



# Mid Term Review of Suriname United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2012-2016



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Annex 1 – List of Persons Interviewed and Organizations

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## List of Acronyms

ATM	Ministry of Labour, Technological Development and Environment
CAL	Computer aided learning
CBOs	Community based organizations
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCPAP	Common Country Programme Action Plan
DaO	Delivering as One
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
ICT	Information, Communication Technology
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
ILO	International Labour Organization
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
JPs	Joint programmes
JSC	Joint Steering Committee
LIC	Low-income country
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIC	Middle Income Country
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MDTF	Multi Donor Trust Fund
MPTF	Multi Partner Trust Fund
MTR	Mid-Term Review
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NIMOS	National Institute for Environment
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OP	Ontwikkelingsplan 2012-2106 (Development Plan
OWGs	Outcome Working Groups
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PCGs	Programme Coordination Groups
PCM	Project cycle management
PSs	Permanent secretaries
RBM	Results-based management
REDD+	Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation
SGP	Small Grants Programme
SMART	Specific, measurable, achievable in a cost effective way, relevant, timely
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV and AIDS
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDAP	UNDAF Action Plan
UN DOCO	United Nations Development Operations Co-ordination Office
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNRCO	United Nations Resident Coordinator Office

## **Executive Summary**

### **1. Introduction**

The UNDAF and its accompanying Action Plan (UNDAP) represent the collective response of the UN in Suriname based on its comparative advantage in supporting national socio-economic development and humanitarian priorities. The Mid Term Review (MTR), which was undertaken as an objective and independent review of Suriname's UNDAF, is intended to help the UNCT and government make mid-course corrections and improve programme management and delivery.

### **2. Context: the UN in Suriname**

The context for developing the UNDAF involved striking a balance between a number of issues: a) Suriname's official status as a middle-income country and the realities inherent in the pockets of poverty in Suriname; b) the reduction in ODA and technical assistance by donor agencies and composition of the UNCT; c) weak internal capacity for managing projects and programmes both in the government and UN agencies; and d) the political realities surrounding Suriname's system of political coalitions and its impact on government administration and leadership. In the context of decreasing ODA funding and technical assistance, it may be necessary to consider the increased use of cost-sharing arrangements where the government provides the bulk of funding for social services administered by UN agencies.

### **3. Scope and Methodology**

The assignment involved two integrated processes: 1) an independent review of the UNDAF/UNDAP to determine the accomplishments and bottlenecks and 2) an update of the UNDAP. The assessment applied four evaluative elements: Relevance and design; Effectiveness in results and programmes, Efficiency in management; and Higher-level goals.

The fieldwork took place during two separate missions between October 13-30, 2014 and November 17-21, 2014, involving an international and national consultant. The team met with key stakeholders including programme coordinating groups (PCGs), government permanent secretaries (PSs), UN staff and heads of agencies.

There were limitations in scope and participation. It was too early in the implementation process to make a full assessment of development results (Outcome level), so the MTR focused on reviewing the progress at the Output level. The MTR did not assess progress in specific projects/programmes or particular UN agencies. Rather it focused on assessing the constructive dialogue in the thematic sectors (the PCGs), the UN's contribution toward the outcomes, the contribution to national goals and the strategic positioning of the UNCT toward DaO. Finally, there was limited participation by vulnerable and marginalized groups, whose opinions and voices are largely absent from the review. Interviews with civil society groups were requested but no meetings were organized by the government.

### **4. Major Findings: Design/relevance, Achievement of Results & Coordination**

#### *Design/relevance*

The UNDAF was designed to provide support under 3 Outcomes: 1) Programme implementation, 2) Policy and 3) Data. This Upstream/Downstream/Data configuration is an indication of the broad array of support needed by Suriname. Middle-income countries normally focus on upstream policy level interventions; the downstream programme level interventions were necessary because Suriname has geographic areas and population groups that are marginalized

and highly vulnerable, and support to data was needed to enhance evidence-based policy making.

A flexible design approach was used that involved inputs by a number of UN agencies working in collaboration with their government counterparts. This involved a long process of reviewing, updating and revising inputs and activities by PCGs, senior management in government and UN agencies. Greater clarity and coherence was supposed to emerge during implementation. Thus, the UNDAF design (and process) was very relevant to the needs of the country. In addition, by focusing on education, healthcare and social services, the UNDAF supported the President's "Social Contract".

Although relevant, the quality of Suriname's UNDAF design was lacking several important areas of focus that were not fully programmed by some UN agencies and their counterpart ministries. Inputs from UNESCO, UN Women and ILO were not included largely because the government ministries were not ready to move ahead with these areas. Also, during the design phase, the CCA process was completed but rigorous assessments of the government's capacity and leadership were not undertaken, which resulted in a missed opportunity to design programmes that would bolster in-country capacities at individual, institutional and civil society levels. The resulting design was a collection of UN agency programmes folded into a range of thematic categories and outputs, rather than a rigorous design process that was led and owned by government. There was a need to design interventions to increase capacity in planning and monitoring, particularly at the sector level, as well boosting the government's capacity to manage multi-sectoral collaboration between ministries. As a result, there is an immediate need to revise the indicators and targets to ensure that the PCGs focus on key results.

### ***Achievement of Results***

An examination of achievements and constraints during the first 3 years indicates the sheer magnitude of the task. Implementing the UNDAF has been an ambitious undertaking – involving 118 key actions, grouped under 21 outputs, operating in 11 thematic sectors and under 3 broad Outcomes (Programme, Policy and Data). In spite of the many accomplishments, the consensus is that progress has been slow and implementation is behind schedule.

A number of enablers and bottlenecks have been identified that contributed to this situation. One of the primary enablers has been the PCGs, which introduced a multi-sectoral, multidisciplinary approach into the relevant programmes and ministries. The meeting of PSs prior to the JSC has emerged as a key enabler, as it provides government officials with an opportunity to discuss matters internally to come up with a "One Government" approach prior to the JSC. A few accomplishments at the policy level deserve mention, particularly the passing of the social protection and child protection laws (Institutional Child Care, Basic Health Care, Minimum Wage and Pension scheme), which can be seen as pillars in the government's 'Social Contract'.

Bottlenecks have been identified at all three levels of the UNDAF (policy, implementation and data) that are hampering implementation and affecting achievement of outputs and outcomes. Many of the UNDAF-supported policy and legislation outputs are stuck somewhere along the policy chain between the line ministries and the National Assembly. Change of Permanent Secretaries and Ministers in some ministries has created a void in policy, leadership and decision-making, which results in constraints at the technical and implementation levels of UNDAF/UNDAP programmes. The primary reason for the lack of progress in programme implementation is because of low capacity in ministries to implement programmes. Also, the absence of sector planning emerged as a critical bottleneck, because ministries do not have sector plans to follow, and the ad hoc and personality-driven nature of development planning in

ministries creates uncertainty and a lack of transparency. In addition, parallel structures created under the President's Office tend to deplete the limited human resources in ministries and add a layer of uncertainty, which affects the provision of government services.

Constraints in the completion of the outputs are having an impact on the achievement of outcomes. To ensure the UNDAF focuses on achieving the key results during the final two (2) years of implementation all parties have to work toward creating more explicit linkages between the three Outcomes (policy, programme and data). Outcome #1: The programme level outputs need to focus on improving management and delivery of government services. For example, the project level pilots in Education have led to the identification of policy level initiatives that may need further support from UN agencies. Outcome #2: In order to improve the policy level outputs, there is a need to build leadership at the senior levels of government. Also, some policy level interventions have led to the need for revised programme level support that is being developed under Outcome #1. For example, after preparing a series of white papers, the Ministry of Agriculture found that there were gaps in the operational level of their programmes. Outcome #3: The collection of data should be leading to the development of evidence-based policies. However, the data group has been focused on gathering data for the publication of various reports and surveys, such as the MDG report. These links need to be improved.

### ***Coordination and Management***

Suriname's UNDAF was designed around the notion of "joint programming", where individual UN agencies developed programmes independently in collaboration with government counterparts. Beyond the UNDAF, the UN agencies do not have many shared frameworks. Communication and collaboration occur primarily through the PCGs. So UN coherence emerges out of the dialogue between agencies, where groups of agencies working in the same sector (e.g. gender, health, education) planned and coordinated their programmes together in an attempt to avoid overlapping roles. Some interventions would benefit from joint programmes (e.g. youth), however specific funding will have to be made available as UN agencies are reluctant to pool their own resources into joint programmes.

UN is playing a very supportive role in Suriname, however some ministries feel that UN agencies have a tendency to work within their specialized mandates (and global and regional programmes), which can cause difficulties for government ministries. Also, the time-consuming processes involving numerous meetings and forms can overload government systems where qualified staff is already spread thin. UN agencies may have to adjust the options for providing technical assistance as longer-term experts are more useful than short-term consultancies, which may mean requiring greater cost-sharing contributions from government for priority social programmes.

Within government there is no formal donor coordination platform. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) has tried to fill the gap left after the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation was dismantled. However, the current process is very informal and ad hoc. MoFA is trying to exercise greater operational government ownership over the UNDAF, however, varied capacities within the sector ministries makes this difficult. At the decision-making level, the JSC was supposed to act as a forum for discussion between government and UN agencies, and provide policy guidance on matters pertaining to the UNDAF's alignment with national development priorities. However, since the establishment of the meeting of Permanent Secretaries in January 2014, the JSC functions as a rubber stamp for reviewing the annual PCG reports. There is a need to re-establish the JSC as a forum for high-level discussion among government and UN decision-makers to discuss priorities, bottlenecks and challenges.

The PCGs are effective for providing multidisciplinary and multisectoral cooperation and coordination within the thematic groups and among the various sector ministries. However, because of leadership and capacity issues within some ministries, many PCGs find it difficult to move forward and get decisions on key actions for implementation of programmes. PCGs will need to be strengthened in PCM and RBM in order to revise the UNDAF targets. It is difficult to determine the extent to which the UNDAF is contributing to Suriname's development, primarily because the government is not able to track progress in the Development Plan (OP). The OP was not accompanied by an action plan, and it does not have an M&E system, targets or indicators. In addition, the Development Plan is not supplemented with a series of strategic sector planning documents, which are needed to establish clear strategic priorities at the sector level and to create stronger links to policy and implementation.

This is a major area of support that is missing in the UNDAF. The outcomes are in broad categories of policies, programmes and data. But the UNDAF is not providing enough support for the *determinants* of these outcomes, that is, *leadership, management and the use of data* for evidence-based policies. The UN agencies are supporting the upstream policy process and they are supporting downstream implementation and data collection. However, many government structures are not in place to absorb the support from the UN agencies or other donors, which means it will be difficult for this support to lead to effective national outcomes. On the one hand government wants to exercise more ownership over programmes, yet on the other ministries are lacking the capacity to implement programmes.

## **5. Best Practices/Constraints and Lessons Learned**

At the mid-point in implementation some areas of the UNDAF need to be flagged so that adjustments can be made and/or promising practices can be promoted during the two years remaining.

### ***Policy***

Social protection: Key pieces of social protection legislation have been passed (National Health Insurance, Minimum Wage and Institutional Child Care) and allocations for Pensions and Child Support and have been increased.

### ***Programme***

Computer Aided Learning (CAL): The education sector's computer aided learning (CAL) pilot project influenced government policy, and provided the IDB with a model to replicate and upscale for 18 schools. Also, the Ministry of Education has established an ICT Unit, and developed an ICT strategy paper.

### ***Data***

The Data PCG has made some good progress on collecting data for the publication of various reports (Household survey, MDG report, etc.). However, for the final two years the PCG should focus on making a link between data collection and the formulation of evidence-based policies, and overall sector planning.

