**Report on**

**Mid-Term Evaluation of the GoI-UN**

**Joint Programme on Convergence**

**(GOI-UN JPC)**

**April, 2012**

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# Abbreviations

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ATI | Administrative Training Institute |
| AWP | Annual Work Plan |
| CDLG | Capacity Development for Local Governance |
| DC | District Collector |
| DF | District Facilitator |
| DHDR | District Human Development Report |
| DM | District Magistrate |
| DPC | District Planning Committee |
| DPMU | District Planning and Monitoring Unit |
| DPO | District Planning Office/er |
| DSO | District Support Officer |
| FGD | Focus Group Discussion |
| HDR | Human Development Report |
| IDA | Integrated District Approach |
| IDP | Integrated District Plan |
| IT | Information Technology |
| JPC | Joint Programme on Convergence |
| KII | Key Informant Interviews |
| MDG | Millennium Development Goals |
| MTE | Mid Term Evaluation |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NPD | National Programme Director |
| NPSC | National Programme Steering Committee |
| PAHELI | People’s Assessment of Health, Education and Livelihood |
| PMU | Programme Management Unit |
| PPSMU | Programme Planning, Steering and Monitoring Unit |
| ProDoc | Programme Document |
| RLBs | Rural Local Bodies |
| SC | Scheduled Castes |
| SIRD | State Institute of Rural Development |
| SPD | State Programme Director |
| SPO | State Programme Officer |
| ST | Scheduled Tribe |
| TSG | Technical Support Group |
| ULBs | Urban Local Bodies |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNFPA | United Nations Population Fund |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children’s Fund |
| UNRC | United Nations Resident Coordinator |
| UNRCO | United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office |

# Executive Summary

The Government of India-United Nations Joint Programme on Convergence (GoI-UNJPC) was launched in 2009. It was in the context of (1) the emphasis the 11th Five-Year Plan placed on decentralized and outcome-based planning for improving effectiveness of development programmes and facilitating inclusive growth as well as (2) the need for achieving MDGs and (3) the outcomes 2 & 3 of UNDAF (2008-12). The programme is implemented in select districts in the seven priority States, viz. Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. It is being implemented by Planning Commission of India in partnership with UN agencies as well as the various state governments and district administrations. Overall objective of the Programme is to improve effectiveness of development programmes and to facilitate inclusive growth through equitable participation and benefit sharing by women and marginalized communities at all important decision-making levels in planning and implementation.

Mid-Term Evaluation of the GoI-UN JPC is expected to generate substantive learning and recommendations for programme partners to undertake mid-course correction and suggest an exit strategy and to documenting important and good practices for dissemination and potential replication. It will assess the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of interventions and their impact in terms of promoting inclusiveness, integration and outcome orientation. The institutional arrangements will be reviewed and appropriateness of the interventions will be assessed.

The basic approach of the methodology for evaluation was to evaluate the programme based on its (i) **Relevance,** (ii) **Effectiveness,** (iii) **Efficiency,** (iv) **Results/impacts and** (v) **Sustainability.** Besides these five criteria of assessment, MTE also focused on the assessment in context of **Replicability** and **Gender.**

Field studies were organized in three convergence states, **Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha**. From these three states one district each namely- Nalanda **(Bihar), Rajgarh (MP) and Sundergarh (Odisha)** were selected for the study as they were the demonstration districts of the Programme. **‘Control districts’** were from outside the convergence districts. They are **Sambalpur (Odisha), Nawada (Bihar) and Umaria (Madhya Pradesh).**

**Findings and Analysis**

In the states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha, there have been concerted efforts to prepare **district plans**, bringing together different line departments. Each state follows a different trajectory and methodology. However, all the three states have moved further on from the five JPC districts to cover the entire state. Bihar has conceptualized the entitlement based planning whereas Madhya Pradesh has tried to see how a district plan can help in efficient use of resources. Each UN agency has specific activities where they lead in the facilitation and support where as a few activities are jointly facilitated.

Preparation of District Human Development Reports (DHDR) in select districts is under way. Many initiatives are being undertaken to achieve the outcome of integrated and inclusive district planning. This includes Change management, Model Convergence Village Initiative and capacity building efforts. The Programme has designed a process of Change Management at the state and districts to engender institutional and attitudinal changes to create an enabling environment for convergent decentralized planning. These are all activities led and supported by the UNDP and District Support Officers (DSOs) played a major role in implementing them. There have been efforts in preparing Gender Sub Plans and engendering district plans. One of the major achievements of the Programme is the introduction of gender concerns at district level, which is not an easy task. Another major achievement during the period was the development of Integrated District Planning modules and Course materials, which are being adapted to the state specificities.

District facilitators supported by the UNICEF have been supporting the Flagship Analysis for social sector in terms of physical and financial progress. They identify the various bottlenecks at different levels of implementation and also assess the extent of the reach of services. They have also been analysing the District Budgets in terms of allocation, receipt, disbursement and expenditure for the social sector programmes. Analysis of human resources for social sector departments in terms of adequacy of human resources, efficiency, competency and motivation is another aspect studied by district facilitators.

Data management is an unfathomed area within the district administration. The Joint Programme on Convergence was able to take some initial steps in this area during this period. Sensitization and orientation of senior officers and the training to district level officers on data and its management followed by preparation of training materials have been so far the major achievements. And these were part of the UNFPA mandate.

Another important institutional mechanism evolved during the process was the District Planning and Monitoring Unit (DPMU). It has found acceptance as a mechanism which would strengthen the District Planning Committee. There were joint efforts by the three UN agencies in pilot testing tools for community monitoring of programmes through the PAHELI approach in all the seven demonstration districts.

The course on decentralized district planning launched at the Centre for Law and Governance in Jawaharlal Nehru University and National Resource Centre for District Planning are initiatives supported by UNDP, which hold promise. It is not yet time to evaluate both these initiatives as they are in their preliminary stages.

In the non-JPC districts too, the District plans are being prepared in the three states we conducted field visits. They too get partial support from JPC team members. The major difference is that the processes are not strictly adhered to in the preparation of the district plan as it is done in the JPC districts. There are capacity issues and lack of technical support. These have affected the quality of the district plans prepared. Moreover, there are no attempts on data management, monitoring system, and many other activities associated with an integrated district plan.

The states and districts have been acknowledging the role played by the District Facilitators (DFs) and District Support Officers (DSOs) in the implementation of various components of the Programme. The extent of this support varies from state to state and district to district.

Comparing the results so far and the expected outcomes, the GoI-UN JPC has been carrying out the activities proposed under each of the four expected outcomes.It is to be emphasized that the Programme has been in implementation for a period of little more than two and a half years at the time of this evaluation, which is too short a time to bring in any major impacts. The outcomes expected are all linked to the foundations of governance system in the country and to the reform measures.

The GoI-UNJPC was launched in the context of the proposed Planning Commission Scheme on Support to District Planning’. However, this scheme is yet to be implemented. This has implications for the JPC also as many of the initiatives undertaken by the Programme would have been better used and made sustainable if the Scheme was also there.

Another important factor to be noted is that the states and districts selected were all backward (classified under Backward Districts Grant Fund) and logically achieving MDGs as expected in the outcomes cannot happen within such a short period. Any reform envisaged in any of these outcomes is dependent on many factors, political, economic and social as well as policy decisions at state and national levels. More importantly, they are heavily dependent on the attitudinal changes too. This is especially true in the case of decentralized and district planning.

Despite these, one of the major achievements of the Programme has been its success in drawing the attention of the state governments to the need for an integrated district plan. Already the states have started preparing the district plans. Thanks to the Programme, the concept of convergence has been introduced to the states and to an extent the districts. These are not easy tasks considering the federal characteristics of the country and the short period of the Programme.

Probably due to reasons of practical relevance and the status of DPC and local governments in the states, the Programme might have found the District Collector/District Magistrate as the effective option to be in the lead in districts. Moreover, in many states, the DC/DM is the Secretary of the DPC and it could be argued that s/he is leading the Programme in this capacity. However, nowhere it was evident that the DC/DM was acting on behalf of the DPC and the Programme could have taken more efforts in engaging with the DPC or the Zilla Panchayat/Parishad and their elected bodies.

It is important to note that there is acknowledgement by the state and district administration about the inputs the JPC team has been providing to the district and state level officials. There are formal letters of appreciation to them from the government in a couple of states.

As mentioned earlier, the Joint Convergence Programme is a multi-partner programme, where resources come from various sources including those from state and national governments and the various UN agencies. But the modalities of funding differ from each other. UNDP, following the National Execution mode, has been providing funds to the Planning Commission and then to the state governments through its Capacity Development for District Planning project. UNICEF and UNFPA have been providing human resources and technical support and funds in response to demand.

It is to be noted that 11 UN agencies signed the Pro-doc (FAO, ILO, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNIFEM, WFP, UN-Habitat and WHO) and only UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA have been engaged in the Programme so far.

**Key Recommendations**

Considering the progress so far, the Government of India – United Nations Joint Programme on Convergence has to be continued for another phase from 2013 – 17, retaining the overall objectives. There has to be clarity on how the decentralised planning has to be taken forward based on the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution and the Planning Commission guidelines being the guiding factor. It is important to have the proposed Planning Commission Scheme on Support to District Planning launched so that experiences from the JPC could be useful to the entire country and also sustainable.

For the UN agencies, the thrust should be on providing quality technical support. Pooling of financial resources to form a ‘flexifund’ to be used whenever there is a need and demand from the states could be considered.

While moving ahead, the Programme should focus on one district per state, but cover all Gram Panchayats and urban local governments in the district so that a comprehensive district plan is prepared, facilitating in addressing service delivery issues and building capacities.

The component on capacity development for data management needs to be further strengthened as it is key to the formulation and monitoring of a development plan. For facilitating inclusive planning, the local level data generation, updation and validation should start from the Gram Sabha and the challenge is to prepare such a methodology and tools. Component on DHDR has to be given more attention and strengthened. In fact, the DHDR should be the basis for planning at the district level.

District Planning and Monitoring Unit model needs to be up-scaled. Care should be taken to build this institution as a support unit for DPC to prepare and monitor District Plan. Interventions like Change management, Gender Sub Plan and PAHELI should be completed, analysed and up-scaled. These should be integrated into the overall Joint Programme.

This report also gives recommendations on the design and operational aspects of the Programme. Joint programming is crucial for a next phase, followed up with joint management structures with higher level of ownership and involvement by the Planning Commission. Other ministries which have direct relevance to the MDGs like that of Women Child Development, Rural Development, Health and Family Welfare and Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Ministry of Urban Development have to be part of the Programme at the national level.

There is a need for adequate quality human resources at the states and districts. Each state should be provided with senior experts in decentralised planning and governance (on call or request), who would provide support to the state and districts as well as mentor the district convergence team members. The report also mentions the need for comprehensive monitoring system, communication protocol and knowledge management strategy.

**The Programme has started showing signs of results, which need to be nurtured and fine-tuned. Considering the impact potential and the initial positive results, the Programme needs to move on, probably with appropriate changes based on the experiences and the lessons learnt.**

# Introduction

The Government of India-United Nations Joint Programme on Convergence (GoI-UNJPC) was launched in 2009. It was in the context of (1) the emphasis the 11th Five-Year Plan placed on decentralized and outcome-based planning for improving effectiveness of development programmes and facilitating inclusive growth as well as (2) the need for achieving MDGs and (3) the outcomes 2 & 3 of UNDAF (2008-12). The programme is implemented in select districts in the seven priority States, viz. Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. It is being implemented by Planning Commission of India in partnership with UN agencies as well as the various state and district governments.

Overall objective of the Programme is to improve effectiveness of development programmes and to facilitate inclusive growth through equitable participation and benefit sharing by women and marginalized communities at all important decision-making levels in planning and implementation.

Intercooperation Social Development India has been contracted by the partners of the GOI-UNJPC to undertake the Mid Term Evaluation (MTE) of the GoI-UN Joint Programme on Convergence. The formal Contract is between UNDP and Intercooperation Social Development India

# Objectives and Scope of the Evaluation

* 1. The Government of India – United Nations Joint Programme on Convergence was launched nationally in early 2009, with subsequent state-level launches. With less than two years remaining (when the Mid Term Evaluation was announced) for completion of this ambitious multi-stakeholder programme, UN agencies and the Planning Commission have directed this Mid-Term Evaluation for:

1. Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the programme, in terms of what has worked and what has not; and the extent to which current programming has been able to influence the key results.
2. Identifying institutional partnerships and capacity development strategies which have proven to be effective in strengthening decentralized planning and bringing the achievement of MDGs at local level to the centre-stage of planning;
3. Identifying the extent to which the human resource deployed by the UN agencies was able to contribute towards the fulfillment of the Programme Outputs, including the alignment of their roles and the role of volunteerism.
4. Assessing whether the programme has been able to identify the bottlenecks to effective implementation and provisioning of quality services under flagship programmes.
5. Generating substantive learning and recommendations for programme partners to undertake mid-course correction and suggest an exit strategy.
6. Documenting important and good practices for dissemination and potential replication.
   1. Scope of the Mid Term Evaluation of GoI-UN JPC extends to:
7. Assess progress made against the Key Result Areas identified for the programme;
8. Assess the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of interventions and their impact in terms of promoting inclusiveness, integration and outcome orientation
9. Review the Joint Programming modality adopted for the GoI-UNJPC, and if gaps are identified, give recommendations for modifications in the institutional arrangements and management arrangements for greater synergy and coordination;
10. Assess the appropriateness of intervention strategies, their design, resource allocation and geographical spread in the light of their contribution to achievement of programme outcomes, including accelerating the achievement of the MDGs;
11. Capture lessons learned, bottlenecks and recommendations on possible choices for sharpening focus and demonstrating successful/ innovative models for replication;
12. Review the current policy environment at both the national and state level, capture any changes and trends and analyze the fit between the environment and the programme outcomes/strategies.

# Methodology

* 1. The key guiding documents for this mid-term evaluation of the Government of India – United Nations Joint Programme on Convergence have been India UNDAF 2008-2012 and it’s Results Matrix for Outcome 2 and 3 and the Pro Doc of GoI UN JPC. In addition, we have tried to understand the ProDocs which are contributing to the various components of the Programme as well as the recommendations of various other reviews which have relevance to the JPC.
  2. The basic approach was to evaluate the programme based on its (i) **Relevance,** (ii) **Effectiveness,** (iii) **Efficiency,** (iv) **Results/impacts and** (v) **Sustainability.** A semi-structured guidance note was prepared on the basis of the above. It was finalized in consultation with the concerned agencies associated with the Programme. This was an assessment of the 1) **relevance** (is the project dealing with the priorities of the target population) 2) **efficiency** (are resources used in the best possible way to achieve the outputs), 3) **effectiveness** (have outputs contributed to the achievement of the project purpose/objective), 4) **impact** (to what extend has the project contributed to its goal) and 5) **sustainability** (will there be continued positive impacts as a result of the project after external funding has ended) of the project. Besides these five criteria of assessment, MTE also focused on the assessment in the context of **Replicability** and **Gender.**
  3. This being a Mid-term evaluation, the approach was to find out what worked which could be taken forward, what did not work which needs to be revamped and what would work if certain changes are made during the second part of the Programme and in future. Though it is not yet time to evaluate the programme based on the expected outcomes, the strategy was to analyze the trajectory and understand the potentials of the activities.
  4. Focus of the evaluation was on key results areas, more precisely outputs and initial outcomes of the JPC. The purpose of Mid Term evaluation was also to assess the appropriateness of project’s design and implementation methods in achieving both specified objectives and more general development objectives. The study tried to assess both intended and unintended results of the project so as to identify the areas in which corrective measures are to be taken up. Various issues related to institution building and effectiveness of human resources deployed for the project were also assessed. Following aspects were specifically looked into:
* Problems / Bottlenecks of Project Implementation
* Analysis of the various implementation modalities followed by different UN Agencies and its impact on the Programme delivery
* Suggestions for redefining and readjusting targets
* Reallocation of Resources and Priorities
* Building a ‘Data Bank’ and ‘Knowledge Bank’ of case studies
* Judging Initial effects of project interventions
  1. Field studies were organized in three convergence states, **Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha**. From these three states, one district each namely- Nalanda **(Bihar), Rajgarh (MP) and Sundergarh (Odisha)** were selected for the study as they were the demonstration districts of the Programme. **‘Control districts’** were from outside the convergence districts. This is very similar to the ‘control groups’ being taken up in cross sectional surveys. They are **Sambalpur (Odisha), Nawada (Bihar) and Umaria (Madhya Pradesh).**

* 1. We have tried to have both longitudinal and cross sectional studies. While the changes taken place due to JPC in terms of processes, systems, convergences, implementation mechanism of the flagship programmes were studied along the time as longitudinal study, cross sectional study was done by taking control districts to corroborate the inferences drawn from the longitudinal study.
  2. The embedded case studies under the evaluation study were on various stakeholders and other relevant institutions. Embedded cases focused on role of each agency in the context of achieving the results envisaged in the Pro-doc. Role of UN Agencies was specifically studied comparing the deliverables envisaged and actual achievement.
  3. Multiple methods, sources and tools were used in the study through a multi-disciplinary team so that multi-approach is applied to validate the facts. In the present study, Pro Doc of GoI-UNJPC, Result and Resource Framework of Project and UNDAF outcome and output matrix were the key source of reference. The information on various outcome and outputs indicators of the project were collected using different sources of evidences and using different method of data collection.
  4. The sources of data were both secondary as well as primary. The primary data was collected from different sources using different methods such as direct observation, Focus Group Discussions, and Key Informants interviews (KIIs). Thus, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were with DFs, DSOs, PMU team, and Gram Sabhas. Key Informant Interviews covered the personnel from Planning Commission, UN agencies, state governments, district administration, technical support institutions and organizations and NGO representatives.
  5. Though the evaluation took place during December 2011 and January 2012 and the first draft covered activities until December 2012, the revised final report has tried to include some of the activities till February 2012.
  6. First draft of the findings and recommendations were shared with the Planning Commission and UN agencies for feedback.
  7. Sections given below start with key findings, which are followed by analysis of the findings and recommendations.

# Key Findings

As mentioned, the team undertook the review of various documents made available and made visits to the states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha, where specific visits to one of the districts under Joint Programme on Convergence (Demonstration districts) and to another non-JPC district in each of them (except in Bihar where field visits could not be organized to the control district, but information were collected through secondary sources) were undertaken.

We begin our journey of this mid-term evaluation note from what we heard, read and saw in these places with regard to the Programme outcomes and related interventions of the Government of India - United Nations Joint Programme on Convergence.

To quote from the Pro-doc, *“one of the key areas of programme support (as also emphasized in the Eleventh Five Year Plan) is to ensure outcome-based, inclusive and decentralized planning. The objective is to improve effectiveness of development programmes and to facilitate inclusive growth through equitable participation and benefit sharing by women and marginalized communities at all important decision-making levels in planning and implementation”.* Whether this has been achieved and if so to what extent are the crucial questions we need to look at.

**What Happened in the Districts and States?**

## Section 1

### District Plans

In the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha, there have been concerted efforts to prepare **district plans**, bringing together different line departments. Each state follows a different trajectory and methodology. However, all the three states have moved further on from the five JPC districts to cover the entire state.

Odisha is one state which has been preparing district plans on a regular basis for the last two years and presenting to the Planning Commission of India. They seek the support of technical support organizations that help the districts in preparing the district plan. The process starts with local level planning in selected Gram Panchayats followed by similar exercises at the block level. Consolidated plan at the block level is used while preparing the District plan.

*The process starts with one day orientation of the elected representatives and officials at various levels. District and block level technical support groups were formed who held discussions with different groups of people in the villages and elicited their wish for village development. These were recorded in different formats. At the block level, the data was entered using decentralized planning software and was uploaded through internet. Department wise proposed activities were visible to the respective departments. Each department gave responses (not feasible/next plan year/ to be taken in future) to the proposed activities based on their departmental ceiling and resources available for the next year. This activity led to the development of ‘district response plan’.*

In Madhya Pradesh, before the Joint Convergence Programme was launched, there were experiences from two IDA districts (Integrated District Approach districts supported by UNICEF) on district planning. From these experiences, the State Planning Commission launched the decentralized planning process leading to integrated district planning exercise in 2009-10 in the five JPC districts. Through this process, district plan was formulated by converging the resources of various departments. Later, the State Planning Commission decided to upscale the process to all the 50 districts of Madhya Pradesh.

In Bihar, planning is being taken to a new dimension with the introduction of the concept of entitlement based planning. Preparation of Planning Atlas and follow up activities can be considered as pointers towards the policy environment favourable to outcome based planning.

