

**United Nations Development Programme**

**Country Office, I.R. of Iran**

**Final Review Report**

**Aquaculture Development Project**

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## **1. Executive Summary**

The Aquaculture Development in Sistan and Baluchistan Project was signed in February 2004, for an estimated period of 4 years, fully funded by Italian Cooperation Cost-Sharing through UNDP in amount of 3,034,000 Euros. The project's selected implementation modality was national implementation, at the time of formulation known as "NEX". The project was a response to the I.R. of Iran Government priorities expressed in its 5 year National Development Plan 1999-2004 and its donor partners' prioritization targeting of what the August 2003 Iran UN Common Country Assessment (CCA) and earlier 1999 Iran National Human Development Report referred to as the Province with the worst poverty income differential and gender differential in the country.

Through strategies and technology methods, techniques and skills, Outputs imparted to staff of key institutions of the Aquaculture sector, the most promising economic sector in the province, the project aimed at the Outcome of more modern and productive new technology skill, methods and institutional capacity being utilized by the Iranian Fisheries Organization and fish farms in the province. At the Impact level, the project Outcome is aimed at increased employment opportunities and income, including for women of local often marginalized communities.

After two years of activity, the project parties have agreed to review the project in terms of performance, contribution to outcomes, as well as UNDP operations and management support effectiveness. The review is to be undertaken by independent consultants. According to TORs drawn up for the review, the Team had been tasked to cover and address the following issues:

1. Whether the right approach and activities have been identified;
2. If the outcome and associated programme (s) and projects are relevant, appropriate and strategic to the national goals and the UNDP mandate;
3. Whether the "right things" have been undertaken, and whether actions to achieve the outputs and outcomes were effective and efficient;
4. If the project results are sustainable, leading to benefits beyond the life of the existing project;
5. Capture lessons learned that may have relevance for future programming or other similar initiatives elsewhere.

The Review Team had also been asked to address the issues raised by UNDP internal audit of the UNDP Country Office, including: lack of transparency in the selection of suppliers; lack of capacity within UNDP Country Office to adequately support the implementation and monitoring of the project; lack of linkage between this project and the overall Country Programme (CP) outcome linked to poverty reduction.

During the review, the Team has noted that the project document did not follow properly the UNDP RBM "Chain of Results" Logic Model, clearly defining the Outcome(s) aimed at, with Outcome indicators, outputs with output indicators and annual targets and related key activities and inputs articulated in a standard Results and Resources Framework or the new Annual Work Plan introduced in 2003 for the Atlas ERP system roll out in 2004. This seems to have consequently made proper Results Based Monitoring and

Evaluation more difficult. However, in the course of field visits and further discussions with local Fisheries Organization (Shilat) authorities, direct and indirect beneficiaries were found to be clearly identifiable. These are indicated in the conclusions section of the present report.

Based on the Findings and Conclusions from the review and consultations with stakeholders and the project team, the Review Team is in the position to make the following general and practical recommendations. More details are indicated in the Recommendations Section of this report:

- Improve the RBM Results Chain Logic Model- clarity of outputs to outcome(s),
  - Strengthen the Project Steering Committee (Project Board) and its processes
  - Promptly recruit a management advisory consultant to support the National Project Director (NPD) in developing a practical Guideline to document the proper workflow, roles and Internal Control Framework relating to project activities.
  - Restart 2 crop cycles in Chahbahar immediately to complete the planned "piloting" in 4 farms.
  - CIRSPE to deploy its 2 experts already planned in the signed agreements with Chahbahar University and Iran Fisheries Research Organization (IFRO).
  - CIRSPER to complete the Laboratories in Zabol and Gowater (Chahbahar area) - equipment planned for Disease Diagnosis Unit.
  - CIRSPE to effect reported pending payments to Iranian "sub-contractors"
  - Arrange compensation for 4 pilot farms in Gowater with partnership agreements with the project which had to halt activities due to the White Spot Disease outbreak.

Furthermore, in the event of supplementary funding for new additional outputs and/or activities provided to the project by Italy under an extended timeframe, the following Additional Recommendations are made:

- A new Project Results and Resources Framework (RRF) compliant with the latest Result Based Management (RBM) chain of results good practices should be designed for management and monitoring of the expanded project;
- A management advisor position in the Project Support Office should be provided for up to 6 months during the new phase;
- An analytical survey of outcome to impact using Human Development Index (HDI) indicators should be conducted.

As to Lessons Learned the following points have been noted by the Review Team:

- a) When entering into "3-party" partnerships of the type involved in this project's design, it is important to ensure the policy and procedural requirements of the respective parties are fully understood and agreeable to all parties;
- b) The different steps of the process of project design and development should always be properly documented in advance of signature of any partnership or other documents which have policy and legal implications.
- c) Steering Committees (Project Board) should meet regularly and continue to meet more frequently.
- d) From the very outset of design and development of projects, UNDP should ensure all parties are aware of basic requirements in terms of documentation and transparency of decisions taken or to be taken by each party to comply with its policies and procedures and oversight.
- e) More practical and simplified mechanism (workflows, roles and ICFs) should be available and communicated to projects with similar partnership arrangements for them to adapt and agree upon not later than the project initiation stage so as to ensure clarity and efficiencies in payment processes.

## **2. Introduction**

### ***2.1 Purpose of the review***

Following two years of activity, the project has reached its mid-term. This status provides an opportunity to review the project's performance, outputs, effect on above outcomes level and UNDP operations and management support effectiveness. Hence, the project parties (Shilat, UNDP, MoFA and Italian Foreign Ministry/Cooperation) have agreed to review the project by independent consultants in order to look into the following issues and offer corrective actions and recommendations for the future, considering that the project had been suspended since late 2007:

- i. whether the right approach and activities have been taken;
- ii. if the outcome and associate programme (s) and projects are relevant, appropriate and strategic to national goals and the UNDP mandate;
- iii. whether the "right things" have been carried out, and whether actions to achieve the outputs and outcome(s) were effective and efficient;
- iv. if the project results are sustainable, leading to benefits beyond the life of the existing project;
- v. capture lessons learnt that may have relevance for future programming or other similar initiatives elsewhere;
- vi. various points of entry for both improved management practices and new community based initiatives that improve the outcomes of the project and also compensation actions for farmers losing from natural disasters or adverse events that can improve the outcomes of the similar program in future.

The Review Team has also been asked to address the issues raised by UNDP internal auditors (OAPR) as mentioned in the Executive Summary above.

### ***2.2 Key issues addressed***

From its inception review of TORs and the current status of the project, the Review Team identified the following four key issues to be addressed by the Team during the course of its work:

- (i) Did UNDP, Government & Project carry out the "right things"?
- (ii) What was the "Logic Model" of the Programme and Project?
- (iii) What caused the delays & problems with Project Management?
- (iv) How is Project Quality Assurance monitoring of outputs & outputs to outcomes being done?