### ***Management and Coordination***

The meeting of PSs prior to the JSC is an important addition to the UNDAF coordination structure as it provides an opportunity for government to exercise strong leadership and ownership by preparing a consolidated "One Government" response. However, there is still a need for a forum to have high-level discussion among UN heads of agencies and government

decision makers. PCGs have introduced a multi-sectoral, multidisciplinary approach into the programmes and ministries, and are creating a dialogue within and between ministries. To the extent possible, this collaboration should be extended beyond UN programmes as this dialogue can introduce a more integrated approach to the delivery of government services and transcend the traditional “silo approach” practiced by sector ministries.

## 6. Recommendations/Way forward

The MTR team is recommending the following revisions to the current UNDAF outputs. These involve some areas that need programming, a few outputs that were not placed in the correct place, and some vital areas associated with programming planning and management.

- a) Add a new output for “Livelihoods” (output #11) in the programme level Outcome #1. The rationale for this is based on the fact that there is a need for a Livelihoods output to meet the government’s economic diversification goals and in particular to boost the competitiveness of the informal sector, which at 20.8% is the largest contributor to GDP. This can include a full range of key actions by various UN agencies, such as UNESCO’s cultural heritage projects (tourism), FAO’s projects aimed at enhancing production and income generation and Youth. This will complement output #9 of the policy level Outcome #2.
- b) Now that the agreement between government and ILO on Decent and Productive Work has been signed, there is an urgent need to develop a programme and start implementation. Unemployment and especially youth unemployment is one of the major challenges facing development in Suriname. This should be programmed in Output #9 along with Trade Policy
- c) The output for Youth/Adolescents (#10) is very weak, with only two key actions identified. This should be developed into a full joint programme with a number of relevant UN agencies, combining a number of interventions into an “integrated approach”, including government priorities such as youth employment and empowerment, skills development, entrepreneurship, etc.
- d) The Trade Policy output (#9) in the policy level Outcome #2 needs to be programmed to meet the government’s economic diversification goals. No key actions have been identified and the only entry is the UN agency (UNDP) and lead government ministry namely the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- e) Output #7 of Outcome #2 (*Enhancing national capacity for forestry management and forestry livelihoods in processing non-timber forest products*) involves community level interventions (not policy), so it should be moved to Outcome #1 and placed under the new Livelihood output #11.<sup>1</sup>
- f) Some thought should be given to whether the REDD+ intervention has been placed in the most appropriate place (output #8, key action #4). Currently it is in the policy Outcome #2, but if the main key actions are at the community level, it might be more appropriately placed under the programme Outcome #1, along with the other community-based environmental interventions (output #8). Like most programs, REDD+ will respond to an overall policy goal (capacity strengthening of NGOs, human rights), but its placement in the UNDAF should be based on the direct results of the intervention, whether they will be felt at the community and NGO levels, or the policy level. Generally, in RBM logic, an

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<sup>1</sup> While many of the ultimate outputs of the national capacity for forestry management are at the policy level (eg., passing of environmental legislation/policy, regulatory enforcement etc.), the majority of interventions are at the programme level, which dictates the placement of the output in RBM terms as the most immediate result in the hierarchy

activity responds to the next level up the hierarchy, which is the most immediate result and not the ultimate result.

- g) Outcome #3 (Data) has an implicit link between data collection and the need for evidence-based policies. However, the link to the policy Outcome #2 needs to be made more explicit in order to improve the focus of the data being collected and generated. Its key actions and targets should be revised to include links to evidence-based policy-making in the relevant ministries.
- h) To improve the quality of results and targets of the data being collected in Outcome #3, output #2 (*Improved national capacity for monitoring development outcomes*), there is a need to introduce a system of project cycle management (PCM) centrally within the Planning Bureau and throughout all government ministries, involving PCM and RBM training. But more than mere capacity building, there is a need to institute an M&E system at the national and sector levels to monitor the Development Plan, and the contribution of donor agency programmes (like the UNDAF) to national goals.
- i) It might be an idea to develop an overall goal statement for the UNDAF. This will focus individual UN agency programmes on the overall goal: “Align UN programming to support the government’s policy and planning objectives and contribute to its national development goals”. Currently, the intervention logic does not provide a link between outputs and outcomes to an overall goal. It may be implicit, but it needs to be explicit.

### ***Priority areas to be developed (2015-2016)***

The following areas were left out of the initial UNDAF design, and need to be programmed to make sure there is some progress during the final two years of implementation.

#### **1. Youth**

To facilitate the establishment of an Adolescents PCG, UN agencies should develop a joint strategy led by UNICEF and in collaboration with the Presidential Working Group, followed by a joint programme designed to support implementation of the results of the Working Group.

#### **2. Livelihoods**

There are many opportunities to diversify livelihoods including tourism, the environment, small business development, etc. Some agencies have started to fill these gaps: FAO is programming a value chain development project, UNESCO is adding activities in cultural tourism, and UNDP is looking at the area of youth development through SIDS and SDGs. There is a need for government ministries to come up with areas that need support, such as entrepreneurship, youth, small business development, access to finance, etc.

#### **3. Sector Planning and Project Cycle Management**

The government needs improved coordination and monitoring in line ministries and centrally. This will require support at two levels: a) Strengthening capacities in line ministries through training in project cycle management, prioritization, sector planning, budgeting, etc., and b) Establishment of a central planning and monitoring system in the Planning Bureau to track implementation of the Development Plan.

### ***Additional Areas of focus for 2015-2016***

During the post-election period, UN agencies should focus their efforts on downstream interventions by developing pilot projects that can provide policy lessons for the new government in 2015 as well as planning for the next UNDAF (2017-21). This period can also provide UN agencies an opportunity to develop a cohesive approach through joint programmes.

### **1. Area based joint programmes**

Develop a series of comprehensive “area based” programmes in several geographical areas and incorporate a variety of relevant UN programmes (livelihoods, the environment, indigenous peoples’ issues (e.g. climate change adaptation as their lives and agriculture are changing), health, social services, youth, etc.). Support could be managed through NGOs and CBOs active in those areas. Data collection could be consolidated for administrative districts in health, census, education, social affairs, etc. And recommendations for strategic plans could be compiled for the community and district levels, such as Moengo (where UNICEF is already active), Wia Wia (which involves indigenous people and the environment), a community in the West near the Guyana border area or in the South near the Brazilian border.

### **2. Civil society**

Many NGOs and CBOs were not included in the implementation of UNDAF programmes. UN agencies should collaborate with and support NGOs and civil society organizations directly to ensure that self-sustaining capacity is developed in rural communities. Important “civil society” programmes could be developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Regional Development, involving direct support for NGOs and CBOs.

### **Next generation UNDAF (2017-2021)**

The next UNDAF should be developed out of the opportunities and shortcomings of the current UNDAF, and focus on fewer strategic areas: youth, environment, livelihoods, social protection, etc. using joint programmes instead of the current individual agency approach. Also, the next UNDAF should look at focusing on strengthening planning, coordination and monitoring both within the central government and line ministries. In addition, it should be linked to the sustainable development goals of post 2015 agenda, through the government’s Development Plan. This will involve improving programmatic coherence among UN agencies and government ministries. On the UN’s side, the agencies will require more funding to develop a more integrated UNDAF programme in Suriname, which can be developed using more government cost-sharing resources.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE**

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and its accompanying Action Plan (UNDAP) represent the collective response of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Suriname, and is based on the UN's comparative advantage in supporting national socio-economic development and humanitarian priorities. Although mid-term reviews of UNDAFs are optional, the UNCT in conjunction with the Government of Suriname decided to undertake a Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the UNDAF. The MTR can be used to improve accountability and learn what has worked, what has not and why. In addition, the MTR can provide important information for strengthening programmes and results at country level, specifically informing the planning and decision-making for the next UNDAF programme cycle and improve UN coordination at country level<sup>2</sup>.

This MTR report is designed to help the UNCT and Government of Suriname make mid-course corrections as an integral part of programme management. It is also designed to determine the UNDAF's alignment with national development goals and priorities, and the country's internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Report represents the results of an objective and independent review of Suriname's UNDAF based on interviews with key stakeholders. Moreover, it builds on the information gathered through three periodic annual reviews (2012, 2013 and 2014) that were undertaken as self-assessment exercises during the implementation process.

The structure of the report includes a presentation of the Country Context (section 2.0), Scope of the MTR and Methodology (3.0), Findings of the MTR (4.0), including assessments of the relevance and quality of design (4.1), effectiveness of results and programmes (4.2), efficiency in operations, communication, coordination and management (4.3), higher level UN and Government goals (4.4), Lessons Learned and Conclusions (5.0) and Recommendations for the UNDAF/UNDAP implementation 2015-2016 as well as the next generation Suriname UNDAF 2017-2021 (6.0).

## **2.0 CONTEXT: THE UN IN SURINAME**

Suriname has some unique characteristics that have to be taken into account when reviewing the support provided by the UN system. In helping the country to meet its development needs, designing the UNDAF involved striking a balance between a number of issues: a) The dichotomy between Suriname's official ODA status as a middle-income country (MIC) and the realities inherent in the pockets of poverty that are characteristic of a low-income country (LIC); b) the reduction in ODA and technical assistance by donor agencies and the composition of the UNCT in Suriname; c) weak internal capacity for managing projects and programmes (both within the government and within the UN system); and d) the political realities surrounding Suriname's system of political coalitions and its impact on government administration and leadership, particularly in the context of the upcoming national elections.

In economic terms, with a GDP of US\$5.3 billion and per capita income of US\$9,370, Suriname is classified by the World Bank as an upper middle-income country<sup>3</sup>. This MIC classification resulted in many donor agencies like the Dutch, EU, World Bank and IDB reducing their financial assistance, downsizing technical specialists and managing their bilateral and multilateral

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<sup>2</sup> January 2010 *Guideline on How to Prepare an UNDAF*, and *FAQs for UNDAF Evaluations* (UNEG 2011)

<sup>3</sup> World Bank data, 2013

programmes externally/remotely from places like Washington and Guyana. But the economic classification does not take into account the capacity challenges faced by a small country, particularly one that has pockets of poverty that create economic and social conditions that are similar to those of a low-income country (LIC). In view of these challenges, some bilateral and multilateral agencies have recognized the capacity needs of the government and are starting to re-engage and increase their assistance. For example, the IDB increased its portfolio from US\$103 million to US\$300 million in 2011–2015, the World Bank has engaged with the government for developing a strategy for the period 2015 – 2018, and Dutch support to the government has been continuing, and an Ambassador has recently been appointed.

In addition, Suriname’s complex social and political structure is comprised of a diverse society made up of more than 8 ethnic groups speaking more than 15 languages and represented by over 30 political parties. Within the context of the upcoming national elections in 2015, it is anticipated that the administration of government services may be left in a period of uncertainty if there is a change in political coalition partners, as government services often experience interruptions following elections when senior staff from entire ministries are often replaced.

Also, in the administration of development assistance programmes like the UNDAF, consideration has to be given to weaknesses in project cycle management and sector planning in the central government and line ministries, and the evolving institutional framework for donor coordination, which is currently being handled by a combination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) for the UN system and bilateral agencies and the Ministry of Finance (MoF)/ Central Bank for the development banks.

Within the context of reduction in donor funds and decreased technical and financial resources allocated by UN agencies in Suriname, it will be necessary to consider the role of UN agencies, which may need to increase their technical assistance through the evolution of new cost-sharing arrangements where the government provides the bulk of funding for social services administered by UN agencies. The role of UN agencies and the context for developing an UNDAF is discussed in greater detail in Section 4.1, Design of the UNDAF.

