–2018 commits to ‘Delivering as One’, the evaluation found little evidence of this, with few joint programmes across the UN system involving UNDP. This is supported by findings in the 2017 evaluation of the UNDAF 2012–2018 that states joint programming has reduced and may have “taken a step backwards” during the UNDAF period.<sup>36</sup> There have been some good joint programmes over the UNDAF and CPD periods, though these have been the exception. UNDP and UNICEF worked closely with other UN agencies and government partners together in the delivery of the iWASH programme and UNICEF also financed some of the response work during Typhoon Yolanda. UN agencies have been involved in the Bangsamoro Peace Process and are joint implementers of the project Increasing Public Confidence and Participation in Support of the Implementation of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro.

During the initial response to Typhoon Yolanda, an inter-agency humanitarian evaluation<sup>37</sup> found that coordination between international agencies was established quickly and worked well. However, within the UN system a separate evaluation found competition and jockeying for position among UN agencies, which hampered effective coordination.<sup>38</sup> This issue was also raised during the evaluation by a number of stakeholders involved at the time of the typhoon response and recovery.

**Finding 23. UNDP has been more successful in working closely with other donors in the Philippines who have recognized their value added and comparative strengths in many areas including peace and resilience and governance.**

Donors have long been supportive of UNDP and have recognized the organization and the Philippine country office as a key development partner. This is illustrated by the high number of jointly funded programmes implemented during the CPD period across UNDP’s peace and resilience work including support to the peace process and the Bangsamoro Basic Law as well as support to disasters. The response to Yolanda was supported financially by Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Korea and the EU. Australia and New Zealand have also been strong supporters of UNDP’s work in disaster preparedness.

The peace process and the transition to the Bangsamoro Basic Law saw considerable partnership with the EU, among others, in recent years. With the establishment of the Mindanao Peace and Development Financing Facility, it is likely that more donors will finance the peace and development process and more CSOs, NGOs and communities will be involved in development activities.

**Finding 24. Considerable work has occurred during the period to ensure that CSOs and academia are included in programme interventions.**

The regional hub mechanism used for integrated water and sanitation supply has been built on ensuring that academic institutions and CSOs partner with local governments to ensure an integrated approach to serving communities. The Government has recognized the benefits of such partnerships.

Third-party monitoring approaches, for the peace process in ARMM as well as the delivery of ICT equipment under the DepEd programme, rely heavily on CSOs and UNDP has worked closely with a large number of CSOs (420 in the case of DepEd) to build their TPM techniques and partnership with communities to ensure the TPM model is successful.

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36 Philippines UNDAF evaluation, 2017, p.36.

37 Hanley, Binas, Murray, Tribunalo, ‘IASC Inter-agency Humanitarian Evaluation of Typhoon Haiyan Response’, 2014, p.52.

38 Ohiorhenuan and Mahapatra, ‘After Action Review for Philippines Haiyan Typhoon’, 2014, p.29.

### 4.3 SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

**Finding 25. South-South cooperation (SSC) support from the country office has been consistent over the CPD period but has been somewhat ad hoc with little strategic approach or focus.**

The country office supported a number of South-South and triangular cooperation activities over the CPD period, including hosting conferences and visits to the Philippines from other countries on a wide variety of issues as well as exploring and learning from other countries regionally and globally through study tours. Areas of support were broad and to a degree very ad hoc and one-off, though some areas were creative in exploring the opportunity for SSC.

A key area of cooperation has been in DRM and climate change where UNDP supported visits to the Philippines from Bhutan and Afghanistan (2012) to learn from the Philippines' experience in DRM. UNDP also supported a visit from the Zanzibar (Tanzania) Government to look at the comprehensive strategic and policy framework for climate change. Following Typhoon Yolanda, UNDP facilitated a high-level SSC initiative between senior leaders in Indonesia who had led the reconstruction in Aceh following the 2004 tsunami and Philippine leaders leading the response and recovery efforts.

A number of learning visits to and from Indonesia were also supported with government and CSOs participants, including a visit from Indonesian Government officials to learn from community-conserved territories and areas (2013) and a visit to Indonesia by women from Bangsamoro to learn from best practices in mainstreaming gender concerns within the transition

process. Overall, the support to SSC was sporadic and with little ongoing focus and was not seen in areas where strong regional cooperation might be expected, such as the environment or disaster management.