### ***2.3 Review Structure and Methodology***



The Review Team consisted of three experts: a Team Leader, a Programme & Operations Specialist, and an Aquaculture Specialist. The Team has generally followed the UN & UNDP guidelines applied to project review/evaluation, adapting them to the particular context of an "assessment review" and the present review's TORs. A review Itinerary Plan was elaborated which is provided in Annex 7.5. The review exercise was conducted through a combination of desk review of relevant documents and project files made available to the Team, and a series of meetings/consultations held with stakeholders, including Government officials, present and former, mainly the Implementing Partner that is Fisheries Organization (Shilat), HQs and field offices, UNDP Country Office top management and former and current Programme and Operations Specialists and other key individuals such as former National Project Directors (NPDs) and former DRR of UNDP Iran. The Team generally applied a prepared strategy and followed standards questions used in evaluations. The Team also, despite the relatively short timeframe, was able to visit project sites in the Zabol area covered by Firooz Salarian and in the Chahbahar area covered by Anthony Wood, both joined by Aquaculture Specialist, Adel Dandani

As per the TORs, the review was undertaken from 3 October to 3 November 2008 and its Preliminary Synthesis Report presented and discussed with UNDP Iran and with the Government on 9 and 11 October respectively. The present document is its Final Report.

### **3. The Project and its Development Context**

#### *3.1 Introduction*

The project originated from a mutual decision by Government, the cost sharing donor (Italy) and the UN/UNDP to develop "....the most deprived region in Iran to which the Government attaches a great importance" (ref. letter of 21 January 2004 from Italian Ambassador to UNDP RR). The UN's Common Country Assessment & UNDP's National Human Development Report identified Sistan and Baluchistan inter-provincial inequality as "poorest province" (CCA table 1.5) and gender development as "lowest" (p.57).

From discussions and review of the Project Files, the UN system including UNDP had "targeted" the project area, as part of a multi-country priority regional development initiative, identified in 1999 to address development issues affecting Afghanistan, Iran and Pakistan. Within Iran, this involved a broad and large Area based Development Programme (ADP) focused on development opportunities in Iran's "most deprived" province of Sistan and Baluchistan. In light of this approach, an Italian team of consultants identified the present institutional development project in 2002 and consulted with UNDP which at the time envisaged supporting the Area Based Development Programme initiative with Government cost sharing resources, then under discussion as a major source of resources of UNDP's on-going Second Iran Country Cooperation Framework (CCF) 2000- 2004 and future Country Programme (CP). A letter from the UNDP Resident Representative to the Italian Ambassador at the time (18 December 2002) indicates that "we would also be willing to support the initiative within the possibilities available to us".

Both the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 and the change of Government in the I.R. of Iran seem to have resulted in both a reduced donor interest in the above initiative, as well as Government interest in cost

sharing through UNDP. Although significant Government cost sharing had already started with a number of projects (e.g. the ASYCUDA project), the new Government took the view that there were legal issues that needed to be resolved before the Government could continue such funding through UNDP. Nevertheless, the new Government continued to welcome the partnership with UNDP in so far as it was a channel for resources from multilateral and bilateral funding sources that would not otherwise be available, including European Union countries that considered Iran as a priority partner for technical development co-operation, such as Italy. This led to the Government to identify UNDP as the channel for the present Aquaculture project.

In order to develop the Sistan and Baluchistan region and increase some of the lowest HDI indicators in the country - including both poverty and gender - aquaculture was identified as the key sector that could serve as a "vehicle" for economic activity and generating employment and sustainable livelihoods in the region.

The main implementation modality for UNDP projects in Iran continued to be national implementation, at the time known as "NEX". This was based on historical experience in Iran with relatively strong national capacities to implement projects as assessed by UNDP at the time, and consistent with practices of UNDP in other countries. Hence, the Fisheries Organization (Shilat) of the Ministry of Agriculture was selected as the national Implementing Partner of the UNDP project. Whereas in a number of countries in Asia and the Pacific "NEX" was done mostly using the "Country Office Support Services to NEX" modality (e.g. Pakistan, Bangladesh), in Iran the national processes and national system modalities were used, such as "direct cash transfer" (formerly "advance of funds") or "direct payment".

### *3.2 UNDP Project Document*

A proper RBM Logic Model was not evident in the project document as should have been, at the time based on:

- (a) the former UNDP Programming Manual released in 1999 with amendments up to June 2003; and
- (b) the Iran – UNDP NEX Manual of April 2003 - in effect at the time of formulation (para. 2.3.)

It seemed that the project design did not follow key elements of, at the time standard UNDP project document "format", in particular clear articulation of project beneficiaries and the absence of a Results and Resources Framework (RRF) table in accordance with the format indicated Chapter 5, page 27 as amended in February 2003.. Not having used the RRF, the project document signed did not define its "partnership strategy" nor contain a normal Logic Model 'chain of results', with the cause and effect design and monitoring elements: intended outcome(s), outcome indicators, intended outputs as well as its indicators and baselines and corresponding output targets for particular years and indicative activities needed to produce each output and inputs.

From the Project File one notes that the "final version of the project document" was transmitted (with the already signed cost sharing agreement with Italy) to UNDP by the above referred letter from the Italian Ambassador.

An effort was made by the UNDP Country Office to format the project document's 3 main components into 4 outputs (the 3 components plus a 4<sup>th</sup> output for "advocacy" which included key project management and monitoring activities) using the required new UN reform simplified and harmonized Annual Work Plan (AWP). The new AWP template had just become mandatory in training prior to the January 2004 roll out of UNDP/UN Partner agencies' ERP system called "Atlas". This was attached to the project document covering the first years of the project.

Although the project Annual Work Plans outputs and activities structure remained generally unchanged for the first half of the project, in the Atlas ERP system critical linkages to the UNDP Country Programme "project's tree" were later established in Atlas, and subsequently its "Enhanced RBM Platform", linking the 4 outputs to a higher level Outcome of the Country Programme Action Plan for the period 2005-2009.

The project document was prepared before the new UNDP Programming Policies and Procedures effective January 2006 (the Results Management Guide (RMG)). However, the Country Office, as instructed by the Regional Director in April 2006, prepared its own "CEDAR project" change project initiation document (PID) and work plan to bring key on-going projects into compliance with the RMG in accordance with guidance provided in the RMG Toolkit for Country Offices. Hence, the present project was included in a "Conversion Plan" which from mid- 2006 through 2007 planned to bring it into compliance with the new UNDP approach and prescriptive content regarding programme and project management. Orientation was organized in early 2007 with the Government National Project Directors and Project Coordinators etc. on additional requirements of project documents and for proper project management. These included adding a regularly updated risk log, a monitoring and communication plan and efforts were made to introduce a quality log at the activity result level as well as introduction of an issues log.

The Team has been informed that a project revised joint annual work plan taking into account the project progress/ achievements was prepared for 2007-2008. It is being revised for 4<sup>th</sup> Qtr 2008 and 2009 to take into consideration the latest situation up until authorization is received from UNDP to "resume" the project and complete the remaining activities needed to complete the planned outputs and contribute towards outcomes the project is aimed at.

### *3.3 Progress reports and Steering Committee Meetings*

In the course of the Review, the Team has noted that no appropriate and common reporting system was in place to ensure regular feedback from the field, reflecting project activity results and overall progress in the normal manner. The 2003 Iran NEX Guideline requires (section 6.2.2) a "Quarterly Progress Report (QPR) prepared by the NPD and submitted to Government, UNDP and other members of the "Steering Committee". While the Quarterly Financial Reports (6.2.3.) were prepared, the Quarterly Progress reports covering all project activities, consolidating all the numerous technical reports produced by the project, were not undertaken during the first years of the project. A reporting or monitoring specialist could have been assigned or recruited to undertake the task of preparing Project Progress Reports or a competent officer from the national Implementing Partner (Shilat) could have been designated and received guidance

as needed from UNDP. CIRSPE as the main project contractor, selected through a special arrangement between Shilat and the Italian government did produce numerous technical reports but not in the template for UNDP results based monitoring oriented project progress reports applicable since the Atlas ERP go live in January 2004 and in particular since January 2006 in the RMG.

