

# **Terms of Reference for the BRC Review Mission to conduct Mid-Term Review of the Communities Programme**

## **1. Mission members:**

Ms Clare Romanik, Local Governance Policy Specialist, BRC and  
Mr Stephan Schmitt-Degenhardt, Policy Specialist for Private Sector Development

## **2. Mission dates:**

05 – 19 November 2012

## **3. Background**

The Communities Programme (CP) is a multi-year initiative that builds on the accomplishments of previous work begun by UNDP Tajikistan in 1996. The programme supports the implementation of Tajikistan's Poverty Reduction Strategy, National Development Strategy (NDS) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework outcomes to address economic initiatives and local governance at the community level. The programme has 5 Area offices in Soughd, Khatlon, and the Rasht and Zarafshan Valleys.

The programme is currently in its third phase which will continue until end of 2015. The timeframe was aligned with the strategic frameworks of UNDP and the Government of Tajikistan. This includes UNDP's Country Programme Action Plan (2010 – 2015) and the NDS. The CP directly contributes to the following outcomes of the Country Programme Document:

1. Poverty reduction - Poverty reduction and economic development programmes are enhanced, with particular focus on the rural poor, women and marginalized people.
2. Good governance - National and local levels of government have the capacity to implement democratic governance practices, and effectively and strategically plan, finance and implement development initiatives in an inclusive and participatory manner.

Indirectly, through 'Delivering as One UNDP' approach, the CP also contributes to:

1. Energy and Environment - Improved environmental protection, sustainable natural resources management, and increased access to alternative renewable energy.
2. Crises prevention and recovery – Decreased risk of natural and man-made hazards to rural and urban livelihoods; infrastructure and recovery mechanisms in place.
3. Health – Sustainable and efficient multi-sectoral response structures are established to halt the spread of HIV-AIDS and TB epidemics and eliminate malaria by 2015 in line with MDGs.

The expected outputs of the Communities Programme are:

1. Sub-national governments capacities to plan, budget and implement development and to provide public services are strengthened (especially benefiting poor and women);
2. Capacities of private sector and civil society to develop, participate in decision-making, partner with government, exercise influence and hold governments accountable are enhanced;
3. Policies, reforms, framework regulations in the areas of poverty reduction, local governance, aid coordination and CP focus areas (rural economic development, environment and energy, crises prevention/mitigation and health) are improved.

According to the Programme Document for 2010-2015, the CP is subject to mid-term review at the end of 2012 to ensure that the programmatic results remain highly relevant with the priorities of the government and the target beneficiaries.

## **4. Country background and context**

Tajikistan is a landlocked country located in Central Asia region and borders with China, Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. It has rather difficult geographical conditions whereby 93% of the land is mountainous terrain and 7% flat. It is highly prone to seasonal and natural disasters. Poverty in Tajikistan is wide spread and it scores as the lowest in Human Development Index (HDI) amongst the countries of the former Soviet Union and in 2011, Tajikistan has been ranked 127<sup>th</sup> among 187 countries.

### ***4.1 Economic situation analysis***

In Tajikistan, despite the fact that the poverty rate decreased from 46,7% in 2010 to 42% in 2011<sup>[i]</sup>, livelihoods require improvements and the population depends mainly on remittances. According to International Monetary Fund World Economic Outlook Data for 2012, Tajikistan's GDP per capita in 2011 was 830 USD<sup>1</sup> with the population of about 7,8 mln, which is relatively low as compared to other CIS countries. Annual Growth of GDP in recent 2 years according to Statistics Agency were about 6% and 6,5%. Due to high dependency from the import of different types of products and low level of export, Tajikistan has a negative trade balance. In September 2012 International Monetary Fund reported that annual headline CPI Inflation in June stood at 4.6% and forecasted 9% by the results of 2012 year. Due to dry season in Russian Federation and Kazakhstan main exporter of wheat to Tajikistan, prices for this product went up and influenced to the CPI inflation. The share of the main industries as agriculture and industry in formation of GDP is relatively low due to lack of job opportunities in these sectors and seasonal type of involvement. Unemployment rate in Tajikistan is high although the level of the officially logged unemployment according to Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Tajikistan amounted to 2.5 per cent of economically active population.

In 2011, the National bank of Tajikistan reported that Tajik labour migrants have transferred about \$2.96 billion, which is above 45.4% of the country's GDP and show high influence of remittances to economic growth. The introduction of new policy and requirements for migrants in the Russian Federation and the global economic crisis is likely to negatively influence this trend in the future.

The private sector contribution to GDP still remains behind some other CIS countries at around 46%. Therefore, Tajikistan with the support of development partners continues the implementation of reforms for improving the business environment in order to create more favorable conditions for private sector development. There are ongoing reforms for improving World Bank Doing Business indicators in terms of simplification of business registration and establishment of electronic submission of documents, introduction of one stop-shop for import-export procedures and obtaining construction permits, simplification of pledge of movable property system and others. These reforms have resulted in improving the ratings of Tajikistan in the World Bank Doing Business Report, and Tajikistan stands at the 147th place out of 183 countries in the 2012 ranking. Nonetheless, in the recently released Global Economic Competitiveness Report for 2012-2013 Tajikistan improved its ranking from 105<sup>th</sup> place to 100 out of 144 countries, but is still considered as a factor driven economy. There are still number of issues dealing with improving business environment in Tajikistan and donor community along with the private sector and relevant government authorities are working on creating favorable conditions for business development.