### 4.4 SUPPORT TO THE SDGS AND POVERTY REDUCTION

**Finding 26. UNDP has given strong support throughout its programmes to reducing poverty as well as supporting the Philippine Government's adoption of the SDGs.**

As discussed previously, the country office has ensured the centrality of marginalized groups to projects and programmes across the CPD period in all outcome areas. Within democratic governance, UNDP has worked on direct service delivery and sanitation and ensuring the poor have access to improved services. At the same time, work in human rights and justice has proceeded closely with poor communities to enable the reporting of rights abuses. Across the ISD cluster UNDP has ensured its work on DRM targets a wide range of marginalized groups including the poor who are highly vulnerable to disasters. Finally, in the RPB outcome area, UNDP continues to work closely with and targets the poor and other vulnerable groups in communities affected by disasters, as during work following Typhoon Yolanda.

At the same time, the country office has supported the transition from the MDGs to the SDGs and continues to support the Government in developing targets and approaches to meet the SDGs. This has included the adoption and reflection of the SDGs within the latest Philippine Development Plan, 2017 to 2022.



# CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

## 5.1 CONCLUSIONS

**Conclusion 1. UNDP activities and interventions have been strongly aligned with the Philippine Government's priorities and development plans over the CPD period. UNDP has also ensured that these government priorities as well as the goals of UNDP have been strengthened at decentralized levels and within communities.**

UNDP has ensured there has been continued strong coordination with the Government of the Philippines in choices of interventions and meeting the demands from the Government and its goals under the Philippine Development Plan (2011 to 2016) and ensuring alignment with the plan. This is in no small part due to the strong oversight of ODA given by the Government through the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and the partnership UNDP has with NEDA in coordinating areas of development support.

UNDP has been highly responsive to many of the disaster challenges that have hit the Philippines in recent years and while responding has also ensured that it has not been sidetracked by these larger events, such as Typhoon Pablo and Yolanda, and has maintained an active portfolio of programmes across all outcome areas.

UNDP has worked closely with LGUs and communities across a range of areas, including DRM planning and integrated water and sanitation, to ensure that systems are strengthened and planning approaches improved, in line with the goals at the national level.

At the same time, UNDP has been proactive in identifying new areas of development need and pursuing new interventions and approaches. The

Government of the Philippines continues to see UNDP as a strong partner and is willing to adopt many proven approaches piloted by UNDP in the Philippines.

Considerable support has been given to key areas of democratic governance during the CPD cycle including human rights, anti-corruption, access to justice and the strengthening of democracy. Though activities and financial support to these areas have been considerable and numerous, they have not been strategic and more could be done to support agencies in these key areas that are central to UNDP's mandate and strategy.

**Conclusion 2. Typhoon Yolanda and several preceding typhoons and disasters illustrated UNDP's positioning as a key partner for disaster response and recovery within the Philippines. Coordination across UN agencies could be strengthened in disaster-response efforts.**

While the scale of the response to Yolanda was considerable for all parties, UNDP was able to coordinate its response in line with the Government, LGU and community needs, though weaknesses were found in coordination among UN agencies. The sheer scale of the response to Typhoon Yolanda meant that challenges were faced by all and UNDP managed the initial response and the transition from response to recovery well with a number of activities that strongly supported communities and LGUs in rebuilding their lives and developing stronger response and preparedness institutions and communities.

However, as UNDP moved to recovery mode and programme implementation that included a strong DRM planning component, more should have been done to link support with existing DRM planning experience under the inclu-

sive sustainable development cluster, which has been considerable.

**Conclusion 3. The Philippines will continue to bear the brunt of climate change impact and has built strong central institutional capacity, coordination mechanisms and structures to address disaster risk management issues and challenges. However, there is still opportunity for UNDP to support and strengthen this area, bringing international and national experience in DRM.**

UNDP is well positioned to support the Government of the Philippines in gathering lessons learned from response and recovery work under Typhoon Yolanda as well as other disasters to develop and support future strategies and approaches including drawing on lessons from UNDP's extensive preparedness portfolio. However, despite the country being hit regularly by typhoons and storms and the accepted major impact that climate change will bring to the Philippines, coordination and available ODA funding for DRM preparedness is declining, posing challenges for UNDP.