The proper Annual Project Review (APR) report, however has been prepared by the respective UNDP Programme Officer for the project at the time for the 2006 annual project review. Unfortunately the 2003 "UNDP Iran NEX Guideline" requirement for annual progress reports stated "there is no standard format for Annual Project Report" (section 6.2.1.). The more recent revisions of the Iran NEX Guideline/Manual (e.g. 2004 revision prepared in consultation with a "forum" of Government National Project Directors (NPDs) and the latest revision have referenced the new standard Annual Progress Report templates indicated in UNDP's corporate policies and procedures which were revised during the first years of the Aquaculture Project and up to the latest issued in January 2008 (POPP).

A "Steering Committee" of sorts was foreseen in the project document, though not explicitly in the manner required. It was defined as a forum for formal analysis and evaluation based on reports and reviews carried out, as well as the "outcome" of the activities. This Committee as the highest decision- making body should have held more frequent meetings to address the issues and problems arising from project implementation, particularly in the first year after project document signature. According to records, the Committee held only four meetings during a two -year long period. This was clearly not sufficient, considering the size and scale of activities, including several remote areas. The Committee should have held regular meetings to closely address issues delaying start up and seek solutions whereby future delays could have been avoided. Furthermore, the discussions held in and decisions made by the Committee were not properly recorded and communicated to concerned parties. This has been confirmed in one of the Review Team's meetings with the Implementing Partner (Shilat).

It should be noted that Iran was one of 3 countries in the Asia Pacific region designated by the UN Development Group (UNDG) as a "pioneer country" for the introduction of the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP). The CPAP introduction has provided the opportunity for strengthening of higher programme level results based monitoring and evaluation towards national programme and outcome priorities and impact towards national and MDG goals.

#### **4. Findings and Conclusions**

##### *4.1 Project design/formulation*

The absence of a proper Results and Resource Framework (RRF), or equivalent RBM type of Log frame, in the project document appears to have had a significant adverse effect on the management, monitoring and reporting of the project. This absence, combined with the lack of clarity concerning beneficiaries in the "output descriptions" and "outcome description" and absence of any indicators, baselines and targets, left the project without key "reference points" for the standard UNDP Annual Work Plans (AWP), Progress Reports and Field monitoring visit reports and reviews by the Project Steering Committee (Project Board).

Furthermore, the Italian CIRSPE institution contracted by the Government Implementing Partner under Iranian national implementation policies and procedures indicated it was not provided, at the very start of the project with sufficient guidance on relevant content of UNDP policies and procedures, so as to understand for example, Atlas ERP system banking details requirements or funds transfers and reporting formats and timelines requirements.

As to beneficiaries of the project, although there has been no explicit description of project beneficiaries in the project document, the Review Team has observed beneficiaries in two visited areas. These could be categorized as direct and indirect beneficiaries:

***Direct beneficiaries***

- Staff of Culture and Breeding Unit and Lab in Zahak of Zabol area;
- Private farmers using technical services of Shilat- Provincial fish breeding farms and shrimp farms and hatcheries in Chahbahar;
- 600 licensed small private breeding farms in Zabol area and 1400 in Chahbahar area;
- 5—60 works of 4 pilot shrimp culture farms in Chahbahar area;
- Private investors needing water safety testing;
- Zabol, Azad and Chahbahar universities fisheries students;
- Experts of veterinary network of Zahak and Zabol using advanced Zabol lab;
- Staff of Hamoun Research Station in Zabol and Chahbahar Research Centre.

***Indirect beneficiaries***

- Hamoun lake fishermen;
- Water resources users at provincial level;
- Workers of shrimp food factories (increased production to meet purchasing requirements) - including women;
- Workers of shrimp processing and packing factories (increased production) - including significant number of women;
- Private shrimp culture farms and hatchery centers
- Kuwaiti investor's culture, hatchery and subsequently processing farm and food factory complex;
- Workers and technicians involved in auxiliary investments by government in electricity, water and roads to project site are (a Kuwaiti project area) either due to project request, accelerated by NPD or rebuilt after Guno typhoon in June 2007.

In the 2004 and 2005 UNDP internal reporting "tree" of projects linked to higher level Strategic Resources Framework and Multi-Year Funding Framework the Country Office seems to have omitted in the first years of the project to effect the linkages properly. Perhaps this was due to difficulties at the time in the Country Office (as with many other COs in the region) with utilizing the new ERP system rolled out in January 2004). This period coincided with the finalization and signature of the project document, cost sharing agreement and implementing agent sub-contractor agreement with CIRSPE an Italian fisheries technology institution.

The Review Team noted that since the period of formulation and the project reaching its mid term the UNDP Country Office has significantly strengthened its capacities both in supporting nationally implemented projects and even in implementing projects directly itself. In particular, the office has proven

capacities to monitor, report on and implement GEF Environment and sustainable development practice area projects and Global Fund projects respectively. The increase from approximately \$ 7 million to \$ 50 million under the direct Country Office Implementation modality of the Global Fund activities is clearly as the sign of confidence in Country Office capacity. The Review Team is of the view that the Country Office today is in a far greater position to produce training guidance to national counterparts and the CIRSPE Italian institution on applicable UNDP policies and procedures, as well as to have adjustments made as project changes and issues arise.

As to the selection of Implementing Agent, the project document indicates" that Shilat would draw upon an Italian technology and expertise institution, considering that this approach provides an important guarantee of quality for the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its General Directorate for Cooperation Development, given Italy's leading European role in the fishery and aquaculture sectors (Part II, para. 3, p 3 of the Project Document). This has been repeated in Part III, Para. 4, p. 5 of the same document." as well as the Cost sharing agreement signed between Italy and UNDP. This clearly implies that CIRSPE was part of partnership agreement between Italy and I.R. of Iran before the signature of the UNDP project document in February 2004 and is confirmed by two email records of discussions between UNDP Iran and the Italian Co-operation in 2003. In fact, CIRSPE was identified and introduced by the Italian government as the most suitable entity to carry out the related activities.

Shilat, followed national policies and procedures as allowed by the 2003 UNDP Iran NEX Guideline and later endorsed it by signing a Technical Implementation Agreement with CIRSPE for 3 years. The Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries Organization (Shilat), as the 'responsible party' indicated in the 2004 AWP for all project outputs and activities, was expected to apply national policies and procedures. It is noted that the project document made no mention of any "limitations" such as due to a review of national policies, procedures and systems finding some of them not up to the standards required. The 2003 UNDP Iran NEX Guideline places no "limitation" on the project implementing Partner contracting a vendor (in this case CIRSPE) according to I.R. of Iran procurement policies and procedures applicable at the time. The Review Team identified Articles 27 to 29 of the Bidding Code approved by the Iranian Expediency Council on 23 January 2003 as applicable in this respect.