### **3.0 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY**

The overall purpose of the UNDAF MTR is to provide an opportunity for the Government of Suriname and the UN to undertake the following (see full Terms of Reference in Annex 2):

- i. Ascertain the cumulative progress made to date against the planned outcomes/outputs in the UNDAF/UNDAP
- ii. Identify issues and opportunities emerging from the implementation of the UNDAF /UNDAP and provide support and quality assurance in making the necessary adjustments for the remaining duration (2015-2016)
- iii. Assess how ‘Delivering as One’ (DaO) has materialized including efforts for joint programming as well as efforts to further progress the DaO and provide recommendations for further improvement
- iv. Discuss strategic the partnership between UN and the Government of Suriname and the way forward to support the country in realizing the UNDAF results

The MTR is focused on the UN’s response in addressing the government’s development priorities, plans and strategies within the broad scope of the 3 UNDAF Outcomes: 1) Programmes, 2) Policy and 3) Data. More specifically, the review addresses the objectives outlined in the ToR by focusing on four evaluative components: a) Relevance and design, b)

Effectiveness in results and programmes, c) Efficiency in management, and d) Higher level goals. This forms the structure of the MTR report.

Following discussions with the UNRCO, it was decided that the assignment should be a “review and revision” of the UNDAF, rather than a formal evaluation. This is in accordance with the *Norms for Evaluation in the UN System*, where reviews tend to emphasize operational issues rather than the rigorous due process of assessing performance involved in an evaluation<sup>4</sup>. Essentially, the assignment involved two integrated processes: 1) an independent review of the UNDAF/UNDAP to determine the accomplishments and bottlenecks and 2) an update of the UNDAP.

The fieldwork portion of the MTR took place during two separate missions between October 13-30, 2014 and November 17-21, 2014. Initially the assignment was to be undertaken by an international consultant in conjunction with a UN staff member from the UNRCO. However, given the need for objectivity and the complexity of the task, it was decided during the first mission to recruit a second (national) consultant to support the international consultant and provide insight into Suriname’s country context. As a result, a second mission was arranged, which gave the government time to organize meetings and interviews with PCGs and relevant officials from the ministries, and it gave the UN time to identify and recruit a national consultant (Ms. Annette Tjon Sie Fat).

In undertaking the review, a participatory approach was used where a range of stakeholders in the UN and government were consulted through one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions. Moreover, although the UNRCO was responsible for management of the evaluation, the government exercised a great deal of ownership over the process, using the MTR as a way for PCG members to contribute to and learn from the review process.

Following initial meetings with the UN and government, the consultant adjusted the tools and methods presented in the original methodology to focus on the review and revision exercise. These included the following:

- ✓ Document review and evaluation design
- ✓ In-depth meetings with UNCT and government counterparts
- ✓ Interviews with relevant stakeholders and key informants
- ✓ Focus group discussions with groups of stakeholders
- ✓ Analysis, reflection and report writing

The MTR team reviewed relevant documentation in order to assess the intervention logic, indicators, targets and other information required for assessing the design of the UNDAF, and for making suggestions on refinements where the indicators or targets were not appropriate or measurable. Particular attention was devoted to the Action Plan, which contained the indicators and key actions to be assessed.

During the MTR field mission, the consulting team met with key stakeholders including programme coordinating groups (PCGs), government permanent secretaries (PSs), UN staff and heads of agencies. Semi-structured interviews were used with open-ended questions to maximize input from key stakeholders in government ministries and UN agencies and to assess the appropriateness and quality of methods being used in the implementation and coordination processes. Focus group discussions were held among stakeholders with similar interests,

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<sup>4</sup> *Norms for Evaluation in the UN System*, 2005

primarily the PCGs. Information gathered in the interviews was compared with the assessments obtained through the document review and observations from the focus group discussions. Examining the weight of evidence compiled from reports and interviews, the MTR report was drafted using a process of reflection and analysis.

### **Limitations**

There is no UN handbook for undertaking mid-term reviews at the country programme level. It was necessary to incorporate several established approaches for reviewing progress toward results and for making revisions to the goals, targets and outputs. During the first mission, it was determined that the MTR was taking place too early in the UNDAF implementation process to make a full assessment of development results (Outcome level), as it would be difficult to assess the changes in development conditions. So it was decided that the MTR would focus on reviewing progress at the “Output” level. In addition, the MTR did not put a great deal of focus on assessing specific projects/programmes or on particular UN agencies. Rather it focused on assessing the constructive dialogue in the thematic sectors (the PCGs), the UN’s contribution toward the 3 Outcomes, and the contribution toward national goals and the strategic positioning of the UNCT in Suriname toward “Delivering as One” (DaO).

Another limitation of the review exercise was the limited participation of representatives from vulnerable and marginalized groups. Participation from civil society groups was largely missing from the interview process, so their opinions and voices are largely absent. Interviews with civil society groups were requested but no meetings were organized by the government. To some extent, this is a reflection of the limited nature of engagement with civil society, as civil society groups could have been involved in a number of areas in the implementation process<sup>5</sup>.

## **4.0 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE MTR**

The objective of this section is to summarize assessments in four areas: 1) Relevance and design of the UNDAF, 2) Effectiveness in achievement of results and programmes, 3) Efficiency of operations, communications, coordination and management, and 4) Contribution to higher level UN goals and national priorities.

### **4.1 Relevance and Quality of Design**

Assessment of programme design is particularly important in an MTR because the review process is more about making mid-course corrections due to design issues than assessing performance. This section is divided into two sub-sections: a) Relevance of the UNDAF is assessed against the background of national priorities and policies in 2010/2011 and the continued importance of the objectives during implementation (2012-2016); and b) The quality of design focuses on the intervention logic and the M&E framework.

#### **4.1.1. Relevance**

The design of the 2012-2016 UNDAF followed an iterative process, and involved inputs by a number of UN agencies working in collaboration with their government counterparts. As part of the design process, the UN Country Team (UNCT) undertook a Common Country Assessment (CCA) in 2011, which involved a country-level analytical exercise as recommended in the UNDAF preparatory guidelines.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> For example, the health sector is using NGOs for implementation

<sup>6</sup> The *Guideline* indicates the importance of undertaking country-level analysis using the CCA to ensure “ownership, leadership and full participation of national authorities in all phases of the programming process”. While the CCA per-

The CCA was not approved by the government.<sup>7</sup> In order to complete the design of the UNDAF, the UNCT used the country-level analysis from the 2011 CCA, in conjunction with the main national strategy documents – draft sector plans, draft ministerial plans/strategies, the ‘*Regeringsakkoord*’ 2010 (Government agreement), the President’s ‘Social Contract’, the Statement of Government Policy 2010-2015, and the ‘*Ontwikkelingsplan*’ 2012-2106 (Development Plan or OP).

Programmatically, the UNDAF was designed as a compromise between the realities of the country and the programming orientation of the main UN agencies operating in Suriname (UNDP, PAHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and FAO).<sup>8</sup> The UNDAF was designed to provide support at three distinct levels:

- a) ‘**Downstream**’ programme interventions at the community level and within government institutions (Outcome #1)
- b) ‘**Upstream**’ support involving the development of policies and legislation (Outcome #2)
- c) **Support for data collection** to facilitate evidence-based policy-making (Outcome #3).

Middle-income countries would normally focus on upstream policy level interventions, so this upstream/downstream configuration is an indication of the broad array of support that was needed by Suriname at the time the UNDAF was designed.<sup>9</sup> The downstream programme level interventions were deemed necessary because Suriname has geographic areas and population groups that are marginalized and highly vulnerable, and the intention was to implement pilot projects that could provide inputs for national policies.

Because of capacity weaknesses both within the government and UN agencies, the design took a great deal of time and effort. The process started in 2011/2012 with the UN agencies identifying broad key actions, discussing and comparing them with other UN agencies and relevant government ministries, thinking through how to operationalize them, and then developing them into outputs in the 3 areas: policy, programme and data. The result of this collaborative process was the development of an UNDAF Action Plan (UNDAP), which included outputs, targets per year, indicators and key actions of the lead implementing agencies/government partners. From this collaborative process, the division of labour emerged regarding which UN agency would do what. Agencies working in the same sector started planning together and coherence among the UN agencies was supposed to develop over a period of time.

This iterative approach was a deliberate feature of the Suriname UNDAP, which involved a continuous process of reviewing, updating and revising by PCGs, and senior management in government and UN agencies. This flexible approach was also meant to enhance coherence and coordination among the UN agencies. The intention was to support the government in the process of planning and implementation, where the UNDAF/UNDAP implementation was to be reviewed on an annual basis by the UN and government, assess the targets and discuss how the targets could be adjusted and redefined. The idea was that greater clarity and coherence would emerge during implementation.

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se is not necessary, the analytical contribution of the UNCT is important to “strengthen country analytical capacities, processes and products, and thereby contribute to the articulation of high-quality development objectives and priorities within the UNDAF and the national development plan”: [http://www.undg.org/docs/11096/How-to-Prepare-an-UNDAF-\(Part-I\).pdf](http://www.undg.org/docs/11096/How-to-Prepare-an-UNDAF-(Part-I).pdf)

<sup>7</sup> It is quite likely that the CCA was not approved because of timing issues surrounding the election of a new government rather than a result of the information contained in the CCA

<sup>8</sup> This is not the full list of resident and non-resident agencies with interventions in Suriname.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Upstream’ support involves policy level interventions and ‘downstream’ involves support at the programme and community level.

This collaborative process was much needed by government. And one of the findings of the MTR is that the UNDAF design (and process) was very relevant to the needs of the country, which straddled both MIC status in terms of GDP per capita and LIC criteria in terms of the level of poverty and living conditions in the Interior. In addition, by focusing on education, healthcare and social services, the UNDAF supported the President's "Social Contract", as programmes included a great deal of support to the ministries of Health, Education and Social Affairs and Housing.

During the initial design phase, several important areas of focus were not fully programmed by some UN agencies and their counterpart ministries. The inputs of UNESCO, UN Women and ILO were not incorporated into the UNDAF, even though these organizations have good relationships with their counterpart ministries and have been providing support. For example, UN Women has been supporting the Ministry of Home Affairs with training and policy support concerning gender; ILO has been engaging for some years with the Ministry of Labour and other stakeholders to develop a Decent Work programme; and UNESCO has been executing projects and training through the Ministry of Education. These omissions were from non-resident UN agencies that have limited capacity to cover the entire Caribbean region, and tend to respond after the government sends clear signals that it is ready to work on a particular programme. Hence, in terms of the UNDAF design, the government ministries were not ready to move ahead with many of these areas. Also, following lengthy discussions, the Ministry of Labour recently signaled that it was ready to start the Decent Work Programme in January 2015. And UNESCO has recently provided some cultural heritage/tourism projects for inclusion in the updated UNDAF.

