

Management Response
Mid-Term Review of UNDP Seychelles CPD 2012-16

Mid Term Review held in June -September 2015

Final report accepted by the UNDP Resident Representative on November 2015

Management Response finalised in Updated December 2015

Budget Department: B0371

Business Unit – MUS10

Country Programme Summary Table

UNDP Seychelles Country Programme Document 2012-2016	
CPD Approval date : June 2011	Original Planned Closing Date : December 2016
Total Budgetary Resources Allocated within Programme: \$18,585,000	
<u>Country Programme Thematic Areas</u>	<u>Estimated Budgetary Allocation (UNDP)</u>
Poverty Alleviation and MDG Support	\$ 85,000
Environment and Sustainable Development	\$ 18,000,000
Democratic Governance	\$500,000

KEY ISSUES

1. Seychelles graduated from “Upper Middle income” to a “High Income, developed country” in July 2015. In welcoming the transition from an ordinary SIDS to a wealthy global hub the President taking due cognizance of Seychelles’ difficult geopolitical situation called for follow-up action including in particular consideration of the SIDS ‘vulnerability index’ rather than the singular consideration of the traditional GDP/per capita indices that in the case of SIDS are usually disproportionately high, and summarily disqualify them from any form of concessional development assistance. In this regard the Evaluation taking due cognizance of Seychelles’ small population and land size(455 sq km), its isolation, extreme imports dependency, piracy and vagaries of nature, not unrelated to climate change concluded that the country is worth sympathetic consideration; if not financial then technical support. This deserves due attention in the next CPD. Seychelles’ relatively high skills population provides an opportunity for UNDP to push for a transformational approach to the isles’ development.

Management response: The Management agrees with the findings above and would like to reiterate that more than ever, Seychelles needs developmental support in pushing for transformational change by building capacities and resilience. These findings will be taken on board in the formulation of the new CPD which is under preparation. Attention will be made to all to ensure that capacity development is integral part of all new programmes and projects.

2. A UNDP-facilitated African regional conference of countries likely to graduate soon to assess and appreciate this issue was held in Seychelles in July 2015. Since its graduation to Upper Middle Income country status the Seychelles has been a “Net Contributing Country” for partners such as UNDP. It has not been a beneficiary of core or concessional resources. Although it could benefit from elements of “regional programmes” of the agencies such as the UNDP, but the respective resource envelope is on the decline. UNICEF pulled out of the Seychelles altogether. UNFPA for example has had a project in Seychelles since 1974. The latest was a four year programme, 2012-2015 with \$50,000 budgeted. It was later cut down to USD25, 000.00; and was further cut to only USD12, 500.00! Reducing funds in the middle of the programme affects programme delivery and sustainability.

Management response: The management agrees that reducing committed funds makes it difficult to deliver on the whole programme. In the upcoming new CPD, commitment will be made on fully secured funds as far as possible.

3. Notwithstanding the identified bottlenecks that can be addressed, the CDP rests on a solid and enabling platform, with a network of stakeholders best equipped to implement it. Adequate consultations during the design stage, close collaboration with the MEECC and other Ministries has ensured an inclusive and transparent apportionment of tasks and responsibilities amongst stakeholders, and a conducive environment for optimal results delivery and its monitoring and evaluation. Exceptions might be in the non-environment democratic governance and poverty/MDGs components especially as it related to the both the NHRCs and prisons interventions.

Management response: The management disagrees that the non-environment components did not have adequate consultations when in fact there was tremendous response to the workshops relating to the democratic governance concepts. It is to be stated that it could be a question of political will in instances of the Human Rights Action Plan and the Prison Strategy that these did not get readily implemented by the relevant departments. UNDP always uses the participatory approach for all its projects. Greater attention will be paid in new programmes with regards to sustainability which is one of the design parameters of the new guidance for new CPDs. This will ensure that UNDP’s interventions are more sustainable and it is carried forward by the national institutions once UNDP exit.