Support to the environment and natural resources as well as climate change has been – and will likely continue to be – a major financial and programmatic component of the CPD period, and has so far been strongly aligned to the Government's priorities, though mostly biodiversity focused.

**Conclusion 4. UNDP, to its credit, has pursued, agreed and entered into initial NAM projects quickly. However, the haste with which agreements were entered into, the lack of detailed understanding of the projects to be implemented, and the newness of the NAM approach meant that many project prerequisites were not in place and a more detailed risk analysis or assessment was not undertaken, which have been highlighted by delays and issues once projects were implemented.**

UNDP has identified a considerable opportunity and need in its support to the Government

of the Philippines in the accelerated delivery of a range of government services through the NAM and did well to secure the opportunity. However, these projects were initially pursued under pressure and with a desire to agree and sign programme documents quickly. Project documents and agreements failed to identify or take into consideration a number of minor and major issues and several assumptions prior to implementation proved incorrect. Several of these issues proved critical and, as a result, delays were seen in implementation, primarily in the BUB project. The DepEd project has been more successful and has navigated initial challenges well.

At the same time, these new and complicated projects were managed within an existing democratic governance team which struggled to maintain the levels of reporting (implementation and financial), project management coordination and communication with partners that should have been expected for such large projects and that UNDP would expect of implementers of its own programmes and projects. The appointment of a new government administration following elections in May 2016 meant that NAM projects and modalities had to be further explained, discussed and agreed with new department leaders. Financial and implementation reporting and project board meetings did not happen on a regular basis and to a level of detail that should be expected for projects of such a short time-frame and high financial value. This led to further misunderstandings between UNDP and the Government of the Philippines and additional delays.

Central to all NAM project documents and agreements is an understanding that support will be given to government agencies to strengthen their capacity to deliver services in time and within budget. At the same time, project documents also recognize a need to support changes within the government procurement system to ensure that UNDP is no longer needed in the future as a service provider. Though the projects have been setting aside funds for such technical support, the focus and areas for support are not yet clear.

UNDP should ensure that while it is supporting the Government of the Philippines in meeting its service delivery commitments, UNDP's own core and cross-cutting principles are integrated, addressed and reflected through these NAM interventions and support. At the same time, it should ensure that UNDP's staff are given the necessary skills to implement the approaches and ensure the goals of UNDP are reflected in the programmes.

**Conclusion 5. Areas of cross-cutting and strategic focus of UNDP have not been adequately addressed during the CPD period. However, UNDP has strengthened many external partnerships especially with CSOs and academia across a range of programmatic areas.**

South-South cooperation has been ad hoc in its implementation and has not been strategically focused in supporting the Philippines for learning from experience in the region or globally. Equally, the Philippines offers numerous lessons for other countries in disaster preparedness and response and recovery as well as climate change and environment and natural resource management, which are valuable for others in the region and globally. A small number of programme-based South-South learning exchanges were seen during the CPD period.

The country office portfolio of programmes has not given strategic priority to gender equality and has not supported the gender focal point or programme officers in ensuring that programmes are gender responsive and transformative but have focused on gender inclusion, to some degree.

Completed evaluations during the period have been primarily focused on mandatory evaluations for environmental and natural resource management projects (GEF mid-term and terminal evaluations). Governance and peace building activities are not covered in the evaluation plan, though a number of recovery activities have been.

Though coordination within the UN system still needs strengthening, UNDP Philippines is a strong partner for both the Government and also

other donors, reflected in the continued financial support and programmatic development from several active donors in the country. At the same time, UNDP has an impressive range of activities with Filipino organizations including academia and CSOs across a range of programmatic interventions.

## 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1. National Acceleration Modality approaches need to be planned, entered into and implemented within an agreed memorandum of understanding between UNDP and the Government of the Philippines. This should include a clear strategic understanding of technical assistance needs and focus with a strategic vision for UNDP moving out as a service delivery agent and the Government acting as primary delivery agent in the future.**

UNDP and the Government of the Philippines need a clear understanding and updated and improved general agreement on the NAM approach including project design, roles and responsibilities, implementation and financial reporting schedules, management oversight responsibilities and should not rely on historic agreements between the Government and the UN as the basis for NAM implementation. This should also include from the outset of projects a clear and agreed understanding of all project and technical support costs.