**Entitlement based Planning in Bihar**

*Entitlement refers to basic human rights, constitutional and statutory provisions and schematic rights for individual or group of individuals (such as based on educational rights, scholarships, social security pensions, health security, bicycles to students, financial provision for self-employment, vocational training etc.); for families (such as housing, food, wage employment, livelihood, sanitation facility, electricity etc.). Entitlement includes norms and benchmarking of facilities in any institution (norms of teachers, classrooms, library, toilet, drinking water etc., in a school; types of doctors, nursing staff, instruments, medicines, lab & other facilities required to render health services etc.) and services to be extended by it to the people and the terms of such services. Entitlement also refers to the norms on which a facility (like roads, irrigation facilities, electricity, schools, health centres etc.) is to be extended to any area such as village, panchayat, block, district or group of districts. These norms may include schools in a vicinity of one Km of each habitation, ratio of primary and upper primary school, and road connectivity to all habitations, source of safe drinking water facilities for a population of 250 persons, etc. Further based on the norms of the schemes, entitlement has been classified in following categories:*

*1.Individual (including group of individuals) Entitelement*

*2.Household Entitlement*

*3.Institutional Entitlement*

*4.Area Based Entielment*

*Based on these well-defined entitlements schemes could be dovetailed to ensure their universal realisation. It is expected that as plans would be prepared at panchayat level, they would be based on the actual requirement within the premise of entitlements. The approach should be to go for universal realisation of such rights and entitlements rather than restricting oneself to certain targets. Such efforts would also be helpful in better monitoring and evaluation and reducing malpractices and also bridging inter regional disparity. During the actual planning process, some other set of local needs could also be identified which may not fall within the existing premise of constitution and statutory provision, schematic entitlement and resource envelop of the district and down below. With the prioritization of activities to be undertaken and use of funds available under schemes like BRGF /13th Finance Commission for those activities not falling under predefined heads, activities can still be carried out and/or could also be taken up next year.*

### Convergence

Convergence has been one of the key concerns of this Programme. At what level should convergence happen is a question which is yet to be completely answered. In this context, the Programme attempted an innovative initiative in Tilwari village of Gumla district in the State of Jharkhand.

***Model Convergence Village Initiative in Gumla***

*Key components for Model Convergence Village Initiatives were to develop a few villages as laboratories of convergence where all the communities, Government departments, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), Banks, Private agencies and other stakeholders came together to work for the overall progress of the villages; to develop a need based comprehensive village development plan by the villagers with technical support from government departments and NGOs; to implement the plan in the time bound way with sufficient ownership and partnership of people; and to demonstrate a model for replication in other villages of the district;*

*Initially a survey was conducted with the help of the village volunteers. The condition of the village was analyzed following the base line survey and ideas were shared with the department heads at the district to formulate an action plan for the next steps to be taken up in this direction. It was agreed that the plan for the village will be developed on the basis of certain indicators agreed upon by the community. In the next phase district level officials visited the village and had initial interactions with the community including Mahila Mandals and Gram Pradhan.*

*NGOs also participated in the process and took the responsibility of community organization and identifying and preparing –rights holders for various livelihood opportunities. Banks played their role in organizing the farmers and other entrepreneurs to link them with the various schemes and benefits available with them. Exposure visits were conducted for the selected community members, youths and Mahila Mandal members of the village to other parts of the district where good activities and initiatives had been taken up by the villagers and SHGs on livelihood such as vermi compost, fishery, lemon grass production, agriculture and horticulture, poultry and other social issues. The process went on with regular visits of officials from the district and block to the village for developing the proposals for different development issues with the villagers and then getting approval through the Gram Sabha. These plans were compiled to develop the village plan. Seeing the success of this initiative, the model convergence village initiative was later termed as Total Village Development Programme (TVDP) by the District Administration.*

### Training

In the JPC districts, **training sessions** or orientation sessions were organized for the preparation of the District Plans, some through technical support organizations or through the state training institutes. The project on Capacity Development for District Planning supported by UNDP has been taking the lead in training programmes. In Odisha, the effort in developing the capacity of the state training institute is evident and also the district plan is prepared with the support of other technical support organizations (mainly NGOs). In Madhya Pradesh the planning process is supported by accredited organizations, if the district wishes so. At the national level, a set of modules has been prepared for Integrated District Planning, which is being customized for state specificities.

In Bihar, the customization of the IDP capacity building module included knowledge and skill building on entitlements and how to further them through planning. The government departments of planning, Panchayati Raj and Agriculture have agreed to use the existing trainers as master trainers and to build the IDP training into the orientation workshops usually held for planning. Thus, the capacity building process would substantially help in grounding the new approach to planning being innovated in the State. In Rajasthan and Jharkhand, the State-customized IDP modules have also taken final shape. In Chhattisgarh, the suggested IDP module is being used for capacity building of government officials by SIRD through a 3-month certificate course.

An allied component on results-based planning and management has been taken forward as a supplementary training intervention. The IDP module has a brief orientation on this. But the RBM trainings have already been conducted in Jharkhand, Rajasthan, UP and Chhattisgarh. Training of ATI/SIRD trainers through a special RBM ToT is also planned. The RBM training has been completely focused on making the plans more exact in terms of targeting specific and measurable outcomes and then monitoring their progress.

A whole new dimension of capacity building has been taken up with the radio, print and electronic media. The focus is to inform the media on decentralised planning and to give them a sense of immersion in planning process through interaction with district and sub-district level planners. It is also to build up a partnership with media for intensive awareness building and strengthen public accountability of planning and implementation.

It has been taken forward in Rajasthan and Jharkhand and is soon expected to be taken up in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and other States.

***IDP Modules***

*The documents prepared as part of the Integrated District Planning Modules include*

*- Course designs for*

*7 days ToT for Master Trainers*

*4 days Training of Trainers for Master Trainers (Alternative module)*

*3 days Training programme for district anchors / officials*

*2 days optional module on Training methodology*

*2 days orientation course for technical support groups*

*- A Course Guide for a 7- day Training of Trainers for Master Trainers*

*- Course Dossier*

*Course Dossier is an attempt at preparing a comprehensive training material for decentralised district planning. This has four sections - district planning, participatory learning and action, thematic learning pack on sectoral issues and participatory training.*

*The section on District Planning has the following sections:*

*Decentralised Planning and Constitution*

*Institutional Set up for District Planning*

*Steps for Decentralised District Planning*

*Understanding the Work Involved in Completing the Steps*

*Stock taking or Situational Analysis*

*Envisioning*

*Community level Planning*

*Consolidation of Plans*

*Various formats*

*Human Development and Millennium Development Goals*

As mentioned, there have been many training programmes, workshops and orientation programmes on decentralised planning and a few other components of the Programme. The following table provides a picture about these. However, there have been more number of programmes at the local level, which could not be captured due to non-availability of data.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 1:Number of Participants in Trainings, Orientation Programme, Workshops 2009-2011** | | | | | | | |
| **Name of the Programme/Workshop/Training** | **States** | | | | | | Total |
| Uttar Pradesh | Rajasthan | Bihar | Jharkhand | Chhattisgarh | Madhya Pradesh |  |
| Decentralised District Planning related | 2718 | 299 | 1089 | 2192 | 1845 | 2514 | 10657 |
| Capacity Development Strategy and ToT | 147 | 15 | 35 | 46 | 193 | 40 | 476 |
| Change Management | 114 | 0 | 50 | 210 | 50 | 0 | 424 |
| PAHELI | 36 | 0 | 50 | 45 | 100 | 0 | 231 |
| Result Based Management | 0 | 26 | 50 | 50 | 35 | 0 | 161 |
| DHDR | 0 | 0 | 490 | 90 | 0 | 0 | 580 |
| Workshops related to Gender Sub Plan and gender sensitive and inclusive planning | 46 | 0 | 115 | 190 | 160 | 180 | 691 |
| Use of Data in Planning and Monitoring | 75 | 81 | 48 | 60 | 260 | 58 | 582 |
| Plan Plus | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 50 |
| Total | 3136 | 421 | 1927 | 2883 | 2693 | 2792 | 13852 |
| Source: Consolidated from the reports of the PMU | | |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cells marked 0 means that the data was not available and does not mean that the programmes were not conducted. | | | | | | | |

### District Human Development Reports

Preparation of DHDRs has been a major initiative supported by UNDP, started through the SSPHD project in the previous cycle. UNDP has been emphasising on human development in planning and promoting DHDRs as situation analysis tool for planning. Human Development Reports have been one of the UNDP flagship products. Status of **District Human Development Reports** (DHDR) varies from state to state. For example, in Bihar, after the preparation of the State HDR, Gaya district has completed its DHDR. In Odisha and Madhya Pradesh, five DHDRs each have already been prepared. Even Uttar Pradesh, where the Programme started late, has already been into the preparation of the DHDR of Hardoi.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Table 2: Status of DHDRs in seven states | | | |
| No. | State | Total Districts | DHDRs in JPC[[1]](#footnote-1) districts |
| 1 | Bihar | 39 | 1 |
| 2 | Chhattisgarh | 18 | 5 |
| 3 | Jharkhand | 24 | 2 |
| 4 | Madhya Pradesh | 50 | 4 |
| 5 | Odisha | 30 | 1 |
| 6 | Rajasthan | 33 | 1 |
| 7 | Uttar Pradesh | 70 | Initiated |

The states and districts have been acknowledging the role played by the JPC team in the preparation of these plans and DHDRs. The extent of this support varies from state to state and district to district. For example, in all the three states, the JPC team members have been called in to support the non-JPC districts also.

### Change Management

Pilot initiatives in **Change management** supported by UNDP have started in various states, but here again the status varies. In Odisha, it has been found to be implemented with enthusiasm among the participants. Officers who attended the various sessions have gradually understood the philosophy of change management and taken forward initiatives to effect change in their functioning. Perceptible changes were seen in work culture of the education officials at the district level, in revenue officials in addressing issues of land rights and ICDS functionaries in their effort to arrest maternal and child mortality. As things have progressed, both the district administration and the state government have shown interest in the initiative as is evident from the active role the District Collector takes in it. In Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan change management rapid assessment has been completed and shared with state and district administration. Workshops on issues related to leadership and decentralized planning have been held at district, block and Gram Panchayat levels. In Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand , the 2nd phase of the initiative is under way to develop models of local planning, modes of outcomes-based planning and technical support system for planners. In Uttar Pradesh, intensive capacity building of sub-district officials and elected representatives is on to strengthen collaboration for preparation and implementation of plans.

*Change Management is seen as a process of negotiating, mediating, facilitating, stabilising and sustaining a self determined shift in government officials and elected representatives in their attitudes, perspectives and approaches and responses to restore dignity, redefine development and reclaim democracy. In Sundergarh district, the process of change management was implemented with sensitisation of district level functionaries. The focus of change management exercise was to bring about a shift from ‘doing for’ to ‘doing with’; exercising ‘power over’ to exercising ‘power with’ and finally to ‘being an official’ to ‘being a co-citizen’ with the people in relation to officials/functionaries at the district level. It aimed to bring about changes in the way the district officials perform with regard to planning and implementation by changing their mindsets, attitudes and perspectives. The change management also aimed at changing the institutional culture and transforming the relationship between the bureaucracy and the community.*

### Plan Plus software

**Plan Plus software** was being used in Odisha whereas Madhya Pradesh has developed its own IT platform for district plan preparation.

### Revisiting Outcome 1

Let us now revisit Outcome 1 of the Joint Convergence Programme and the activities proposed under it.

***OUTCOME 1: Integrated and inclusive district planning adopted***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***No.*** | ***Activities Proposed*** | ***Status based on the findings*** |
| 1 | Creating models for coordination and convergence among different line departments and flagship programmes at district and State levels | * All the three states visited (Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Odisha) have district plans prepared in every district * Coordination among different line departments and flagship programmes has been the focus while preparing the district plans * Concept of convergence introduced, Madhya Pradesh developing its own methodology for this while Bihar is in its initial stages of developing a concept called Entitlement based planning, which specifically addresses convergence |
| 2 | Supporting situation analysis and visioning using the human development approach including preparation of District Human Development Reports (DHDRs) | * Preparation of DHDRs is in different stages in different states. |
| 3 | Capacity development of district and local functionaries and elected representatives for planning and monitoring, support institutional strengthening of ATIs and State Training Institutions for delivering on their capacity building mandate; catalyze a process of Change Management at the state and districts to engender institutional and attitudinal changes to create an enabling environment for convergent decentralized planning | * A set of modules has been prepared for Integrated District Planning, which is being customized for state specificities. * Pilots on Change management initiated in states, at different stages in each state. |
| 4 | Strengthening and encouraging use of IT-based planning tools like Plan Plus | * In Odisha, all the districts have started using Plan Plus, in MP indigenously developed software is being tried out. |

What is evident is the fact that most of these activities have been initiated, and are at different stages in different states.

**What Happened in the Districts and States**

## Section 2

### Assessment of Resource Availability

In Madhya Pradesh, the district planning exercise and the subsequent plan discussion of the district administration with the State Planning Commission has helped the districts to understand the **resource availability** to the district through the departments and the various schemes and programmes including the flagship programmes. The information has been made available on the website. It is still not completely successful in bringing in flagship programmes like National Rural Health Mission, but effort is under way. In other states too, the district officials acknowledged the fact that they now have an idea of what is available in the district, though not as comprehensively as in Madhya Pradesh.

### Social Sector Planning and Programme Implementation

District facilitators have been supporting the district administration in planning and implementation of **the social sector programmes** in the district. They have been supporting the Flagship Analysis for social sector in terms of physical and financial progress. They identify the various bottlenecks at different levels of implementation and also assess the extent of the reach of services. The areas of convergence with other key ‘National Flagship Programmes’ and avenues of potential convergence is an integral part of this analysis.

District Facilitators have also been analysing the District Budgets in terms of allocation, receipt, disbursement and expenditure for the social sector programmes. Under this analysis they also identify gaps during different stages- budget formulation, enactment, implementation and auditing. Role of various stakeholders in different stages is also studied. This budget analysis will throw up recommendations to overcome the gaps and bottlenecks to ensure better budgeting process and its implementation.

Analysis of human resources for social sector departments in terms of adequacy of human resources, efficiency, competency and motivation is another aspect studied by district facilitators. Study of components like promotion, transfer, vacancies, training need analysis, training itself, planning and target setting of their performance in the prevailing system are enriching this analysis.

The output of the study shall necessarily help the planners at government level to restructure human resource, policy and incentive frameworks and also attract, recruit, develop and retain the workforce for timely achievement of programmatic objectives.

***Human Resource tracking and Budget Tracking exercise***

*Vacancy status and average tenures of key government functionaries are important factors which affect the state of delivery of basic services under each flagship programme at the district, sub-district and even at panchayat level, which in turn affects the human development situation in the area. In this context the human resource tracking exercise was taken up under the UNICEF supported component of the GoI-UN JPC to determine the trend of human resource status under the implementation structures of different flagship programmes at the district, block and gram panchayat (GP) level; this includes vacancy in each position and the overall vacancy at each level. The scope also extends to ascertain the tenure of key official and accordingly recommend appropriate measures to fine tune the deficiencies in status of human resource of the district.*

*In order to conduct the exercise data with respect to human resource status of each flagship programme (Viz. NRHM,ARWSP,ICDS,MDM,SSA,NREGS,TSC) for last 10 years from thirty UN-GoI JPC districts across six states viz. Rajasthan, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha and Jharkhand had been collected in 2009. The data collected were from government sources.*

*It is envisaged that the findings of this exercise will necessarily assist the planner and decision makers to understand the trend of human resource situation and help the district and state administration to address the various constraints such as vacancy, frequent transfer, proper positioning and training etc so that the objectives of the flagship programme can be achieved in timely manner. Moreover it will also facilitate the UN agencies, institution and individuals to make human resource related advocacy at various level.*

*The objectives of the Budget tracking exercise was to determine the quantum of* ***unused funds*** *under major flagship programme1 across the 30 districts among the six states namely Rajasthan, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh and Odisha for the year 2006-2007, 2007-2008 and the year 2008-2009.*

*DFs collected and studied various financial data for the above period from different sources at district and state level related to flagship programme that includes; allocation of fund, fund receipt and utilization of funds. A year wise comparative study report was prepared on the basis of this analysis to depict the quantum of utilized and unutilized funds under various flagship programmes across the 6 states and the concerning Convergent Districts.*

*This is expected to draw the attention of the authorities to find out the gaps and barriers under various flagship programmes highlighted in the study so as to fine tune the district planning and its implementation. Already there are examples of local level interventions based on these reports, some of which are highlighted in the Annexure to the Compendium of Innovations and Initiatives. A few examples of such actions are given in the table below:*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***No.*** | ***Analysis*** | ***Follow Up Action*** |
| *1* | *Human Resource Tracking* | * *Formation of Consortium of experts for health, nutrition, education and livelihoods, Azamgarh, UP* * *Capacity building of TAs of MGNREGS, Sonbhadra, Uttar Pradesh* |
| *2* | *Flagship Analysis* | * *Total Sanitation Campaign, Kandhamal, Odisha* * *Multilingual Education, Kandhamal, Odisha* * *Convergence of Livelihood and Employment generation programmes, Angara Block of Ranchi, Jharkhand* * *Promoting Sanitation through Convergence, Chattarpur, Madhya Pradesh* * *Management Information System for SSA, Khandamal, Odisha* |
| *3* | *Budget Tracking* | * *Village Master Plans and budget, Chattarpur, Madhya Pradesh* |

A large number of documents produced are evidence of this. Glancing through the list (attached as document V in Appendices) of such studies and reports gives us the magnitude of their support to the district in improving the service delivery and implementation of the social sector programmes.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Table 3: Reports, studies, manuals, documents etc. prepared by DFs** | |
| **Items** | **Number** |
| Planning related documents | 110 |
| Service delivery related | 58 |
| Flagship Programmes | 53 |
| On MDGs | 15 |
| Budget and Human Resources analysis | 21 |
| District Profiles | 7 |
| Capacity Building documents | 6 |
| New Proposals | 11 |
| Others | 11 |
| **Grand Total** | **292** |

In the initial stage, these were submitted to the District Collectors, and the findings were shared with state government counterparts in the month of August 2010. It was informed that the follow up of analyses is being done with the help of Technical agencies and it will be used for policy and programme influencing.

We were not able to assess the quality of these reports due to the time constraints. It is not yet time to assess how these reports have been used, any comprehensive strategies developed out of these etc. as they are still under review and consideration at various levels, though local initiatives based on some of these reports have already been launched.

These analyses otherwise would not have been possible in the district, if not for the JPC. As one of the District Collectors put it:

*“We do not have time and adequate human resources to look at the basic issues. Most of the time, it is implementation or fire fighting. That is where these reports are useful”.*

DFs and DSOs have been providing support to the district administration not only in the specific activities where their concerned UN agency is involved in the JPC, but mutually support each other in many other activities related to the overall objective of the Programme. Provision of such support by the JPC team in the districts to the district administration on many bottlenecks in programme implementation and service delivery are being appreciated by the administration, especially the District Collectors and DPOs.

Community mobilization was more for Gram Sabhas, especially for the preparation of the plans or development of community’s ‘wish list’ for the plan. The process of preparing the Gender Sub Plan which is expected to address partially the issue of community mobilization for access to programmes by disadvantaged groups is in its initial stages and so it is difficult to comment upon its impact now. However, experiences so far points to some opportunities in introducing the concept of ‘gender in development’ in states and districts, where these were never even talked about.

### Gender Sub Plan

There have been efforts in preparing **Gender Sub Plans** in the districts, an activity supported by UNDP. In Odisha, the Gender Sub Plan is being prepared as part of the District Plans in all the districts. In Bihar, this initiative has been completed in Nalanda, the demonstration district. The same is the case with Madhya Pradesh, where Rajgarh is the demonstration district. In Udaipur in Rajasthan, the Gender Sub Plan was prepared as part of the district plan of 2011-12. It is in its early stages in Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand. These in general are done by the departments with support from gender expert provided by the UNDP. Apart from changing the perspectives of officials on gender, the initiative has opened up new opportunities for participation and inclusion of women in planning process and programme strategies.