The implementation of the agrarian reforms covering as well as Water sector reform, Land reform, alternative financing, and a new dekhkan farms law was initiated in August 2009 with planned completion in the middle of 2010. However, due to slow implementation, the reform process is still ongoing. Despite high level government declaration of freedom to farm, local authorities continue to influence farms' activities, particularly in certain sectors and districts. In order to increase productivity, the Dekhkan farms still need technical support from the state and international community.

### ***4.2 The Political Context***

The government is taking measures to improve the governance system of the country. Thus, in the framework of Public Administration Reform (PAR), the Government of Tajikistan in partnership with the international community has conducted functional reviews of ten line Ministries. The results of the

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<sup>1</sup> World Economic Outlook Database , <http://www.imf.org/>

functional review will lay the basis for further institutional changes in the ministries. In addition, UNDP started implementing an initiative in partnership with the Executive office of the President and discussions were held on developing a new concept for local governance in the framework of the PAR. In 2010, Tajikistan developed the second Mid- Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) for 2011-2013. UN FAO facilitates the implementation of agriculture reform initiatives and organized analysis of the current status of agriculture management structures in the country which resulted in the development of a Roadmap for Local Governance and Agriculture Management Institutions Reform currently presented to all stakeholders.

Meanwhile, Tajikistan's government administration and decision making bodies remain heavily centralized. There is a need for the redistribution of responsibilities and strengthening local governance (decentralization or de-concentration). Until recently (2009), local self-governance bodies were mostly managed directly by district level authorities. With the adoption of the new Law on Local Self-Governments in August 2009, the democratic nature and accountability of jamoats was supposed to be enhanced in 2010 through the direct election of jamoat council members for the fixed term of five years. Following the elections, it was anticipated that in 2011 jamoat executive body will have its own budget, but this regulation is not implemented yet due to uncertainty of the law implementation mechanism.

The practice of planning socio-economic development is growing in the country within the framework of a methodology developed by MEDT. The planning process is however not linked well with the budgeting process. The current budget allocation for districts and jamoats is set on vertical decision-making lines, which conflicts with the notion of strengthening the responsibilities of local authorities for local development and the provision of basic and essential services to their respective population. Access to health and education facilities, drinking water and sanitation, irrigation and transport infrastructure remains very poor in rural areas.

The process of localizing MDGs and improving the capacity of local governance structures to provide services to local communities is complicated by the fact that the system of public administration and the division of powers between various government levels tends to overlap in some areas and there remains a lack of clear legislation.

Development in Tajikistan is still heavily dependent on international and humanitarian assistance. Following the signing of the Millennium Declaration, in 2007 the government adopted an MDG-based National Development Strategy (NDS) for 2005-2015 and the third Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) for 2010-2012. The process of elaboration of new Mid Term Development Strategy (in the past Poverty Reduction Strategy) for 2013-2015 year is ongoing. In the new strategy Government of Tajikistan will focus on the measures aimed on improving living standards of population and formation of middle class. All measures which are in line with National Development Strategy 2005-2015 will be directed for achieving sustainable development in Tajikistan. It is expected that formulation of new National Development strategy will be started in 2014 year.

In the support of the NDS, UNDP together with the ADB, WB, DFID and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, developed a Joint Country Partnership Strategy for 2010-2012 which concentrates on developing regional cooperation for economic growth. International community is supporting the Government of Tajikistan in proper implementation of national strategic documents and priorities as well as building the capacity of relevant governmental structures on monitoring and evaluation and coordination of external aid for Tajikistan.

## **5. Objectives of the Review Mission**

Following UNDP Evaluation Policy and UNDP Tajikistan Evaluation Plan, an outcome evaluation of the Communities Programme is carried out at the end of each phase. The last outcome evaluation was carried out in 2009 and its main outcomes were reflected in the current Programme Document. The present review will:

1. Assess to which extent the set outcomes and outputs of the programme remain *relevant* for current development context in the country. Provide recommendations and make required adjustments to the current Programme Document of CP for ;

2. Assess to which extent the *recommendations of the previous outcome evaluation* were/are being addressed from both programmatic and operational points of views;
3. Review the current *funding* status of the programme and identify potential entry points in relevant thematic areas at the CO, BRC and possibly RBEC levels for improving resource mobilization;
4. Review the current *structure of the CP and its Area Offices* as well as AO's modus operandi in 'full funding', 'partial funding' and 'no funding' scenarios and provide recommendations for more sound management and cost-effective operations;
5. Assess potential impact CP is making as a '*delivery mechanism*' for vertical programmes<sup>2</sup> of UNDP Tajikistan and propose recommendations for more enhanced integration of UNDP and eventually UN operations in Tajikistan;
6. Review the programme from *communications* perspective and provide recommendations, an action plan and potential entry points to enhance better communication for results in the future and better use of the evidence from the ground with the broader policy level discussions;

The review should be carried out from *relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact* perspectives.