UNDP should also undertake very detailed risk analysis prior to all NAM approaches that details implementation, financial and reputation risk and this should be monitored throughout implementation.

An understanding and agreement should also be reached on the role of NEDA in the oversight of this new form of support in its position as overseer of inward ODA and donor activities within the country.

At the same time, UNDP as a whole, globally and regionally, as it increasingly pursues Government cost sharing agreements (GCS) needs to develop

guidelines and approaches for country offices that outline how to address design, contractual, implementation, financial and reputational risk aspects of the service delivery modality and also allow and recognize the need for country-level flexibility in design. This is especially needed if regional and country office annual targets for GCS are going to continue to be set and increased (the target is currently 15 percent for public and private co-financing for the region).<sup>39</sup> The experience of NAM in the Philippines provides strong support to this process.

UNDP in the Philippines needs to develop a technical capacity support strategy for the NAM modality as a whole and for individual projects and its support to key service delivery areas, especially in procurement. This should include a detailed assessment of constraints within the Philippine Government's procurement and service delivery systems and a clear plan of support to address these challenges as well as an action plan for regulatory and policy changes that will ensure strengthened government procurement systems and service delivery. UNDP should continue to ensure that it moves towards improvements in the government system itself and provides capacity and technical support to strengthen service delivery by the responsible government agencies ensuring that future use of parallel systems is avoided and a clear exit strategy for UNDP is developed. As part of this, UNDP and the Government of the Philippines need to clarify roles and come to an agreement on how and for what accrued technical assistance funds can be used.

**Recommendation 2. Experience from the response to and recovery from Typhoon Yolanda and other disasters over the period needs to be consolidated and documented and UNDP Philippines could ensure that this strengthens its own response plan and its coordination role**

**for future disasters as well as feeds into existing and developing government response, recovery and preparedness work.**

During this period, UNDP has been highly responsive to a range of disasters across the country, including flooding, typhoons and storms, earthquakes and conflict. It holds a strong partnership with the Government in response and recovery as well as disaster preparedness. However, challenges remain and UNDP should support a review of DRM to clearly identify weaknesses and future areas that may need to be strengthened when responding to disasters and moving to recovery work. This could include a review of access to the many government systems and funds in place to support impacted LGUs and communities but which were reported by some to be difficult to access and slow to disburse.<sup>40</sup> This would be in line with proposed PFM reviews under NAM programmes.

The UNDP/EU programme was implemented in a highly professional way, with a focus on quality and smart demonstration. The UNDP/EU programme provided model demonstrations with observed capacity strengthened and targeted implementation of solution-oriented projects, including resilient infrastructure and sustainable livelihoods and was highly illustrative of the technical implementation links between environment/climate change and risk reduction.

A key finding based on the evaluation of the UNDP/EU recovery activities was the need for reconstruction to a medium standard. While it was positive that UNDP supported high standards for building and construction, a major finding was the need for a minimum standard and support for a low standard which is safe and secure and is also financially accessible by the Government, LGUs and communities.

39 <http://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/presscenter/speeches/2017/02/16/haoliang-xu-speech-on-the-changing-role-of-undp-in-asia-pacific-at-columbia-university-s-school-of-international-and-public-affairs.html>.

40 Some of the larger disaster funds include the Local Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund, National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Fund and the People's Survival Fund.

At the same time, a high number of shelters have been constructed or are under construction, supported by a range of donors including the Government, international donors as well as CSOs and individual citizen donations. In turn, there are a large number and variety of construction styles and levels. UNDP could consider a broad review of permanent shelter construction with the Government of the Philippines to help implement policy and standards for future disaster support.

**Recommendation 3. UNDP needs to give greater strategic focus to areas of cross-cutting concern to UNDP as a whole including gender, South-South cooperation as well its evaluation of programmes and projects.**

While a gender focal point is in place, it is important that adequate training is given to the focal point in order for them to give support to projects and staff. At the same time, project staff in general need to also ensure that gender is integrated within all programme and project designs. Management should also develop a gender strategy, prioritizing gender mainstreaming in the next country programme and implement a strategy for achievement of the gender seal.

The country office should also identify areas where South-South cooperation could benefit the development needs of the country and also where the experience and knowledge of the Philippines could be shared to aid the development of other countries. The country's experience in disaster response and preparedness is one such area.

