**Conclusions**

Overall, and unsurprisingly, the programme has been able to demonstrate success across a whole range of activities, with very clear and comprehensive outputs achievement, some outcome achievement, but with impact being hard to quantify at this stage. Sustainability with respect to some of the interventions is possibly also questionable. Sadly this may be the case for a number of the SGS projects. CSOs and NGOs are frequently dependent on very few permanent and more often voluntary staff who are always busy chasing more funding and managing a range of projects for their sponsors. Once funding runs out for a particular initiative, it is sometimes hard for them to continue to apply resources to it. Where sufficient momentum has been generated to galvanise public participation – e.g. for S4S Bel Ombre based project which now has a popular local Newsletter *‘Bel Ombre Buzz’,* there can be said to be sufficient ‘critical mass’ to ensure sustainability. On the other hand, where it might be expected, for example, that the Ministry of Health could pick up on and continue the good work done by volunteers for the Red Cross’s blood donors’ project, there is no guarantee of this, and the Ministry does not even have the most basic of databases to make effective record or use in future of the newly recruited donors and the project’s work.

The establishment of a new CAB would be beneficial and could be one means to ensure the sustainability of some of the programme’s outcomes.

Overall the evaluation concludes that Government could be seen to some extent as perhaps missing an opportunity provided by this project to gain political capital out of a clear demonstration of its commitment to human rights in practice as well as on paper. Strategic communications, or public information channels, could have been used – and still could – for Government to claim credit for having secured EU funding for such a programme, and as a result demonstrated its commitment to supporting human rights in all its manifestations.

It is possible that the programme has not had sufficient visibility or publicity to stimulate the Government’s interest in this regard and perhaps the EU could have done more – either through diplomatic channels or through insisting the UNDP should pay more attention to this.

**Lessons Learnt**

For lessons learned, the consultant / evaluator considered in particular:

* policy, organisational and operations lessons
* pre-conditions or pre-requisites normally required for implementation of such programmes
* general development lessons (policy, regulations, instruments, sectoral and national strategies.

From a policy perspective, it is clear that whilst the MOFA has been engaged both for the benefit of the programme and for policy making, adherence to treaties and conventions, legislative amendments and a new NHRAP, this enthusiasm has not really been demonstrable across Government more broadly. Perhaps Ministers could have been involved more directly, and perhaps the UNDP Programme Manager could have been more ‘visible’ in this respect – both in terms of relationships, communications and awareness raising with senior representatives of GoS, but also with donors. For their part, UNDP state that they have on every possible occasion raised the matter with the MFA at ministerial level as well as during the presence of the Resident Representative on mission to Seychelles with the particular issue of the non-participation of the NHRC being raised at every opportunity but unfortunately with no result. The UNDP PM has participated in these meetings and when on mission in other activities to this end such as workshops, opening statements and in all but the last of the SC meetings.

Although both the British High Commissioner and the French Ambassador have taken an interest in the programme throughout, and have attended PSC meetings, they have both remarked on the lack of ‘visibility’ of the Mauritius-based UNDP Programme Manager from the perspective of project activities in general. The PM has stated, however, that he has attended all but one of the SC meetings which he missed as a result of a conflict in scheduling that had been discussed with the Delegation.

From an operational perspective, the UNDP management team based in Victoria has done an excellent job of day-to-day project management, and the capacity building for some of the small NGOs (in the SGS) in terms of learning how to prepare proposals, how to report and account for finances, has been very much a product of their hard work and commitment. It has been much appreciated by implementing partners.

As to pre-conditions or pre-requisites, hindsight is, of course, 20-20. Perhaps the programme design might have taken greater account of the limited absorptive capacity (particularly with regard to human resources) of certain GoS departments (e.g. the Attorney General’s (AG’s) Office is permanently dealing with a backlog of amendments to legislation). It might also have appreciated that Seychelles is a conservative society which, like many small island cultures, has a tendency to be risk- and confrontation-averse. This may be due to fear (rational or not) of backlash or victimization and loss of jobs (for civil servants), or the prospect of bureaucratic hurdles to starting a business which needs to be licensed. Everyone knows almost everyone, or is related to them, and as a result people are reticent when it comes to being outspoken or critical of Government or governance.

The pre-existence of a fully functioning Human Rights Commission – or possibly the inclusion of a specific set of inputs to strengthen the organisational capacity of such a Commission, could have been a valuable addition to the programme design, as could a greater appreciation of the rapidly developing utility of social media in awareness raising, messaging, and communications generally. Given that it must have been apparent that the Commission was not well capacitated and that there was no professional attention to strategic communications that might help Government to demonstrate its real commitment to such matters, perhaps the project design could have considered the inclusion of inputs to these ends, or the PSC or project management could have attempted to draw greater attention to these issues (which are, however, mentioned in reports, PSC meetings minutes and the NHRAP).

As things stand, and whilst it is clear that the NHRC is in need of capacity building in all respects, it is doubtful whether simply providing funding or technical assistance (TA) for support for plans or training for staff would result in its becoming effective without the genuine commitment of the GoS to welcome and ensure this. The Government needs to make it clear in what direction it wishes to take the NHRC and how its role and powers should be set out in the NHRAP and supporting legislation. Unless this is made clear, the NHRAP may suffer from an inability to function as the anchoring institution that can be the custodian of the Plan.

**Recommendations**

* The Government should take immediate steps to strengthen the organisational capacity and credibility of the Human Rights Commission, separating its functions from that of the Ombudsman’s Office (or at least establishing separate, specialised units within the same office dealing, respectively, with human rights and with complaints against the administration) and supporting it in particular with its communications and advocacy functions. The GoS must demonstrate its commitment to the spirit and the importance of this if it is to persuade donors like the EU to consider further funding support for this purpose.
* The Government should approve the establishment of a Citizens’ Advice Bureau (CAB) using the most appropriate institutional status to allow such a body to be essentially independent whilst receiving some financial support from Government for its overheads. LUNGOS is researching the operations of similar bodies internationally.
* The Cabinet and AG’s Office (and Parliament) should take all possible steps to speed up the validation, endorsement and enactment of the new HR legislation, treaties, conventions and the NHRAP.
* Further attention should be given (and if necessary funds sought) to make the training curricula for both police and prisons more practical; breaking the accredited qualification courses down further into ‘lesson plans and manuals’ for officers that have not necessarily been trained as trainers. Such trainers should, however, be given ‘Methods of Instruction’ courses and care should be taken not to dilute the standard of the qualifications.
* Perception surveys should be commissioned (ideally by Government contracting an independent contractor), and if necessary with further donor funding (or possibly a contract variation allowing use of remaining unspent programme funds for this). These should address in particular the SOV for the Programme’s DO to provide *‘a broadly undertaken survey on public perceptions of Good Governance and substantial Human Rights including vulnerable groups (using the 2008 survey as a baseline)’.*  A further survey of public perceptions of police behaviour and the extent of trust in their knowledge and application of HR principles (i.e. whether or not there is evidence of the new training having the desired effect) would also be beneficial.
* Development Partners should continue to support Seychelles but should perhaps propose that future assistance might be contingent on results achieved to some extent. This is always something of a ‘chicken and egg’ situation, but GoS must play its part in convincing donors that it is serious about ensuring that the results of the programme will be sustainable and that it does want to see the planned impact achieved.
* The EU Delegation should consider what other forms of leverage it might apply (e.g. perhaps through diplomatic channels in addition to the possibility of future funding) to influence the GoS that it really is in its interests to take the overall HR agenda more seriously and demonstrate this – for example - through the establishment of a more functional NHRC.