At the time, UNDP could enter into such arrangements provided that both Donor and the host Government clearly decided as a "pre-condition" that a Responsible Party from the donor country was required. This was confirmed during discussions at the early 2006 UNDP RR/DRR Cluster Meeting in Colombo between DRRs (Deputy Resident Representatives) and the Director of the Bureau of Management and at a meeting with the UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok the following week. Numerous examples of such practices existed for UNDP projects throughout the 1990s when UNDP faced serious reductions in core resources contributions. Donors that made similar "pre-conditions" included, aside from Italy, the USA, Canada, Japan and the European Union. Since January 2006, RMG there were two additional requirements: (a) that in assessing the suitability of an Implementing Partner UNDP needed to verify the capacity of the Implementing Partner to "sub-contract" and (b) requirements for HACT macro and micro assessments.

Considering that the project was nationally executed (NEX), according to the 2003 UNDP Iran NEX Manual in effect at the time of formulation, the national implementing partner, unless otherwise stated is expected to apply the national Bidding and Procurement Procedures. Accordingly, the implementing partner (Shilat) has gone through the procedures and waived normal requirements in certain cases.

To justify the waivers, there are provisions in the Government procurement policies and procedures that allow such waivers, as also possible in UNDP internal processes at the time (DEX or Country Office support services to NEX). However, a close monitoring is required to further ensure transparency and accountability. This is referred to World Bank's Iran's Operational Procurement Review of June 2005 which complemented the Government for improving the transparency of its new 2005 procurement policies and procedures compared to those in effect at the time of design of the UNDP Aquaculture project.

The Review Team noted that in the absence of any alternative qualified Italian vendor, a bidding process involving Italian vendors would not have had any other result back in 2003-4. Furthermore, were a bidding to occur today of Italian vendors no other vendor would be in a position to win, given the experience and knowledge of the remote Sistan and Baluchistan region that CIRSPE has gained since the start of the project.

#### *4.2 Project implementation*

As envisaged in the project document, it has been carried out through UNDP's national execution modality at the time called "NEX". In other words, the project was managed by the government entity, in this case Shilat with UNDP support and assurance monitoring. UNDP was also the channel for payment following the payment request from Implementing Partner (Shilat on behalf of Agriculture Jihad Ministry) under UNDP's longstanding "Direct Payments" modality for paying a third party after a Government contracting or procurement process, as adapted for CRISPE as main "implementing agent" (responsible party under the harmonized terminology of the 2005 CPAP)

The project payments were effected in accordance with UNDP rules and regulations as well as the UNDP Iran NEX Manual of 2003 and no discrepancy or irregularity has been observed. In fact the NEX audit reports globally for UNDP's portfolio of projects from 2000 to 2003 were consistently rated as "satisfactory" up until 2004 when the ratings slipped to "partially satisfactory" a trend that continued during the first two years after which the Aquaculture project was approved in February 2004. However, reportedly some delays occurred in the payments that could be avoided by finding more practical ways or speeding up the process while strictly observing the financial regulations. On this point, the UNDP Country Office indicated that some payment requests did not bear sufficient or proper supporting documents nor complied with the NEX guidelines in effect.

The Iran NEX Manual/Guidelines were revised to keep up with corporate and national changes, including a latest version which the Team learned was about to be adopted so as to bring the earlier Manual/guidelines up to date where they relate to UNDP's Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures (POPP) themselves updated in January 2008. The absence of a corporate set of "National Implementation Modality (NIM)" (ex-NEX) easily extractable and self-contained section applicable for standard use at country level, such as the 1998 corporate NEX Manual did not help provide clarity to new country office and Government or other partner personnel alike.

According to existing documents, there were instances of improper assets management during the inspection. This has also been confirmed by NEX Independent Auditor's Special Purpose Report for 2006

and 2007. The apparent insufficient training and guidance provided by UNDP Iran to the CIRSPE or new national counterparts joining the management or implementation team of the Project at Shilat and its regional offices seems to have contributed to this. Increased training and guidance and more frequent field monitoring visits by UNDP Country Office staff from both Programme and Operation could prevent from this. Presently, the office has strengthened its operational and monitoring capacity which is expected to ensure that assets management issues do not arise again.

From the view of the Italian Embassy officials covering Italian Cooperation projects in Iran, compared to the 4 other on-going Italian Cooperation projects in Iran the implementation of the one entrusted to UNDP had progressed in an "average" manner. The Italian Embassy had noted that the UNDP Country Office at the start of the project had a share of responsibility in delays the project encountered, notably with payments. This was attributable to the issues relating to data needed to establish CIRSPE's banking information in UNDP's new ERP system and related misunderstandings on requirements for payments of different types to be processed.

The situation of the UNDP Country Office and knowledge gained by CIRSPE and Shilat management is considerably improved today compared to the time when the previous delays occurred.

#### *4.3 Results achieved with the project*

The following achievements can be enumerated for the project in the Zabol area:

- Implementation of breeding and culture of *Schizothorax* indigenous fish in two phases in which bio-technique was attained;
- Culture and production of some 4000 fingerlings in the first year of the project and some 300,000 fingerlings in the second year of the project implementation;
- Prevention from the decline of this species in the region's waters;
- Creating new job opportunities in the field of aquaculture and fishing for deprived people of the region;
- Establishment of two Labs for water analysis and aquaculture diseases diagnosis, the latter needs to be equipped soon. These will help measure and control the chemical and physical factors of water and soil in the culture centers, breeding farms, lakes in the region. These will also provide Lab. services to 600 small farms of private sector in the region.
- Organized two study tours in India and Thailand where the Shilat experts familiarized themselves with the latest techniques for breeding fish and shrimp;
- Assistance to the purchase of supplementary food for fish;
- Renovating the guesthouse of Zahak Aquaculture Station where the lab is located, with furniture and other materials and facilities.

Similar achievements were made in the Chahbahar area the main ones which are as follows:

- Enhanced the practical and scientific level of experts and technicians acquired new skills and methods from attended training courses and study tours;
- Transfer of breeding and culture technology;
- Removal of technical problems previously encountered in the fish breeding and culture;



- Modeling in design and preparation of implementation plans for fish breeding and culture centers;
- Familiarization of Shilat experts with terminals and new methods of fish breeding and culture in other countries.

The local Shilat authorities in both Chahbahar and Zabol project target areas firmly believed that the project has been very useful so far, though many more things need to be done in order to attain the initial objectives set for the project, especially in terms of capacity building, including training for Shilat specialists.

#### *4.4 Assessment of the results achieved*

Overall the Review Team assessment of the project's results achieved suggests that:

- Within the poorest province, an Aquaculture development project was the "right thing" for UNDP Iran to do at the time – attributable Outcome indicator benefits accruing: employment, foreign private investment & gender empowerment
- From field visits & discussions it is clear that aquaculture development was and remains today the most promising means of addressing the poverty challenge among others, given its potential in the Province.
- From its presence on the ground and relations with other Government institutions, it is evident that the Fisheries Organization (Shilat) of the Ministry of Agriculture was and remains the organization which can "deliver" on the ground.
- Key challenges identified in the UN's CCA appear to have been sustainably addressed through Outcome benefits that are attributable to project outputs achieved and planned, as observed during the Team's field visits & discussions:
  - Challenge 5: Employment
  - Challenge 9: Gender
- Despite the set backs in the work plan caused by the "Guno" storm of June 2007 (unprecedented in 50 years), a full recovery is possible given the Government commitment and actions on the ground.
- There does not appear to be sufficient justification to prevent Shilat and its selected international partner ("responsible party") from completing the project as planned.
- The UNDP Country Office is better aware of the issues needing its support and attention in the present project and has meanwhile significantly boosted its capacity – mainly to support GFATM and GEF portfolio – which has given it depth to support the present project.
- The Italian CIRSPE institution has learned important lessons and is committed to deliver in response to the Implementing Partner's technical needs and has signed agreements and experts ready to deploy to resume the project on short notice as well as a strategy for the sustainability of project results contributing to livelihood outcomes of target secondary beneficiaries in the project areas.