UNDP should continue to support the Government of the Philippines in its localization of the SDGs across its plans and strategies as well as ensuring that the SDGs and targets are addressed within its own work.

The evaluation plan for the next CPD cycle should ensure a well-balanced approach enabling all outcomes and large or strategic programmes opportunity for evaluation to ensure lessons are learned and UNDP Philippines is accountable to the Government. This will also allow for course correction

if needed. At the same time, new modalities such as NAM, though funded by the Government of the Philippines, should also be evaluated to capture their impact and identify future programmatic adjustments that may be needed.

**Recommendation 4. UNDP in the Philippines needs to develop a more strategic approach in some areas of intervention, especially aspects of its governance work including human rights issues and support to responsible Philippine institutions, in order to ensure support is optimal and targeted and allows UNDP and Philippine partners to address challenges strategically and sustainably.**

Current interventions in key democratic governance programmatic areas including support to human rights, anti-corruption, access to justice and the deepening of democracy are not strategically focused and do not strategically address existing and emerging needs of the country in these areas. To a degree, this is due to the declining funding available for support.

UNDP's strong role and history of support and partnership in areas many others might consider sensitive or struggle to find opportunities for support, such as human rights, places UNDP in a strong position to seek further external funding. UNDP Philippines in coordination with partner agencies for human rights, access to justice, anti-corruption and support to democracy should develop a strategic framework for support beyond the previous programmatic structure that allowed for loose interventions. A greater strategic focus going forward would recognize and address key issues within the government system and areas and would also support the leveraging of additional support from other donors.

UNDP should consider the continuation of support to the Regional Human Rights Commission in ARMM and should encourage support for the RHRC from the ARMM administration as well as through the newly developing Mindanao Peace and Development Financing Facility Trust Fund.

**Recommendation 5. UNDP with the Government of the Philippines should review its current and past interventions and support to the environment, natural resources and climate change, especially those financed through the GEF, to ensure that the support is addressing the main needs and priorities of current and future policy and strategy priorities and that interventions are meeting key needs and gaps in support are not developing.**

UNDP in partnership with the Government of the Philippines should review GEF programmes and their alignment with the Government's range of strategies and policies for environment, natural

resources and climate change to ensure that interventions are aligned with current Philippine legislation for the environment and climate change, identify gaps in support and weakness in legislation and to ensure that future support and programme implementation is aligned with both the demands of the Philippine Government and at the policy as well as at the grassroots levels.

This analysis should then inform a longer term strategy of support for use of the GEF funds and programmatic support that has a broader strategic framework ensuring coordination and harmonization across programmes and avoiding individual programme-focused interventions.

### 5.3 MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

**Recommendation 1. National Acceleration Modality approaches need to be planned, entered into and implemented within an agreed memorandum of understanding between UNDP and the Government of the Philippines. This should include a clear strategic understanding of technical assistance needs and focus with a strategic vision for UNDP moving out as a service delivery agent and the Government acting as primary delivery agent in the future.**

**Management Response:**

The National Acceleration Modality operates under the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement and is a variant of the direct implementation modality. The modality has never been one focused on supplanting the Government's role as primary delivery agent. The intention has always been to provide temporary and time-bound support to accelerate delivery where the Government considers it lacks sufficient capacity to do so and in parallel support the strengthening of capacity and systems with a clear exit strategy to phase out the support as that capacity develops. Each intervention is jointly planned, entered into and implemented under a Government financing agreement and a project document as per UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures.

An assessment of constraints within the Philippine Government's procurement (and to a lesser extent service delivery) systems has been undertaken and will provide the basis for an action plan to strengthen institutional capacity including regulatory and policy instruments.

| Key Action(s)  | Time-frame | Responsible Unit(s) | Tracking |          |
|--|------------|---------------------|----------|----------|
|  |            |                     | Status   | Comments |
| 1. The modality will be specifically referenced in the new CPD where its logic and its role in the overall country strategy will be clearly articulated.   | 2018       | CO                  |          |          |
| 2. Government financing agreements and project documents will continue to be jointly agreed and used to govern implementation. The documents and annual work plans will continue to detail all project and technical support costs.        | 2018-2019  | CO                  |          |          |
| 3. Project Boards will guide and monitor implementation. NEDA will continue its oversight role through its participation in Project Boards and review of country programme implementation.   | 2018-2019  | CO                  |          |          |
| 4. UNDP will strengthen the quality of the risk analysis that is undertaken prior to project design finalization, including detailing implementation, financial and reputational risks. Risks will be monitored throughout implementation. | 2018       | CO                  |          |          |