4. In the design of CPDs, programme countries and UNDP COs are always torn between programme focus and inclusiveness. But the Seychelles Government and UNDP Office came up with a very focused and strategic programme components; it is not spread all over the country with tiny bits of money to support all sorts of little interventions. Furthermore it was anchored in the environment area dovetailing with the challenge of the management of the ocean surrounding the isles.

Management response: The size of the country and population enable inclusiveness as there is no distinction between urban and rural in the Seychelles context. All programmes can easily touch the whole country and the whole population. The level of resources and the source of funding is also a factor which contributes to the strategic focus.

5. The three pillars of the CDP are found to be relevant to the priorities of the country and its commendable political, socio-economic transformation as it emerges from a major macroeconomic reform programme. However, in the case of the GEF-funded environmental interventions, outside entities have had a strong voice in programme content. Given Government’s alertness it is fair to say that it is still Seychelles in its different formations that is on the steering wheel of the CPD work including the environment and sustainable development pillar. Given that most CPD activities are either on-going or have just started, it is hard to gauge long-term results or impact

Management response: The management disagrees with the last statement. The Country Programme is developed to assist the Government achieve its National Priorities and one CPD may include part of an on-going project or programme with additional interventions within the thematic areas. Environment Programmes are usually overlapping from one CPD to the next given the nature of the funding windows, the GEF cycles and the need for sequencing of projects taking into account the country's absorptive capacity. The long-term sustainability and impact will be tangible if such components continue to remain the core focus of upcoming CPDs and a review conducted from past and future programmes in terms of notable and impacts. The CPD is a living document and there will always be projects that will start late in the cycle, whereas all interventions under the Governance and Poverty Pillars had been completed.

6. The 'Environment and Sustainable Development practices', promotion of 'Democratic principles and Human Rights' as well as the identification and ascertainment of the 'poverty status' of the most economically fragile and vulnerable in society remain imperative. Devising and implementing measures to attenuate consequences to uphold a peaceful, stable and harmonious socio-economic platform upon which sustainable growth and development can proliferate are very important.

Management response: Management agrees with this observation.

7. The PCU is an innovative and "business unusual" programme execution modality; it has cut on unnecessary red tape and long and cumbersome processes, to put more emphasis on programme delivery. The PCU's modus operandi allows substantive interactions with the various partners and stakeholders. The heavy bias towards the female gender in terms of its project managers can be improved upon. However there is a clear and distinguishable difference in what it is capable of delivering in terms of project management and implementation compared to other structures in the other two non-environment pillars. .

Management response: Although the Management agrees that the PCU is a well established model of good practice for NIM projects, the bias on female gender is arguable. PCU is an equal opportunity establishment and recruitment is fair and transparent. In Seychelles, men tend to be more independent practitioners rather than holding a steady 9-5 job. This could be one reason that there are more female project managers always applying for the position of project managers. It should be noted as well that during the MTR mission, 3 male Project Managers actually resigned and all were replaced by female candidates. This explains the high ration of female to male in the PCU currently. With the high turnover in Seychelles, the configuration can always change from one year to the next..

8. UNDP's modus operandi especially under the environment pillar allows substantive interactions with the various partners and stakeholders. With the PCU under the roof of the UNDP the limitations of the present location leaves a lot to be desired. Geographically being in the centre of town close to the main bus stop is ideal but otherwise for the congested parking and limited operational space

Management response: Discussions are ongoing with the Government to provide suitable office space. With the implementation of the UNDP DIM project SAPPHIRE and the JMC, it is expected that the staff of the PCU, UNDP, MFF and SGP will have an office close to the office of the Minister for Environment, Energy and Climate Change with sufficient parking facilities as well in 2016. The whole PCU will be centralized under one roof as of January 2016.

9. It is worth noting that the UNDP office in Victoria is not a fully-fledged "UNDP CO"; if Seychelles was not a sovereign country the office would have been a sub-set per se of the Main office in Port Louis, Mauritius where the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Res Rep (RC/RR) is based. It has no official representative role. It should therefore not be unduly judged on its performance on a scale that goes beyond its mandate or TOR. However, the more permanent presence of the Programme Manager (UNDP CO), a former public sector employee of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with nearly two decades of experience in the UNDP Head office in Mauritius, is a positive and welcomed game changer that has acted as a lubricant to the UNDP work in the Seychelles, minimizing things that were hitherto referred to Mauritius.