## **5- Recommendations**

Given the fact that all project parties have agreed to complete the present project and work to ensure it becomes a "model" which with some modifications can be replicated in similar contexts, the Review Team offers the following recommendations formulated as "actions" in accordance with the Team's TOR, depending on two possible funding Scenarios:

### **Scenario one – Project continues to complete activity results and outputs almost completed**

#### *5.1 Corrective actions for the design, implementation and management, monitoring and evaluation of the project*

1. Improving the Logic Model- Results Chain clarity of outputs and outcome with indicators for better Results Based Monitoring and Evaluation.
2. Strengthening Steering Committee through proper definition of roles and responsibilities, with TORs to meet more frequently in order to effectively address issues and problems arising during the remaining period of project implementation in accordance with current POPP. See Annex 7.6 for a Project Organizational Structure to be added as part of the next Annual Work Plan (AWP) as an Annex on Management Arrangements
3. Promptly recruit a management advisory consultant to support the National Project Director (NPD) in: (a) documenting the specific business workflows of this project's processes from donor contribution through to the proper recording of receipt of goods or services in UNDP's ERP system (Atlas), (b) its Internal Control Framework, and (c) prepare a revised practical work plan complying with Logic Model-Results Chain referred to under the 1. above. This short term advisor in the Project Support Unit will deal with all administrative and financial areas to ensure accelerated performance and prevent future NEX audit observations of the type observed by the review team reading of past years NEX audit report of the project;
4. Based on the NEX audit of 2007 recommendations and in accordance with UNDP results based management framework, adequate and strong control systems should be established and strengthened in Aquaculture project in order to achieve objectives and mitigate and manage the risks.
5. CIRSPE to effect reportedly pending payments to Iran sub-contractors (e.g. OFRC for Schizothorax fish in Zabol and for monitoring and management of shrimp production in Chahbahar).
6. Find a more practical mechanism to quickly effect the required payments within the project whereby the delays in the project activities for payment, could be avoided. Late payment or delay in the payments was a critical issue raised by the project parties during the review, though any payment within the NEX modality must be fully documented and justified.

#### *5.2 Actions to follow up or reinforce initial benefits from the project*

7. Restart two crop cycles in Chahbahar immediately in order to complete the planned pilot in 4 farms that were stopped due to White Spot Disease, Guno storm that inflicted serious damages, and subsequently UNDP audit, requiring at least 1 top level international experts presence at the pilot sites conducting courses on diseases prevention (SPF and SPR) and technical training on management of culture and hatchery for new species (P. Vannamne);
8. Address compensation issue (damage to 4 of Project's pilot farmers shrimp feeding supply and bulk shrimp larva for second crop cycle which was cancelled due to White Spot disease by paying the estimated \$50,000 to the farmers from the savings already made by return of food to the factory (graciously agreed by factory) according to the project team's information. The project Steering Committee should be convened to formalize this arrangement;
9. CIRSPE to deploy its 2 experts already planned in the signed agreements with Chahbahar University and Iran Fisheries Research Organization (IFRO), to complete work required to allow CIRSPE to present its Strategy Plan for shrimp marketing and economic development;
10. CIRSPER to complete the Labs in Zabol and Gowater (Chahbahar area) - equipment planned for disease diagnosis Unit.
11. Establish a market in Zabol city where the fishermen could supply and sell their products to consumers. This is a pressing need that should be addressed seriously.
12. Prepare final comprehensive report on bio-technique of (Shizothorax zarudyni) indigenous fish by AFTM company and Research Center of Chahbahar contracted by CIRSPE;
13. Deploy CIRSPE experts to the project sites to guide and monitor project implementation.

### *5.3 Proposals for future directions underlining main objectives*

#### **Scenario two – Project continues as above but with an infusion of additional funding from Italy as indicated at the last Steering Committee Meeting, adding new activity results or outputs**

In the event of supplementary funding for new additional activity results or outputs is provided to the project by Italy, the following additional recommendations are made:

- (i) A new Results Framework compliant with Result Based Management (RBM) chain of results good practices should be designed for management and monitoring of the extended project;
- (ii) A management advisor position in the Project Support Office should be provided for up to 6 months during the new phase;
- (iii) An outcome population Human Development Index (HDI) oriented impact analysis survey should be conducted to set a baseline for monitoring impact on the communities in Zabol and Chahbahar target areas.

## **6. Lessons learned**

As to lessons learned, the following points are addressed to the I. R. Government, the Italian Cooperation and UNDP:

- A) When entering 3-party partnerships of the type involved in this project design, it is important to ensure the requirements of the respective parties are fully understood by all parties;
- B) The different steps of the process of project development should always be much better documented for future review in accordance with international standards, e.g. Project Files with copies of all historical records in one place in UNDP office from the project idea through to project closing process so as to be available for project audit and post -project evaluations
- C) Steering Committee should properly prepare with progress reports in required formats and field monitoring visit reports and meet more frequently and its discussions and decisions are properly recorded for constant follow up.
- D) From the very outset, UNDP should ensure its appraisal of national capacities, including the capacity to further sub-contract to another entity (introduced in RMG issued in August 2005 but not referred to in the previous Programming Manual of 1999) are properly documented in notes for the file in the Project File and in the minutes of Pre-PAC internal peer review and PAC appraisal of project document for such relatively large scale projects
- E) Where a Country Office lacks capacity at a particular point in time it should be able to draw on and outsource expertise to be deployed to support it, and UNDP central services should have a reserve of funds to be able to support such "details" of capacity when the CO lacks sufficient resources, as a means of risk mitigation in high visibility countries such as Iran.
- F) Reportedly, late or untimely payments in projects involving multiple partners can cause significant cost increases when a project team is in place and escalating misunderstandings unless rapidly addressed in a sustainable manner. Hence, a tool for workflow and ICF design at the project level should be developed by UNDP for nationally implemented projects involving non-core resources and more than one partner responsible for outputs and activity results which can be adapted to different country, donor and project circumstances.
- G) UNDP's global policies and procedures for national implementation need to be updated with a self contained and extractable guideline which can be interfaced with national policies and procedures as well as national systems to produce a joint Guideline which all concerned partners and new managers and personnel can refer to.

## **Review Report Annexes**

### **7.1 Review Team's TORs**

Attached

## **7.2 List of persons met, consulted or interviewed**

### **Government (Fisheries Organization – Shilat of the Ministry of Agriculture)**

- Aziz Zadeh, Deputy President of Shilat for Aquaculture
- Asghari, Director, Shrimp Affairs Bureau
- Afrasiabi, Director, Aquaculture Resources Development Bureau
- Ghadiri, Expert, Project Unit in Zabol
- Shirazi, International Affairs Dept.
- Hassani, Expert, Shrimp Affairs Bureau
- Amini, National Project Director (NPD)
- Afsharian, Director- General, Sistan Shilat, Zabol
- Dr. Rezvani, Former National Project Director, Fisheries Research Institute
- Zare Javan, Sistan Shilat, Zabol

### **Other national stakeholders and former officials**

- During the project site visit in Zabol, a group of fishermen were met and their feedback and issues discussed (a brief mission report was also prepared and shared with UNDP Country Office management in this respect).