(continued)

**Recommendation 2. Experience from the response to and recovery from Typhoon Yolanda and other disasters over the period needs to be consolidated and documented and UNDP Philippines could ensure that this strengthens its own response plan and its coordination role for future disasters as well as feeds into existing and developing government response, recovery and preparedness work.**

**Management Response:**

The experience from response and recovery efforts during Typhoon Yolanda has been documented through the After Action Review (2014) and project evaluations of UNDP early recovery and rehabilitation efforts. UNDP also supported the Government in reviewing the broader Typhoon Yolanda experience by commissioning two major studies: the Assessment of Housing Recovery from Typhoon Yolanda in the Philippines after Two Years, and Typhoon Yolanda Recovery in the Context of Large-scale International Recovery Experiences. The reports also highlighted good practices to strengthen the recovery process moving forward. A Compendium of Resettlement Approaches for the Yolanda Response was also prepared, which was well received by key shelter agencies, the National Economic and Development Authority and the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

Drawing on the lessons from the Yolanda experience, UNDP also conducted a disaster preparedness desktop exercise for country office staff. The exercise aimed to strengthen UNDP's response capability and ability to continue in parallel its development interventions.

| Key Action(s)   | Time-frame | Responsible Unit(s) | Tracking |          |
|---|------------|---------------------|----------|----------|
|   |            |                     | Status   | Comments |
| 1. UNDP will document and undertake assessments of future disaster interventions.   | 2018       | CO                  |          |          |
| 2. UNDP considers that it is the Government's role to coordinate responses to future disasters. UNDP will support this role as appropriate and as requested. UNDP will also facilitate the Early Recovery Cluster operations under the Humanitarian Country Team structure to ensure that UN support to the Government is coordinated, timely, effective and relevant. The new CPD will emphasize the need to integrate UNDP disaster recovery responses with support for strengthening of capacity within the Government for disaster risk reduction and management. | 2018       | CO                  |          |          |

**Recommendation 3. UNDP needs to give greater strategic focus to areas of cross-cutting concern to UNDP as a whole including gender, South-South cooperation (SSC) as well its evaluation of programmes and projects.**

**Management Response:**

Management acknowledges the need for the country office to strengthen mainstreaming of gender equality, SSC, and evaluation of programmes and projects. The country office, however, notes that the current country programme, which was endorsed by the Government, did not have a major role for SSC but acknowledges the inherent value of such cooperation. The Philippines' role in SSC is now moving from a recipient of experience from the South towards more as a provider, considering the amount of knowledge and experience that the country has to share in terms of its innovations in biodiversity financing, disaster response, and SDG mainstreaming and localization. This is clearly evident in the regular requests from countries in the region to visit the Philippines to draw on the experience and expertise here.

| Key Action(s)  | Time-frame | Responsible Unit(s) | Tracking |          |
|--|------------|---------------------|----------|----------|
|  |            |                     | Status   | Comments |
| 1. UNDP will develop a gender equality mainstreaming action plan and will aim to achieve the gender equality seal in the next CPD cycle.   | 2018-2019  | CO                  |          |          |
| 2. The UNDP gender marker will be used to monitor expenditure and improve gender-based planning and decision making. Project gender markers and gender integration in programmes will be reviewed through project quality assurance mechanisms and the conduct of gender assessments, especially for large-scale projects. | 2018       | CO                  |          |          |

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|   |      |    |  |  |
|---|------|----|--|--|
| 3. UNDP will collaborate with UN Women on substantive joint initiatives to promote SDG 5 in the next UNDAF and country programme.   | 2019 | CO |  |  |
| 4. UNDP will strengthen its documentation and sharing of project successes and solutions to provide easy and broad access to other countries and with national and global think tanks to facilitate exchange of development solutions and address the challenges in achieving the SDGs. In certain cases, UNDP will seek to draw on lessons and experience in the region, for example, in the normalization process for former combatants and in e-governance.  | 2018 | CO |  |  |
| 5. UNDP will ensure a well-balanced approach in evaluations, ensuring that the outcomes and consolidated results of projects are evaluated regularly to capture their impact and identify future programmatic adjustments that may be needed. Thematic evaluations will also be conducted for all CPD outcomes, measuring the consolidated contributions of individual projects to programme results. UNDP will pursue partnerships with academic and research institutions to implement its evaluation plan and to generate more regular independent assessments of project achievements, with the aim of contributing to high-level policy discussions. UNDP will also support NEDA in formulating and implementing the National Evaluation Agenda for 2018-2022 to evaluate the Philippine Development Plan, the Public Investment Programme, and progress against the SDGs. | 2018 | CO |  |  |