Apart from these delayed programming areas, important thematic areas of youth and livelihoods were not completed. The MTR provides an opportunity for the government and UN agencies to complete the design process, enabling the PCGs and UN agencies to revisit the UNDAF key actions, indicators, and targets and update them. In this respect, to improve the relevance and completeness of the UNDAF, the MTR team is making the following recommendations:

- a) Add a new output for "Livelihood" (Output #11) in the programme level Outcome #1. The rationale for this is based on the fact that there is a need for a "Livelihood output" to meet the government's economic diversification goals and in particular to boost the competitiveness of the informal sector, which at 20.8% is the largest contributor to GDP. This can include a full range of key actions by various UN agencies such as UNESCO's cultural heritage projects (tourism), FAO's projects aimed at enhancing production and income generation and Youth. In addition, a programme level livelihood output will complement output #9 of the policy level Outcome #2
- b) Now that the agreement between government and ILO on Decent and Productive Work has been signed, there is an urgent need to develop a programme and start implementation. Unemployment and especially youth unemployment is one of the major challenges facing development in Suriname. This should be programmed in Output #9 along with Trade Policy.
- c) The output for Youth/Adolescents (Output #10) is very weak, with only two key actions identified. This should be developed into a full joint programme involving a number of relevant UN agencies combining a number of interventions into an "integrated approach", including government priorities such as youth employment and empowerment, skills development, entrepreneurship, etc.
- d) The Trade Policy output (#9) in the policy level Outcome (#2) needs to be programmed to meet the government's economic diversification goals. No key actions have been identified and the only entry is the UN agency (UNDP) and lead government ministry namely the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

#### 4.1.2 Quality

The UNDAF is both a planning tool (UNDAF) and an action plan (UNDAP). It provides a flexible approach but it may not be the ideal tool for country programming because it applies project level tools (LogFrame) to a multi-sectoral, country level approach. It merely aggregates project work up to the country level. Another weakness of the UNDAF approach is that it does not provide a strong prioritizing process, where for example, Suriname's priorities may be lost in a string of 118 key actions, 21 outputs and 11 thematic categories. Nevertheless, the UNDAF is the UN system's primary tool for country programming, combining the disparate programmes of a wide variety of UN agencies working in a number of economic and social sectors.

According to the *Guidelines*, there are a number of critical assessments that should be undertaken when preparing an UNDAF. A great deal of importance is placed on these initial steps in order to get the UNDAF pointed in the right direction. The macro-level assessments (CCA) and strategic planning exercises are intended to assess the capacity of government to lead the consultative and prioritization exercises (involving civil society) and to identify opportunities for capacity building that can be addressed in the programmes.

However, during the design of Suriname's UNDAF, it appears that shortcuts were taken in some critical assessments – the Common Country Assessment (CCA) process was completed but the assessments of the government's capacity and leadership were not rigorous enough. This may have been a critical oversight in the design, because certain levels of capacity and leadership are required to exercise national ownership, and these appear to be in short supply in Suriname. If capacity gaps are identified, the UNCT can design programmes accordingly by developing in-country capacities at individual, institutional and civil society levels.

Hence, although relevant, the quality of Suriname's UNDAF design may have been not been optimal. As described above, the UNDAF design was limited by the programmatic structure of the UN agencies, government capacity and a complicated dichotomy between MIC and LIC economic and social conditions. The resulting design of the UNDAF appeared to be a collection of UN agency programmes folded into a range of thematic categories and outputs, rather than a rigorous design process that was led and owned by government.

The intervention logic of the UNDAF was based on the realities in Suriname at the time, and prompted the need for a dual upstream/downstream programming structure. However, the gaps in government capacity for planning and monitoring its own strategic development interventions should have prompted the need for designing interventions to increase capacity in planning and monitoring, particularly at the sector level, as well boosting the government's capacity to manage multi-sectoral collaboration between ministries. These essential capacity building and institutional development elements appear to be missing from key interventions in the UNDAF.

Also missing is a results focus – focusing on results is a key element in terms of quality of design in country programming. And the UNDAF does not appear to have enhanced the results focus of the government and UN agencies at country level. The UNDAF Action Plan matrix (UNDAP) is rather it is a 'statement of intent' that can be updated to reflect what is actually implemented. The indicators were not fully "SMART" formulated and some were not specific enough to be able to determine whether the results have been achieved or not.

In addition, according to many PCG members, the original UNDAP targets were too ambitious, and they question the feasibility of meeting the outcomes. Consequently, the indicators, targets and results need to be revised to ensure that the PCGs focus on key "results".

In order to improve results, there is a need to re-design and scale down the targets. This can be accomplished through a series of “problem tree analysis” workshops at the PCG level (see section 6.0 for more details). These workshops would help both the government and UN agencies redefine the UNDAF targets and realign them with the goals and targets implied in the government’s Development Plan 2012-2016. Unfortunately, this plan was not accompanied by a results-based action plan. Similarly, the ministries have not developed multi-year sector plans, as their operational plans are formulated on a year-to-year basis. This key element is missing from the UNDAF/UNDAP – helping the government to fill the gap in planning and monitoring. The development of sector plans would strengthen the policy and technical levels of government, and align the efforts of donor agencies with the sector plans and national goals.

It is not realistic to expect the UNDAF to be able to achieve its targets in isolation of government plans. Hence, in order for the UN agencies to help the government enhance its results, there will be a need for a comprehensive RBM system within government to enable it to effectively plan, implement and monitor its programmes. The process of the government establishing a planning and monitoring system and trying to work out a valid results chain with the help of UN agency personnel can be a lengthy one. So it is recommended that the process be started in the second half of the current UNDAF, and continued through the development of the new UNDAF.

In the identification of problem areas and constraints, the MTR team is recommending a number of adjustments in the UNDAF to correct the logical placement of some outputs and key actions, which will help improve the overall contribution of the UNDAF to the country’s Development Plan:

- a) Output #7 of Outcome #2 (*Enhancing national capacity for forestry management and forestry livelihoods in processing non-timber forest products*) involves community level interventions (not policy), so it should be moved to Outcome #1 and placed under the new ‘Livelihood’ output #11.<sup>10</sup>
- b) The new ‘Livelihood’ Output #11 should be completed with a full range of key actions by various UN agencies, such as UNESCO’s cultural heritage projects (tourism), FAO’s projects aimed at enhancing production and income generation, and ILO’s youth employment, among others.
- c) Some thought should be given to whether the REDD+ intervention has been placed in the most appropriate Output (#8, key action #4). Currently it is in the policy Outcome #2, but if the key actions are at the community level, it might be more appropriate to place it under programme Outcome #1 along with the other community-based environmental interventions in Output #8. Like most programs, REDD+ will respond to an overall policy goal (capacity strengthening of NGOs/civil society, human rights, etc.), but its placement in the UNDAP should be based on the direct results of the intervention, whether they will be felt at the community and NGO levels, or the policy level. Generally, in results-based management (RBM) logic, an activity responds to the next level up in the hierarchy, representing the most immediate result and not the ultimate result.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> While many of the ultimate outputs of the national capacity for forestry management are at the policy level (eg., passing of environmental legislation/policy, regulatory enforcement etc.), the majority of interventions are at the programme level, which dictates the placement of the output in RBM terms as the most immediate result in the hierarchy.

<sup>11</sup> Similarly, while the REDD+ is a policy pursuit that will require government policy interventions, the readiness preparation phase involves engagement with the community. This does not preclude the development of a policy level

- d) Outcome #3 (Data) has an implicit link between the collection of data and the need for evidence-based policies. However, the link to the policy Outcome #2 needs to be made more explicit in order to improve the focus of the data being collected and generated. Its key actions and targets should be revised to include links to evidence-based policy-making in the relevant ministries.
- e) To improve the quality of results and targets of the data being collected in Output #2 of Outcome 3 (*Improved national capacity for monitoring development outcomes*), there is a need to introduce a system of project cycle management (PCM) centrally within the government's planning mechanism as well as throughout all sector ministries. There is a need for sector planning, PCM and RBM training. But more than mere capacity building, there is a need to institute a rigorous M&E system at the national and sector levels to monitor the sector plans, the government's Development Plan, and the contribution of donor agency programmes (like the UNDAF) to national goals. Normally, this is the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. However, in Suriname, the functions associated with development planning have been separated from the Planning Bureau, and the capacity of the Bureau is uncertain. As a result, a capacity assessment of the Planning Bureau will have to be undertaken and significant strengthening will be needed before the level of development planning and monitoring can be accomplished. This is described in more detail in section 6.0.
- f) Within the UNDAF, the outcomes involve a combination of interventions in economic and social development and government policy making and capacity building. However, few NGOs have been included in the planning or implementation of UNDAF programs. This shortcoming needs to be addressed because NGOs and CBOs provide the sustainable aspects of social development at the community level, where government programmes do not always reach and are not always included in Suriname's politicized coalition structure.

## **4.2 Effectiveness in Achievement of Results and Programmes**

This section focuses on the highlights and shortfalls in the achievement of results, and identifies a number of enablers, constraints and bottlenecks affecting or promoting progress towards these results. The intention is to flag areas that need to be emphasized and where corrective action can put the UNDAF back on track.

### **4.2.1 Achievements and Constraints by Thematic Sector (PCG)**

The annual reports provide a record of progress of UNDAF outputs by thematic area (PCG). These PCG reports use a traffic light system to indicate the percentage completion and a color code to indicate the level of progress, whether the activity is On-track, Constraint, Completed, etc. Based on the latest information in the Annual Reports, Figure 1 below includes the cumulative progress up to the end of 2014.

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output in the Policy Outcome that will be driven by government policy actions to pursue low carbon development options and reduce emissions.

**Figure 1: Status update of UNDAF Action Plan (2014)**

PCG	Status				
Data		66.6%	16.7%	16.7%	
Health	44%	28.5%	22%	5.5%	
WASH		100%			
Environment		23%	77%		
Governance		84%		16%	
Education	34%	66%			
Agriculture		84%	16%		
Emergencies		100%			
Social Services	5%	60%	35%		

Key	Colour code	
No Progress		No progress made against the target
Constrained		Significant impediments but with some progress
On-track		Progress on-track and target will be met
Met / Completed		Target Met
Discontinued		Target dropped in consultation with partners
Data Not Available		Data not available to report
Not Applicable		Reporting not applicable for the period

The progress in each thematic sector has been quite different. The tables below provide an overview of the progress to date as well as the challenges, key priorities and way forward:

#### Data

Accomplishments	Challenges
✓ All publications for 2012 Census complete	8 Delay in Expert Group to define poverty
✓ Draft Migration Profile for Suriname formulated	8 Need experts in data collection, processing, analyzing, etc
✓ Evaluation workshop for Environment Statistics	8 National Statistics Development Strategy proposal
✓ Launch of Environment Statistics Publication	8 Management of data systems, making use of data for policy development
	<b>Way Forward</b>
✓ MICS 5 survey preparations started: Statics Bureau, Ministries Social Affairs & Health, Health, UNICEF participated in MICS survey design workshop	Develop a statistical section in each Ministry, and make data more available and accessible
✓ Launched SurInfo & CensusInfo	DevInfo 7 training UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA
✓ Launched Suriname MDG 2014 report	Design of intervention (SPARC) to address social data gaps in Suriname

## Health

Accomplishments	Challenges
✓ Safe Motherhood Action Plan	8 Insufficient Human Resources
✓ Obstetric and Neonatal care protocols	8 Limited availability of technical staff and staff with specific expertise
✓ Sexual Reproductive Health policy	
✓ IYCF+ Communication Strategy	8 Insufficient communication/information sharing within and between agencies
✓ Non-Communicable Diseases policy plan 2012-2016	
✓ Moengo Youth Action plan	<b>Way Forward</b>
✓ Moengo Youth Health fair	Human resource planning: qualified staff
✓ National Strategic Plan for HIV 2015-2019	Financial resource mobilization for certain expertise needed: incentives; salaries
✓ Prevention Mother to Child Transmission	Increased coordination & communication
✓ Preparedness & response for Chikungunya & Ebola	
✓ Tobacco Law approved	Multi-stakeholder & Health in all Policies approaches