***Experiences from Korba district, Chattisgarh***

*Guidelines were prepared and the District Collector Korba issued a letter to all line departments to submit the gender sub plan. District JPC teams coordinated with different line departments and 26 of them submitted the plan. In the first year there were problems in integrating the plans of different departments and to collate it. A district level follow up workshop was organized to review the first draft of the Gender Sub-Plan which was attended by officers from 15 departments. The purpose of the follow up workshop was to give the feedback on the gender sub plan and provide inputs and suggestion for its improvement so that district will come up with the gender sub plan 2012-13 in the improved way and include it as a separate chapter in annual district plan 2012-13.*

***Gender Sub Plan in Udaipur district of Rajasthan***

*Gender Orientation and workshops were conducted for building capacities of district officials and local NGOs to prepare gender Sub-Plans to identify sectoral issues. Assessment of relevant legislation, policies, programmes and schemes was done to see to what extent are they able to address the socio-economic and other rights and needs of women. Care was taken to foster convergence of resources/schemes to avoid duplication. Also, specific targets and goals were identified for each sector. Consultation with women stakeholders and Gram Sabha was done prior to GSP formulation. Gender Sub-Plan was revised based on the inputs received from technical experts and it was ensured that it was approved by the District planning Committee to become a part of District Plan.*

*Following steps ensured that district plans prepared are gender sensitive and gender issues are addressed. This includes the process of formulating appropriate gender sensitive plans and developing corresponding gender sensitive strategies and activities.*

*1. Gender Orientation and sensitization of government and non-government stakeholders.*

*2. Analysis of the situation of men /women and boys and girls.*

*3. Spatial planning for micro level needs*

*4. An assessment of the extent to which the sector’s policy addresses the gender issues and gaps described in the first step.*

*5. Envisioning and participation of stakeholders*

*6. Goal Setting and mainstreaming*

*7. Gender Appraisal of all new programmes and schemes*

*8. Preparation of gender sub plan*

*9. Monitoring whether the money was spent as planned, how much of it was delivered to women*

*10. An assessment of the impact of the policy, project and schemes and the extent to which the situation as assessed in the stock taking exercise has been changed*

### Revisiting Outcomes 2 and 3

Let us revisit the Outcome 2 and 3and activities under them.

***OUTCOME 2: Districts able to mobilize and utilize maximum of resources from government programmes and other sources***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***No.*** | ***Activities Proposed*** | ***Status based on the findings*** |
| 1 | Assessment of budgetary allocation and actual fund flows to the districts under flagship programmes | * Many such studies and assessments have been done in the districts. (See Appendices 9.5) |
| 2 | Analyze expenditure and staffing patterns at district levels and support improved resource utilization under these flagships | * These analyses have been done in many districts (See Appendices 9.5) |
| 3 | Advocate enhanced resource mobilization and its efficient allocation at the district and local level for optimal funding of schemes | * Reports submitted to the concerned authorities (See Appendices 9.5) |

***OUTCOME 3: Service delivery under government programmes improved at local level***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***No.*** | ***Activities Proposed*** | ***Status based on the findings*** |
| 1 | Analyze bottlenecks in programme implementation and service delivery | * Bottleneck analyses completed in several districts |
| 2 | Work with government institutions for strengthening effectiveness of individuals and institutions including RLBs/ ULBs for improved service delivery at the district and state level | * Many of the reports prepared have been submitted to the concerned authorities for follow up action. |
| 3 | Mobilize communities and other relevant institutions for increasing access to programmes by disadvantaged groups (women and children, SC/ST) | * Gender Sub Plan preparation has been launched, at different stages in the states |

**What Happened in the Districts and States**

## Section 3

### Data Management

**Data management** is an unfathomed area within the district administration. The Joint Convergence Programme was able to take some initial steps in this area during this period. The initiative started with the orientation and sensitization of senior officers from the states. This was organized at Institute of Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore and senior level faculty members and resource persons led the training programme. Modules were prepared, training notes distributed and later collated. Faculty members at ISEC were enthusiastic about the initiative and looking forward to the next step. In the states, the initiative was followed up with training programmes for district level officials. This was through developing training modules, providing orientation to the senior officials and training the district level officers on the importance of data and how to use them in planning process. Officers interviewed in the districts acknowledged the usefulness of such an initiative. In Madhya Pradesh (and Chhattisgarh) the training programme was received well, which was evident from the post – training queries and enthusiasm shown by the participants. It is also to be noted that the state office of UNFPA was actively involved in the entire process. In Odisha, the ownership by the state government was evident as the training programmes were closely coordinated by them and the training institute. In all the three states, a local institution has been brought into the programme, focusing on long term importance and sustainability.

***Use of Data for Planning and Monitoring of Development Programmes***

*UNFPA led activity led to the preparation of a comprehensive Training Course Material on Use of Data for Planning and Monitoring of Development Programmes. It is a hands-on training manual for statistical officers to equip them with skills to compute the key social, economic, demographic, health and education indicators. However we find that the structure of the material provides opportunities for even non-statistical officers to get accustomed with issues related to data. A few of the sections like interpolations, extrapolations and age smoothing, population projections and life tables might require a round of trainings. Nevertheless, the document could be used to introduce these concepts to the district level officers.*

*Introductory chapter deals with the background of decentralised district planning and the need for data. This is followed by chapters on source and quality of demographic and health data and measures of fertility and mortality methods of estimation. There are chapters interpolations, extrapolations and age smoothing , Population projections and Life tables. Chapters on Reproductive and child health, levels of living, education, drinking water, sanitation and cooking fuel are followed by a specific chapter on monitoring and evaluation of development programmes.*

*There are two more documents of importance, developed as part of the JPC – 1. Assessing the quality of district data for improved planning and monitoring of development programmes prepared by UNFPA and Population Research Centre at Institute for Social and Economic Change and 2. District Level Population Projections in Eight Selected States of India 2006-2016 prepared by UNFPA.*

*The challenge is to see how these documents are made of by the districts in the preparation and monitoring of district plans. It is also useful to see how these documents can be used together with the DHDR.*

### District Planning and Monitoring Unit

Another important institutional mechanism evolved during the process was the **District Planning and Monitoring Unit (DPMU)**. Started as a pilot in one of the districts in Odisha, under the Integrated District Approach by UNICEF and the district administration, it has found acceptance as a mechanism which would strengthen the District Planning Committee. Other districts in Odisha have also accepted the concept of DPMU, the Government of Odisha has been trying to mainstream it and other state governments have understood the importance of similar support mechanisms for DPC. In fact, the Government of Odisha has even issued a Government order creating DPMUs in all districts.

***DPMU in Odisha***

*It was envisaged in the 74th Constitutional Amendment that DPCs would prepare plans for the whole district. The existing planning apparatus at the district level is very weak and cannot provide the required support to District Planning Committees (DPC). In Odisha, the state government ensured the formation of District Planning Committees by Orissa District Planning Act 1998 and subsequent Orissa District Planning Committee Rules 2000. Creation of a separate unit ‘District Planning and Monitoring Unit’ (DPMU) in each district is a step (under the GoI-UN JPC) in the direction of strengthening the district planning apparatus and to provide secretarial and technical support to DPC. The DPMU was initially tried out in Odisha by one of the districts under the Integrated District Approach of UNICEF and was later formally created by a government order of state government of Odisha. The three important objectives envisaged for DPMU are:*

1. *To collect, analyze and update districts and sub-districts database for generating useful knowledge for local level planning;*
2. *To provide secretarial and technical support to DPC, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) in preparing and consolidating local level plans;*
3. *To assist DPC in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of development programmes.*

*The DPMU works under the overall supervision of the District Collector who is also the Member Secretary of District Planning Committee and Chief Executive Officer of Zilla Parishad. For effective functioning of the DPMU, it was proposed that it would have two main cells comprising of General Planning Cell and Analytical Support Cell. The General Planning Cell was further divided to have two wings-Planning and Statistical. The important role of DPMU is to provide high end analytical and conceptual support to the DPC and other district officials for preparation of district plans. Various government functionaries who would be part of different wings under DPMU have also been selected.*

*The DPMU would also be responsible for collecting, analysing and maintaining appropriate data base to meet the requirements of district, block and gram panchayat level planning. It would also facilitate preparation of district development profiles and district atlas at different periods and making inventories of resources available in the different development sectors including land, water, minerals, forests, skilled and un-skilled manpower and other resources. DPMU would also study intra-district and intra-block disparities in terms of key social, economic and human development indicators. It would also assess infrastructure gaps, preparing shelf of projects and developing Detailed Project Reports for the identified infrastructure projects.*

### Community Monitoring

There were a few efforts in developing **community monitoring** of programmes in all the three states, some of them are very participatory and effective. The experiences from this have to be disseminated to higher levels and to other districts.

***Community Monitoring Chart of Satna in Madhya Pradesh***

*Satna district administration introduced “Community Monitoring Chart” to initiate the community monitoring of essential services. It is a community based monitoring tool which gathers information on vital indicators at the gram panchayat level and places this information at a public space and ensures regular updating of data through community involvement. The tool in its current form covers the following services and corresponding development indicators at the Gram Panchayat level:*

*1. Deliveries by Skilled person (Nurse/Trained TBA)*

*2. Birth registration and Certification*

*3. Girls Enrolled in Primary and Middle school*

*4. Children Enrolled in Anganwadi Centers (ICDS centre )*

*5. Malnourished children at Anganwadi Centers*

*6. Village Health and Nutrition Day*

*7. Construction of Household toilet and its use*

*8. Complete Immunization*

*9. Diarrhea and use of ORS*

*10. Job card status in MGNREGS*

*11. Status of Source of drinking water/Hand pump*

*12. Status of Toilets*

*The district initiated the Community Monitoring Chart process in all the 93 Gram Panchayats of Sohawal block in the month of January/February 2011. A community monitoring chart is placed at the designated Panchayat Bhawan and is updated at panchayat level. Data is collected from villages and compiled at panchayat level and then filled up in the monitoring chart. The process is supervised by the Gram Panchayat. Auxiliary Nurse Midwife, ICDS supervisor, Sachiv, Sarpanch, Rozgar sewak, ASHA and Anganwadi worker provide all the relevant information to the Panchayat Sachiv, who is responsible for compiling and updating the chart periodically. Extensive support has been provided in building the capacity development of the Panchayat level functionaries on concept of Community Monitoring Chart****,*** *developing the linkages between the departments and Panchayats, community mobilization/awareness and tracking the progress in the field.*

The most important and recent initiative is the **PAHELI approach** in community monitoring, which we came across in the demonstration district in Odisha. These were being tested out with the support of local NGOs who were supported by Pratham, the national organization. In Bihar and Madhya Pradesh too, the exercise has been completed in the demonstration districts. Reports were being prepared at the time of the evaluation. Results of all these are yet be analyzed. This has turned out to be one of the key initiatives of the Programme, with all the three UN agencies coming together and contributing by way of technical or financial support. PAHELI was earlier piloted in 11 districts under the SSPHD project supported by UNDP.

***PAHELI – the Community Monitoring Tool***

*Under Government of India – UN Joint Programme on Convergence, an innovative pictorial community monitoring tool, People’s Assessment for Health Education and Livelihoods (PAHELI) has been rolled out in eight pilot districts in the seven UNDAF state (Hardoi in Uttar Pradesh, Sundargarh in Orissa, Udaipur and Bhilwarain Rajasthan, Gumla in Jharkhand, Raipur in Chhattisgarh, Nalanda in Bihar and Rajgarh in Madhya Pradesh) to monitor sectoral schemes and local progress towards achieving Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The tool was rolled out to gauge people’s perception about the effectiveness of service delivery and development programmes and to facilitate inclusive growth by ensuring participation of the disadvantaged social groups. This is one of the major components of GoI- UN Joint Convergence Programme and is jointly funded by UNDP and UNICEF.*

*Four thematic sub groups on Health and Nutrition, Water and Sanitation, Education, Life and Livelihoods were identified and key indicators were designed that directly affect the day to day lives of people, but which can also be linked to national goals and to the MDGs.*

*In each district, 60 villages were selected using PPS sampling techniques. Within each selected village 20 households were randomly chosen. This process lead to survey of 1200 households per district. The main primary data collection effort resulted in development of district report card that provides a status of key human development indicators in the district.*

*PRATHAM with active engagement of GoI UNJPC team has conducted assessment of PAHELI for action at two levels: Household and facility level. As a result a comprehensive PAHELI report has been developed in addition to eight district report cards (one for each of the eight districts). The state and district level dissemination workshops are ongoing with active engagement and involvement of state and district officials to disseminate the findings of PAHELI results at both state and district level and advocating for its use in district planning, further upscale and replication. Until mid-May 2012, workshops have been conducted in all seven UNDAF states and districts except in Raipur, Chhattisgarh, Bhilwara, Rajasthan and Orissa.*

*PAHELI aims to create a platform for the widespread use of the tool from village level upwards, and the results from such exercise are to be integrated into the district, block and village level planning. Across districts, PAHELI has been appreciated as an important and unique tool in empowering local communities especially women by assessing the status of servise delivery which will result in strengthening of implementation and monitoring of district plans. It will help in communities not just making informed district plans but also systematically and periodically re adjusting or revisting their district plans.*

*Due to the dissemination workshop, state and district officials have appreciated the information gathered and have committed on the upscale and replication of the tool. State Government in Madhya Pradesh has indicated that PAHELI will be replicated in five other districts. In Gumla, Jharkhand, the district administration has committed that PAHELI will be undertaken in 38 other villages to capture the perception of the people on service delivery. District Administration in Korba, Chhattisgarh has indicated that they propose to replicate PAHELI in 100 other villages. In Nalanda district, PAHELI is proposed to be part of strategy being developed on model Panchayats by the district administration. In Rajgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Udaipur, Rajasthan findings of PAHELI will be included in the annual district planning process as per commitment of the district administration.*

### Revisiting Outcome 4

At this stage, let us revisit the fourth outcome and its activities.

***OUTCOME 4: Monitoring used for management and planning purposes***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ***No.*** | ***Activities Proposed*** | ***Status based on the findings*** |
| 1 | Improve monitoring and data use systems at district and other levels through development of capacities for better use and management of data | * Trainings to senior officers and district level officers * DPMU pilots |
| 2 | Strengthen systems for community monitoring of programmes and other accountability initiatives like social audit | * Various community monitoring tools being tried out like the Community monitoring chart and PAHELI |

What we see here is that there have been preliminary attempts to address the issues of data use systems at the district level. Interventions in community monitoring are still under way.

## From the Control Districts

In all the three states, we tried to see what happens in non-JPC districts by identifying three districts as control districts. They are **Sambalpur (Odisha), Nawada (Bihar) and Umaria (Madhya Pradesh)**.

* District plans are being prepared in all the three districts.
* They too get partial support from JPC team members in all the three states.
* The major difference is that the processes are not strictly adhered to in the preparation of the district plan as it is done in the JPC districts.
* There are capacity issues and lack of technical support. These have affected the quality of the district plans prepared.
* Moreover, there are no attempts on data management, monitoring system, and many other activities associated with an integrated district plan.
* In Madhya Pradesh, additional DFs are provided by UNICEF to cater to all the districts.

So far, what we have tried to narrate are the first hand impressions we received from the field. Revisiting the outcomes and activities were to see how they are related to the activities under the Programme Outcomes. **And it is clear that the Programme has been moving more or less towards the activities proposed under each outcome. It is also to be noted that the Programme started late in Uttar Pradesh. In other states, the actual implementation has completed only a little more than two and half years at the time of evaluation.**

As mentioned, this is only a narration of our experiences in the three states and inputs from other states. These will be followed by a brief analysis of these findings in the section on Conclusions. Before proceeding to conclusions, let us also have a look at the various other aspects of the Joint Convergence Programme.

## Genesis and Evolution of the Programme

Each of the agencies involved in the Government of India- United Nations Joint Convergence Programme came into the Programme through different routes, finally to be converged at a single point – to help realize the Millennium Development Goals. The Eleventh Five Year Plan and the Second Administrative Reforms Commission had emphasized the need for decentralized district planning. The Planning Commission of India had already formulated guidelines to this effect and was also discussing the need for strengthening District Planning Committees. However, the states covered in the Programme were at different levels with regard to the preparation of decentralized district plans.

Planning Commission has been implementing the ‘Rural Decentralisation and Participatory Planning for Poverty Reduction’ (RD) project with support from UNDP during the 2003-2007 programme cycle. This was to be followed up with a project on Capacity Development for District Planning, formulation of which was already undertaken. UNDP also had supported the project on Strengthening State Plans for Rural Development where the preparation of District Human Development Reports was a major activity. UNICEF has been working on Integrated District Approach (IDA), which they were planning to take forward, wider and deeper. UNFPA was into building capacities at various levels on managing demographic data. All of them had relevance to the JPC as the objectives, experiences and learnings from these projects lead to the various outcomes of the GoI-UN Joint Convergence Programme.

It is at this time that the United Nations Country Team in India under the UN Resident Coordinator came forward with the idea of pursuing the concept of ‘One UN’ and the need for convergence of the activities of various UN agencies, so as to meet the Millennium Development Goals. Such an initiative had to be based on the new India UNDAF 2008-2012. This already had four Outcomes:

* Strengthening the implementation of national schemes,
* Strengthening governance at the district level,
* MDGs met by 2012 in select districts through convergence, and
* Vulnerability of poor people to natural disasters and public health emergencies reduced.

Though all the UN agencies in general have been formulating their activities based on the UNDAF 2008-12, a Joint Programme document was prepared taking into consideration the mandates and capacities of each of the UN agencies, specifically UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA. Later, seven more UN agencies joined as signatories this document. The document in general included the activities proposed in their own individual projects already designed, especially in the case of UNDP and UNICEF. It was planned to work in five districts each of the seven UNDAF districts viz. Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. Based on the UNDP Governance Outcome Evaluation, it was decided by UNDP in consultation with UN agencies, Planning Commission and States in 2011, that UNDP will focus more in one district in each of the states, now known as demonstration district.

The Programme document described the support UN agencies will together provide to the process of needs assessment, integrated district planning, budgeting, and convergence of government resources for implementation, supporting relevant existing and possible new schemes of the Government of India. As the Pro-doc mentions,

*“Specifically, the programme has been designed to support the Planning Commission Scheme for Strengthening Planning at National, State and District level and not as a stand-alone programme. The joint programme will furthermore work with existing governance and government structures and processes at all levels and will not create new institutional mechanisms specific to this programme”.*

The Joint Programme on Convergence was signed by the Planning Commission and UN Resident Coordinator along with nine UN agencies. This was followed up with specific MoUs with the state governments. The Programme was to be started on 15 November 2008 and to be completed by December 2012.

## Launch

Though the Programme was to be launched in 2008, it could be started only in 2009. It could not be launched in all the states at a single point of time. It was only in 2010 that the Programme could be fully initiated in Uttar Pradesh.

In addition, each of the UN agencies launched their mandated activities in the Programme at different times. This was due to the different modalities of implementation used by the UN agencies like UNDP using the National Execution mode which takes a longer period to get the approval by the Ministries concerned. Thus, the District facilitators were already there in the districts by mid-2009 whereas the District Support Officers (DSOs) came in a few months later. The table below shows the month and year of launch in each state, but even this will not give the actual situation as the team became complete with State Project Officers (SPO) even later and the first installment of funds could be transferred only by the end of 2009 in many cases. Example given by a member of the JPC team from one of the states will reinforce this statement. This is from an ‘early starter’.

*“MoU was signed on 11thNovember 2008, State Level Steering Committee was formed in February 2009, DFs and DSOs joined in May 2009, SPO joined in August 2009 and finally the funds were received by the state in December 2009 and only thereafter the implementation started”.*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 4: Month and Year when the JPC was operational** | | |
| No. | State | Month/Year of launch |
| 1 | Bihar | August 2009 |
| 2 | Chhattisgarh | May 2009 |
| 3 | Jharkhand | June 2009 |
| 4 | Madhya Pradesh | May 2009 |
| 5 | Odisha | November 2009 |
| 6 | Rajasthan | May 2009 |
| 7 | Uttar Pradesh | November 2010 |

## Institutional Mechanisms

The Programme has a National Steering Committee which is co-chaired by the Planning Commission represented by the National Programme Director and United Nations represented by the UN Resident Coordinator. Heads of participating UN agencies are also members of this Committee. Over these years, until February 2012 it has met thrice.

At the state level too, there are State level Steering Committees headed by the State Programme Directors who would be Development Commissioner/ Principal Secretary Planning. UN Agencies active in the state and UNRC official are members of this Committee. The Programme is anchored at the State Planning Commission/Board at the state level.

There is a National level Convergence Working Group with representatives from Planning Commission, UNRC and the participating UN agencies. This has been meeting regularly, once in two weeks. Till recently these meetings were attended only by the representatives of UN agencies and UNRCO representative. Of late, these meetings are attended by the Planning Commission representatives also.

A similar mechanism exists in states too with a State level Coordination Team. UNICEF state offices are designated to be the nodal offices. The composition and functioning of this Team varies from state to state.

A Programme Management Unit has been set up under the Planning Commission. The support to this unit is provided from the UNDP supported Capacity Development for District Planning Project.

The institutional mechanism of the Programme reaches up to the districts where the District Collector/District Magistrate is the nodal point. S/he designates the District Planning Officer to oversee the Programme in many of the districts.

While the formulation of the District Plan is the mandatory function of the District Planning Committee (DPC), there has not been any formal relation between the Programme and the DPC or the Zilla Panchayat / Parishad (District Local Government) other than the fact that the DC/DM is usually the Secretary of DPC.

## Human Resources

One District Facilitator and a District Support Officer were provided to each JPC district by UNICEF and UNDP respectively. From 2011 onwards, District Support Officers work in one district known as Demonstration district. There are also designated blocks where too one of the DSOs works as the block level DSO. In all the states, one District Facilitator is posted to work at the state headquarters. In the case of UNDP, it provides a State Project Officer who coordinates the JPC activities in the state. Each of these categories of personnel has specific ToRs, also based on the mandates of the concerned UN agencies in the JPC.