Management response: Management agrees with the observation as the increase in the substantive presence in Seychelles has allowed from greater networking at the highest level of Government.

10. Improved collaboration and partnership with stakeholders inclusive of government and civil societies have been duly noted. This is the case not only for the visibility of UNDP in Victoria but also of the UNDP and GoS entities "moving together". The RC/RR as a routine comes to the Seychelles each three months (and more if there is need) to meet government leaders and other officials. He is well known in key Government and partner institutions including the foreign missions. The RC/RR has developed a strategic, operational and personal relationship with the work in the Seychelles. The Mauritius-based Economic Advisor whose mandate also extends to the Seychelles visits the CO as, and when, required. The Evaluation benefited greatly from her written comments on work she was associated with in Seychelles. Apart from the Programme Manager who is by the way officially part of the United Nations Team in the Main Office in Mauritius, there are only two staffers in Seychelles- a Project Officer and a Programme Assistant, all on contract; they are not even Local UNDP staff as they would have been in other countries. This situation needs to be streamlined and Office capacity beefed up.

Management response: Management takes note of the observation but is guided by the rules of UNDP for NCC which does not have FT staff. The staff are on SC scales and given the discrepancy in salaries, SC conditions makes it more attractive to recruit staff than on FT salaries. Should the situation change in the future, contract modalities can be reviewed.

11. The pillar for the promotion of Democracy and Human Rights principles is gaining even more currency as the country heads for Presidential and General elections. Inclusion of this pillar is not only timely but essential for transforming the country. Like the Poverty pillar it is a challenge to mobilize resources but UNDP and partners soldier on. There is room for further coordination of interventions with other UN and multilateral agencies such as UNODC, WHO, and EU. On both counts the Government and People of Seychelles have never been more receptive to the promotion of those two topical and relevant pillars.

Management response: In the new CPD, the focus will be on developing the right partnerships to address poverty and governance issues given the limited TRAC that may be available for Seychelles for 2017-2020. Some of these needs will be addressed as far as possible through the environment funds in addressing poverty and governance.

12. After emerging from major macroeconomic reforms the concerns to, for example, improve upon the national debt profile has also given a renewed determination to uphold and honour reporting commitments on the various signed and ratified conventions for which Seychelles is a party. The CDP has facilitated a number of the

reporting obligations, building capacity and promoting awareness whilst elevating the visibility and credibility of Seychelles in the international community.

Management Response: Management agrees with this observation

13. The promotion of the 'Blue Economy' concept is one relatively new element that will feature in any future development strategy. The on-going work to formulate a spatial development plan for the Republic's EEZ and the Master plan for the Aqua and Mari-culture are indications of the preparatory phases and related projects that will follow. In the Programme formulation process for the new CPD 2017-2020 (the basic framework of which was discussed at the validation workshop) the stakeholders are seriously considering its core elements.

Management Response: The Management feels strongly that this would be a critical area of intervention in the upcoming CPD. Environment will form a core pillar of the new CPD and will touch upon the Blue Economy. What will need to be develop and agreed upon is how at what level will UNDP intervene to support the Blue Economy, and how to leverage GEF and Adaptation Funds as well as government local resources (Cost-Sharing) to support this new initiative. Some support is already earmarked under the upcoming Sustainable Financing for Protected Area Project to establish the SEYCCAT Trust Fund to develop the Marine Spatial Planning as part of the Debt Swap.

14. The Implementation of the current CPD and the design of its successor programme is happening in a rapidly changing world, of which Seychelles is a part. We witnessed in the past five years the global financial and economic crisis, the ICTs revolution, piracy and climate change. These unanticipated developments have impacted on the CPD implementation. In some critical areas Seychelles has outperformed its peers whilst in others challenges still persist, some of which can be addressed by the UNDP in its next country programme.