## 6. Expected outputs

The Review Team is expected to produce a Mid-term review Report that highlights the key findings, conclusions, recommendations and lessons learnt against objectives 1-6 stated in preceding section above and introduce required changes/adjustments to the Programme Document of the Communities Programme for 2010-2015.

### *Scope of the Review*

#### Outcome analysis

- Do the stated outcome, indicator and targets remain appropriate for the development situation in Tajikistan and UNDP's program of assistance in this field?
- What is the current status and prospects for achieving the outcome with the indicated inputs and within the indicated timeframe?
- What are the main factors (positive and negative) within and beyond UNDP's interventions that are affecting or that will affect the achievement of the outcome? How have or will these factors limit or facilitate progress towards the outcome?
- Are UNDP's proposed contributions to the achievement of the outcome appropriate, sufficient, effective and sustainable?
- To what extent are the outcomes set out in the ProDoc relevant to international and national frameworks such as MDGs, NDS/PRS?

#### Output analysis

- What are the key outputs that have been or that will most likely be produced by UNDP to contribute to the outcome?
- Are the UNDP outputs relevant to the outcome?
- What is the quantity, quality and timeliness of outputs? What factors impeded or facilitated the achieving of such outputs?
- Are the monitoring and evaluation indicators appropriate to link these outputs to the outcome, or is there a need to improve these indicators?
- Has sufficient progress been made with regard to UNDP outputs?

#### Output-outcome link

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<sup>2</sup> Vertical programmes of UNDP are those programmes which mainly work at the policy level with no physical presence at the local level.

- Whether UNDP's outputs or other interventions can be credibly linked to the achievement of the outcome (including the key outputs, projects, and soft assistance);
- What are the key contributions that UNDP has made/is making to the outcome?
- With the current planned interventions in partnership with other actors and stakeholders, will UNDP be able to achieve the outcome within the set timeframe and inputs – or whether additional resources are required and new or changed interventions are needed?
- Assess UNDP's ability to develop national capacity in a sustainable manner (through exposure to best practices in other countries, holistic and participatory approach).
- Has UNDP been able to respond to changing circumstances and requirements in capacity development?
- What is the prospect of the sustainability of UNDP interventions related to the outcome?

#### Resources, partnerships, and management analysis

- Is UNDP's resource mobilization strategy in this field appropriate and likely to be effective in achieving this outcome?
- Were partners, stakeholders and/or beneficiaries of UNDP assistance involved in the design of UNDP interventions in the outcomes area? If yes, what were the nature and extent of their participation? If not, why not?
- Are UNDP's management structures and working methods appropriate and likely to be effective in achieving this outcome?
- Overall, assess the scope, relevance, efficiency and sustainability of UNDP's resources mobilization, partnership and management arrangements in achieving this outcome.

#### Recommendations

- Based on the above analysis, how should UNDP adjust its programming, partnership arrangements, resource mobilization strategies, working methods and/or management structures to ensure that the proposed outcomes is fully achieved by the end of the next CPAP period under Communities Programme ProDoc?
- What corrective actions are recommended for the new, ongoing or future UNDP work in the CPAP outcomes, which will be implemented by Communities Programme?
- Provide preliminary recommendations on how the UNDP Communities Programme can most effectively continue to support the Government and how the poverty reduction and governance portfolio should be designed.

## **7. Key deliverables**

The key deliverables from this review include (1) a comprehensive mid-term review report; (2) and a revised full-fledged ProDoc for the Communities Programme.

7.1 The report will include, but will not be limited to, the following components:

- Executive summary;
- Introduction;
- Description of the review methodology;
- Analysis of the situation with regard to outcome, outputs, resources, partnerships, management and working methods;
- Key findings;
- Conclusions and recommendations for the future programme implementation,
- The entry points for more effective fundraising, communications and integration of CP (a) within its key programmatic portfolios, (2) within CO and (3) the UN system in general. Entry points for more close engagement of BRC experts in addressing the identified capacity gaps (ie communications) are to be determined by the review mission.

7.2 Full-fledged ProDoc will derive from the outcomes of the mission outlined in the mission report and will require preliminary discussions with CO staff prior to making adjustments/changes. Therefore,

the mission itinerary will include a session to present the proposed changes during the last day of the mission.

#### **8. Tentative schedule for delivery of outputs by the mission members**

<b>Key outputs:</b>	<b>Tentative deadline:</b>
Mid-term review report	26 November 2012
Revised Communities Programme Document	30 November 2012

The mission dates have been agreed for **05 – 19 November 2012**. The mission will include extensive stakeholder consultations at the national and local levels as well as visits to Area Offices.

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<sup>[i]</sup> President's appeal from April 20, 2012