DFs had undergone training in Tata Institute of Social Sciences for almost six months, on various development related thematic areas. DSOs on the other hand have undergone orientation for one to two weeks, mostly on the Programme, UN system and general orientation on decentralized planning. DSOs are drawn from UN Volunteers. There are also differences in remuneration, perquisites and facilities.

There is also the issue of staff turnover within this short period. In fact, at the time of our field visits, in Odisha there was only one DSO for the entire demonstration district, in place of five; the same was the case in Bihar too. In Madhya Pradesh the number was not more than two. In the case of DFs too, there have been such turnover issues, but replaced with new faces.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 5: Number of DFs and DSOs in the State, at present** | | | | |
| No. | State | DFs | DSOs | SPOs |
| 1 | Bihar | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| 2 | Chhattisgarh | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| 3 | Jharkhand | 6 | 2 |  |
| 4 | Madhya Pradesh | 7 | 3 | 1 |
| 5 | Odisha | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| 6 | Rajasthan | 7 | 2 | 1 |
| 7 | Uttar Pradesh | 7 | 3 | 1 |

Though there were specific tasks assigned to the DFs and DSOs, they contribute to each other’s tasks in states where they work as a single team.

It is important to note that there is acknowledgement by the state and district administration about the contribution the JPC team has been providing to the district and state level officials. There are formal letters of appreciation to them from the government in a couple of states.

## Funding Arrangement

As mentioned earlier, the Joint Convergence Programme is a multi-partner programme, where resources in different ways like human, financial or institutional come from various sources including those from state and national governments and the various UN agencies. But the modalities of funding differ from each other.

UNDP, following the National Execution mode, has been providing funds to the Planning Commission and then to the state governments through its Capacity Development for District Planning project.

UNICEF provides technical support through its DFs and whenever required the funds for the activities are to be organised by the latter and on demand.

UNFPA has entered into institutional collaboration with agencies like International Institute of Population Studies, Institute of Socio Economic Change and through the former with state level institutes.

During the period from 2009 to 2011, the UN agencies have provided an amount of US$ 8.14 million for the GoI-UN JPC. In addition, UNICEF had spent US$ 0.98 million in 2008 itself as they had started the activities earlier. All these are by way of HR costs, technical support costs and activities cost, depending upon the modality adopted by each agency.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table 6: Expenditure incurred by each UN agency for JPC (in USD)** | | | | |
| **Agency** | **2009** | **2010** | **2011** | **Total** |
| **UNDP** | 1,205,432.00 | 1,510,095.00 | 1,245,079.00 | **3,960,606.00** |
| **UNICEF** | 885,306.00 | 1,324,753.00 | 1,485,628.00 | **3,695,687.00** |
| **UNFPA** | 390,911.00 | 91,665.00 | 5,056.00 | **487,632.00** |
| **Total** | 2,481,649.00 | 2,926,513.00 | 2,735,763.00 | **8,143,925.00** |

The nodal officers in all the three states opined that they would rather prefer not to handle funds by themselves but expect high quality technical support and human resources than funds as it is difficult to manage them considering the procedures involved and the difficulties in the government system in managing such funds.

Other UN agencies who were signatories to the Pro-doc were expected to provide technical support on demand. We did not see any evidence of such an assistance or a demand for the same.

## Preparation of Annual Work Plans

Subsequent to the signing of the document at various levels, Annual Work Plans were prepared at the state and national levels. The Programme has been implemented at various levels on the basis of the Annual Work Plans. The process of Annual Work Plan preparation could be termed as ‘top-down bottom up’. While the guidelines on how to prepare the State AWPs go down to the states from the national level (in practice prepared by PMU in consultation with various UN agencies and approved by the Planning Commission), the states prepare the draft AWP with inputs from districts.

## Communications System

Since the Joint Convergence Programme is a multi-partner initiative, there is a need for an effective communication system. In practice, a system has evolved where the districts report to the State Programme Director who in turn reports to the Planning Commission. On the other hand, the communications to the states go from the Planning Commission through the Programme Management Unit to the State Programme Director. However, these are only for reporting of key aspects. There are many other day to today and routine matters of importance, the communications regarding which are yet unclear. A communication protocol has been designed, but yet to be put in practice.

## Monitoring

The Pro-doc provides a Results Framework. During the implementation of the Programme, a Monitoring Framework was developed, but is yet to be approved and put into practice. Alongside the issue of communication and reporting systems, monitoring also is not comprehensive. Monitoring done from the PMU is more focused on activities directly implemented from the national level. Not all activities happening at the district level are being reported to the states and less to the national level from the states. This definitely affects the monitoring of the entire Programme at the national level. While the UN agencies have their own monitoring mechanisms for their components, the Planning Commission and the Programme as a whole are dependent on the reports, mainly transferred to them through the PMU.

# Analysis and Conclusions

Having gone through what we found in the states and districts, let us first discuss the implications of the activities based on the overall premise of the Government of India – United Nations Joint Convergence Programme. Later, we shall also assess the Programme and its activities on the basis of their **relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability, replicability** and **gender.**

## Strategic Issues

It is to be emphasized that the Programme has been in implementation for a period of little more than two and a half years so far (at the time of this evaluation), which is too short a time to bring in any major impacts. The outcomes expected are all linked to the foundations of governance system in the country and to the reform measures.

The GoI-UNJPC was launched in the context of the proposed Planning Commission Scheme on ‘Support to District Planning’. This was envisaged to provide the initial support in establishing an institutionalized process of district plan preparation, with adequate support to strengthen DPC and its support structures. However, this scheme is yet to be implemented. This has implications for the JPC also as many of the initiatives undertaken by the Programme would have been better used and made sustainable if the Scheme was also there. Learnings and experiences generated from the Programme would have been utilized by the scheme.

Another important factor to be noted is that the states and districts selected were all backward (classified under Backward Districts Grant Fund) and logically achieving MDGs as expected in the outcomes cannot happen within such a short period. Any reform envisaged in any of these outcomes is dependent on many factors, political, economic and social as well as policy decisions at state and national levels. More importantly, they are heavily dependent on the attitudinal changes too. This is especially true in the case of decentralized and district planning.

It is relevant to quote a team member at the national level:

*“There is an inherent weakness of the operating framework of decentralized district planning. The institutional stewardship and mandate for this at the State and national level needs to be determined, in absence of which projects like the GoI-UNJPC suffer from a problem of stakeholdership and intent. The proposed scheme to be implemented by the Planning Commission on decentralized planning was conceived to fill up this gap which remained a non-starter to this day. Thus, tightening of the institutional structure and policy imperative for decentralized planning is needed. And these are not to be expected in such a short time of two years, that too exclusively from within a Programme of this nature”.*

## Motivating States

Despite these, one major achievement of the Programme has been its success in drawing the attention of the state governments to the need for an integrated district plan. Already the states have started preparing the district plans in their own ways. Thanks to the Programme, the concept of convergence has been introduced to the states and to an extent the districts. These are not easy tasks considering the federal characteristics of the country and the short period of the Programme. It is up to the state governments to decide how planning is to be done and how the governance system is to be maintained or reformed. The Programme too had provided the space and flexibility for the states to adopt their own activities within the overall framework of the Programme.

Again, to quote from the Pro-doc, *“One of the key areas of programme support is to ensure outcome-based, inclusive and decentralized planning. The objective is to improve effectiveness of development programmes and to facilitate inclusive growth through equitable participation and benefit sharing by women and marginalized communities at all important decision-making levels in planning and implementation”.* While the states have been motivated to prepare district plans, it is doubtful whether the aspects of equitable participation and benefit sharing by women and marginalized communities at all important decision-making levels in planning and implementation have been achieved so far. In the context of the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution and the Decentralized Planning guidelines prepared by the Planning Commission of India, possibilities are more if the planning process is embedded in the local government processes starting from the Gram Sabha.

## Government Counterpart

A key question that emerged during our interactions was: Which could have been the government counterpart? Is Planning Commission of India the right choice for such a Programme? The reasons for such a question are many. For instance,

* Planning Commission is not an implementing department or ministry.
* DPC which is mandated to prepare district plans is not under the Planning Commission domain.
* Decentralized planning, **as of now**, is looked after by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj

However, which other ministry or department could have been the lead partner? If it was with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, it would be able to mobilize only Panchayats and not the various line departments which are crucial in decentralized convergence planning. The Planning Commission could coordinate with other line departments, being a neutral agency by itself. Moreover, planning, including decentralized planning has to be the legitimate domain of the Planning departments in the states, since they do have the power to convene all line departments in the state.

Still the question remains - who is responsible for district planning and decentralized planning in the states? Deciding this is the prerogative of the state governments. Each state government would have its own policies and the Programme has to be reoriented to cater to that. For example, in all the three states, the Planning department / Commission have been in the forefront. However, the lack of (or lesser) involvement of the Department of Panchayati Raj in the state seems to have reduced the scope of a stronger role for Panchayats in decentralized planning and their capacity development during the process. This will certainly have a long term institutional consequence for decentralized planning. Also, being a Programme promoting convergence and service delivery, the need for active involvement of the line departments is also crucial.

## Historical Perspectives

At this stage, it is important to place this Programme in a historical perspective. Ever since Independence, India had ventured into sector wise planning. In one way or the other, all departments at all levels, from district to national were involved in this process. District Collector / District Magistrate has been the ‘coordinator’ in the district, but s/he coordinates only the functioning and not the planning, which was always the prerogative of the departments. Thus, there was no institution at the district level to plan for a district and hence the need for a Zilla Panchayat / Zilla Parishad and then the District Planning Committee. Once this institution was in place, there required a process for planning. It is here that the Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. V. Ramachandran detailed out a process for decentralized participatory planning, leading to a district plan. Later, based on this, the Guidelines were prepared by the Planning Commission. Joint Convergence Programme has to see how these guidelines work, at the district and sub district levels. There would be issues of viable size, data availability and capacities.

Which level is the appropriate lowest unit of planning, how the area disaggregated data could be made available, how participatory the planning process could be, how the capacities could be developed at each level so that the process becomes sustainable etc.are questions the Programme has to address. Answers to these will add value to the process of development planning in the country.

Probably due to reasons of practical relevance and the status of DPC and local governments in the states, the Programme might have found the District Collector/District Magistrate as the easy and effective option to be in the lead in districts. Moreover, in many states, the DC/DM is the Secretary of the DPC and it could be argued that s/he is leading the Programme in this capacity. However, nowhere it was evident that the DC/DM was acting on behalf of the DPC as the Programme did not seem to have taken any serious efforts in engaging with the DPC or the Zilla Panchayat/Parishad and their elected bodies. In the long run, this would jeopardize the overall objective of decentralized planning and local government system in the country and the Joint Programme could be accused of contributing to this albeit unintentionally.

## Quality of Plans

So far, the Programme has been focusing (and rightly so) on getting the district plan prepared, not much on its contents. It was about various steps in the preparation of the district plan. The challenge is about ‘real’ planning where one needs to consider the present status, needs and demands, the possibilities, resources, strategy and prioritization. Even in districts, it is the budgets that determine planning and not planning determining the budgets. Changing this paradigm requires a lot of efforts in designing the process and capacities. The programme has evidenced important interventions to improve quality in terms of inclusiveness in planning and monitoring and removing attitudinal barriers among officials and other stakeholders involved. These needs to be taken forward.

## Other UN Agencies

It is not only about building capacities of various stakeholders at the district and sub district levels, but also about the DFs and DSOs who are to organize technical support. It is here that the roles of other UN agencies (other seven signatories) are important. It is to be noted that 11 UN agencies signed the Pro-doc (FAO, ILO, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNDP, UNFPA, UNIFEM, WFP, UN-Habitat and WHO) and only UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA have been engaged in the Programme so far.

## District Plans

At present, the district plans could be considered as a compilation of the various schemes and activities of the line departments with tentative approximation of the resources available. It is in Madhya Pradesh that this has gone beyond ‘compilation’. Here the effort has been to pool in all the resources available in the district to address its felt needs, thus trying to ensure efficiency in budget expenditure. The initiative in Bihar to tie resources and programmes to people’s entitlements is an important one to bridge the gaps between programme implementation and achievement of national development goals and MDGs. Learning from this process would be very useful for decentralized planning in the country.

## Convergence

In continuation of the concern on the quality of contents, the issue of convergence of activities of line departments and flagship programmes needs to be considered. The district plans prepared so far, in general, have been able to establish coordination among the line departments at least during the plan preparation stages, but not convergence. Though the concept of convergence has been introduced, the ‘what and how’ of convergence is yet to be understood at all levels. As a member of the JPC team in a state stated:

*“Convergence itself should be understood with clarity. Even the various documents related to the Programme do not tell give us any clarity on convergence. This convergence programme is coming from a planning perspective. So, it looks only at the process, not about content”.*

In fact, there have not been serious efforts in this direction on contextualizing the concept of convergence and preparing a comprehensive methodology for convergence. Madhya Pradesh plan process partially tries to address the issue of convergence in its district plans. Concept of ‘Entitlement based planning’ being developed by Bihar is worth noting and the Madhya Pradesh system of ‘response plan’ could be taken forward as one of the components to address some of these concerns. All these require professional support. However, the key to both of them is the ownership and political will. In Madhya Pradesh, the process has been tried out for the last two years and in Bihar it is only in its conceptualization stage. It is based on the experiences of bringing all departments together in the district, collecting the wish list from the grassroots, identifying the available resources and finally trying to match the resources with the wish list is what makes the Madhya Pradesh initiave worth noting. Though it looks simple, without high level of ownership and political wil at the state government level and such support from a programme like JPC, this would not have been possible.

## District Human Development Reports

As mentioned earlier, preparation of District Human Development Reports is a follow up of the previous SSPHD project supported by the UNDP. In our field visits too, this is one of the initiatives which was acknowledged and appreciated by the state governments and the district administration. As is seen from the number of DHDRs prepared so far even in JPC districts, we feel that the component has to be given more attention, considering its impact potential. The challenge is also on how to make it useful in the situational analysis and visioning for the district plan. Even while appreciating the DHDRs, both the state and district officials were of the opinion that the methodology could be further simplified to cater to the district plan preparation, monitoring and evaluation.

The challenge is to develop a methodology to use the contents of the DHDR for the visioning and district plan preparation exercises. Analysing why the present status, how to set up goals and targets based on DHDR, how to develop strategies and plan for achieving these targets and how to develop measurable indicators for regular monitoring etc. could be attempted. These have to be linked to IDP modules.

## Capacity Development

Another important and one of the basic components of the Programme is the capacity development of district and local functionaries and elected representatives for planning and monitoring and institutional strengthening of ATIs and other State training institutions for delivering their capacity building mandate. This is being supported by UNDP. Training programmes were organized for the functionaries for the preparation of the district plans. There were also workshops and trainings on specific interventions like Change management, PAHELI, Gender Sub Plan and DHDR. But there were no experiences shared with us by the states visited on the efforts in long term capacity building, which will have deeper impacts. Moreover, the elected representatives in general were not found to have received the kind of training programmes which would make them capable of initiating local planning in their own local government areas. There is already a UNDP supported project on Capacity Development for Local Governments (CDLG) in the JPC states. Impact potential would be more if coordination between the Joint Convergence Programme and CDLG is formally established. In the case of training institutions too, a lot more needs to be done to make them capable of addressing the capacity needs of district and local functionaries and elected representatives for planning and monitoring. Institutes themselves are short of faculty members who are trained in these aspects. The states manage these issues through technical support organizations or NGOs, but this is far from sustainable.

## Integrated District Plan (IDP) Modules

As mentioned earlier, the set of modules prepared (IDP modules) seems to be comprehensive, but yet to be tried out in its entirety. It was reported that these modules are being customized for state specificities. The section on district planning has covered most of the aspects and could be used as a base document and step by step guide and not just as a training material alone. These could be enriched with experiences from various interventions, not only from JPC, but also from other initiatives like IDA, CDLG and other initiatives of the UN agencies and many other agencies. It could also provide information on availability of support mechanisms while preparing district plans and how to access them.

## District Planning and Monitoring Unit

The concept and institution of District Planning and Monitoring Unit (DPMU) becomes important in this context. It has received much attention and appreciation so far. Odisha has gone ahead with this concept, trying to upscale it to other districts with formal government decisions. Other states were also in approval of such a concept. Strategy to strengthen these units need to be formulated so that they are sustainable and have the required knowledge and skills. However, there is a tendency for these units to be another arm of the District Collector / District Magistrate, rather than a secretariat or support system for District Planning Committee. Considering the Constitutional role and legitimacy of the DPCs in preparing the district plan, this is an issue to be given serious thoughts as it has long term consequences.

## Change Management

The Programme, as part of the UNDP support, has designed an activity to catalyze a process of Change Management at the state and districts to engender institutional and attitudinal changes to create an enabling environment for convergent decentralized planning. Of the states visited, Odisha seems to have gone ahead with this activity. The activity itself has inculcated enthusiasm among the officials who attended the sessions. Its potential in improving service delivery and forging convergence was evident. The following two examples would be evidences to prove this point:

*“As Tahsildar, I wanted to do good things for the people. But, I was thinking only in terms of my own department and tasks. Now, I understand the interlinkages, why I should bring other departments together in some of my activities, how it could address some of the issues like poverty etc.”, thus spoke an official who has been attending the Change management workshops.*

*Visit to a district level office of a department showed how the office has become ‘people-friendly’, with clear guidelines pasted on the wall on what are the services rendered, how people could access them etc. In addition, the entire office system has been reorganized to cater to help in such interface with the people. The officer has been attending the Change management workshops and he said, “I wanted to do something like this, the workshops provided more insights, on why this should be done and how”.*

Initially, the ownership of the state and district administration in this component was wanting, but of late this has changed as was seen from the responses of the concerned officials in Odisha. However, as a pilot initiative, only a very few officers are being addressed at the moment. The participants are expected to draw in their colleagues to the process of change management. Moreover, this is yet to be linked to the district planning process. As one of the state level officers put it:

*“It might be good, but we have not got time to think about it seriously. Our priority is on the planning exercise. Let us see how it proceeds”.*

## IT Platform

IT platform for district planning has not undergone many changes other than in Madhya Pradesh. Here, the state had gone ahead developing its own platform, catering to its own system of district planning. Other states, especially Odisha have been trying the Plan Plus. The reason for Madhya Pradesh opting for its own software was due to the different methodology and formats the state was using for district plans. Odisha in general follows the nationally formulated guidelines for district planning. Effectiveness of the software is dependent on the purpose for which the software is developed. So far, no concerted efforts have been taken by the Programme to analyze the IT platform and suggest appropriate changes to make it more useful. It is now reported that already an attempt is being undertaken to assess the two and explore the possibility of creating linkage between them and provide the state with option to have best adapted version. This is part of the mandates of the newly established National Resource Centre for District Planning.

## Assessment of Budgetary Allocation

As part of Outcome 2, a few activities were listed in the Pro-doc. These include assessment of budgetary allocation and actual fund flows to the districts under flagship programmes, analysis of expenditure and staffing patterns at district levels and support improved resource utilization under these flagships and advocacy for enhanced resource mobilization and its efficient allocation at the district and local level for optimal funding of schemes. The first two have been attempted by the DFs as their key activities. Many of these reports are first of their kind and have gone beyond Flagships to the Sectors, in the district and so have been appreciated well by the District Collectors/Magistrates. A few of the reports seen could be considered as good attempts considering the complexities involved, but need a lot of fine-tuning. As a JPC team member said:

*“District Collector acknowledges and appreciates, but he has not been able to address the issues pointed out in these reports in a comprehensive way. There is no time and human resources with him”.*

This is especially true in the case of streamlining resources mobilization, utilization and efficient allocation. Our opinion is that these are also due to the fact that the efforts were too much centered and dependent on the DC/DM and absence of ownership by the line departments and the flagship programmes. It is here that the engagement with the DPCs, local governments and elected representatives and line departments become important. We are also yet to see the districts being able to mobilize maximum resources from government programmes and other sources, except in the case of Madhya Pradesh where the planning process, to some extent, has helped towards this. In fact, wherever the state governments have been proactively involved in the process, there are attempts to address the issues pointed out in these reports. It is to be noted that the purpose of these analyses in the Phase 1 was to bring to the attention of the District Administration, the budget, HR and Flagship analyses of their districts and this part has been accomplished. The findings were also shared with the Planning Commission. Technical agencies are also involved in further analyses. Advocacy on these aspects so that the 12th Five Year Plan addresses some of the identified issues is the immediate challenge.

## Service Delivery

It is not yet time to assess whether the service delivery under government programmes improved at the local level. So far, only the analysis of bottlenecks in implementation and service delivery of some of the programmes has been done. The comments made in the previous section on various reports and studies are completely applicable in this case too. After the bottleneck analysis, what would happen is the question. What strategy has been developed or was there any move towards developing such a strategy for taking post-analysis actions is important. In addition, was any capacity built among the Joint Programme team members in the districts to address these? We also noticed an attempt by UNICEF to follow up the recommendations of these reports by providing technical experts/agencies. This is expected to provide solutions and policy recommendations to the state and national levels.