### **UNDP Country Office- Tehran**

- Mr. Knut Ostby, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Res-Rep.
- Ms. Elzira Sagynbaeva, Deputy Res-Rep.
- Mr. Yuxue Xue, Former Deputy Res-Rep- UNDP Tehran, (presently Deputy Res-Rep UNDP Thailand)
- Mr. Ali Farzin, Programme Specialist, RC Office and former UNDP Programme Officer covering the project
- Mr. Ahmad Salari, Programme Specialist and present Programme Officer responsible for the project
- Ms. Karineh Dror, Programme Assistant for the Project
- Shahrzad Daneshmand, Consultant for revision of Iran NEX Manual

### **Embassy of Italy- Tehran**

- Marco Landolfi, First Secretary and the Project Liaison for the Italian Cooperation
- Roberto Neccia, First Secretary

### **CIRSPE**

- Roberto Ugolli (Tele -conversation between the Team Leader and CIRSPE's Representative in Rome)

### **7.3 List of documents consulted/reviewed**

- Iran National Human Development Report, 1999
- United Nations Common Country Assessment for the Islamic Republic of Iran, August 2003.
- United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), 2005-2009; September 2004
- Iran – UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP), 2005-2009
- Project document - Aquaculture Development in Sistan and Baluchistan, February 2004;
- Project Annual Work Plans up to and including 2008 (Atlas Award number 35928)
- Project files correspondence and emails in the file relating to partnership between Iran, UNDP and Italy and development of the project
- UNDP Iran Project Tree in Atlas (ERP) and ERBM Platform and Project Management Dashboard
- UNDP – Italy Cost Sharing Agreement for Aquaculture Development Project
- Technical Implementation Agreement between the I.R. Iran Government Fisheries Organization and CIRSPE (Centro Italiano Ricerche Studi per la Pesca-Rome);
- UNDP Programming Manual, 1999 with amended pages up to June 2003
- UNDP - I.R. Iran NEX Guideline, April 2003
- I.R. of Iran's Bidding and Procurement Procedures, 1986, (available only in Farsi);
- Iran Operational Procurement Review (OPR), World Bank, June 2005
- UNDP Field Visit Mission Reports and Annual Project Report (2006), prepared by UNDP Programme Officer Farzin; and Power Point Version of Annual Project Report for 2007

- Aquaculture Development in Sistan and Baluchistan (2005-2008), Shilat Work Plan, Tehran, February 2007;
- Aquaculture Development in Sistan and Baluchistan 2005-2007, Shrimp Rearing Stakeholder Consultation, Chahbahar, Prepared by CIRSPE, August 2006;
- Monitoring and Management of two crop shrimp production of Indian white shrimp – Gowater Shrimp Farm in collaboration with UNDP, Offshore Fisheries Research Centre- Chabahar, September 2007
- UNDP OAPR RSC Kuala Lumpur report of CO Audit of UNDP Iran and UNDP Iran Management Response, 2007;
- NEX Audit Report of the project for year ended 31 December 2007 Special
- UNDP User Guide –Results Management and Procurement sections, August 2005 and subsequent revisions and additional sections up to 2008 (POPP)
- UNDP Partnerships Toolkit, 2006
- UNDP Evaluation Policy, 2006
- Standards for Evaluation in the UN System and Code of Conduct, April 2005
- What a UN Evaluator Needs to Know, UNEG and UNSSC, 2008

#### ***7.4 Itinerary of the Review and Field visits***

**Prior to arrival of Team Leader:** - Interview with former DRR of UNDP at the time of Project development & approval

**Day 1: Briefing by UNDP Mgt Team**

**(5 Oct) - Interviews – former UNDP Programme Officer**

- Review documents

**Day 2: - Meeting with National Implementing Partner top management**

**(6 Oct) and Project team**

- Teleconference with Responsible Party – CIRSPE
- Meeting with Italian Embassy's Cooperation Officers

Day 3: - Field visit and interviews in Zabol area

(7 Oct) - Interview UNDP Audit-NIM Manual focal point and WB Procurement

Capacity Assessment

- Teleconference with CIRSPE

Day 4: - Field visits in Zabol area and Chabahar area (Gwater) project sites up to

(Oct 8) borders with Afghanistan and Pakistan

Day 5: - Meetings with indirect (outcome level) beneficiaries of project in Zabol &

(9 Oct) at Shilat Chabahar main office

- Return to Tehran - Teleconference with Italian Cooperation Officer at

Italian Embassy in Tehran

- Initial Debriefing of Review with RR (advanced due change to his agenda  
on 12 Oct)

Day 6: - prepare debriefing Presentation report and Preliminary Synthesis Draft  
Report

(11 Oct) - Debriefing with Government/ Implementing Partner

Day 7: - Debriefing Presentation with UNDP and completion Preliminary

(12 Oct) Synthesis Draft Report

## **7.5 Annex for Recommendation number 2 – Project Organizational Structure**

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### **AWPs FOR 3<sup>RD</sup> QTR 2008 & JAN-DECEMBER 2009**

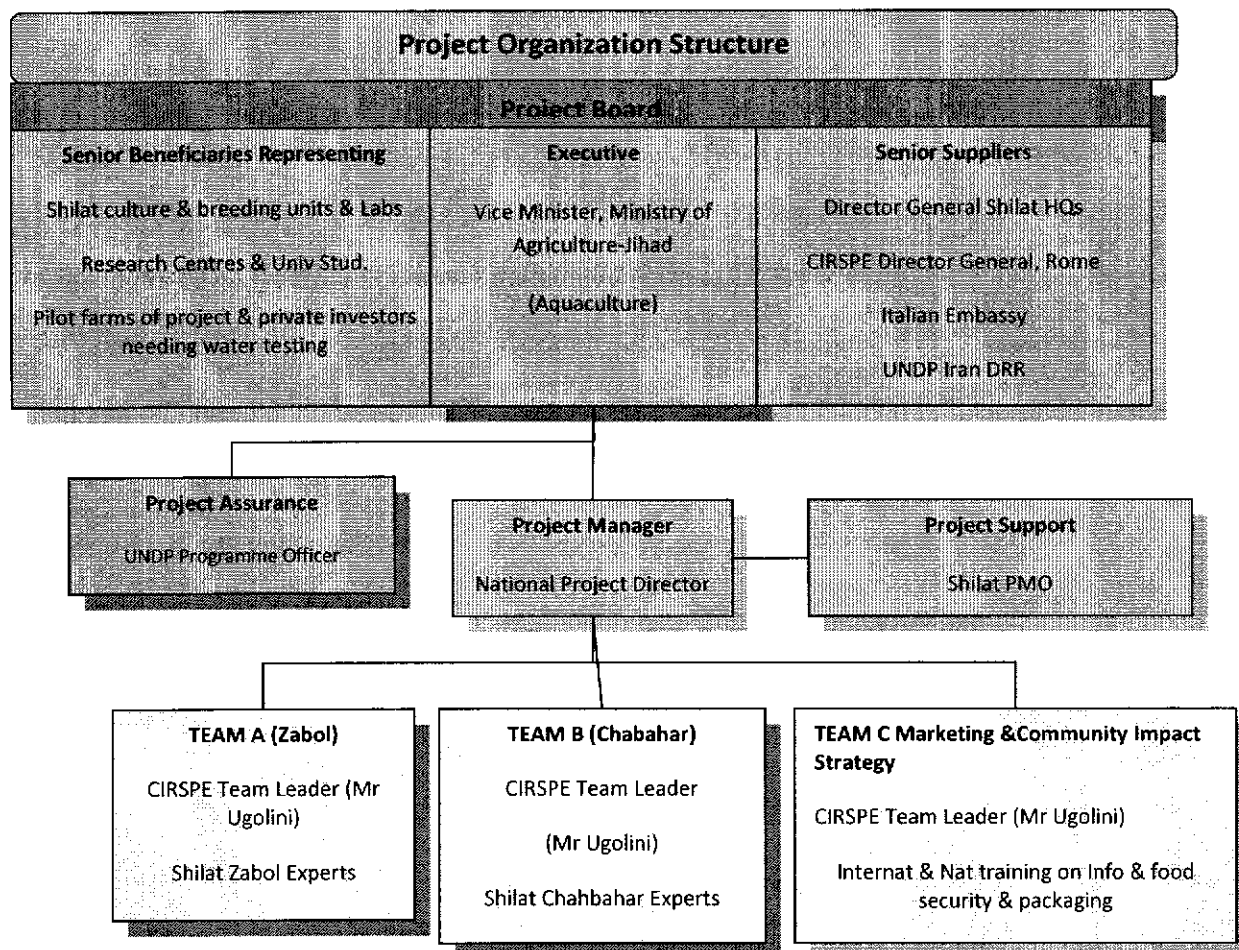
#### **AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT IN SISTAN-BALUCHISTAN PROJECT**