## WASH

Accomplishments/Lessons Learned	Challenges
✓ Partnerships with UNICEF, Ministry Regional Development, UNDP, Engineering firm and Rotary for project in Apetina	8 Poor communication between partners led to uncertainty and distress in communities
	8 Funding delays impacted on progress
✓ Partnership in the Interior with PAHO, ministry Regional Development and NGOs	8 Timely completion of toilets by villagers
	8 Unsatisfactory cooperation with MNR due to internal changes/transition affected inputs
✓ Documentation of WASH for awareness best practices and resource mobilization	<b>Way Forward</b>
✓ Funding for WASH in school Apetina	Funding new water system in Apetina school
✓ Use of toilets in villages has increased, reducing the risk of pollution and diseases	Use document for funding and awareness
	Awareness movie & class assignments to be shown in schools in Upper Suriname River (1480 pupils)
✓ Successful meetings between partners establish structure and standardization in construction of toilets in villages	Printed material to promote WASH behavioral change

## Governance

Accomplishments/Lessons Learned	Challenges
✓ Good cooperation with Parliament and ministry Justice and Police, signed longstanding agreements	8 No clarity from Government on UN assistance to UPR
	8 No clarity on UN assistance for Elections
✓ Network of female politicians set up, training and mentoring programme to coach peers, increase awareness of participation women in politics	8 Shortage of national expertise on Human Rights. UNDP has to work with the same consultants with limited possibility to critique their work. Need Government to promote human rights education.
	<b>Way Forward</b>
✓ UNDP partnered with 2 CSOs for Democracy Month (October)	Continue working with Parliament to increase participation of women in politics
	Agree on UN's role in Universal Periodic Report and Election processes
	Work with civil society actors on public education programs for the upcoming elections in 2015

## Education

Accomplishments/Strengths	Challenges
✓ Implemented in-service teacher training through Nucleus center to provide quality onsite support and guidance to teachers in interior primary schools	8 Delay on the realization of the AWP
	8 Delay in program implementation
	8 Unclear role & undefined tasks in Ministry of Education Programme Coordinating Unit
✓ Children's motivation for language & math increased significantly in 5 pilot schools; and understanding of Dutch increased with interactive software	8 Insufficient and unreliable data in education sector
	<b>Way Forward</b>
✓ Assessments led to ICT policy recommendations	Rapid evaluation of "I believe in you"
✓ Increased collaboration among Ministry of Education, UNICEF and UNESCO in education	Develop standards/criteria for Child Friendly approach, schools, budget, material, etc.
✓ MINOV, RKBO (Catholic denomination) and EBG (Christian denomination) educational support staff were trained to make regular monitoring, onsite support and guidance visits to CAL pilot schools	Conduct Child Friendly, Computer Aided Learning assessments
	Discuss progress with Basic Education Improvement Programme project & ICT unit
	Study situation & activities of Special Education Bureau
✓ Increased awareness of the importance of national comparable education statistics	Develop and implement a strategy and plan on reform of Education Management Information System
✓ Discussed collaboration among national stakeholders and international partners in education to improve quality of statistics	

## Agriculture

Accomplishments/Lessons Learned	Challenges
✓ Livestock and Fisheries legislation enable smooth project implementation	8 Delay in implementation of ruminants project due to the type of the project (regional)
✓ Improved technology and marketing for small ruminants	<b>Way Forward</b>
	Assign adequate HR to projects, especially regional ones
✓ Increased capacity of staff and stakeholders in post-harvest losses, GAP, IPM, crop protection	Assign adequate human resources and timely submission to parliament
✓ REBYC I implemented, management tools are operational i.e. vessel monitoring, TED	Regional pesticide registration, management database, financing and communication strategy
✓ Improved knowledge and public awareness of obsolete pesticides, & updated legislation	Assign more research to post harvest losses to spread knowledge keep project on schedule
<u>Recommendations</u> : Capacity building for PCG and JSC to improve program management (training in planning, monitoring, evaluation, reporting)	Continued dedication and ownership from the government and the UN with reference to the One-UN approach
Organize PCG workshops with agendas and outputs	Focal points prepare presentation, invite FAO
Increased effort by government to get all new and updated legislation on the agenda of the parliament	Government should review and set priorities with national and international requirements in mind

## Emergencies

Accomplishments/Lessons Learned	Challenges
✓ A multi-sectoral approach is the standard way of getting things done in case of emergencies	8 Lack of human resources as most are also assigned to other duties
✓ Communicate to the parties involved whenever opportunities for capacity strengthening are identified	Way Forward
	Continue to train local resources in all aspects of emergencies

## Social Services

Accomplishments/Lessons Learned	Challenges	
✓ Passing of social protection bills, Basic Health Care, Minimum Wage & Pension scheme	8 Delays in implementation of UNDP Capacity Strengthening program: differing views and lengthy procedures	
✓ Finalizing Child Protection System program	8 Delays in implementation of Child Helpline Programs	
✓ Collaboration with other Ministries and other institutions in the Moengo pilot	8 Change of financial procedure (HACT System) in UNDAF 2014; caused lag in implementation	
✓ The need for technical and juridical support	8 Human resource and capacity	
✓ Need for decision-making & assistance from High Level (PS/Ministers).	Way Forward	
Priorities	Training of daycare personnel to meet standards of Institutional Child Care Legislation (Raamwet Opvanginstellingen), and promotion of it	
Ownership & policymaking in programs		
Reporting & guidance in financial procedure		Operational Unit perpetrators guidance
Implementation of MICS 5 survey		Availability of Asyda reports on children in frequent contact with Justice
Setting up the unit perpetrators guidance		Approval of Child Ombuds Institute Law by Parliament
Finalization of the domestic violence intake form		
Youth data gathering system of Justice and Police		

## Environment

Accomplishments/Lessons Learned	Challenges
✓ Project document for Ecosystem Based Adaptation developed	8 Limited availability of local technical experts
✓ Management, Monitoring and Training Plan for sustainable capacity strengthening in the Bigi Pan coastal protected area developed	8 Limited access to information inter and intra government institutes and other local organizations.
✓ 4 new CBOs registered (rural and interior areas) and strengthened in capacity to carry out sustainable livelihoods and income generation activities.	8 Lack of clear and timely guidance on institutional arrangement for project management
✓ Finalization of the National Climate Change Action Plan, approval of the Suriname Readiness Preparation Proposal (R-PP)	
✓ Draft National Situation Report (NSR) on Sound Management Chemicals (SMC) was prepared	
Priorities	Way Forward
Broader segments of local community need to be engaged and participate	Increase and optimize information and knowledge exchange
Sources for additional funding and strengthening of individual capacities (personnel, expertise)	Maintain and increase stakeholder involvement and participation

Integral approach to local communities' actions and national policies and strategies, including required cross cutting capacities.	
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**Gender**

In 2014, the Government and the UN took the decision to establish a Gender PCG. This PCG would look at how gender as a crosscutting programme principle is to be mainstreamed in programme and project planning and implementation. The establishment of the PCG is a work in progress. The Gender focal points for the UNDAF-UNDAP have been identified and capacity building is on-going, but the Gender Strategic Plan has been stalled. A Gender work plan was developed for 2013 and the implementation of this Plan needs to be evaluated.

**4.2.2 Summary of Enablers and Constraints**

In spite of the above accomplishments, the consensus among PCGs and UN agencies is that progress has been slow and implementation of the UNDAF is behind schedule. A number of enablers and bottlenecks have been identified.

***Enablers***

PCGs: One of the primary enablers of the UNDAF/UNDAP has been the PCGs, which introduced a multi-sectoral, multidisciplinary approach into the relevant programmes and ministries. The inter-ministerial and multi-sectoral membership of the PCGs created a process of dialogue within and between ministries, where members discuss objectives, commonalities, and other issues. To a limited extent this is breaking down the “silo approach” practiced within the sector ministries. However, this collaboration appears to be limited to particular programmes and individual focal points appointed to the PCGs. Although this was a unanimous comment made by all PCG members interviewed, there are different degrees to the extent this multi-sectoral approach is practiced in each PCG.<sup>12</sup>

Permanent Secretaries (PSs) Meeting: The meeting of PSs prior to the JSC has emerged as a key enabler, providing government officials with an opportunity to discuss matters internally in order to come up with a “One Government” approach prior to the JSC.

Policies: A few accomplishments at the policy level deserve mention: The passing of the social protection and child protection laws (Institutional Child Care, Basic Health Care, Minimum Wage and Pension scheme) can be seen as pillars in the government’s ‘social contract’.

***Bottlenecks***

Bottlenecks have been identified at all three levels of the UNDAF (policy, implementation and data) that are hampering implementation and affecting achievement of outputs.

Policy bottleneck: There are a number of bottlenecks in relation to the UNDAF’s policy and legislative outputs, where policies and laws are being drafted in a number of ministries, following which they have to pass through the Council of Ministers and the legislative machinery<sup>13</sup>. This points to either a lack of capacity in processing policies and legislation or a commitment/

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<sup>12</sup> For example, the Health PCG operates at a more technical level, focusing on health matters rather than practicing a high degree of multi-sectoral coordination, so it would be difficult for the health sector to undertake a more multisectoral approach, apart from particular targets which would include other ministries (such a multi-sectoral approach was practiced for the implementation of the Tobacco legislation)

<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Justice and Police, State Advisory Board and the National Assembly

prioritization issue within the senior levels of government. Some documents are getting delayed because of capacity issues, as they are prepared at varying degrees of standards, some by lawyers and some by consultants, some of which have to be rewritten numerous times. In addition, there appears to be an issue surrounding government priority, where the passage of laws is dependent on priorities within the State Advisory Board, as some laws pass relatively quickly and others linger for years. As a result, many of the UNDAF-supported policy and legislation outputs are stuck somewhere along the policy chain between the line ministry and the National Assembly. While it is recognized that it may take time for a particular ministry or the Cabinet to determine the importance and priority of these policy and legislative issues, the delays are having an impact on the UNDAF's progress towards its achievements. This bottleneck needs to be alleviated if the UNDAF is to achieve its targets.

*Change in leadership:* Change at the political level in some ministries (Permanent Secretaries and Ministers) has created a void in leadership and decision-making at the policy level, which results in constraints at the technical and implementation levels, which are having a direct impact on the implementation of UNDAF/UNDAP programmes. Leadership and decision-making constraints are most evident in 3 ministries – Education; Labour, Technological Development and Environment (ATM); and Home Affairs, where changes have occurred multiple times.

*Lack of capacity:* The primary reason for the lack of progress in programme implementation is because of constraints on the government's side, where the ministries have low capacity to implement programmes. Lack of human resources and capacity issues were mentioned by all PCGs, particularly at the technical levels. Also, intermittent changes in senior management at the decision-making level puts additional strain on the limited technical capacity, which is delaying decisions on policy and implementation of projects and programmes. In addition, in relation to UN agency practices, several ministries (Health, Agriculture) have indicated that the tendency for UN agencies to provide short-term consultants is not always helpful, as the ministries don't always have the in-house capacity to follow up with the work suggested by the short-term experts. Rather, what these ministries need is long-term technical assistance.

*Absence of sector planning and monitoring:* The absence of sector planning in the ministries is one of the most critical bottlenecks hampering implementation of UNDAF/UNDAP projects and programmes. At the implementation level, ministry officials and PCG members do not have sector plans to follow, and as a result are uncertain about operational priorities, annual targets and multi-annual budgets. In addition, the ad hoc and personality-driven nature of development planning in ministries and across government creates greater uncertainty and a lack of transparency. To overcome these bottlenecks, there is a need to develop strategic/sector plans in each ministry, which will create a greater level of stability and continuity in the planning and delivery of government services. Planning and monitoring systems are lacking at both the central level (Planning Bureau), and at the sector level (although some ministries have cobbled together plans out of necessity). As a result, strengthening is needed at a number of levels: 1) developing sector plans in line ministries, 2) establishing an M&E system within the central government planning mechanism (possibly through strengthening of the Planning Bureau), and 3) establishing a cadre of technical M&E officers in each ministry.