## Monitoring and Data Use Systems

Another area where the Joint Programme on Convergence has been able to raise hopes is the activity on improving monitoring and data use systems at district and other levels through development of capacities for better use and management of data. The UNFPA led initiative in orienting and training concerned officials in the need, collection and management of data is very crucial for decentralized planning and district plan preparation. It has generated enthusiasm in some of the states like Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. It could be also due to the quality of training programmes organized for these states. One could see a well-structured and planned programme in Madhya Pradesh (which also caters to Chhattisgarh), with clear ideas and vision on the way forward for the initiative. This kind of enthusiasm was not in evidence in Bihar where there were issues of language, lack of in-house expertise and participant profiles hampering the quality of the training programme. The state level institutes who are partners to this initiative are yet to be in a position to take this up independently. The present capacities in these institutes to carry out this activity are found wanting.

Ownership of the process by the state government is also important. Here again, addressing the data needs of the local governments and DPCs in preparing the local plans including the district plan has to be addressed. Non-synchronization of this activity with the plan preparation process makes it difficult for us to comment on whether this activity was useful in the district plan preparation so far. Methodology and tools for monitoring MDGs at the district level has not so far been attempted and expected in the final year. However, given the quality of administrative data and comprehension of district level officers, the possibility of getting the methodology rolled out in the coming year is too farfetched an expectation.

## Community Monitoring

Apart from a few one-off local initiatives in community monitoring as in Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, the significant initiative has been the recently initiated PAHELI. The results are yet to flow in and the dissemination meetings are being planned. As mentioned earlier, it is turning out to be a widely accepted tool for community based monitoring and ideal for the JPC to adapt and promote. As has already been evident, it is one initiative where all the three UN agencies have jointly contributed and there is potential and need for such a joint action. The recent enthusiasm of some of the partnering states in upscaling the initiative is a welcome sign. Effort should be undertaken to see how local governments are involved and get an opportunity to play their legitimate role which is important for sustainability and local ownership. It should not be considered as a standalone project and linkage with the overall Programme objectives needs to be established.

## New Centres

Capacity development has been one of the key activities of the Programme. It is important to have national level initiatives too to contribute to the state level capacity development. The course on decentralized district planning launched with the support of UNDP at the Centre for Law and Governance in Jawaharlal Nehru University is one such step. It was also reported that a National Resource Centre for District Planning is being set up with UNDP support. It is not yet time to evaluate both these initiatives as they are in their preliminary stages.

## Genesis and Evolution of the Programme

Evolution of the Programme as described earlier had impact on the implementation. As each of the UN agencies came up through different routes, perspectives, history, funding arrangements and projects of their own, the ‘birth pangs’ were seen in the early stages of the Programme implementation. This Joint Programme on Convergence did not go through an effective joint programming, and so, all the UN agencies emphasized the importance to be given to the joint programming in the next cycle. While each of the agencies had specific and defined roles, this might have also led to lack of ownership by each of them in the overall Programme.

One of the major changes which have happened to the Programme is the UNDP pooling its resources to focus on one demonstration district in each state from 2011 onwards. This was based on the recommendation of the UNDP Governance Outcome Evaluation.

Though this might have been a well thought out strategy to be more focused and avoid ‘thin spread’ considering the overall resources, it had its complexity and sensitivity. This move towards one district from five was a difficult choice at all levels. Finally, it was handled well without affecting the overall progress of the Programme.

## Delayed Launch

Overall delay in the launch of the Programme had already taken away at least one to one and a half years of the Programme. Thus the Programme period has reduced to such an extent that Uttar Pradesh will have only one and a half years of effective implementation. Delays were due to different reasons. One of the major reasons was the time consuming process involved in the National Execution Mode, which the UNDP follows. This delayed the approval by the concerned ministries and the launch followed by delays in recruitments and fund transfer.

These had implications for the Programme as the DFs joined the districts well in advance whereas the DSOs came much later. This initially created issues of seniority and hierarchy, much to the discomfort of the concerned UN agencies. More than all these, the team building got hampered, programme could not be launched as a joint programme and synchronization of activities were affected. However, the DFs and DSOs played a responsible role and showed maturity in most of the places to work as a team, as was observed in Bihar and Odisha. State Project Officers (UNDP) and the DFs posted at the state level too seem to have played a crucial role in this team building in these states. Wherever, the state governments have been playing a proactive role, these issues are of minor consequences.

## Institutional Mechanism

The Programme is owned at the state level by the Planning department/Commission/Board. In all the three states this ownership was evident. This has been the most successful part of the institutional mechanism in the Programme as the subjects dealt with by the Joint Programme are all related to different departments of the state government functions. Flexibility of choosing their own methodologies for district plan preparation has also contributed to this.

At the district level, as mentioned earlier, the Programme is anchored at the DC/DM’s office, which could have been at the DPCs, so as to harmonize with the overall objectives of the Programme and the legitimacy of the local governments and DPCs in the preparation of District plan and local plans. On the other hand, it could well be argued that for a Programme of short duration, DC/DM was the best option for quick results.

However, even when the DC/DM was the lead officer, formal relationship with the DPC or Zilla Panchayat/Parishad could have been established under the Programme which in turn would have provided better chances for sustainability.

There is lack of role clarity with the State level Coordination Team of the UN agencies. This has affected the Programme monitoring potentials of the State level Coordination Team and also potentials for mobilizing technical support. In this context, the need for an approved communication protocol, monitoring framework and role clarity has to be highlighted.

The Convergence Working Group has been playing the key role in steering the programme from the national level. This has been meeting regularly all though the Programme. We felt that the absence of representatives from Planning Commission until recently has contributed to the inability to tap the potentials of such a Working Group. Of late, the Planning Commission has been brought in who could play a coordinating and leadership role in the Convergence Working Group.

Programme Management Unit has been the pivot in the entire Programme. Role clarity has been an issue with the PMU. Conceived to support the Planning Commission in the Programme management, it has to manage the day to day operational aspects. On the other hand, who will contribute to the qualitative and content aspects of the Programme? Who will coordinate with all the UN agencies in pooling various kinds of resources including technical support for the improvement of the Programme activities? Being a unit supported by the UNDP, in practice reporting to the latter and being part of the project on Capacity Development for District Planning, other UN Agencies felt that PMU should be under GOI-UNJPC and should be supported by all UN Agencies.

The role of Planning Commission of India who heads the programme and the UN Resident Coordinator’s office who co-chairs the National Steering Committee is crucial. However, the workload and lack of sufficient human resources with these two major players in steering and monitoring is an issue to be tackled in the next phase.

There are two recent experiences which could be highlighted as good practices in the institutional arrangements as well as pointers towards the potentials of the GoI-UN JPC. The organization of this Mid-Term Evaluation itself is an example on how this joint programme could be taken forward. Suggestion from the NPSC, decisions taken together in Convergence Working Group, resources pooled from all the three UN agencies, active engagement of the Planning Commission, the UN agencies at all levels and the state governments, role of PMU to coordinate etc. are a few signs. The second experience is the recently held National Conference about which is described under Knowledge Management.

## Funding Mechanism

As mentioned earlier, the funding mechanism by each of the UN agencies has been different. In all the three states, the government representatives were clear that the resources in terms of quality technical support would be of greater value. In fact, they do find it difficult to manage the funds, considering the large size of own resources they have been managing and the quantum of work involved in maintaining the accounts of the UN agency contribution. They acknowledge and would prefer technical support including highly competent human resources. Financial support is required only in cases where the government system might not be able to find resources immediately due to procedural issues. In such a case, will not the government shy away from the ownership of a Programme without funds? The answer seems to be ‘no’, provided the state government is given the authority and flexibility to design and manage the Programme, of course with a common objective and defined roles for each of the partners.

The other argument is that the states always say money is available, but linkage with the JPC for funds utilization has not yet been established. If the JPC has to be a catalytic factor, this linkage has to be established. While the technical support comes from the JPC, utilizing this support efficiently and effectively requires the linkage with government financial resources. How this could be worked out within the existing government system and practices is the challenge for the coming days.

There are two ways for addressing this – 1. State’s contribution is also specified while signing the project and finalizing the Annual Work plan. 2. Specify the activities which will be undertaken by the states. The former would be a difficult proposition for the states. Consider the case of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Odisha. They have extended the scope of district planning to all the districts. It might be difficult to calculate the expenses incurred for the specific purpose as the processes are integrated with the regular functioning of the departments and the district administration. Only a minor part of these expenses can be captured separately. In all the three states, funds have been earmarked for the preparation of district plans. Funds are earmarked for training institutes too. However, while coming to the specific activities of the JPC like various pilot initiatives, this might not be the case. These will be dependent on the state’s ownership of the initiative.

Would the emphasis in the states on decentralised planning wane in the absence of UN support was another question probed. In reality, the decision on decentralised planning is a political one and depends on various factors. UN initiative and support have helped in initiating the process in states like Odisha and Bihar. It has been playing a catalytic role too in these states as well as in Madhya Pradesh. Now that the decentralised planning (with more focus on district plan) has become a policy initiative in these states, any shift from it will be mainly dependent on political and administrative situation in the states. However, UN support through the JPC can still influence the policy environment to some extent, but not in its entirety. The situation might be different in other states like Uttar Pradesh, which are in its initial stages in the preparation of the district plans and where UN support would be crucial. In all the JPC states, absence of the Programme will definitely affect the pace and quality of decentralised planning considering the present capacities at the state level.

## Internal Capacity Building and Technical Support

We had already made a mention of the training and orientation given to the DFs and DSOs at the national level. However, they require specific trainings after the induction trainings, especially on topics like decentralized planning, district plan, DHDRs and other areas directly relevant to the objectives of the Programme. No doubt there were annual meetings / workshops, but they would require in depth training if they have to provide technical support to the districts.

There has been no technical support to them from other UN agencies (other than UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF) especially in areas where there was a need, like health, agriculture, food security etc. It is also to be mentioned here that no demand was made by them to these agencies either. It could be also due to the fact that the concerned personnel were ignorant of the availability and potentials of such agencies.

The reasons for the turnover of DSOs and DFs mentioned earlier are complex. Being a short duration Programme, the contract being annual and lack of scope for promotion are key reasons. In the case of DSOs, being UN volunteers, they opt for positions which provide higher salaries. In the case of DFs, their services are being procured through an HR provider and in effect they are employees of the latter and not part of the UN. These are some of the reasons mentioned by the DFs and DSOs.

## Knowledge Management

While many new initiatives were tried out in various districts, there was no exchange of these experiences and learnings from them, even within the state. Of course, there have been conference/workshops for DFs and DSOs separately, but many respondents observed that it was only the recent National conference which provided them such an opportunity for the first time where all the key players could come together and learn from each other. The experiences shared during this conference show the potentials of this Programme. Moreover, coming together of all the partners for the first time also reiterated the strength of the Programme and provided confidence to all concerned, especially those in the partnering states. Here again, the entire group of partners could be brought together and experiences shared, all for the first time. Important points to be noted are the roles played by all the partners as well as the ownership of the Programme by state governments which were represented by the higher level officers from all the states. This was an occasion where most of the initiatives taken up in the districts and states were presented or showcased. There were opportunities for experience sharing, learning from each other and generating ideas for future activities. It was also important because as a multi partner, multi-stakeholder Programme, it brought together all of them and which gave them the opportunity to understand the Programme in a more comprehensive manner. The leadership role played by the Planning Commission and the UNRC during the Conference emphasized the importance given to the JPC by the Government of India and the UN and this was reflected in the interest shown by the state government representatives too. Above all, this conference gave enough confidence to all concerned with the JPC to move forward to achieve the outcomes envisaged.

It is also to be mentioned that the Conference gave the much needed inputs to the Mid Term evaluation and in the preparation of case studies, as the field visits were only to three states where as the Conference had all the relevant stakeholders of the JPC from all the states and from the national level.

## Relevance, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Impact, Sustainability and Replicability

1. **Relevance:** We have tried to understand the relevance of the Joint Convergence Programme by noting the extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time - - “to what extent the programme is addressing or addressed problems of high priority, mainly viewed by the stakeholders, particularly the programme’s participants and other people who might have been its beneficiaries.”

The relevance of such an initiative is dependent on the context in which it was designed. The Millennium Development Goals and the Eleventh Five Year Plan targets are the premise in which the Joint Convergence Programme was designed. The latter had specifically dealt with the need for decentralized planning and convergence. Improvement in service delivery, outcome based planning and the need for effective monitoring, especially by the community were highlighted. The country was heading towards this direction. Planning Commission had already come up with guidelines for decentralized planning, which was yet to be made operational in many states. UNDAF 2008-12 was also underlining the above aspects. Most of the new flagship programmes also emphasise on decentralised participatory planning, community based monitoring and convergence. Thus, the Programme was highly relevant and continues to be relevant considering the ownership and activities being pursued at the state and district levels.

It is not yet time to assess whether the Programme activities have touched the needs of the community. But, the activities and processes involved in the Programme are highly relevant for the community as it proposes community participation in planning, implementation and monitoring.

The relevance of the present mode of Programme design and management could perhaps be looked into. Absence of a joint programming and joint visioning for the Programme right from the districts to the level of UN agencies makes the mode of Programme design less robust. Programme management without real ownership by all partners at various levels too is a concern in terms of relevance.

1. **Efficiency–**The Joint Convergence Programme as a whole could be considered as one of the efficient programmes considering the results it would be able to achieve and the resources provided. Motivating the state governments and the district administration to go in for a paradigm shift towards decentralised district planning, analysing the various flagship programmes, looking towards corrective measures and introducing the concept of data management at the district level with minimum extra costs in terms of human and financial resources have been the hallmarks of the Programme. Even within a short period of two years, there are signs of results in terms of these aspects.

However, the Programme could have been and will be more efficient **if:**

* Proper synchronisation of activities by various agencies were made (for example, the data management inputs, the various studies on flagship programmes, DHDRs and actual planning exercises were sequenced in the right order)
* Knowledge management system was in place so that learnings from one district and state could be made use of by the others
* Proper coordination among various Programme partners was possible
* Convergence of UN agencies and their projects were materialised (like the Integrated District Approach, Capacity Development for Local Governments, Capacity Development for District Planning etc. and many other projects by other divisions of UNDP and UNICEF)
* Technical support from other UN agencies who are signatories were pooled
* Communication system was in place and adhered to
* Scientific concurrent monitoring system was in place and follow up actions taken based on the monitoring
* Resources of the states (financial, institutional and human) were also integrated with the JPC activities at the state and district levels.

How the overall institutional mechanism has been efficient as a joint programme is another question to be addressed. It is dependent on how each UN agency links this to its own other programmes. Even while it is a joint programme, there were parallel processes and to some extent structures. This is particularly true in the case of UNDP and UNICEF as they were already into formulating their own projects. The role of UNFPA was specific and clear and so did not have much efficiency issues. The transaction costs for being in a joint programme and then having a parallel system is definitely an issue of efficiency concern for UN in India in the context of ‘One UN’ concept and Joint Programme on Convergence. One way would have been to have only joint programming with specific mandates to each agency or have a single programme where all the agencies work as a single team based on a single comprehensive pro-doc and budget. The former would improve efficiency in the prevailing conditions while the latter would increase the effectiveness in terms of the overall objectives of the Programme and UNDAF and impact potential.

1. **Effectiveness –**As was evident from the previous sections, the Joint Convergence Programme has shown signs of effectiveness within such a short period. Most of the planned outputs, especially from the Annual Work Plans are being developed. However, it is not yet time to assess the effectiveness in terms of planned outcomes and impacts. For a Programme of this nature, it might take a few more years to deliver such outcomes. If many of the issues mentioned under efficiency could be addressed, the effectiveness also would improve. In addition, more proactive involvement by the Planning Commission would make the Programme more effective.

Effectiveness in terms of the human resources provided is an important lesson. The system of providing human resources by way of DFs and DSOs has proved to be effective. Roles played by them including at the state level have contributed a lot to the effectiveness of the Programme. However, their capacities have to be further developed on a regular basis to be more effective. Otherwise, they would end up as ‘errand boys/girls’ (the tendency is slowly creeping in) to the DCs/DMs or to the district administration. Providing regular higher level technical support to the states on decentralised district planning will make the Programme more effective and useful to the state.

Despite their effectiveness, there is a need to relook at the overall concept of providing such support to the districts. The objectives of the JPC, ToRs of DFs and DSOs, their status in the government system and capacities do not match. It is highly ambitious to expect such objectives to be achieved in the districts by a couple of individuals of this level. Of course, one could argue that they are only to facilitate, but for all practical purposes, they are the only group directly involved in this Programme at the district level.

The Programme could not effectively tap the potentials of the Programme Management Unit. The unit also became modelled as an administrative support structure rather than providing programmatic support. Absence of a regular leadership within the PMU also has contributed to this. The PMU would become more effective if it is reoriented to provide programmatic support, working as a link between all partner agencies and states to collate and provide appropriate technical support and for monitoring, under the proactive leadership of the Planning Commission. Efficiency of the PMU would also improve. However, the evaluation team has observed that recently, since the National Conference, there has been a major shift where the PMU is playing the above mentioned role more actively and effectively.

Experiences from the control districts where the various activities like preparation of the district plans did not have the rigorous process and the quality in output, point towards the effectiveness of JPC.

1. **Impact –**While the potential can no doubt be significant, it is too early to come out with any impressions right now. This is especially true in the case of achieving MDGs, improving effectiveness of development programmes and facilitating inclusive growth etc. If followed up with specific strategies for each of them, the impact can reach its full potential.
2. **Sustainability–**Some aspects of the Joint Programme on Convergence like the preparation of district plan have proved to be sustainable, as long as the Governments, national or state, do not move towards a paradigm shift in their policies towards planning and development. This sustainability is due to the fact that the state governments do recognise the ownership of the Programme. This would have been more sustainable if

* The preparation of the district plan would have been preceded by local level participatory planning ( which some states are already attempting) through local governments
* District Planning Committees were engaged in the District Plan preparation
* More concerted efforts in capacity development of local functionaries including elected representatives and communities were undertaken. These bodies have Constitutional legitimacy and the governments will not be able to withdraw easily once these processes are established. Success in working through the District Collectors/Magistrates can be individual dependent and unsustainable.

However, the Programme has so far conclusively proved that convergence is possible and sustainable at the lower levels. The remaining period should focus on this aspect of ensuring convergence by establishing a system for convergence in decentralised and district planning.

The fact that states like Madhya Pradesh and Bihar are innovating their own methodologies for decentralised planning points to the fact that there is capacity in the states for multiplication of outcomes/effects and impacts (of the same kind or different kinds), which is an important factor in ensuring sustainability.

Since convergence teams in the states and districts have substantially contributed to the Programme, will the sustainability of the Programme be dependent on this kind of human resources? It appears so. In that case, how long the UN agencies will be able to provide such a support? Should we not strengthen the DPCs and DPMUs by providing them with equally competent staff that can be eventually taken over by the concerned State administrations? These are questions which need to be addressed by the Working Group without further delay.

Conceptually sustainability results when adequate mechanisms are put in place to maintain six components – governance, management practices, human resources, financial resources, service delivery and external relations. In this Programme, these are ensuing challenges. The state governments do have control over governance, financial resources and management practices. But human resources in terms of personnel like DFs and DSOs, quality of service delivery and mechanisms to access improved ideas and practices are areas where the governments may fail and this would have an impact on the sustainability.

1. **Replicability**

Possibilities for replication have already been established as the district planning has been taken to non-JPC districts in Odisha, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. As the Programme is in the premise of the Planning Commission guidelines and the Five Year plans, many of the components would be replicable within the state and outside. There are many individual interventions mentioned earlier which are replicable, but the ideally the JPC should be able to distil the good lessons and practices from each of the interventions, contextualise within the overall objectives of the JPC and facilitate the transfer of comprehensive models. These could be made more replicable if proper documentation and dissemination are attempted.

1. **Gender consideration**

“The UNDAF (2008-2012) also focuses specifically on the inclusion of women and girls. Gender sensitive outcome evaluation will contribute to improve future interventions. The purpose for the gender analysis is to understand the mechanism underlying dominant development problems and policy, programme and project intervention in terms of their implications for women and men, and the relationship between them”. The Joint Convergence Programme too needs to be evaluated based on its gender sensitivity. As mentioned earlier, the attempt at Gender Sub Plan has made it possible to introduce the concept of gender in the districts, which itself is a major achievement. Other than the preparation of the Gender Sub Plan, there have been no specific and concerted efforts to mainstream gender concerns in the programme. However, the process of preparation of Gender Sub Plan might be able to contribute to the mainstreaming of gender in the overall Programme in the near future.