#### **MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

*Roles and responsibilities of the parties involved in managing the project according to UNDP Standard diagram.*

*Source: UNDP Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures, Project Management, Defining a Project Process, Templates and Forms, Project Document*





## TERMS OF REFERENCE

### CONSULTANCY SERVICES

#### AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT PROJECT REVIEW

##### 1-Context

Iran is facing considerable unemployment and unused capacity: official figures indicating 13% unemployment in the working population, and much higher in the youth. This is especially so in deprived regions and those areas suffering from natural disasters such as drought or flood. The province of Sistan and Baluchistan in south eastern Iran is an example of this deprivation, as it suffers from lack of resources, lack of broad-based economic development as well as regular natural disasters such as drought and flooding. The province was, and still remains, the poorest area in terms of human development in Iran: with an HDI of .54, compared to .73 for the country as a whole; a human poverty index of 40% compared to about 20% nationally; an adult illiteracy rate of around 50% compared to 17% nationally.

This province has also been the subject of United Nations support since the publication of the first National Human Development Report in 1999. A number of small initiatives were undertaken by separate UN Agencies to provide models for deprivation reduction, including a UNCT initiative in 2000 which was mainly active in the provincial capital of Zahedan. The Government of Italy has also supported development in that province, especially for border development project that empower communities and prevent trafficking; and also initiated the study and programme design for the Aquaculture project in the province in 2002. By nature, the project target groups in the province are some of the poorest people in terms of income and MDG-type indicators in Iran. This is especially so for the people of the two areas of chosen as project sites.

The logic and underlying assumptions of the Aquaculture project's main design has been to strengthen and expand technical aqua cultural production activities in Sistan and Baluchistan province, in order to expand economic opportunity and to provide the enabling environment for such areas to grow economically. The main focus has been on production development and technology transfer, with an emphasis on economic results: for raising productivity per hectare of shrimp/fish farming (through various technologies, including aeration to increase oxygen levels of ponds) and for raising Shillat human resource technical capacity (through technical training courses). The project is also expected to benefit local populations and to have indirect impact on the living standards of the target local working population. The project was to also generate a technical model for provincial level and national level replication.

The latter economic approach is considered as an indirect means to raise socio-economic welfare levels of target groups and local communities, and thereby achieve development goals. The project strategy's focus on economic means to achieving development goals has, however, limited its activities to production and technology transfer that generate employment and raise the general average of incomes for those directly benefiting from the project (fish and shrimp farmers), and not necessarily the larger community in the locality. Intensive activities that directly reduce community deprivation were not foreseen in the project design.

##### 2-Purpose and subject of Assessment

Following two years of activity, the Aquaculture project is now at mid-term: providing an opportunity to assess project performance, outcomes and UNDP operations and management support effectiveness. The results of the assessment may be utilized by UNDP and the Government for improving NEX project implementation and identifying internal UNDP operations support gaps and opportunities. Further, the general design of such technical production based projects, vis a vis UNDP's human development mandate, may be assessed and improvements in design recommended by consultants.

The assessment will undertake to identify:

- i. whether the right approach and activities have been identified;
- ii. if the outcome and associated programme and projects are relevant, appropriate and strategic to the national goals and the UNDP mandate;
- iii. whether the right things have been done, and whether actions to achieve the outputs and outcomes were effective and efficient;
- iv. if the project results are sustainable, leading to benefits beyond the life of the existing project
- v. capture lessons learnt that may have relevance for future programming or other similar initiatives elsewhere;
- vi. various points of entry for both improved management practices and new community-based initiatives that can improve the outcomes of the project. (such as the Area Based Development ABD approach) and also support compensation actions for farmers losing from natural disasters or adverse events (such insurance-based systems) that can improve the outcomes of the similar programmes in future.

The specific technical and production objectives of the project were:

- i. the identification of useful production strategies for aquaculture in Sistan-Baluchistan;
- ii. identification of technologies that are appropriate for different contexts (i.e. fish farming in fresh water and shrimp farming in sea water);
- iii. expansion of activity levels and product diversification; and
- iv. institutional capacity building for the Shilat (Fisheries) Department of the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad.

The main stakeholder in the project has been the Ministry of Agricultural Jihad's Shillat (Fisheries) Organization. The project's three main activity components mainly benefit that Organization and its activities, including: technical assistance, training and supply of technology and equipment. Annex 1 provides the project document, setting out project objectives and activities.

The implementation arrangements that have actually been adopted by the project differ slightly from the original design, mainly due to unforeseen and uncontrollable factors such as drought and typhoon in the project areas that forced regular changes in activities and implementation schedules. The Zabol project site, in particular, has suffered from three years of drought forcing low project activity levels (less than 10% expenditure by end of 2006), while the Gowater site suffered the Geno Typhoon in mid 2007, destroying most of the projects physical achievements.

The assessment report will be utilized by the Italian Government, UNDP, Ministry of Agriculture (Shillat) and other stakeholders for the purpose of improvement of performance in the implementation of projects. The initial findings of the assessment will be shared with counterparts and stakeholders at a meeting at the end of the mission, while the final assessment report will be reviewed in a formal tripartite review meeting to make decisions based on the findings of the review report.