Management Response: Management agrees with the observation and recommendation as it is in line with the spirit of the new UNDP Strategic Plan which guides the formulation of new CPDs. The context of a rapidly changing world is one of the core considerations which will shape all new CPDs from 2014 onwards.

15. Notwithstanding its NCC status, Seychelles because of its vulnerabilities still deserves some external assistance, for some activities like humanitarian work or climate change whose agenda as underlined by the MDGs/SDGs a global one. Thus UNDP must re-examine its resource mobilization strategy, undertake a mapping of donor issues, interests, concerns and priorities both in the Seychelles and in donor capitals, widen its outreach and improve on its development results. Given that donor constituencies are looking for evidence of good demonstrable results, UNDP has to build a good track record in key thematic areas; and continue to be an obvious partner of Government in programme delivery especially in the environment area.

Management Response: Management agrees that income per capita needs to be one consideration for country classification under the various thresholds for assistance. Vulnerabilities of SIDS like Seychelles and cost of development per capita needs to be taken into consideration when it comes to determining resource allocation. UNDP office in Seychelles is now producing regular newsletter as part of the UNCT, as well as it's the PCU newsletter which is showcasing more the results of UNDPs work in the environment sector in Seychelles. One example is the PV project which featured in the UNDP publication for a side event at COP 21.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 16: Seychelles' vulnerability to external shocks despite its very high human development status is a reality which rationalizes advocacy for development assistance. This would include rationalizing less stringent development cooperation terms through developing and popularizing "the vulnerability" and/or "resilience index". UNDP should continue with its advocacy work and with working and supporting government efforts on the same especially at global fora. One advocacy instrument that could be used is a National Human Development Report on a topical issues such as the challenge of the blue economy, that could allow substantive discussions on this and related issues.

Management response: Agreed. Refer to Management response at #15 above. UNDP is working with the office of the Vice President to ensure that in all HRDs Seychelles is ranked in all dimensions. UNDP has been supportive in the development of the UNDESA-led Vulnerability and Resilience Profile for Seychelles in the run up to the SAMOA meeting of SIDS. The issue of vulnerability will feature prominently in the new CPD. With regards to the production of a NHDR, this will be undertaken in further dialogue with the government in 2016.

Key action (s)	Timeframe	Responsible unit/s	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
16.1 Incorporate Vulnerability concepts in new country programme development and support.	February 2016	UNDP CO	Ongoing	
16.2 Work with the Special Advisor of the VP's office on ensuring all data are provided in the current format to reflect all development indicators of Seychelles in the global HDR	No timeline (ongoing)			
16.3 Initiate dialogue for the production of a NHDR	March 2016			

Recommendation 17: Given that the twin pillars of the economy are fisheries and tourism, both of which are dependent on environmental sustainability, it is incumbent to continue with the GEF-support. This is also central to sustainable exploitative of the blue economy. UNDP should see their programme interventions as hinged on this challenge. Seychelles should be prepared to sustain the interventions that are now donor-dependent.

Management response: Agreed. The new GEF 6 project is developing a fisheries component but unfortunately the Government has agreed to develop with the World Bank. However, as the concept was developed as part of a larger Ridge-to-Reef proposal, it will still create the right synergy with the UNDP proposal which is now being developed with the remaining GEF-6 STAR allocation entrusted to UNDP.

Key action (s)	Timeframe	Responsible unit/s	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
Development of the PIF under GEF-6 and create links to the World Bank SWIOFISH3 Project proposal during project development	July 2016	UNDP PCU MEECC		

Recommendation 18 : Given limited corporate-wide resources, UNDP Seychelles should break into new areas tapped from the UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 and more importantly the SDGs. It could increase its clout in the tourism area; and be more pro-active in working in the poverty- reducing productive sectors such as agriculture and fishing, which is one of the key components of the "blue economy". This could possibly be done in partnership with the private sector with possible IFIs involvement. It should not be business as usual. Above all UNDP should position itself as a partner working with, and assisting government to,

Summary of Key Actions

Tracking

deliver its programmes. Its technical capacity should be augmented.