*Parallel Structures:* A number of parallel structures were created under the President's Office after the new government took office – Task Forces and State Advisors in Education, Adolescent/Youth, Health and Environment. The establishment of these parallel structures was related to the focus of the government in certain areas, and was intended to support the line ministries in the development and implementation of policy. Some of these Task Forces have been dismantled, leaving the ministries to decide on and implement policy themselves. However

others are still active, which are deemed necessary to circumvent the inefficiencies within particular ministries. Because of a lack of capacity in some ministries, there is constant consultation with the President's Office on policy decisions, which takes time and hampers implementation. In general, parallel structures often deplete the limited human resources in ministries, which weakens their ability to implement projects and deliver government services. Whereas it is recognized that parallel structures are a reality in Suriname, there should be clarity on the respective roles of both the ministries and the parallel structures.<sup>14</sup>

***Constraints at the Output level are leading to non-achievement of Outcomes***

From the above bottlenecks and constraints, the impact on UNDAF results starts to become more evident. Constraints in the completion of the outputs are having an impact on the achievement of outcomes. PCGs and UN agencies will have to start asking some probing questions such as: What will it take to improve the conditions for the outputs that will lead to the achievement of the outcomes in the 3 UNDAF areas (policy, programmes and data)? To answer this question, support is required at three levels: leadership, management and use of data for evidence-based policy making.

***Linkages between Policy, Programme and Data Outcomes***

Implementation of the UNDAF is based on a three-pronged approach that is being applied to sectoral development processes under separate Outcomes – collecting data for policy development (Outcome 3), developing policies (Outcome 2) and programme implementation (Outcome 1). For example, in child protection, the information collection process involved a mapping study, which led to the development of recommendations in an Action Plan, which when approved will be implemented and monitored using the Action Plan. Many areas followed a similar approach of assessment, development of action plan and implementation. While this approach appears logical, the difficulty is that the three outcomes cannot work in parallel, as there is a time sequence that involves going through the process of collecting data for policy development, developing policy and then implementation. Thus, each component is dependent on progress in other areas, and if there is a delay in one area, other areas are affected. Thus, many of the outcomes are constrained due to a range of issues, such as capacity issues and lack of government decision and funding.

The immediate issue involves how to get the UNDAF back on track. In terms of UNDAF programming, there are implicit linkages between the three Outcome levels (policy, programme and data). These need to be made more explicit to ensure the UNDAF focuses increasingly on achieving the outcome-level results during the final two (2) years of implementation. The following points provide examples of how to enhance implementation of the UNDAF:

**Outcome #1:** The project level pilots in Education have led to the identification of policy level initiatives that may need further support from UN agencies. The programme level outputs of Outcome #1 need to focus on improving management and delivery of government services. The UN agencies should consider including NGOs and CBOs in the implementation of projects and programmes, particularly in the Interior so as to strengthen the sustainability of community-based structures that support the marginalized groups closer to home.

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<sup>14</sup> Better Aid Effectiveness: Progress in Implementing the Paris Declaration (OECD 2011) recommends avoiding parallel structures because they often undermine efforts to strengthen core government institutions. Note: Suriname is not a signatory to the Paris Declaration.

**Outcome #2:** Some policy level interventions have led to the need for revised programme level support that is being developed under Outcome #1. For example, after preparing a series of white papers, the Ministry of Agriculture found that there were gaps in the operational level of their programmes and activities. This realization resulted from ministry officials thinking through the policy interventions and realizing that they needed support at the project level in order to implement the policies (e.g. programme for small ruminants). In order to improve the policy level outputs, there is a need to build leadership at the senior levels of government.

**Outcome #3:** The data group has been focused on gathering data for the publication of various reports and surveys, such as the MDG report (which are improving). However, the collection of data should be leading to the development of evidence-based policies, such as the outputs being supported under Outcome #2. This link needs to be improved.

### **Summary**

Considering the cumulative progress to date, one might assume that the planning process was a bit ambitious and unrealistic in its activities and targets. However, this is not the entire story. During the design phase, both the government and UN agencies were in agreement on the interventions identified. However, the designers did not fully take into account the government's capacity to implement. Thus responsibility for any lack of progress during the first 3 years of implementation has to be shared between the UN and government. While the capacity for planning, implementation and monitoring functions within the government's central and sectoral ministries may have been lacking, the UNDAF should have included the necessary capacity building and institutional strengthening elements to accommodate for these weaknesses. In the absence of this, the UNDAF is having a more difficult time implementing and achieving what it set out to do.

#### **4.2.3 M&E System**

The M&E system involves a "traffic light" indicator to monitor the achievement of UNDAF outputs on an annual basis through progress reports. This system involves a 7-stage colour coded designation that identifies whether an output is 'on-track', 'constraint', 'completed', 'no progress', 'discontinued' or 'data not available'. The reporting system provides an indication of the status of progress at the output level, identifies constraints and makes suggestions on where adjustments are needed.

However, the MTR team observed inaccuracies in reporting where reports tended to emphasize accomplishments first and foremost, whereas constraints affecting implementation were grouped together at the end of the report. As a result, it is difficult to identify what has not been achieved in relation to the targets or why. For example, the reporting matrix may show a "green light" indicating that a particular output is "on track", but often key pieces of legislation had not been passed or there was no budget to implement, which should have indicated that the output was "constrained". To be clear, progress reports should be more in depth on what happened in a particular activity in relation to the targets, and they should record the rationale for any changes in targets, as this may be an indication of a design flaw or lack of progress toward the objective. Generally, for monitoring and reporting purposes, recording what was not achieved will often lead to the identification of constraints and bottlenecks.

This type of “activity-based reporting” is understandable because the selected indicators were not always “SMART”<sup>15</sup> and because there was no clear criteria to indicate which colour code to select for various levels of progress. Plus there was no logical sequencing of activities into a hierarchy of achievement. As indicated in the design section, the UNDAF Action Plan is merely a statement of intent, and is not fully based on RBM principles, which would specify a logical flow of activities in a particular sequence.

In summary, the traffic light indicator works well for an M&E system, but training is needed for PCG members responsible for completing the reports. In addition to training, it will be necessary to identify criteria for using the M&E system in order to adopt a uniform approach. This can be developed as part of a government M&E system.

Another option to consider, because government ministries operate on the basis of annual budgets and plans, the UNDAF should adopt a similar annual planning and monitoring system. Introducing a system of annual work plans (AWPs) would make it easier to track activities and outputs on a yearly basis, and simplify the monitoring process, in addition to aligning it with the government’s annual planning cycle. It is understood that the UNDAF is in the process of developing annual targets, which are listed on the progress matrix as key priorities for the respective year – which can function as an AWP.

#### **4.3 Efficiency in Operations, Communication, Coordination and Management**

This section examines the different levels of management, coordination and communication within the UNDAF, both among the UN agencies and between the UN and government. This involves assessing the various management structures and processes for coordination including the PCGs, Permanent Secretaries, JSC, UN agencies and the UNCT to identify what has worked, what has not, and why.

In order to consider whether the UNDAF is taking the right steps and going in the right direction, it is necessary to look at the structures for communication within the individual UN agencies, between UN agencies and the role of the RCO, as well as complementarity, coherence, joint management, alignment and integrated reporting

##### **UN System**

The UNDAF is an inter-agency planning tool, and communication and collaboration occurs through the established coordination structures managed by the UN agencies, PCGs and JSC. Suriname’s UNDAF did not include any joint programmes, and instead was designed around the notion of “joint programming”, where individual UN agencies developed their programmes independently. Coherence was supposed to emerge out of the dialogue between agencies, where groups of agencies working in the same sector (gender, health, education) were encouraged to plan and coordinate their programmes together in an attempt to avoid overlapping roles. This collaborative process continued during implementation, as the intention was that more clarity and collaboration would emerge during implementation – through the PCGs and JSC.

Coordination of the UN agencies in Suriname is provided through the UN Country Team (UNCT), which consists of a small, unified group of agency heads that display a lot of goodwill toward each other, and collaborate and cooperate at the programme level.

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<sup>15</sup> Specific, measurable, achievable in a cost effective way, relevant for the program, and timely

However, beyond the UNDAF, the agencies do not have many shared frameworks, apart from informal working arrangements around specific programmes.

Some UN agencies felt that there would be better coordination if there were more financial incentives to develop joint programmes. The absence of joint programmes appears to be mainly due to a lack of joint funding mechanisms (such as a “One Fund”), because each agency raises funds in a different way. There are some appropriate interventions that would benefit from joint programmes (e.g. Youth), however without these joint funds, many UN agencies are reluctant to pool their own funding into joint programmes. Somehow, UN agencies have to be encouraged to mobilize resources specifically for joint programmes.

Although the UN is playing a very supportive role in Suriname, the MTR has revealed that the tendency for UN agencies to work within their specialized mandates (and global and regional programmes) can cause difficulties for government ministries. For example, the Ministry of Health expressed that working with 3 UN agencies (PAHO, UNICEF and UNFPA) in the implementation of their programmes can be a challenge as each agency has its own mandate, procurement procedures, reporting and financial arrangements. As mentioned by one Ministry official, “coordination and coherence under the One UN system is more like three UNs”. The time-consuming processes involve numerous meetings and forms, which overloads the systems within the Ministry, where qualified staff is already spread thin. So, from this Ministry’s perspective, there needs to be better coordination of UN agencies that are engaged thematically in a country programme, and the UN agency mandates may need to be modified to suit the special circumstances of Suriname

This will have implications for coordination and management of UN programmes that may involve adjusting the tendency to provide short-term technical assistance in favour of longer-term experts. The UN system is very flexible and can tailor its programme to a range of countries in order to provide what the country needs. Because Suriname is an upper middle-income country, the new arrangements may have to include greater government cost-sharing for priority social programmes and more direct interventions in the interior involving civil society and NGOs.

Considering the strategic participation of the UN in Suriname, there have been some good examples of collaboration among UN agencies, managed through government ministries. For example, the Tobacco legislation was championed by the Ministry of Health and involved multi-sectoral collaboration with valuable technical assistance provided by the resident UN agencies, particularly PAHO and FAO. Also, UNICEF and UNDP have been able to raise a great deal of funding for Suriname – although there are significant bottlenecks when it comes to implementation and disbursement of funding.

To put the UN system in perspective, while the technical assistance is valued by the government, the reality is that the UN finances a relatively small programme in comparison to the bilateral agencies and the development banks. As such, the UN system is not a very important development partner in terms of providing financial resources. Nevertheless, the UN has a particular comparative advantage that includes providing access to a global network of technical experts, knowledge, international standards and conventions, neutrality, and a trusted partner for the government.

## **Government**

Coordination within the government involves examining the roles and practices of the JSC, PCGs, sector ministries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA), particularly its role in donor coordination, and the parallel structures established under the President's Office.

### **Joint Government and UN Steering Committee (JSC)**

The highest decision making authority for the UNDAF/UNDAP is the JSC, which is comprised of government permanent secretaries (PSs) and heads of UN agencies. The original intention of the JSC was to act as a forum for discussion between government and UN agencies and provide policy guidance on matters pertaining to the UNDAF's alignment with national development priorities. However, since the establishment of the meeting of Permanent Secretaries in January 2014, the role of the JSC has changed. Now, the government discusses important issues internally beforehand in the PS meeting, and the JSC functions as a rubber stamp for reviewing the annual PCG reports.

The JSC meeting provides an opportunity for all agencies and national partners to interact and review their contributions to the achievement of national development goals relevant to the UNDAP. In order to revive the deliberation between government and UN agencies, the MTR is recommending that the JSC re-establish itself as a forum for high-level discussion among government and UN decision makers to have an in depth discussions on priorities, bottlenecks and challenges, at least once in the annual cycle. The January JSC involves a presentation of the previous year's progress, so the July JSC meeting is used as a mid-year review to discuss implementation challenges and to take corrective action.