**Recommendation 4. UNDP in the Philippines needs to develop a more strategic approach in some areas of intervention, especially aspects of its governance work including human rights issues and support to responsible Philippine institutions, in order to ensure support is optimal and targeted and allows UNDP and Philippine partners to address challenges strategically and sustainably.**

**Management Response:**

While the logic underlying this recommendation is acknowledged, the lack of a sustained resource base constrains the capacity of the country office to provide optimal and sustained support for governance and human rights.

UNDP notes the importance of strengthening governance systems and institutional capacities through a human-rights-based approach as well as deepening citizens involvement to promote integrity, transparency, and accountability.

| Key Action(s)  | Time-frame | Responsible Unit(s) | Tracking |          |
|--|------------|---------------------|----------|----------|
|  |            |                     | Status   | Comments |
| 1. UNDP will adopt a human-rights-based approach and the strengthening of democratic processes as a cross-cutting theme in the new CPD.  | 2018       | CO                  |          |          |
| 2. To support improved access to quality basic social services, justice, and economic opportunities especially among marginalized and most-at-risk groups, the new CPD will include as a sub-outcome, strengthening governance in national and sub-national government entities and citizen engagement in the development process. | 2018       | CO                  |          |          |
| 3. UNDP will also expand its partnership with the private sector to include the adoption of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to ensure enterprises positively impact on people's lives and prevent risks of potential adverse impact.  | 2018-2019  | CO                  |          |          |

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**Recommendation 5. UNDP with the Government of the Philippines should review its current and past interventions and support to the environment, natural resources and climate change, especially those financed through the GEF, to ensure that the support is addressing the main needs and priorities of current and future policy and strategy priorities and that interventions are meeting key needs and that gaps in support are not developing.**

**Management Response:**

Global priorities of the GEF are set every four years through the Programming Guidelines. These are developed based on guidance given by the relevant Conventions (e.g., Convention on Biodiversity, Desertification, Climate Change, Basel, Nagoya Protocol, etc.), based on inputs from member countries, including the Philippines. Countries are given opportunities to develop their respective country programmes and strategies for the GEF that involves an analysis of drivers of environmental degradation. UNDP has played a key role in this process by directly supporting the national strategic planning process. GEF projects therefore, while developed and implemented individually, are derived from a national prioritization exercise, and therefore contribute to the overall aim of addressing underlying drivers of environmental degradation.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF) also provides an opportunity to support Government efforts in natural resources management and climate change adaptation and mitigation. UNDP is working with the Government on the formulation of a national programme that will identify how the GCF can support the main needs and strategic priorities.

| Key Action(s)   | Time-frame | Responsible Unit(s) | Tracking |          |
|---|------------|---------------------|----------|----------|
|   |            |                     | Status   | Comments |
| 1. UNDP will continue to closely collaborate with the Government to ensure that GEF projects are aligned with government priorities to address environmental degradation.   | 2018       | CO                  |          |          |
| 2. UNDP will suggest to the Government that the evaluation of the country's GEF projects be included under the National Evaluation Agenda for 2018-2022.  | 2018-2019  | CO                  |          |          |
| 3. Through UNDP's support to the Philippines to access the GCF, government capacities will be strengthened to effectively and efficiently plan for, manage, and monitor climate finance, as well to implement the country's National Action Plan and Nationally Determined Contributions. | 2018-2019  | CO                  |          |          |



# ANNEXES (available online)

The annexes to the report are available on the IEO's website at: <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/detail/9393>

Annex 1. Evaluation Terms of Reference

Annex 2. Evaluation Framework

Annex 3. Persons Consulted

Annex 4. Documents Consulted

Annex 5. Status of Country Programme Action Plan Outcome Indicators

Annex 6. List of Programmes and Projects







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