Management response: Agreed with recommendation. The strategy under the new country programme is to enter into partnerships with IFIs and other development partners as far as possible. Furthermore the resource mobilization strategy is to have a dialogue with the government in order to leverage enough cost sharing which will allow UNDP to enter into non environment sectors in a cost effective way.

Key action (s)	Timeframe	Responsible unit/s	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
Develop the new CPD which contains a resource mobilization and partnership strategy	February 2016	PCU UNDP		

Recommendation 19: The procedures and consultative processes for coming up with the CDP and allocation of the Global Environment Fund (GEF) is thorough, inclusive and SSDS compliant. It is however highly recommended that the SSDS multi-sectoral Steering Committee mandated to oversee the implementation of the SSDS meet more regularly and be more pro-active to fulfil their mandate. Furthermore the release of the new government development framework, the Medium-Term Development Strategy together with the SSDS should provide an anchor for the development of UNDP-supported projects. Given the multi-sectoral nature of the portfolios it might be helpful if decision-making in government was coordinated at a slightly higher pitch- possibly the Vice Presidency.

Management response: The SSDS has not gained momentum although there has been a renewed interest in the year. It is hoped that the budgetary allocations for 2016 will provide the necessary impetus for SSDS to become functional. Although the SSDS is multi-sectoral it has been argued that the strategic focus is driven solely by environment. It is likely that the National Development Strategy which supersedes the SSDS will propose a structure which will consist on a combined Secretariat to monitor the implementation of these various national strategies.

Key action (s)	Timeframe	Responsible unit/s	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
The NDS should form the basis for the development of the new CPD. National priorities of the NDS should guide the programme focus.	February 2016	UNDP MEECC MOF		

Recommendation 20 : The UNDP interventions in Seychelles are hinged on the environment, thanks to donor resources especially via GEF. However, corporate UNDP's main areas of concentration focuses on poverty, human development, and governance. The CPD's focus on these areas were very limited because of very limited financial resources. It is important to raise funds to be able to address non-environmental aspects – i.e. building on the current poverty and democratic governance. The SDGs could be a good entry point. It is also recommended that more efforts be put in spin-offs from the environment into poverty and governance areas. The “social dimensions” parameters which are key for increased productivity could perhaps be taken on board in the GEF environment projects as “capacity development” components. Capacity for proper management of the MPAs (to avoid uncontrolled fishing) needs jerking up. Furthermore greater efforts should be made to tap on Thematic trust funds and regional programmes that while still very limited for Seychelles-type of polities, have greater avenues for addressing non-environmental interventions. Furthermore, the Green Climate Fund which is being operational zed October 2015 (before the Paris Climate Change Summit) which will address both climate change mitigation and adaptation- with UNDP as one of seven accredited organisations—is another source of additional resources.

Management response: Agreed. UNDP will diversify its funding sources in the next cycle. Dialogue on GCF has already started with the Government to develop proposals under GCF. Additional funding sources will be identified and explored during the next cycle

Key action (s)	Timeframe	Responsible unit/s	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
Diversify funding sources in next CPD as far as practicable	Dec 2016	UNDP		

Recommendation 21 : The Evaluation had concluded that although cross-cutting issues were mentioned in the CPD and other pro-docs, their mainstreaming was not upheld in programme implementation. With the exception of the prison sub-programmes were the gender element was highlighted and addressed,

Summary of Key Actions

Tracking

cross-cutting issues save for environment did not feature as much in the programme documents, much less in programme implementation. It could be taken up in on-going projects and in future programmes. In particular special seminars could be held to sharpen the capacities of PCU and other programme staff and their IPs on issue of mainstreaming in general and of cross-cutting issues in particular. One entry point would be the mainstreaming of SDGs into national development framework and ensuing programmes.

Management response: Agreed. This recommendation has also been brought up in project evaluation.

Key action (s)	Timeframe	Responsible unit/s	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
Workshop/seminar will be organized formally at regular intervals to sharpen the skills of the PCU as well as staff on implementing agencies on mainstreaming concepts.	2017.	UNDP PCU MEECC		

Recommendation 22: The PCU is a commendable model that should be maintained. It is highly recommended that specific collaboration and cooperation to upgrade the skills and practices, to improve general abilities, levels of efficiency and effectiveness in project and programme implementation be considered. Experienced PCU Project Managers and networking with regional and global centres of excellence can play a pivotal role in realizing this proposal. UNDP's strategic position in working on the GEF projects is based on GOS confidence in the organisation and the sustainability of resource flow.