### **Permanent Secretaries' Meeting**

Established in January 2014, the Permanent Secretaries' meeting provides an opportunity for government to have internal discussions prior to the JSC meeting. This is an important addition to the UNDAF coordination structure as it provides an opportunity for government to exercise strong leadership and ownership over the UNDAF by preparing a consolidated "One Government" response to the UN agencies. However, as indicated above, since the establishment of the PS Forum, PSs no longer feel the need to participate in the JSC, and hence UN Agency Heads no longer have a forum to deliberate and engage with PSs on important issues.

### **Programme Coordination Structure (PCGs and OWGs)**

The Programme Coordination Groups (PCGs) are responsible for managing the dialogue process and for meeting the UNDAF outputs. The PCG structure parallels the "thematic" group structure that the government used before the UNDAF. Because PCGs are constituted of UN technical officers and national counterparts/technical officers from implementation partner institutions, they are effective for providing multidisciplinary and multi-sectoral cooperation and coordination within the thematic groups and among the various sector ministries. However, not all PCGs are operating at the same level of effectiveness. Some PCGs find it difficult to make decisions, because of a lack of leadership in some ministries. For example, since 2011 the Ministry of Education has had 3 Ministers and 4 PSs<sup>16</sup>. This has led to a lack of discussion on important issues, hampered decision making and implementation and created a lack of cooperation among partners. Because of leadership issues, many PCGs find it difficult to move forward and communicate key actions for implementation of programmes.

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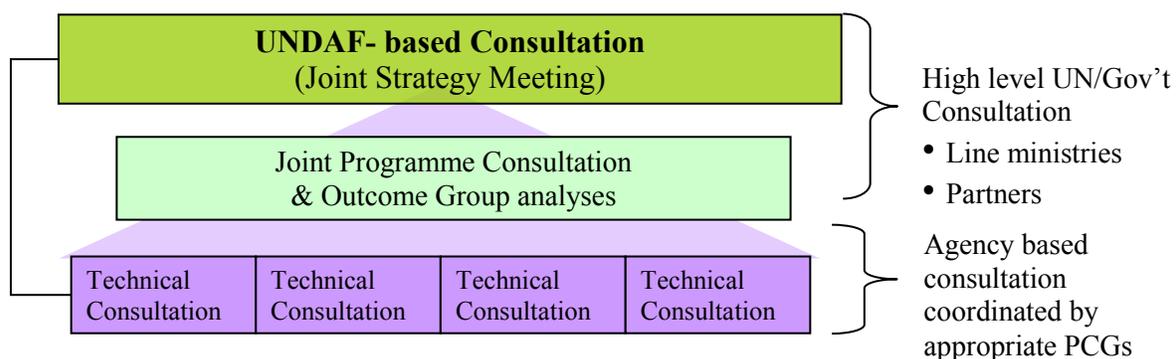
<sup>16</sup> If acting PSs are counted, this number increases to 6.

In general, members feel that the PCG structure is working, but implementation is becoming a problem, as there is limited human resource capacity (both within the UN and Government) and decision-making is centralized in many government agencies. In addition, some PCG members raised a concern that they have to sit on a number of UNDAF meetings – indicating that overloading staff capacity and frequency of UNDAF meetings was becoming a problem.

Currently, there is a gap in coordination and management – implementation at the PCG level is constrained, and deliberation of important issues is not occurring at the JSC level. One alternative would be to establish Outcome Working Groups (OWGs), which may be more inclined to focus on bottlenecks at the output level, and alleviate constraints that are affecting achievement of outcomes. For example, analysis of agency reports by outcome groups could provide an opportunity for UN agencies to collectively assess convergence of agency contributions and overall progress towards UNDAF outcomes. Thematic group analysis may be useful in particular ministries that are experiencing implementation delays, e.g. Education, Home Affairs regarding Gender and Social Services. At the UNCT level, OWGs could provide a forum to establish coherence among UN agencies. Outcome groups could use a revamped M&E framework as an operational tool to report on a regular basis to the UNCT and the JSC. The ideal option would be to revive the JSC as a forum for high-level deliberation. If this is not possible, important issues could be discussed in OWGs. The experience of implementing UNDAFs in the South Pacific was that outcome level analysis provided the UNCT with valuable input for the JSC meetings in the following areas (see Figure 1 below)<sup>17</sup>:

- Changes in broad planning assumptions, risks and emerging opportunities
- Continued relevance of UNDAF and CP outcomes to national priorities and broader country context
- Corresponding adjustments to UNDAF and CP outcomes
- New opportunities for convergence/synergies across programmes, joint programmes and/or M&E activities.
- Necessary revisions to programme approach, cross-cutting strategies, partnerships, resource allocations and the UNDAF M&E Plan.

**Figure 1: Structure of Annual Reviews in Fiji & Samoa**



<sup>17</sup> Source: Pacific UNDAF M&E Project Initiation Document, 2008, and UNDAF Annual Review Guidelines

### **Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)**

In general, the government exercises ownership of the UNDAF through the JSC and PCGs, and through the participation of the sector ministries – all of which MoFA attempts to coordinate. However, there is no formal government-led donor coordination platform and no annual donor report, both of which are needed to share information on projects/programmes and ODA flows. MoFA has tried to fill the gap left after the dismantling of the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation. However, the new system is not ideal as there is no overall interlocutor to monitor donor activity, and the current process is very informal and ad hoc. Currently, the Joint Desk in the Ministry of Finance and the Central Bank coordinates the development banks (IDB, Islamic Development Bank and Caribbean Development Bank), and MoFA coordinates the UN system and bilateral agencies. Usually, as a line ministry, Foreign Affairs would be responsible for diplomatic relations and South-South cooperation, but not ODA or technical assistance. In addition, it has been difficult for MoFA to monitor the Development Plan and capture the flow of donor funding. These functions are normally the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance and/or Development Planning, where MoF will focus on financial issues and Development Planning will focus on programme issue.

### **Sector Ministries and Parallel Structures**

As indicated above, government ministries have not been preparing sector plans or medium term strategies. Most ministries have annual operational budgets, and some ministries have reverted to updating old sector plans from previous years. Also, there appears to be a lack of coordination and communication between the line ministries and the parallel structures created in the President's Office. Within this complicated structure, it is often difficult for focal points to share information between ministries, as some ministries are reluctant to release information to other ministries or to the MoFA. Information has to flow from the technical level to the PS level and back to the technical level. Sometimes when PCG members are requesting information, they are told that those responsibilities have been transferred to the President's Office. In some sectors information flowing through the PCGs has to take a circuitous route because decisions are made by the President's Office (Environment), or in the case of Adolescents/Youth PCGs have to consult with six different ministries including the Ministry of Sports and Youth. Hence, the process of consultation within the line ministries or coming to a unanimous decision approved by the President's Office takes time. In an attempt to accommodate this structure, some sector ministries are consulting focal points from the President's Committee.

In examining options for future communication and coordination, it appears that the current mechanisms and structures are appropriate (PCGs, JSC), but some fine-tuning is needed in the management of the dialogue, the selection of targets and the monitoring of results. In the area of government/UN dialogue, the JSC is the forum for important deliberations, and the UN agencies need to be involved in those discussions. At the level of PCGs, there is a need to re-focus on achievable targets with the help of problem tree analysis workshops. Finally, in the area of planning and monitoring, robust sector planning and M&E systems are needed to ensure a focus on the results targeted in the ministries' sector plans and the Development Plan. The JSC meetings for 2015 will be an ideal opportunity to undertake a review of progress to date, consider how the UNDAF is meeting the government's Development Plan, and identify how it can support the sector planning and M&E systems that are needed to align UN support with national priorities, as well as considering the priorities for 2015/16 and beyond.

#### **4.4 Higher Level UN and Government Goals**

##### **a. Delivering as One**

Since 2005 the UNCT in Suriname and the key partners in the government have been working together to enhance UN coordination and coherence at the country level in support of national priorities. Efforts culminated with the preparation of the first CCPAP for 2008 – 2011, which represented the first “One UN Programme” for Suriname. In June 2008, a high level meeting with the government and UN was held solidifying “Delivering as One” (DaO) processes.

The first UNDAF for Suriname was developed for the period 2012-2016, and included an Action Plan (UNDAP). These documents were aligned with the policy framework of the government installed in 2010, and seeks to contribute to the national development objectives set out in the *Ontwikkelingsplan 2012-2016* (Development Plan) concluded by the government in December 2011.<sup>18</sup>

There are two elements to the DaO approach – programme and operations – and it is evident that Suriname has gaps in both. Operationally, the DaO approach in Suriname involves a combination of resident and non-resident UN agencies, with the UNCT comprised of 4 resident and 7 non-resident agencies, and a non-resident Resident Coordinator. Three (3) of the resident UN agencies operate out of the common premises “UN House” (UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP). On the programme side, there are no joint programmes, which usually require incentives such as a “One Fund” because individual UN agencies are often reluctant to pool their own resources into joint programmes. So, while the UNDAF/UNDAP is operating as “One Program”, the “One Budget” and “One Operation” have not been operationalized.

In developing the Suriname UNDAF, the idea was to focus on the programme side first and fix the operational processes later. Hence, the UNDAF was based on the concept of “joint programming”, where individual UN agencies folded their programmes into 3 outcomes, 11 thematic categories, 21 outputs, and 118 key actions. Within the division of labour, each agency has different areas of responsibility and areas of work. Some agencies tend to programme everything through the UNDAF, while others only programme when they need to collaborate on a multisectoral platform. For example, UNICEF programmes all their projects through the UNDAF, while PAHO uses the global agendas for health, climate change, environment, etc. and programmes most of their activities outside the UNDAF through their own programme. A third set of agencies use the UNDAF joint programming structure because of limitations within their agency structure or a lack of human capacity or financial resources. UNAIDS for example is a standing “joint programme” rather than a UN agency, and they recognize the need for a multi-sectoral approach that relies on a division of labour among resident UN agencies. Finally, some agency projects are not included in the UNDAF at all (UNEP).

Within this flexible approach, programmatic coherence tends to occur through the implementation process. This structure delivers its coherent approach using a multi-sectoral framework focusing on the broad areas of poverty alleviation and inequities. And, in Suriname the level of coherence within the DaO system has evolved to suit the realities of the country, which involve fairly small programmes hosted by a few resident and non-resident agencies in a country that needs both upstream and downstream interventions. However this approach is limited to the nature of the dialogue that occurs at the technical level (PCGs) and the policy level (JSC).

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<sup>18</sup> Delivering as one UN in Suriname, July 2009; Suriname is not officially registered yet as a DaO country

There was an underlying assumption that implementation of the DaO would lead to increased efficiency of the UN at the country level by reducing transaction costs, and increasing cohesion among UN agencies, emphasizing the contribution of the DaO to development results. Within the context of the MTR, there are a number of questions that have to be asked to determine the UNDAF's impact on DaO. First, we have to consider whether the UNDAF process has promoted greater coherence in the UN system's programme and operations. Here, assuming that coherence and integration mean better communication within the UNCT, then there is some evidence that the UNDAF process is achieving this. The UNDAF formulation process provided an opportunity for intensive internal discussion within UN agencies and between the UN and government; and this dialogue has continued during implementation. Also, there is evidence to suggest that the UNDAF is having some effect on ensuring that the UN's support is more coherent and integrated and leads to greater use of joint programming. This is a common finding in evaluations of other UNDAFs, where individual UN agencies and groups of agencies were engaged in ongoing policy dialogue and efforts to enhance coherence during the implementation process. One study speculated that the *implementation process* may therefore be a more useful vehicle for improving coherence than the application of the UNDAF for new UN systems and procedures, and speculated that this was perhaps due to strong inter-personal relationships and trust, the leadership of the RC and support from the RCO.<sup>19</sup> This appears to be the case in Suriname, where the *implementation process* (multisectoral dialogue) has been more effective than the *results* (accomplishments). Certainly, some government ministries treat the UNDAF process as if it was a UN "project" or a training exercise for PCGs, rather than a framework for cooperation and collaboration.