#### **4-Review Approach**

The mission will undertake the following tasks, in Tehran and the two provincial project sites, according to the schedule table:

- i. desk review of programme document and consultation with programme authorities and stakeholders;
- ii. site visits to assess the operations and results of the project in the field;
- iii. assess project performance, objective and approach from the following perspectives of:

- a. overall project design and efficacy of project activities with regard to both project outputs and outcomes,
  - b. project management effectiveness from cost and time, and
  - c. socio-economic outcomes perspective;
- iv. make a presentation on findings/results to UNDP and Government officials;
- v. prepare an end of mission report;
- vi. prepare a consolidated report on the outcome of the assessment and recommendations as to the next steps to be undertaken.

The concerned stakeholders will be briefed on the initial findings of the review at the end of the mission, and the final report that incorporates their opinions on the review will be shared with them.

The criteria to be used for the overall project management assessment are primarily, the audit recommendations (NEX and internal) and the project logical framework, including: the programme formulation and initiation modality; the implementation framework and *modus operandi*; and the UNDP CO and national and international partners capacities. Secondary criteria are the national working context and the administration and legal working constraints facing such projects' implementation.

Some key issues raised by the internal auditors require to be addressed, including: lack of transparency in the selection of suppliers; lack of capacity within UNDP CO to adequately support the implementation and monitoring of the project; lack of logical linkage between this project and the overall CP outcome linked to poverty reduction.

The criteria to be used for the technical and economic assessment is production and growth, while for the socio-economic assessment are: primarily, the technology transfer impact on local economic development and especially its employment and income generating dimensions; and secondary, indirect small and medium sized enterprise development potential, skills strengthening, and export promotion that may have occurred in the project region. Further, also any potential South-South cooperation possibilities that may have occurred during the implementation process.

General information and statistics on national and provincial human development is limited to the 1999 Iran Human Development Report, and a draft of a recent similar study (not yet published). Specific information and statistics are limited to project generated production and technical data from site activities. These have been used by the implementing contractors to assess progress. There is very limited new socio-economic data from the site, or on the projects impact on the community: but these may also be indirectly assessed through very rapid appraisals while on site.

## **5- Expected Outputs**

I. The review will be undertaken by a team of three consultants; An Expert on development as a Team Leader and a Programme/Operations Expert and an Aquaculture Specialist. The overall responsibility of the Review lies with the Team Leader.

II. The following outputs are expected from the team of consultants:

1. an end of mission **presentation** to brief UNDP, Implementing Partner and other stakeholders:
  - a. on the overall outcome of the team's assessment and their findings and
  - b. the outline of the proposed action plan for bringing the project to conclusion.

In this briefing session the implementing partners and stakeholders will have a chance to comment on the report before it is finalized.

2. a short **mission report** at the end of the mission, and before leaving Iran. This report will outline:
  - a. the findings of the team's site visit to the project sites and
  - b. conclusions from the stakeholder meetings;
  - c. activities undertaken for this assessment.

3. a **final consolidated assessment report** indicating the following (based on the above mentioned purpose and approach):
- project strategy, approach and design;
  - project performance and operations assessment (identify feasible alternatives and options for possible improvement areas);
  - project outcome assessment;
  - recommendations on various points of entry for both improved management practices and new approaches that can improve the outcomes in future
  - lessons learnt.

This assessment report will take into consideration the comments of implementing partners and stakeholders to the mission's presentation.

#### **6-Review mission schedule**

The duration of the review will be one month (15 working days) including field work, local travel time, consultations, research, briefing and debriefing at the UNDP office in Tehran and writing the report.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Team Leader</b>	<b>Programme and Operations Consultant</b>	<b>Team Leader (Aquaculture Specialist)</b>
1. Design and work plan, desk review of existing documents	2 days Home base	2 days Home base	2 days Home base
2. Stakeholder meetings and UNDP	2 days in Tehran	2 days in Tehran	2 days in Tehran
3. Field visits, meetings with partners, and key stakeholders in Project sites	3 days in Project sites	3 days in Project sites	3 days in Project sites
4. Drafting of the reports	2 days in Tehran	2 days in Tehran	2 days in Tehran
5. Debriefing with UNDP and partners of the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Presentation</li> <li>o End of mission report</li> </ul>	1 day in Tehran	1 day in Tehran	1 day in Tehran
6. Finalizing and delivery of final consolidated assessment report	5 days Home base	7 days Home base	5 days Home base
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 working days</b>	<b>15 working days</b>	<b>15 working days</b>

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

UNDP Iran CO is conducting the mid-term review of the Aquaculture Development Project in Sistan Baluchestan Province. Based on the scope of work, UNDP Iran will recruit one international consultant to lead the entire team of consultant reviewers. The team will be comprised of 3 consultants:

- 1) Team Leader will be an international consultant who will strategically lead the team and ultimately responsible for the briefings and reports of both projects.
- 2) Programme and Operations Consultant who will provide the necessary input on the programme with a socio-economic perspective as well as the operations and management aspect of both of these interventions.
- 3) Technical Consultant - Aquaculture Specialist who would be a national consultant to be recruited for the technical aspect of the review for the Aquaculture Development Project.

### ***Qualifications and competencies for Team Leader***

- At least 15 years professional experience with development organizations, preferably in UN agencies at senior management level;
- In depth knowledge of UNDP programmes and policy, preferably drawn from a range of country contexts;
- A strong background in leadership and management to guide the assessment in conducting the assessments on two projects;
- Proven ability to work effectively in multi-national and multicultural arenas within a strategic framework with a variety of partnerships;
- Proven ability to develop strategic approaches which incorporate and promote national responsibility and ownership;
- Proven ability to provide situational analysis with regard to outcome, outputs and partnership strategy;
- Sound understanding of the geo-strategic and political situation in I.R. Iran;
- Ability to consolidate the inputs from the technical Consultants of the two projects and give recommendations based on the lessons learnt extracted in the assessments;
- Strong co-ordination and consensus building skills;
- Excellent communication and inter-personal skills;
- Ability to work with staff at all levels of the organization (headquarters and field), implementing partners, other UNDP offices, and so forth.
- Sensitivity, tact and diplomacy;
- Culturally sensitivity;
- Fluent in English; and
- Physically capable of operating in the field in demanding conditions for 2 weeks;

### ***Qualifications and competencies for Programme and Operations Consultant***

- Advanced university degree in the field of development and at least over eight years work experience in the conducting assessments on development interventions;
- Knowledgeable about UNDP's programme management/strategy regulations, systems and procedures, including execution modalities;
- Ability to advise on conceptual issues related to programme management and operations;
- Sound knowledge about results-based management (especially results-oriented monitoring and assessment);
- A track record of conducting assessments on socio-economic and recovery interventions;
- Capably works in a highly pressured environment and ready to take on a wide range of tasks;
- Physically capable of operating in the field in demanding conditions for 2 weeks;
- Able to exercise sound judgment;
- Works well in a team and projects a positive image;
- Self-motivated and able to recommend options for resolution of issues;
- Able to handle confidential and politically sensitive issues in a responsible and mature manner;

- Physically capable of operating in the field in demanding conditions for 2 weeks; and
- Fluent in English.

***Qualifications and competencies for Technical Consultant – Aquaculture Specialist***

- Advanced university degree and at least over eight years work experience in the area of expertise;
- Sound knowledge and understanding of vulnerability profile in relation to aquaculture;
- Substantive experience in conduction assessments and ability to assist in designing assessment methodology;
- Capable of extracting best practices and lessons learned on the technical aspect of the development intervention for future programming;
- Ability to assist Team leader in finalizing document through incorporating suggestions received on draft related to his/her assigned sections and
- Fluent in English.