## Expected Key Results of GoI – UNJPC

Finally, looking back towards the expected Key Results of the GoI-UNJPC which are:

* Improvement in participatory District Planning: including situational analysis and visioning (e.g. District Human Development Reports), training of planners and statistical officials for better use of data. Based on priorities identified, support outcome-based planning through convergence of resources and efforts.
* Better understanding of fund flows - Support District level Budget analysis including identification and mapping of financial and human resources and fund flows
* Improved Implementation of plans and schemes- including assessment of bottlenecks and constraints in the lead sectors and flagship programmes.
* Strengthened Monitoring: including government and panchayat data collection and reporting mechanisms and community monitoring systems including social audit etc.

We feel that the Programme has been moving towards these key results. It was and is a relevant programme, efficient and effective in many aspects, with many components replicable and sustainable and has significant impact potential. However, the Programme is just a little over two and a half years old which is too short a period to expect any major outcomes considering the huge task involved in reforming governance and the development planning system in the country.

The Programme has started showing signs of results, which need to be nurtured and fine-tuned. There are a few issues of design, management, role and conceptual clarity, which are rectifiable. Considering the impact potential and the initial positive results, the Programme needs to move on, probably with appropriate changes based on experience and the lessons learnt.

# Recommendations

## Strategic Issues

The Government of India – United Nations Joint Programme on Convergence has to be redesigned and continued for another phase from 2013 – 17, retaining the overall objectives. Experiences so far from the Programme demands such a phase. In addition, the design of the various flagship programmes of the Government of India and the recent announcements and actions by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj as well as Ministry of Rural Development to strengthen Panchayati Raj and work through PRIs emphasises the need for participatory Panchayat level planning.

There are a few strategic issues to be noted while going forward, so that the Programme is effective and sustainable. Convergence may not happen easily at the highest levels, but easier at the lower levels and so the focus should be at the lower levels. In Madhya Pradesh, the state feels that it should at the block level. In Bihar, it is considered to be even below. This question could be left to the individual states, but convergence has to be the focus. Key requirements for convergence planning include the disaggregated data up to the Gram Panchayat level and make it available up to that level so that people can validate it and use. DHDR could be modified and up dated to address this. Gram Panchayats may or may not prepare the plan as it is dependent on the Panchayati Raj situation in each state. However, they can have rapid rural appraisal and come up with a definite wish list. This is to be followed up with plans at the intermediate Panchayat. This requires staff with capability. Every block / taluka needs to have at least one person to support hem for preparing this plan. Zilla Panchayat has to prepare their plan and DPC has to finally integrate both urban and rural concerns and come up with a District Plan. This requires support to the DPC (like the DPMU) or ZP as the case may be. The District Collector has to attend /participate in these deliberations in his/her capacity as the secretary (or other) to the DPC. This is the ideal but might not be possible everywhere. Consider this as the long term goal and UN agencies should work for this. 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution should be the premise, and the Planning Commission guidelines should be the guiding factor. However, all these become sustainable only if the Planning Commission considers district plan as an integral and non-negotiable part of the process of planning in India. Being the nodal agency for the GoI-UN JPC, the key responsibility of Planning Commission should be to ensure this.

## Specific Focus

### Flexifunds

For the UN agencies, the thrust should be on providing technical support and not financial resources. Pooling of the financial resources to form a ‘flexi fund’ to be used whenever there is a need and demand from the states could be considered.

### Data Management

The component on capacity development for data management needs to be strengthened as it is key to the formulation and monitoring of a development plan. How this could be taken to the sub district level should be thought of. Again, to be inclusive planning, the local level data generation, updation and validation should start from the Gram Sabha and the challenge is to prepare such a methodology and tools. Establishing a regular system to provide helpline services for data management issues could be considered. A Mentoring group at the district-level providing hand-holding support for a while and reviewing progress is an option, which should later get institutionalised.

### DHDR

Component on DHDR has to be given more attention and strengthened. In fact, the DHDR should be the basis from where one plans at the district. It should be able to provide disaggregated information up to the Gram Panchayat level so that participatory district plan preparation starting from the village level could be initiated.

### District Planning and Monitoring Unit

DPMU concept needs to be upscaled. Care should be taken to build this institution as a support unit for DPC to prepare and monitor District Plan.

### Other Interventions

Interventions like Change management, Gender Sub Plan, PAHELI and DHDR to be taken forward. Each state is different and the Programme could focus on one of these initiatives in each state according the situation.

## Consolidating

* While moving ahead, the Programme should focus on one district per state, but cover all Gram Panchayats and urban local governments so that a comprehensive district plan is prepared, facilitate in addressing service delivery issues and build capacities. There are issues of each UN agency having a different focus district in the state. However, efforts have to be taken so that all of them work in the same district.
* Get the appropriate teams in position for this and build their capacities. Consider developing local capacities (like DPO, BDO, other technical personnel available at the lower levels as well as the elected representatives).
* There is a need for adequate quality human resources at the states and districts. Each state should be provided with senior experts in decentralised planning and governance (on call or request), who would provide support to the state and districts as well as mentor the district convergence team members.

## Role of Governments

* Government of India has to come out with a defined policy on decentralised district planning, which has to be made mandatory. Based on the experiences from the GoI-UN JPC, the proposed Scheme on Support to District Planning could be redrafted and launched. The guidelines for decentralised and district planning may also be revised based on the JPC experiences. A national framework on convergence has to be developed so that the environment is set for the states and districts to pursue convergence on decentralised district planning.
* The state governments have to upscale and mainstream some of the initiatives already piloted like the DPMU, Change Management and PAHELI. Long term strategy for capacity development for decentralised planning has to be developed and the concerned institutions strengthened. IDP modules could be adapted to the state situations. Training to district officials on data management has to be institutionalised.
* The states should also take up various analyses like the flagship programme analysis, HR and budget analyses in the way it was done through the JPC and actions based on these analyses could be taken up and thus improve service delivery.

## Developing the Programme Document

* Process of redesigning the Programme has to be participatory with all the potential partners and stakeholders consulted and views taken from them. This is especially important in the case of the state governments who have to consider this Programme in the context of how it adds value to their own policy initiatives, within the overall expected outcomes of the Programme. Based on these proposals from the states, the national level initiatives have to be proposed to cater to the strengthening of state initiatives. Within the UN Country Team, the overall Programme has to be perceived in the context of MDGs and UNDAF 2013-17. Governance Cluster could play a key role in this. UN agencies individually and collectively decide on the value addition and support they could provide, while giving a final shape to the Programme. The role of governance cluster is also crucial as there are many projects and programmes of UN agencies which deal with governance (especially local governance) and there is a need to have a joint understanding on how they do not work in silos and at cross purposes. This is especially pertinent in the case of UNDP, UNICEF and UNWomen programmes.
* Roles, contribution and responsibilities of each of the UN agencies have to be decided, thus completing the Joint Programming exercise. The role of other UN agencies (signatories to the previous Programme) has to be looked into. **Moving further on can be in two ways:**

1. Joint Programming is followed by each agency playing its own role as decided and agreed upon, independently or collectively according to the activities and log frame.
2. A Joint Programme as per the document prepared, with specific roles and responsibilities. Activities carried out would be based on the log frame matrix, with a joint programme team at all levels.

## Institutional Arrangements

* One of the members of the Planning Commission has to head the Programme. Other ministries which have direct relevance to the MDGs like the Women and Child Development, Health and Family Welfare, Rural Development and Ministry of Panchayati Raj and Ministry of Urban Development have to be part of the Programme at the national level.
* Day – to - day management and Programme steering has to be solely under the leadership of the Planning Commission. UN agencies have to provide the support as per the Programme document. UN Resident Coordinator/office to play a lead role for steering the activities from the UN agencies side. It should be the UNRCO engaging with the Planning Commission on all Programme related policy matters (especially in the forthcoming stages which require policy decisions on various aspects of planning, convergence etc). It is clear that both the Planning Commission and the UNRCO would not have enough human resources to manage these. In such a case, the Programme Management Unit has to be continued if option (ii) is accepted.
* This PMU could have two layers – the first layer is solely the core team under the Planning Commission, reporting and accountable to the latter. It should have a senior person as the officer, which will also provide more autonomy in technical and day to day management. The second layer will have personnel with equal representation from all participating UN agencies, part time or full time as the case may be considering the involvement of the agency concerned. Both the layers together form the unit. The need for second layer is to have better integration and communication with the UN agencies.
* Resources for managing the PMU have to be from a common fund with contributions from each of the UN agencies.
* Roles of the PMU have to be redefined – Steering and monitoring the Programme on behalf of the Planning Commission, providing support to the states in terms of technical support (drawn from within the PMU as well as from various UN agencies, Ministries, technical institutes, and Planning Commission itself), documentation, knowledge management etc.
* If option (i) is accepted, there is no need of a PMU and depending upon the requirements, each UN agency may or may not have Project Management Units.

## Committees

* National Programme Steering Committee should meet regularly at least twice a year. National Convergence Working Group has to be headed by the Planning Commission. Within the UN agencies, the Governance Cluster could be made active to involve in the Programme.
* At the state level, all the line departments dealing with development and the identified training institute have to be incorporated in a state level group. The A corresponding system has to be worked out at the district level too. Ideally this has to be an extended arm of the DPC.
* State Coordination Team has to be ‘revived’. The team has to monitor the programme from the UN side in the state, providing support to the Programme as and when necessary or requested, by pooling in expertise from various UN agencies. As the overall ownership of the Programme has to be with the state government, the role of the Team is not to control or steer the programme, but to be proactively involved. The lead agency of the Team could be decided from among the various UN agencies in each state (similar proposal already made in the UNDAF 2013-2017 document could be followed) or on rotation basis. The Team leader has to lead the UN agencies in meetings with the state government with regard to the overall steering of the JPC.
* There has to be a State level Programme Support Unit at the state level, placed under the nodal department. These have to be formed in the same pattern as the PMU.

## Human Resources

* Quality human resources with adequate package, status and support, together with guaranteed contract for a specific period could address the ‘turn over’ issue. However, this has to be considered in depth and see how these resources could be embedded in the government system. See how this can be integrated with the newly announced Prime Minister’s Rural Development Fellow Scheme.
* ToRs of these personnel should be reworked as a single person will not be able to manage all what is envisaged in the present ToR, in a district.
* Regular trainings have to be provided to them, especially on matters related to decentralised planning, data management, analysis, budgeting, service delivery etc. where they have to provide support to the districts. It would be useful to have at least one official from the district in these trainings, mainly to ensure sustainability.
* As mentioned earlier, each state should be provided with senior experts in decentralised planning and governance (on call or request), who would provide support to the state and districts as well as mentor the district convergence team members.

## Steering, Monitoring and Knowledge Management

* A comprehensive monitoring system has to be in place, at national and state levels. At the national level, the Planning Commission and at the state level the nodal department have to be in charge of monitoring. They would be supported by the PMU and similar mechanism at the state level.
* Communications Protocol has to be in place and adhered to. Communication process should start from the local level to the DPMU and upwards.
* Knowledge management strategy and system to be developed, internally and for external sharing. Documentation of experiences should be a thrust area in the next phase. The next phase should have a system of sharing the experiences and knowledge generated from each state and district. It should also feed into the actions of the Planning Commission and State governments.

# The Year Ahead

Being a Mid-term evaluation, our specific suggestions on what could be done during this year – 2012 are as follows:

* Only less than a year to go and so, focus only on those activities which have been initiated in each state.  Change management, Gender Sub Plan and PAHELI – bring them to logical conclusions in states where it has been actively taken up.  Document the experiences, for dissemination, both at the state and national levels.
* While continuing with the on-going activities, consider decentralised participatory planning leading to a district plan with convergence as the key – this year the project could review the existing guidelines (states and national), based on the experiences so far.  These guidelines could be state specific too.   Experiences from the preparation of the Gender Sub Plan should also be included. Identify the gaps and issues which need to be corrected so as to formulate the plans as the project had envisaged (or as Planning Commission had envisaged).  And, come up with draft revised guidelines. These could be done through workshops at the district and state levels, with relevant stakeholders and experts.
* Another specific concept where the Programme could provide additional technical support this year would in the development of the concept of Entitlement based planning being pursued in Bihar. This is being suggested because it starts from the premise of convergence at the local level. UNDP already has experiences similar to this from Philippines where planning based on family level MDGs is attempted.
* DPMU concept has already been launched.  This year the project could assess the status of DPMU and DPC (or structures/support mechanisms for planning), identify the gaps and needs and come up with recommendations.  This might have to look into human resources, skills, quality and other resources.  Governments, if interested, could make use of these recommendations in future.This could be done at the district level, later taken up to the state level.  Experts could help in the process, but it has to be a participatory exercise.
* Give focus on DHDR and all the HDRs of all JPC districts should be completed by this year.
* Analysis of data requirements for decentralised district planning:  Prepare a set of data requirements and sources / methodology which could be taken up by the state governments.  It could even feed into the report of the committee developing the system for Basic level data for local development.
* Finalise the modules for data management and design a strategy for capacity building for data management at district and sub district levels.
* Finalise the IDP modules and test them in the seven states. Focus on developing capacity building strategies in each of the states and develop a network of trainers in addition to the faculty members of these institutes.
* Various analyses like that of the Human resources, budget tracking etc have been done at the district level. A comprehensive document on these may be prepared covering the findings as well as the process.
* Bottleneck analysis of Convergence may be done this year in selected levels like Gram, block and district.
* Immediate task this year should be to document similar experiences and processes, bring them to the attention of the national and state authorities, so that they could be used in the preparation of the 12th Five Year Plan.

All these activities require technical support, by way of ideas and people.  It would be useful if the Programme provides sufficient quality human resources to address these needs.

# Limitations and Lessons Learnt

GoI-UN JPC is a large Programme covering seven states with multiple partners and many activities. Some of the lessons **we learnt** as the evaluation agency are as follows:

* Number of days required to conduct an evaluation of such a large Programme should have been more, especially the field visits days. Size of the team too should have been larger so that in depth field studies, preparation of case studies etc. could be attempted. These have been our own omissions.
* Only three states were included in the field visits and many important facts from other states might have been missed. To some extent these were overcome through the National Conference and the support received from the states and PMU.
* Planning for field visits was a problem, as the line of communication had many key players whose time availability was difficult to predict.
* As many agencies and partners are involved, and varying views are expressed sometimes even conflicting, it was difficult to arrive at conclusions in certain cases.
* Collection of data related to participants, programmes etc were difficult as many of the local/village level activities involve large participation (especially local level orientations, workshops etc), the data for which were not readily available.
* As different modalities of funding were in vogue, availing the comparable activity wise disaggregated information was difficult.
* Preparation of case studies at this stage was difficult as most of the key initiatives were in their preliminary stages when the field visits were made. It was not yet time to evaluate them and provide suggestions and conclusions.