Management response: Agreed with the recommendation. See comments at #7 above

Key action (s)	Timeframe	Responsible unit/s	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
Training will be provided as and when available for project managers in their respective field.	2016	PCU UNDP		

Recommendation 23 : Although the "Delivering as One" approach has no clear "fit" in the Seychelles; it is by the UN family pulling and working together that their contribution can be more significant, visible and "fit for purpose". A MoFAT- driven effort to bring the Agencies to buy-in into and support the, Government's Medium- Term Development Strategy – and possibly around the SDGs is a new way of advancing the one UN/DaO agenda, and should be supported. It would bring the UN to work together, and provide the UNRC opportunities to push for inter-agencies cooperation, with parallel meetings with a rotating Chair amongst the Regional Directors/UNRCs.

Management response: Agreed. This will only happen when Government is ready to sign the Strategic Partnership Agreement and all Agencies can have a framework for collaboration. Future discussion on a one office/one programme approach can also be tabled. .

Key action (s)	Timeframe	Responsible unit/s	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
UNCT will continue to follow up with Government for the formal endorsement of the Strategic Partnership Agreement prepared by all UNCT members.	March 2016	UNCT members UNDP RR		

Recommendation 24 : The present physical location of the UNDP offices that hosts the PCU is a bit cramped although ideal in the centre of Victoria. A recommendation for a more accommodating premise is justified. It could also provide room for NRAs (and possibly NGOs working on CPD projects) to be hosted by UNDP at least temporarily and/ or short visits. It is recommended that UNDP CO be relocated to a more spacious location.

Management response: Agreed. Government has agreed to provide new premises which will house the SAPPHERE, PCU, UNDP and GEF-SGP/MFF Programme. The office will be ready by January 2016.

Key action (s)	Timeframe	Responsible unit/s	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
Move to new premises by January 2016. UNDP need to terminate lease of current offices by February 2016.	February 2016	UNDP PCU		

Summary of Key Actions	Tracking
------------------------	-----------------

		MEECC		
<p>Recommendation 25: We recommend that capacities of the Seychelles UNDP office be beefed up, possibly with a full-fledged multi-disciplinary development specialist to support the Programme Manager/Office and jerk up future UNDP interventions especially in the blue economy and regional projects which could increasingly be the mainstay of the UNDP in Seychelles for non-environmental work, which is necessary to avoid the organisation being duped as an environmental agency. This would be supplemented by increased inputs from the UNDP Regional Service Centre(s).</p>				
<p>Management response: Agreed with recommendations. UNDP RR has started dialogue with the Ministry of Finance to increase the yearly local office support, waiver of rental of office when we move to the new premises in return for increasing the number of personal from 3 to 4 in the Seychelles unit.</p>				
Key action (s)	Timeframe	Responsible unit/s	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
Continue dialogue with the Government on the issues mentioned above in management response and upon approval, UNDP to recruit an additional officer.	March 2016	UNDP Ministry of Finance Ministry of Foreign Affairs		

Approved by Mr Simon Springett, UNDP Resident Representative

Signature: 

Date: 11 December 2015

ANNEX: TERMINAL EVALUATION RATINGS

Elements evaluated	Rating
A. Attainment of project objectives and results	
Effectiveness	
Relevance	
Efficiency	
Impacts	
B. Sustainability of project outcomes	
Financial	
Socio-political	
Institutional framework and governance	
Environmental	
C. Achievement of outputs and activities	
D. Monitoring and evaluation	
M&E design	
M&E plan implementation	
Budgeting and funding for M&E activities	
E. Catalytic role	
F. Preparation and readiness	
G. Country ownership	
H. Stakeholder involvement	
I. Financial planning	
J. Implementation approach	
K. UNDP/GEF Supervision and backstopping	