# Appendices

## List of Persons Interviewed / FGDs

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Elected Representatives** | |  |
| 1 | Anil Kumar | Ex Mukhiya, Sherpur, Mohhammadpur | Bihar |
| 2 | Bedvyas Dhruva | Member, Meghdagha Gram Panchayat | Odisha |
| 3 | Crescencia Ekka | Sarpanch, Padmapur Gram Panchayat | Odisha |
| 4 | Hindusingh Pawar | Sarpanch, Bhavdikkada GP | Madhya Pradesh |
| 5 | Jatiya Munda | Sarpanch, Niyalipali Gram Panchayat | Odisha |
| 6 | Jayanti Naik | Sarpanch, Meghdakha Gram Panchayat | Odisha |
| 7 | Kamlendar Singh | Mukhya, Mohhammadpur | Bihar |
| 8 | Koushara Rout | Member, Padmapur Gram Panchayat | Odisha |
| 9 | Laxman Kishan | Member, Padmapur Gram Panchayat | Odisha |
| 10 | Rathikrishan | Nyaya Sarpanch, Padmapur Gram Panchayat | Odisha |
| 11 | Sivnath Delki | Chairman, Tangarplai Block | Odisha |
| 12 | Vinod Behera | Member, Padmapur Gram Panchayat | Odisha |
|  | **Government officials at the national, state and district level** | |  |
| 13 | Ambarish Pathi | Sub Divisional Panchayat Officer, Sundargarh | Odisha |
| 14 | Bhatnagar N.S. | District Collector, Rajgarh | Madhya Pradesh |
| 15 | Damodar Sahoo | Executive Engineer, Rural Works | Odisha |
| 16 | Daniel Ekka | BDO, Jujumura Block | Odisha |
| 17 | Dhurv P.S. | District Planning Officer, Rajgarh | Madhya Pradesh |
| 18 | Dhurve V.S. | Asst. Statistical Officer, Rajgarh | Madhya Pradesh |
| 19 | Harendra Prasad | Joint Director, Planning | Bihar |
| 20 | Indu Patnaik | Joint Adviser, Planning Commission | Delhi |
| 21 | Iwane B.S. | District Planning Officer, Umaria | Madhya Pradesh |
| 22 | Jamra V.S. | Deputy Director, Agriculture, Umaria | Madhya Pradesh |
| 23 | Jiaut Singh | Director, DRDA Nalanda | Bihar |
| 24 | Kar R.C. | Planning Commission | Odisha |
| 25 | Madhu R. Tewatia | CEO, Umaria Zilla Panchayat | Madhya Pradesh |
| 26 | Mamta Devi | CDPO, Kuarmunda | Odisha |
| 27 | Manasi Satpathy | Deputy Director Planning, Sambalpur | Odisha |
| 28 | Mangesh Tyagi | Adviser Planning Commission | Madhya Pradesh |
| 29 | Mangulal Sharma | Sachiv, Bhavdikkada GP | Madhya Pradesh |
| 30 | Manoj Kumar Srivastava | Principal Secretary DoPR | Bihar |
| 31 | Ojha M.P. | District Collector, Umaria | Madhya Pradesh |
| 32 | Pradeep Jena | Secretary Planning | Odisha |
| 33 | Pradeep Kumar Naik | Project Director DRDA, Sambalpur | Odisha |
| 34 | Pradhan G.S. | Deputy Director Planning | Odisha |
| 35 | Prakash Narayan Sharma | Executive Officer, Redhkol Notified Area Council | Odisha |
| 36 | Pramod Kumar Panda | District Education Inspector, Sundargarh | Odisha |
| 37 | Rajesh Kumar | District Planning Officer, Nalanda | Bihar |
| 38 | Ramachandra Soren | BDO | Odisha |
| 39 | Ramchanda Prashad | Additional Collector Nalanda | Bihar |
| 40 | Roopa Roshan Sahoo | District Collector, Sundargarh | Odisha |
| 41 | Sachidanand Patel | ABDO, Lephriparia Block | Odisha |
| 42 | Satpathy C.R. | Deputy Director PHDMA | Odisha |
| 43 | Singh R.V. | Principal Secretary Planning | Odisha |
| 44 | Siv Narayan Sahoo | Executive Officer, Padmapur Gram Panchayat | Odisha |
| 45 | Solanki | District Statistical Officer | Madhya Pradesh |
| 46 | Subhash Chandra Pradhan | Deputy Director Horticulture, Sambalpur | Odisha |
| 47 | Surendra Prashad | District Welfare Officer, Nalanda | Bihar |
| 48 | Tripathy S.N. | Principal Secretary Rural Development | Odisha |
| 49 | Vijoy Prakash | Principal Secretary Planning | Bihar |
| 50 | Vinay Kumar Sahoo | GRS, Padmapur Gram Panchayat | Odisha |
|  | **JPC teams at the state and districts and PMU** | |  |
| 51 | Abhishek Mohanty | DF | Kalahandi, Odisha |
| 52 | Abhishek Singh | DF | State level, Bihar |
| 53 | Ahmad Shahvez | DF | Badaun, UP |
| 54 | Akhilesh Dixit | DSO | Uttar Pradesh |
| 55 | Alpana Jain | DF | Udaipur, Rajastha |
| 56 | Amit Choury | DSO | Madhya Pradesh |
| 57 | Anjali Bijoy Kumar | DF | Khargone, M.P |
| 58 | Aparajeet Sinha | DF | Gumla, Odisha |
| 59 | Arindam Misra | DF | Mayurbhanj, Odisha |
| 60 | Ashish Dwivedi | DF | Nalanda, Bihar |
| 61 | Ashu Verma | DF | Palamu, Jharkhand |
| 62 | Atul Dev Sarmah | Officer in Charge | PMU |
| 63 | Babubhai Shrivas | DSO | Chhattisgarh |
| 64 | Bishnu C. Parida | SPO | Jharkhand |
| 65 | Brajesh Kumar Das | SPO | Bihar |
| 66 | Brajesh Tripathi | DF | Azamgarh, UP |
| 67 | Debashish Dash | DF | StateOdisha |
| 68 | Deepak Ranjan Nag | DF | PMU |
| 69 | Dharmendra Gautam | DF | Sirohi, Rajasthan |
| 70 | Dhram Prakash Karn | DF | Supaul, Bihar |
| 71 | Farooque Siddiqui | DF | Korba, Chattisgarh |
| 72 | Goutam Aryabhusan | DF | Kandhamal, Odisha |
| 73 | Hanif Shaikh | DF | Rajgarh, Madhya Pradesh |
| 74 | Jaimon Thomas | DF | Sarguja, Chattisgarh |
| 75 | Janesar |  | PMU |
| 76 | Jitendra Pandit | DF | Mandla, MP |
| 77 | Kaushal Kishore | DSO | Bihar |
| 78 | Kumar Bikram | DF | Chhittorgarh, Rajasthan |
| 79 | Mainak Sarkar | SPO | Odisha |
| 80 | Manjeet Saluja | SPO | Uttar Pradesh |
| 81 | Mini Kurup | DF | Jharkhand |
| 82 | Mohan Kumar Malvia | DF | Bihar |
| 83 | Naveen Das | DF | PMU |
| 84 | Neeraj Jaiminy | DF | Barmer, Rajasthan |
| 85 | Neeraj Jha | DF | State Rajasthan |
| 86 | Neetu Singh Raj | DSO | Madhya Pradesh |
| 87 | Nirmala Pandey | DF | Hardoi, UP |
| 88 | Pavan Dubey | DF | Sonbhadra, UP |
| 89 | Pradeep Kumar Tyagi | DF | State UP |
| 90 | Pranab Kishore Dash | DF | Pakur, JH |
| 91 | Raj Kamal Srivastav | DF | Bihar |
| 92 | Raj Kumar Pandey | DF | Hamirpur, UP |
| 93 | Rajiv Kumar Bhardwaj | DF | State, MP |
| 94 | Ram Chandra Singh | DF | Kanker, CG |
| 95 | Rekha Raj | DF | West Singhbhum, JH |
| 96 | Rishi Raj Sharma | DF | State, MP |
| 97 | Ritu Ghosh | DSO | Chhattisgarh |
| 98 | Rohini | DF | Satna, MP |
| 99 | Rupendra Kuamr Dadsena | DSO | Chhattisgarh |
| 100 | Sajjad Majeed | DSO | Jharkhand |
| 101 | Sandeep Saxena | DSO | Madhya Pradesh |
| 102 | Santosh Pal | DF | Chhatarpur, MP |
| 103 | Shailesh Kumar Nayak | SPO | Madhya Pradesh |
| 104 | Shelly J. Kerketta | DF | Jharkhand |
| 105 | Shipra | Monitoring Specialist | PMU |
| 106 | Simran Bawa | Programme Management Unit | PMU |
| 107 | Soubhagya Satpathy | DSO | Odisha |
| 108 | Subir Kumar Das | DF | Gumla, JH |
| 109 | Sudhir Kumar | DSO | Jharkhand |
| 110 | Sujan Sarkar | DF | Rajasthan |
| 111 | Sundar Mishra | District Planing Specialist | PMU |
| 112 | Susmita Samantray | DF | Jashpur, CG |
| 113 | Syed Parwez | DF | Mahasamund, CG |
| 114 | Vijay Jain | DF | PMU |
| 115 | Vivek Saran | DF | Bihar |
| 116 | Vjay Kuamr Jamwal | SPO | Uttar Pradesh |
| 117 | Yogendra Shukla | DSO | Uttar Pradesh |
|  | **NGOs, Academicians, Others** | |  |
| 118 | Amitabh Singh | Debate | Madhya Pradesh |
| 119 | Anindo Banerji | PRAXIS | Bihar |
| 120 | Ashok Singha | CTRAN | Odisha |
| 121 | Bal Mukund Shukla | VISTAR | Odisha |
| 122 | Biswas Dr. | Indian Institute of Forest Management | Madhya Pradesh |
| 123 | Diwakar, Prof | A.N. Sinha Institute | Bihar |
| 124 | James, Dr | Institute of Social and Economic Change | Karnataka |
| 125 | Lalit Sharma | Jan Abhiyan Parishad | Madhya Pradesh |
| 126 | Leena Singh | Debate | Madhya Pradesh |
| 127 | Paliwal | Former DPO | Madhya Pradesh |
| 128 | Parul Upadhyay | Jan Abhiyan Parishad | Madhya Pradesh |
| 129 | Saroj Nayak | CTRAN | Odisha |
| 130 | Sudipta Mohanty | VISTAR | Odisha |
| 131 | Yogesh Kumar | Samarthan | Madhya Pradesh |
|  | **UN Agencies** | |  |
| 132 | Akhilesh Khare | UNDP | Madhya Pradesh |
| 133 | Ambika Prasad Nanda | UNDP | Odisha |
| 134 | Amit Anand | UNDP | Madhya Pradesh |
| 135 | Caitlin Wiesen | Country Director | UNDP Delhi |
| 136 | Deo Dr. | UNFPA | Madhya Pradesh |
| 137 | Edouard Beigbeder | Chief of Field Services | UNICEF Delhi |
| 138 | Harsh Vardhan | UNDP | Bihar |
| 139 | Hemant Dwivedi | UNFPA | Odisha |
| 140 | Joaquin Gonzalez Aleman | Chief - Social Policy, Planning and Monitoring | UNICEF Delhi |
| 141 | Kaushik Nag | UNICEF | Bihar |
| 142 | Narendra Mishra | Programme Officer Governance | UNDP Delhi |
| 143 | Nilesh Deshpande | UNFPA | Bihar |
| 144 | Patrice Coeur-Bizot | UN Resident Coordinator | UNRCO |
| 145 | Radhika Kaul Batra | Advocacy Officer, UN | UNRCO |
| 146 | Rajesh Patnaik | UNICEF | Odisha |
| 147 | Roopa Prasad | UNFPA | Odisha |
| 148 | Ruchi Pant | Programme Officer | UNDP Delhi |
| 149 | Ruth Benjamin | UNICEF | Odisha |
| 150 | Sanjay Kumar | National Programme Officer | UNFPA Delhi |
| 151 | Satya Narayana K.M. | National Programme Officer | UNFPA Delhi |
| 152 | Shairose Mawji | UNICEF | Odisha |
| 153 | Shikha Wadhwa | Programme Specialist | UNICEF Delhi |
| 154 | Sumeeta Banerji | Assistant Country Director | UNDP Delhi |
| 155 | Tejiram, Dr. | UNFPA | Madhya Pradesh |
| 156 | Thomas George | Manager District Support | UNICEF Delhi |
| 157 | Vikas Singh | UNICEF | Bihar |

## Data Collection Instruments

**Guidance Note for Data collection**

Based on the objectives of the Mid Term evaluation the focus of the evaluation study will be on key results areas more precisely outputs and initial outcomes of the project. The purpose of Mid Term evaluation is also to assess the appropriateness of project’s design and implementation methods in achieving both specified objectives and more general development objectives. The study will assess both intended and unintended results of the project so as to identify the areas in which corrective measures are to be taken up. MTE will also assess the level of institution building, various issues related to institution building and effectiveness of human resources deployed for the project. The mid-term review will result in:

* Identifying Problems / Bottlenecks of Project Implementation
* Analysis of the various implementation modalities followed by different UN Agencies and its impact on the Programme delivery
* Suggesting for Redefining and Readjusting Targets
* Proposing Reallocation of Resources and Priorities
* Building a ‘Data Bank’ and ‘knowledge Bank’ of case studies
* Judging Initial effects of project interventions

Mid Term Evaluation of the project will be an assessment of the 1) relevance (is the project dealing with the priorities of the target population) 2) efficiency (are resources used in the best possible way to achieve the outputs), 3) effectiveness (have outputs contributed to the achievement of the project purpose/objective), 4) impact (to what extend has the project contributed to its goal) and 5) sustainability (will there be continued positive impacts as a result of the project after external funding has ended) of the project. Besides these five criteria of assessment, the MTR will also focus the assessment in context of replicability and Gender.

1. Relevance: The extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time. In the context of GoI-UN Joint Programme on Convergence, the issue of relevance will be - “to what extent the programme is addressing or addressed problems of high priority, mainly viewed by the stakeholders, particularly the programme’s participants and other people who might have been its beneficiaries.

There will be following questions related to the relevance –

* Whether the project resources which have gone into might have used with greater advantage for some alternative purposes? Or
* Whether the people most in need of the respective assistance have received the benefit of the project/programme. Or
* Whether original priorities of the project are still relevant? Or
* How well the project supplements other development work?

1. Efficiency - the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible. Efficiency in context of Joint Programme on Convergence can be elaborated as –

“The amount of outputs created and their quality in relation to the resources (Capital and Personnel) invested.”

In case of Joint Programme on Convergence the relevance of efficiency can be seen at the level of the outputs generated in taking up different activities. (Activity - Out put level) This relates to how productively the inputs are used to give desired outputs. The efficiency will also be relevant at the level of intervening organizations getting and using the knowledge products to create outputs for fulfilling the Millennium development Goals.

1. Effectiveness - the extent to which an objective has been achieved or how likely it is to be achieved. The effectiveness in context of the convergence project shall be seen as– (To what extent the planned outputs, expected effects or outcomes and intended impacts are being produced or achieved). In case of the convergence project, Activities and Outputs will be in control of the management and therefore can be guaranteed to certain extent but the effects and, the impacts will be influenced by the external factors also. For effectiveness analysis, it will be appropriate to focus mainly on the effects on the outcome side due to the reason that – the effect level is the first level at which the benefits for the intended beneficiaries are expressed and can be seen. Being more directly derived from the inputs, activities and outputs compared to impacts, the effects will normally be less influenced by the external factors and can be assessed quicker and more reliably.
2. Impact - the positive and negative, and foreseen and unforeseen, changes to and effects produced by a development intervention. Impact of the project will be related to - Long-term effects produced by the interventions either directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. The impact of the project will relate to the Goal of the project which very clearly states about addressing MDGs, improving effectiveness of development programmes and facilitating in inclusive growth.
3. Sustainability - the likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion. Sustainability aspect is important in the context of the convergence project. The understanding of sustainability in context of this project is –“The maintenance or augmentation of positive changes induced by the programme or project after the latter has been terminated.” Sustainability may relate to all levels in the framework of the project. The sustainability depends on whether the development work undertaken by the project or programme is intended to be continued after the termination of that development intervention. In more specific terms, under sustainability, the project will have to ensure the following –

* Continued ability to plan and manage similar development work
* Maintenance of the Physical Facilities Produced
* Continued use of physical facilities and processes
* Continued production of kind of outputs created
* Multiplication of outcomes/effects and impacts (of same kind or other kinds)
* Maintenance of impact created

Conceptually sustainability results when adequate mechanisms are put in place to maintain six components – governance, management practices, human resources, financial resources, service delivery and external relations.

1. Replicability

By replicating, we mean – The feasibility of replicating the programme or project or even parts of it, in some other context -

* At a later time
* In other areas ( In other parts of the country or in other countries),or
* For other group of people ( Other target group)

The replicability of a particular programme or project depends on project/programme’s – internal as well as external factors.

1. Gender Issues

Promoting gender equality was one of the key themes of the UNDAF 2003-2007. The UNDAF (2008-2012) also focuses specifically on the inclusion of women and girls. Gender sensitive outcome evaluation will contribute to improve future interventions. The purpose for the gender analysis is to understand the mechanism underlying dominant development problems and policy, programme and project intervention in terms of their implications for women and men, and the relationship between them.

**METHODS, SOURCES AND DATA COLLECTON TOOLS**

Under the study, multiple methods, sources and tools will be used in the study through a multi-disciplinary team so that multi-approach is applied to validate of the facts. In the present study, Pro Doc of GoI-UNJPC, Result and Resource Framework of Project and UNDAF outcome and output matrix will be the key source of reference. The information on various outcome and outputs indicators of the project will be collected using different sources of evidences & using different method of data collection.

For the data collection a combination of methods and sources shall be used in MTE. The sources of data will be both secondary as well as primary. The primary data will be collected from different sources using different methods such as direct observation, Focus Group Discussions, and Key Informants interviews ( KIIs).

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): FGDs will be used to cover specific group of people engaged at various levels in the implementation of the project

Observation Method: Since the MTE involves assessment of various processes, system and functioning of different project teams of government schemes, observation method will also be used to verify the reality.

Key Informant Interviews: KIIs will be used for officials of the concerned departments/ village level committees and other relevant agencies for understanding their role in programme implementation.

Documentation like progress reports, annual reports, other written reports of events etc. will be collected to support the primary data collected through interviews and other methods. Thus the facts collected from different sources will be used in a converging manner to define the “facts” of the case. This will satisfy one basic requirement of the qualitative studies - reliance on “multiple sources of evidence”.

## List of Documents Reviewed

|  |  |
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| 3 | Fox, Sarah and Wilde, Emily - Developing a monitoring and evaluation framework for the district decentralisation and convergence - Draft Log frame for the UN Joint Convergence Programme (UNJPC), Oxford Policy Management, September 2010 |
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| 20 | IDCG, Report on Rapid Assessment of Current District Planning Process Madhya Pradesh, 2011 |
| 21 | Institute for Social and Economic Change, GOI-UNJPC Orientation for Senior Officials, Use of Data for Planning and Monitoring of Development Programmes, Lecture Notes |
| 22 | Institute for Social and Economic Change, Use of Data for Planning and Monitoring of Development Programmes, GOI-UNJPC – Orientation for Senior Officials. |
| 23 | International Institute for Population Sciences, Use of Data for Planning and Monitoring of Development Programmes – Training Course Material |
| 24 | International Institute for Population Sciences, Utilization of Demographic Data for Local Level Planning, Capacity Building of Planners and Programme Managers, Programme sponsored by UNFPA |
| 25 | James,K.S., Bansod, W Dhananjay (ISEC), Satyanarayana, K.M, Sanjay Kumar (UNFPA), Srinivasan, K, Kulkarni P.M.(Experts) - Assessing the Quality of District Data for Better Monitoring of Development Programmes manual, Population Research Centre, UNFPA, 2011 |
| 26 | Kalyani Menon-Sen and A K Shiva Kumar, Mid Term Review of the Country Programme Action Plan 2008-2012, Final Report UNDP, September 2010 |
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| 29 | Premila Nazareth Satyanand, Outcome Evaluation of UNDP India’s Democratic Governance Programmes 2008-2011, UNDP, 2011 |
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| 31 | UNDAF – India, United Nations Development Action Framework 2013-2017 |
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In addition, district plans, DHDRs, various reports prepared by the DFs and Pro-Doc

## Terms of Reference

1. **BACKGROUND**

India has achieved considerable success in recent past on various development indicators, but it still faces stiff challenges in the achievement of several MDGs. To meet these challenges, the country's 11 Five-Year Plan places strong emphasis on decentralized and outcome-based planning for improving effectiveness of development programmes and facilitating inclusive growth. Among the key strategies proposed by the Plan is accelerated support to decentralized and outcome-based planning, implementation and monitoring, to improve effectiveness of development programmes, through equitable participation and benefit sharing by disadvantaged groups.

In line with the national plan priorities and that of UNDAF (2008-12) Outcomes 2 & 3, which aspire to ensure that targets related to MDGs are on track in select districts in its seven priority States by 2012, Government of India – UN designed and are implementing the GoI- UN Joint Convergence Programme (GoI-UNJPC), which is being implemented by Planning Commission (PC) in partnership with UN agencies.

One of the key areas of programme support (as also emphasized in the Eleventh Five Year Plan) is to ensure outcome-based, inclusive and decentralised planning. The objective is to improve effectiveness of development programmes and to facilitate inclusive growth through equitable participation and benefit sharing by women and marginalized communities at all important decision-making levels in planning and implementation.

Programme Outcomes of GoI-UNJPC and the interventions being undertaken are:

**OUTCOME 1: Integrated and inclusive district planning adopted**

* Creating models for coordination and convergence among different line departments and flagship programmes at district and State levels;
* Supporting situation analysis and visioning using the human development approach including preparation of District Human Development Reports (DHDRs);
* Capacity development of district and local functionaries and elected representatives for planning and monitoring, support institutional strengthening of ATIs and State Training Institutions for delivering on their capacity building mandate; catalyse a process of Change Management at the state and districts to engender institutional and attitudinal changes to create an enabling environment for convergent decentralized planning.
* Strengthening and encouraging use of IT-based planning tools like Plan Plus

**OUTCOME 2: Districts able to mobilize and utilize maximum of resources from government programmes and other sources**

* Assessment of budgetary allocation and actual fund flows to the districts under flagship programmes;
* Analyse expenditure and staffing patterns at district levels and support improved resource utilization under these flagships;
* Advocate enhanced resource mobilization and its efficient allocation at the district and local level for optimal funding of schemes;

**OUTCOME 3: Service delivery under government programmes improved at local level**

* Analyse bottlenecks in programme implementation and service delivery;
* Work with government institutions for strengthening effectiveness of individuals and institutions including RLBs/ ULBs for improved service delivery at the district and state level;
* Mobilise communities and other relevant institutions for increasing access to programmes by disadvantaged groups (women and children, SC/ST)

**OUTCOME 4: Monitoring used for management and planning purposes**

* Improve monitoring and data use systems at district and other levels through development of capacities for better use and management of data;
* Strengthen systems for community monitoring of programmes and other accountability initiatives like social audit;

The **Key Results** of the GoI-UNJPC are:

* Improvement in participatory District Planning: including situational analysis and visioning (e.g. District Human Development Reports), training of planners and statistical officials for better use of data. Based on priorities identified, support outcome-based planning through convergence of resources and efforts.
* Better understanding of fund flows - Support District level Budget analysis including identification and mapping of financial and human resources and fund flows
* Improved Implementation of plans and schemes- including assessment of bottlenecks and constraints in the lead sectors and flagship programmes.
* Strengthened Monitoring: including government and panchayat data collection and reporting mechanisms and community monitoring systems including social audit etc.

1. **PROGRAMME PARTNERS**

Key partners in this Joint Programme are Planning Commission of India, State and District Governments and all participating UN Agencies (with leading roles played by Office of UN Resident Coordinator, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and UNV). Planning Commission of India and governments of seven UNDAF states are the implementing partners. The following are the mandates and areas of support of the different UN agencies.

1. **a. PLANNING COMMISSION OF INDIA**

The programme is being implemented by the Multi-Level Planning (MLP) Division of the National Planning Commission. The programme has a Project Management Unit- PMU comprising Subject Matter Specialists who guide the implementation, monitor the activities in the UNDAF states and also coordinate its national component. The PMU acts as the link between the Planning Commission, state governments and participating UN agencies.

1. **b. UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (UNDP)**

UNDPs support focuses on capacity development at individual, institutional and enabling environment level for inclusive and convergent planning. Within the scope of this project the district and sub-district levels are targeted. UNDP supports systems development for accountable and results-based planning and provides technical support for strengthening of institutions involved in District Planning like Line Departments, District Planning Committees (DPCs) and State Planning Departments/ Commission. The agency provides specialist human resources at the State level (State Project Officers) to initiate change processes for effective planning and to coordinate the work of different UN agencies in the state.

1. **c. UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS (UNV)**

United Nations Volunteers provides human resource support by deploying one UNV Volunteer in each of the convergence pilot districts as District Support Officer (DSO). DSOs support the planning process at the district and sub-district level and are expected to support the creation of models for community mobilization and monitoring and also promote and capture the role of volunteering in the decentralized planning processes.

1. **d. UNICEF**

UNICEF provides third-party human resource support through deployment of multi-skilled professionals- „District Facilitators‟ (DFs). DFs, together with the DSOs constitute the District Support Team in these 35 districts. DFs support the programme through district-level bottleneck analysis of major flagship programmes for improved management and quality of service. They capture best practices for larger sharing and demonstrate models of inter-sectoral coordination.

1. **e. UN POPULATION FUND (UNFPA)**

UNFPA focuses on improving capacity for data management in planning and programme implementation among various categories of government officials placed at district and state levels. It aims to enhance capacities to access, collect, analyse and use data for better planning and monitoring of government schemes. Its training programmes attempt to address data gaps for an outcome-oriented planning.

1. **OBJECTIVES OF THE MTE**

The programme was launched nationally in early 2009, with subsequent state-level launches and with less than two years remaining for completion of this ambitious multi-stakeholder programme, UN agencies and the Planning Commission would like to undertake a Mid-Term Evaluation for:

1. Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the programme, in terms of what has worked and what has not; Extent to which current programming has been able to influence the key results.
2. Identifying institutional partnerships and capacity development strategies which have proven to be effective in strengthening decentralized planning and bringing the achievement of MDGs at local level to the centre-stage of planning;
3. Identify the extent to which the human resource deployed by the UN agencies was able to contribute towards the fulfilment of the Programme Outputs, including the alignment of their roles and the role of volunteerism.
4. Assessing whether the programme has been able to Identify the bottlenecks to effective implementation and provisioning of quality services under flagship programmes
5. Generating substantive learning and recommendations for programme partners to undertake mid-course correction and suggest an exit strategy.
6. Document important and good practices for dissemination and potential replication.
7. **SCOPE OF THE MTE**

Scope of the Mid Term Evaluation of the Joint Convergence Programme would be to:

1. Assess progress made against the Key Result Areas identified for the programme;
2. Assess the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of interventions and their impact in terms of promoting inclusiveness, integration and outcome orientation
3. Review the Joint Programming modality adopted for the GoI-UNJPC, and if gaps are identified, give recommendations for modifications in the institutional arrangements and management arrangements for greater synergy and coordination;
4. Assess the appropriateness of intervention strategies1, their design, resource allocation and geographical spread in light of their contribution to achievement of programme outcomes, including accelerating the achievement of the MDGs;
5. Capture lessons learned, bottlenecks and recommendations on possible choices for sharpening focus and demonstrating successful/ innovative models for replication;
6. Review the current policy environment at both the national and state level, capture any changes and trends and analyse the fit between the environment and the programme outcomes/strategies.
7. **PROPOSED METHODOLOGY**

**List of interventions is mentioned under the point XI below.**

*The key guiding document for the mid-term assessment will be India UNDAF 2008-2012 and its Results Matrix for Outcome 2 and 3.*

The evaluation will involve desk review of available documents/literature including the programme design, periodic evaluations and status reports, discussions with key stakeholders at all levels- National, State, District and Sub-District, consultation meetings and Interviews with the participating UN agencies and Planning Commission.

**Literature Review -** Documents will include Convergence Project Document (ProDoc), GoI-UNJPC M & E Framework and Baseline report, National /State level Annual Work Plans (2009-11), UNDP Capacity Development for District Planning Project Document (ProDoc), UNICEF Plus One strategy Paper, UNFPA‟s documents on Statistical Strengthening, Minutes of the National and State PSCs, Quarterly Progress Reports, Minutes of the Convergence Working Group meetings, UNDAF MTR, UNDP/UNICEF/ UNFPA CPAP MTR, UN Volunteers periodic

Reporting System reports (VRS), Field Visit Reports, Convergence LFA, Results Framework, and Final M & E Framework etc.

**Discussions and Consultation meetings** - With the management and staff of participating UN agencies, project staff and other personnel deployed by different agencies at the district, state and national level, representatives from National Planning Commission and State Planning Department/ Commissions, Heads of relevant departments at the states - Panchayat, Rural and Urban Development and relevant training and research institutions and NGOs. The evaluators will also be required to participate in the National Convergence Workshop scheduled to be held in September 2011 at Delhi to get the stakeholders and governments perspective on the programme.

**Interviews -** With the UN Programme and Project Staff, Government Counterparts at the National and State level, Elected Representatives and Members of the District Planning Committees, as well as District/ Block/ Gram Panchayats.

**Field Visits –** To at least 3 states and districts for interaction and interviews with functionaries, representatives and members of community and other collectives. The field work would have to be conducted in three states, Orissa, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh, which are at various stages of progress and are representative of the diversity that is present in the UNDAF states:

1. **Orissa** – for being at a comparatively advanced stage in creating the institutional mechanisms for facilitating planning at the state and district level - DPMU;
2. **Madhya Pradesh** – for having adopted a different model of district planning and making good progress in terms of involvement of TSI in planning and having partially consolidated budgets.
3. **Bihar** – for being at a very preliminary stage of decentralized district planning
4. **KEY DELIVERABLES**

* Inception Report spelling out the methodology and the roadmap for the evaluation;
* Compendium of innovations and initiatives at the state and local level that have had an impact and are replicable;
* Presentation of the findings and recommendations of the MTE to the UN agencies and the National Planning Commission; and
* Final Evaluation Report outlining the Status, Progress, Constraints and Success, recommendations (both state specific as well as for National level) for focusing on a few high impact initiatives.

1. **STRUCTURE OF EVALUATION REPORT**

The Evaluation Report should contain at least the following:

* Title Page
* List of acronyms and abbreviations
* Table of contents, including list of annexes
* Executive Summary (Gender issues are to be noted in the executive summary)
* Introduction: background and context of the programme
* Description of the program – its logic theory, results framework and external factors likely to affect success
* Purpose of the evaluation
* Key questions and scope of the evaluation with information on limitations and de-limitations
* Approach and methodology
* Findings
* Summary and explanation of findings and interpretations
* Conclusions
* Recommendations
* Lessons, generalizations, alternatives

In addition, the final report should contain the following annexes:

1. - Terms of Reference for the evaluation
2. - Itinerary (actual)
3. - List of meetings attended
4. - List of persons interviewed
5. - List of documents reviewed
6. - Any other relevant material
7. **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

The project progress and achievements will be tested against following criteria:

1. **Relevance** – the extent to which the activity is suited to local and national development priorities and organizational policies, including changes over time.
2. **Effectiveness** – the extent to which an objective has been achieved or how likely it is to be achieved.
3. **Efficiency** – the extent to which results have been delivered with the least costly resources possible.
4. **Results/impacts** – the positive and negative, and foreseen and unforeseen, changes to and effects produced by a development intervention.
5. **Sustainability** – the likely ability of an intervention to continue to deliver benefits for an extended period of time after completion.
6. **TIMEFRAME**

The agency contracted to undertake Mid-Term Evaluation will have to complete the assignment within 90 days of the signing of the contract.

The agency will have to share the detailed schedule of the roadmap it proposes to adopt for the MTE and finalise it in consultation with the UN agencies and the PMU.

This roadmap will incorporate, among other things, visits to States/ Districts and interaction with implementing agencies/ stakeholders. The Evaluation team shall finalize the exact schedule for different stages of the evaluation in consultation with PMU, New Delhi.

**If the agency fails to complete the assignment within 90 days after signing the contract, penalty @1% of the total contract value will be imposed by UNDP for per week of delay. Penalty amount will be deducted from the final payment to contractor.**

1. **GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE**

GoI-UNJPC is being implemented in five districts each of seven UNDAF states:

1. a. **Bihar:** Nalanda, Gaya, Bhagalpur, Supaul, Purnia
2. b. **Chhattisgarh:** Sarguja, Jashpur, Korba, Mahasamund, Kanker
3. c. **Jharkhand:** Hazaribagh, Gumla, Palamau, W. Singhbhum, Pakur
4. d. **Madhya Pradesh:** Mandla, Chhatrapur, Satna, Khargone, Rajgarh
5. e. **Orissa:** Ganjam, Kalahandi, Sundergarh, Kandhamal, Mayurbhanj
6. f. **Rajasthan:** Barmer, Chittorgarh, Sawai Madhopur, Sirohi, Udaipur
7. g. **Uttar Pradesh:** Hardoi, Budaun, Hamirpur, Azamgarh, Sonbhadra
8. **MAJOR INTERVENTIONS UNDER GOI-UNJPC**
9. Capacity development of various stakeholders on different aspects of decentralised planning
10. Strengthening planning database, preparation and use of human development approach to planning
11. Change Management initiative
12. Gender Sub Plan and efforts for inclusive planning
13. Planning and monitoring of flagship programmes
14. Budget and HR analysis for optimization of impact
15. Bottleneck analysis in flagship programmes for improving service delivery
16. Effective management and use of data for responsive planning and monitoring
17. Promotion of Results-based programme management
18. Demonstration of participatory/ inclusive bottom up planning approaches
19. Demonstration of models (including tools) for effective community monitoring
20. Establishment of mechanisms for convergence and coordination of government programmes and resources

## List of Documents Prepared by DFs

| **S. no.** | **Particulars / Title** | **Report** | **District** | **State** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | TSC Convergence Advocacy | Report | Bhagalpur | Bihar |
| 2 | Concept note- InfoHub | Report | Bhagalpur | Bihar |
| 3 | DLHS-3 District Analysis | Report | Bhagalpur | Bihar |
| 4 | Vital District Demography | Report | Bhagalpur | Bihar |
| 5 | District Profile | Report | Bhagalpur | Bihar |
| 6 | SSA analysis | Report | Bhagalpur | Bihar |
| 7 | Integrated District Plan 2011-12 | Report | Bhagalpur | Bihar |
| 8 | Assessment report of nutrition | Report | Bhagalpur | Bihar |
| 9 | Compilation of data on 96 block level indicators | Excel sheet | Bhagalpur | Bihar |
| 10 | ICDS Advocacy | Report | Bhagalpur | Bihar |
| 11 | Convergence in Gaya under IAP | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 12 | DPC analysis | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 13 | Assessment of Performance of MPLAD funds in Gaya | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 14 | SSA report | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 15 | Assessment report of Nutrition | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 16 | Integrated District Plan 2011-12 | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 17 | Budget and HR Tracking of key flagships | Excel sheet | Gaya | Bihar |
| 18 | Block wise key Indicators on Basic Amenities | Excel sheet | Gaya | Bihar |
| 19 | District Profile | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 20 | Block Profile of the Manpur block | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 21 | Integrated District Plan 2012-13 | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 22 | Final R&M Report\_Gaya | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 23 | Gap Filling, Planning, Gaya | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 24 | Gaya- A report on Planning & Res. utilization-ICDS | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 25 | Gaya- A report on Service Delivery-ICDS | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 26 | Human Resource Status in Districts-Gaya | Excel sheet | Gaya | Bihar |
| 27 | Integrated Action Plan under LWE | Report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 28 | Priliminary Analysis\_Data Management\_ICDS GAYA | report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 29 | Proposal for District Human Development Report Gaya | report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 30 | DPC Assessment Gaya\_2010 | report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 31 | Summary of district TSC | report | Gaya | Bihar |
| 32 | Case Study on BANELLIPATTI VILLAGE | Case Study | Gaya | Bihar |
| 33 | Assessment of MNREGS (2010) | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 34 | Assessment of Nutrition | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 35 | MDG and Nalanda (2009) | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 36 | Identification of Hamlets- a step ahead to strengthen local level planning | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 37 | Assessment of Functioning of DPC in Nalanda | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 38 | Assessment report of DPC | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 39 | Convergence for improving water and sanitation | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 40 | PRA in Nalanda | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 41 | TSC analysis | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 42 | Proposal for preparing DHDR, Nalanda | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 43 | MGNREGS in Nalanda: A Report for Scheme of Award for Excellence in NREGA ADMINISTRATION (2012) | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 44 | Block wise key Indicators on Basic Amenities | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 45 | Model Village Approach- Nalanda | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 46 | Concept note- DLCC | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 47 | Integrated District Plan 2011-12 | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 48 | Integrated District Plan 2012-13 | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 49 | Gender Sub Plan 2012-13 | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 50 | Impact on Flagships in Nalanda | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 51 | Budget and HR Tracking of key flagships | Excel sheet | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 52 | Compilation of data on 96 block level indicators | Excel sheet | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 53 | District Profile | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 54 | Block Profile of the demonstration block - Rajgir | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 55 | Block Profile of Rahui | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 56 | Impact study of identified schemes | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 57 | Proposal on Decentralised Planning\_Nalanda | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
| 58 | Proposal to build capacities through PAHELI , Nalanda | Report | Nalanda | Bihar |
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| 65 | Framework for demonstration of VHSND in identified blocks of Bihar | Report | Patna | Bihar |
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| 67 | Consolidated State report on nutrition | Report | Patna | Bihar |
| 68 | District Planning Atlas-5 convergent districts of Bihar | Concept Note & Software | Patna | Bihar |
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| 71 | Summary of HR and budget track - Bihar | Excel sheet | Patna | Bihar |
| 72 | Ranking of districts\_DLHS\_BIHAR | Excel sheet | Patna | Bihar |
| 73 | Checklist format for situation analysis | Checklist | Patna | Bihar |
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| 75 | Budget Tracking of key flagships | Excel sheet | Purnea | Bihar |
| 76 | Nutritional Status in Purnea | Report | Purnea | Bihar |
| 77 | Integrated District Plan 2011-12 | Report | Purnea | Bihar |
| 78 | HR Tracking of key flagships | Excel sheet | Purnea | Bihar |
| 79 | District Profile | Report | Purnea | Bihar |
| 80 | Block Profile of East Purnea | Report | Purnea | Bihar |
| 81 | Situation Analysis of district based on PRA and Secondary data - Purnea | Report | Purnea | Bihar |
| 82 | Proposal to strengthen decentralized planning - Purnea | Report | Purnea | Bihar |
| 83 | Report on Nutrition Monitoring Framework | Report | Supaul | Bihar |
| 84 | Compilation of data on 96 block level indicators | Excel sheet | Supaul | Bihar |
| 85 | Panchayat Profiles of all panchayats of Supaul | Report | Supaul | Bihar |
| 86 | Block wise key Indicators on Basic Amenities | Excel sheet | Supaul | Bihar |
| 87 | Assessment of Functioning of DPC | Report | Supaul | Bihar |
| 88 | District Profile | Report | Supaul | Bihar |
| 89 | Integrated District Plan 2011-12 | Report | Supaul | Bihar |
| 90 | Block Profile Pipra | Report | Supaul | Bihar |
| 91 | CASE STUDY BANELLIPATTI VILLAGE | Case Study | Supaul | Bihar |
| 92 | Consolidated Report on Nutrition Monitoring Framework Study Report of Supaul District | report | Supaul | Bihar |
| 93 | Report on TSC, Supaul | report | Supaul | Bihar |
| 94 | SUPAUL Human Resource Status.xls | Excel sheet | Supaul | Bihar |
| 95 | Supaul District Plan 2011-12 | report | Supaul | Bihar |
| 96 | District Earthquake Report | report | Supaul | Bihar |
| 97 | MNREGAReport | report | Supaul | Bihar |
| 98 | BRGF plan | Report | Jashpur | CG |
| 99 | Project proposal for District Innovation funds | Proposal | Jashpur | CG |
| 100 | District vision document-2012 | Report | Kanker | CG |
| 101 | Integrated Action Plan | Report | Kanker | CG |
| 102 | MDG fact sheet | Excel sheet | Kanker | CG |
| 103 | Orientation of block level officials on departmental programmes - kanker | Report | Kanker | CG |
| 104 | Integrated Village Micro plans | Village Micro plans | Kanker | CG |
| 105 | Report on the functioning of the DPC in the district | Report | Kanker | CG |
| 106 | Decentralized District Plan - a challenge | Report | Kanker | CG |
| 107 | Response to 12th report of Admin. Reforms Commission - Kanker | report | Kanker | CG |
| 108 | Towards Environment Sustainability- a study of the TSC , 2010 | Report | Kanker | CG |
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| 111 | Situational Analysis | report | Korba | CG |
| 112 | Study on the functioning of District Planning Committee | Report | Korba | CG |
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| 119 | District Vision Document | report | Mahasamund | CG |
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| 121 | Format for the Gram Panchayat Planning | Excel sheet | Raipur | CG |
| 122 | Mechanism to Institutionalise Convergence at State and District level "Mukhya Mantri Samajik Utthan Karyakram” to facilitate convergence in Chhattisgarh | Concept Note | Raipur | CG |
| 123 | MGD -2 status of Chhattisgarh | Report | Raipur | CG |
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| 126 | Feedback on all 18 district plans submitted to state planning commission | Report | Raipur | CG |
| 127 | Designed simplified formats for District Planning including finance and physical detail | format | Raipur | CG |
| 128 | Concept Note on customization of Plan Plus Software.docx | Concept Note | Raipur | CG |
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| 131 | Monitoring framework of UN JPC | Concept note and excel sheet | Raipur | CG |
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| 137 | Rapid Assessment Study on Growth Monitoring in ICDS | Report | Gumla | JH |
| 138 | Rapid Assessment Studies on Student Teacher Attendance, Physical Facilities & Incentives | Report | Gumla | JH |
| 139 | Distric Profile Updation and Uploading on District Website | Document | Gumla | JH |
| 140 | Convergence Matrix-Health | Document | Gumla | JH |
| 141 | Analysis of ICDS MPR | Document | Gumla | JH |
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| 143 | Report on Model Village Initiative | Report | Gumla | JH |
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| 151 | Convergence Matrix-TSC & NRDWP | Document | Hazaribagh | JH |
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| 158 | MDG Flip Card | Flip Card | Pakur | JH |
| 159 | District\_At\_A\_Glance\_Pakur | Document | Pakur | JH |
| 160 | Convergence Matrix-ICDS | Document | Pakur | JH |
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| 162 | An Inspiring Leader-Case Study | Report | Pakur | JH |
| 163 | MDG-2 report | Report | Pakur | JH |
| 164 | MDG II District Handbook- Palamu | Report | Palamu | JH |
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| 167 | District ASER report | report | Palamu | JH |
| 168 | Improving Service Delivery-Palamau | Document | Palamu | JH |
| 169 | Demographis,Health& Education Status of Palamau | Report | Palamu | JH |
| 170 | Convergence matrix on conservation and sustainability of Water | Matrix | Palamu | JH |
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| 184 | Brochure of GoI - UN JPC Jharkhand | Brochure | Ranchi | JH |
| 185 | E-Bulletin (March 2011) GoI - UN JPC Jharkhand | E-Bulletin | Ranchi | JH |
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| 191 | Process documentation of IVPP | Report | West Singhbhum | JH |
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| 193 | Flagship\_Report\_West\_Singhbhum | Report | West Singhbhum | JH |
| 194 | ASER\_Report\_Analysis | Report | West Singhbhum | JH |
| 195 | District HDHR -Inception report | report | West Singhbhum | JH |
| 196 | Saranda Profile preparation | Document | West Singhbhum | JH |
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| 217 | Concept maps | Report | Mandla | MP |
| 218 | District information brochure | brochure | Mandla | MP |
| 219 | Report on MDGs Status -District Mandla | report | Mandla | MP |
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| 221 | Orientation on NREGS for Media and Activists | Report | Satna | MP |
| 222 | Concept Note for MDG Goal\_5\_District Satna\_MP | Report | Satna | MP |
| 223 | Concept Paper for MDG Goal\_1\_District Satna\_MP | Report | Satna | MP |
| 224 | Office upgradation\_District Satna\_MP | Report | Satna | MP |
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| 226 | Measures taken in Satna district for decentralize planning | Report | Satna | MP |
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| 244 | District Analysis based on Annual health survey,Ganjam | Analysis | Ganjam | Odisha |
| 245 | Monitoring checklist, Health | Excel sheet | Ganjam | Odisha |
| 246 | Child Profile,Ganjam | report | Ganjam | Odisha |
| 247 | Solution through convergence approach | report | Ganjam | Odisha |
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| 257 | Review of district plan Kalahandi- 2008-09 | report | Kalahandi | Odisha |
| 258 | Kalahandi Knowledge Network | report | Kalahandi | Odisha |
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| 260 | Analysis of NRHM | report | Kandhamal | Odisha |
| 261 | District Fact Sheet | report | Kandhamal | Odisha |
| 262 | ASER analysis | Report | Kandhamal | Odisha |
| 263 | Child Profile | Report | Kandhamal | Odisha |
| 264 | Best Practices- MNREGS & Watershed | Report | Kandhamal | Odisha |
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| 291 | District Action Plan-Eye Care\_for year 2012-2013 | Report | Chittorgarh | Rajasthan |
| 292 | PIP (draft) of National Program for Control of Blindness (NPCB) of Chittorgarh for FY 2012-13 | Report | Chittorgarh | Rajasthan |
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| 304 | Status cum Action Taken Report for Strengthening FBNC & MTC of Chittorgarh district | Report | Chittorgarh | Rajasthan |
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| 313 | Micro-plan of MCHN Days of Chittorgarh District | Report | Chittorgarh | Rajasthan |
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| 321 | Summary of key Processes and Outputs Facilitated under GoI-UNJPC in Chittorgarh District | Report | Chittorgarh | Rajasthan |
| 322 | Action Plan 2010-2011\_FBNC & MTC | Report | Chittorgarh | Rajasthan |
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| 374 | Initiation of Model Village in Kharonj | Report | Hamirpur | UP |
| 375 | NGO list-Hamirpur | List | Hamirpur | UP |
| 376 | Strengthening the process of accounts opening, receipts/payments in Nationalized Bank | Report | Hardoi | UP |
| 377 | Status Report: SSA 2009-10 | Report | Hardoi | UP |
| 378 | Status Report: ICDS 2009-10 | Report | Hardoi | UP |
| 379 | Status Report: NRHM 2009-10 | Report | Hardoi | UP |
| 380 | Status Report: MNREGA 2009-10 | Report | Hardoi | UP |
| 381 | Analysis of Total allocation and expenditure under NFPs (SSA,MDM,NRHM,ICDS,ARWSP,MNREGA, TSC, BRGF) | Excel sheet | Hardoi | UP |
| 382 | Report on District Launch Workshop | Report | Hardoi | UP |
| 383 | District\_analysis | report | Hardoi | UP |
| 384 | Case study -innovation | report | Hardoi | UP |
| 385 | Convergence Initiative | Report | Sonbhadra | UP |
| 386 | Social Auditor's Training Programme - Sonbhadra | Training Program | Sonbhadra | UP |

1. Most DHDRs were initiated under the SSPHD project, while some were taken up under the JPC [↑](#footnote-ref-1)