Second, we have to consider the development of joint programmes (JPs), as opposed to joint programming. It is a reality of the UN system that agencies need to have an incentive to create JPs. For example, Suriname's Nutrition Plan came out of an MDG fund, which encourage agencies to engage in joint programmes. However, these "One funds" have been decreasing and it is very competitive to obtain funds from pooled funds such as the MDTF and MPTF<sup>20</sup>. In Suriname, the DaO system has some distance to go before the agencies agree to pool their resources through joint fundraising. In the meantime, the agencies will tend to focus on "joint programming".

Third, has the UNDAF reduced duplication of UN activities? It is unclear whether the UNDAF has reduced duplication. However, it is clear is that agency programmes are becoming more coordinated with similar programmes of other agencies. Agencies are designing their programmes, and then during the process of identifying key actions and implementation, they are communicating and collaborating with other UN agencies.

Fourth, has the UNDAF reduced transaction costs? The evidence suggests that the UNDAF might have increased programmatic transactions because designing and reporting are additional tasks. Also, each UN agency is responsible for monitoring and evaluating its own programme outputs and outcomes. UNDAF programming requirements have therefore been an additional cost to agency programming at the country level, rather than a process that has substituted for programming processes within the individual agencies.

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<sup>19</sup> *The Relevance, Effectiveness and Efficiency of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework*, Paul Balogun (UNDESA 2012)

<sup>20</sup> Multi Donor Trust Fund and Multi Partner Trust Fund

Fifth, has the DaO approach reduced transaction costs for government partners? The evidence suggests that this may have increased as well, because of the need to manage implementation through the PCGs.

In summary, the strength of Suriname's DaO approach depends on the resources and programming orientation of the individual UN agencies in Suriname, and the capacity of the government. In the end, while DaO may be a priority for the UN system, it is not necessarily a priority for the government. Officials understand the difficulties of cooperation, but often are dealing with similar cooperation and collaboration challenges within government structures.

**b. Contribution to National Priorities:**

The ultimate question that has to be answered is: Has the UNDAF fostered greater alignment of UN support with national development priorities? This is a very important question for the both the government and the UN because of the need to determine how the UNDAF has helped UN agencies contribute to Suriname's national development and capacity building efforts.

The 2012-2016 UNDAF is synchronized with the government's Development Plan (2012- 2016), and its programmes are primarily focused on the government's social agenda (health, education, social protection and others), which form part of the President's "Social Contract". As such, the UN agency programmes and the UNDAF are helping the government to meet its development goals. However, as indicated in previous sections, there is a need to focus on areas where programming was delayed (livelihoods, decent work, etc.).

But it is difficult to determine the extent to which the UNDAF is contributing to Suriname's development, primarily because the government is not able to track progress in the Development Plan (OP). The OP was not accompanied by an action plan, and it does not have an M&E system, targets or indicators. In addition, the Development Plan is not supplemented with a series of strategic sector planning documents, which are needed to establish clear strategic priorities at the sector level and to create stronger links to policy and implementation.

This is a major area of support that is missing in the UNDAF. The outcomes are in broad categories of policies, programmes and data. But the UNDAF is not providing enough support for the *determinants* of these outcomes, that is, *leadership, management* and *the use of data* for evidence based policies. UN agencies are supporting the upstream policy process and they are supporting downstream implementation and data collection processes. However, as indicated in previous sections, many government structures are not in place to maximize support from the UN agencies or other donors. If the structures and leadership are not in place within government ministries, then it will be difficult for this support to lead to effective national outcomes. The missing structures include effective leadership in the ministries; robust systems for planning, implementing and the ability to monitor development interventions, in addition to the data linkages between policy and implementation.

As indicted above, some ministries feel that some UN agencies have been pushing the mandates dictated by their headquarters, and that officials are not listening to the national counterpart institutions. This appears to be rooted in a growing desire by government to take greater ownership of its development programming. Certainly, to some extent the UN agencies play a normative role in advocating with government and other national partners for re-alignment of government priorities to meet international norms. In the case of Suriname, the UN agencies may have felt the need to fill the void left by the absence of strong leadership and sector plans in the ministries.

In any event, during the past year, it appears as if the government is feeling the need to push back – by exercising ownership over PCGs, establishing a meeting of PSs prior to the JSC and taking the lead in the re-prioritization process. From the government’s perspective, ownership is critical, but from the UN’s perspective leadership and capacity have been a challenge.

Part of the problem may rest with the precarious position Suriname occupies in the ODA rating system – somewhere between MIC and LIC<sup>21</sup>. Scholars have recognized the shortcomings in the practice of allocating ODA on the basis of per capita income alone. First, poverty alleviation is both a cause and an effect of development, as MICs display a wide range of “structural gaps” that constrain and hinder inclusive growth. Second, this practice presupposes that the categories of low-, middle- and high-income countries are relatively homogeneous in terms of their economic and social needs, but this is far from the truth in a country like Suriname. As such, a new approach is needed to address the structural gaps that constrain the development of MICs like Suriname – in terms of inequality and poverty, investment and saving, productivity and innovation, infrastructure, education, health, fiscal issues, gender and the environment.<sup>22</sup>

## 5.0 LESSONS LEARNED AND CONCLUSIONS

### Lessons Learned

One of the intentions of the MTR is to learn from experiences within the current programming cycle, and identify issues and opportunities emerging from the implementation of the UNDAF so as to make relevant adjustments in programming, and inform the design of the next UNDAF, country programmes and projects by individual agencies.

It is premature to talk about lessons learned and “best practices” in a mid-term review, especially when implementation has not been optimal. Nevertheless at the mid-point in implementation, it is possible to highlight some areas of the UNDAF that could and should be flagged or worthy of promoting in the remaining two years. Presented below are some areas that deserve to be noticed and followed up in each of the three Outcome areas (policy, programme and data), as well as overall management and coordination.

### *Policy*

Social protection: Key pieces of social protection legislation have been passed (National Health Insurance, Minimum Wage and Institutional Child Care) and allocations for Pensions and Child Support and have been increased.

Tobacco legislation: PAHO started the process from a global framework, and then the Ministry of Health requested assistance in developing the programme. The Ministry arranged some excellent consultations, drafted the law, and mobilized society through an awareness campaign. The process started in 2008 and took 5 years (until 2013). The Convention framework provided a framework for inter-sectoral collaboration with many ministries, the police, NGOs, advocacy groups, etc. A range of stakeholders came together to see it through.

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<sup>21</sup> With a GDP of US\$5.3 billion in 2013 and per capita income of US\$9,370, Suriname is classified as an upper middle-income country by the World Bank (high-income by IsDB), but the country has pockets of poverty that would classify it as LIC. It has been placed in this bracket at least since 2005, when its per capita GDP was estimated at \$4,700

<sup>22</sup> Middle-income countries: A structural-gap approach, Alicia Bárcena et al, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), 2010

### ***Programme***

Computer Aided Learning (CAL): The education sector's CAL pilot project influenced government policy, and provided the IDB with a model to replicate and upscale for 18 schools. Also, the Ministry of Education has established an ICT Unit, and developed an ICT strategy paper.

### ***Data***

The Data PCG has made some good progress on collecting data for the publication of various reports (Household survey, MDG report, etc.). However, for the final two years the PCG should focus on making a link between data collection and the formulation of evidence-based policies in Outcome #2, and overall sector planning (Outcome #3, output #2). For this, it will be important to build capacity for improved data gathering and evidence based policy development.

### ***Management and Coordination***

In the area of management and coordination, the meeting of PSs prior to the JSC is an important addition to the UNDAF coordination structure as it provides an opportunity for government to exercise strong leadership and ownership over the UNDAF by preparing a consolidated "One Government" response. However, there is still a need for a forum to have high-level discussion among UN heads of agencies and government decision makers to discuss priorities, implementation bottlenecks and challenges. It is recommended that this discussion take place during the JSC meeting for 2015 so that corrective action can be taken in a timely manner.

In addition, the PCGs have introduced a multi-sectoral, multidisciplinary approach into the programmes and ministries, and are creating a dialogue within and between ministries. To the extent possible, this collaboration should be extended beyond UN programmes and individual focal points as this dialogue can introduce a more integrated approach to the delivery of government services and break down the traditional "silo approach" practiced by the sector ministries.

### ***Concluding Remarks***

The UNDAF was designed in good faith by both the UN and government, and it was aligned with the priorities articulated in the OP. Moreover, it was designed with upstream/downstream components to suit the special needs of Suriname's economic and social conditions. However, the targets were too optimistic, and many of the outputs are not on track to meet even half the targets. The designers in the UN agencies and government should have put more emphasis on addressing the capacity gaps within government, and the lack of sectoral planning and monitoring systems. Centralized decision-making, lack of leadership and high turnover in ministry personnel have resulted in bottlenecks that have halted progress in some outcome areas.

It is very difficult to assess the progress of the UNDAF beyond the output level – largely because it is impossible to determine if the implementation and policy bottlenecks and challenges that are affecting the outcomes will be overcome by the end of the UNDAF period. Some policy and legislation outputs are stuck in the formulation process, which is having an impact on implementation of programmes in Outcomes #1 and #2. Within Outcome #3, although the data collection and surveys and reports are improving, the outputs and data gathering process is not necessarily leading to the creation of evidence-based policies.

***Is the UN doing the right things, and is it doing them right?***

The perception within some ministries is that the UN agencies have downsized their operations in terms of funding and personnel, which has affected the availability of financing, technical assistance and human resources. In addition, some agencies appear to be following the mandates dictated by their Headquarters as opposed to the development needs of Suriname. The resulting resource constraints within the UN are having an impact on the limited availability of government resources (both human and financial).

In the past three years, the UNDAF has helped the government to focus attention on its broad priorities in the areas of social development (health care, education, social services). However, better management of these efforts is needed on both the UN's and the government's part. The UN agencies will have to pay more attention to the capacity limitations within government ministries. From the government's side, more resources need to be allocated to the areas associated with the President's "Social Contract", which appear to have dropped lower in the list of priorities. If this is not forthcoming, UN agencies should consider introducing cost-sharing measures practiced in other MICs where the government is required to contribute an increasing amount of resources for UN expertise and programmes. For their part, UN agencies will have to listen more carefully to the government's need for more ownership. The JSC meeting for 2015 may provide an opportunity for the government and the UN to have frank and open deliberations on these issues, and re-design the targets in the UNDAF based on government's priorities.

The government is showing a desire for greater ownership over its programmes. But some ministries are overwhelmed by the workload they have already and are not been able to keep up with the additional demands provided by the UN system's programmes. In order to improve implementation of the UNDAF/UNDAP, UN agencies should continue to help strengthen the government's capabilities in the 3 Outcome areas of policy, programme and data. However more focus is needed on the *determinants* of these areas: Strengthening *leadership*, improving *management*, improving *the use of data* for evidence-based policies, and improving the *management of development* through MoFA, Planning Bureau, and the Ministry of Finance.

For this, it will be necessary to improve leadership for decision-making levels and strengthen technical levels of government ministries. An IDB project will be providing leadership training for the PS level. Strengthening the technical level (PCGs) is critical because in the absence of leadership in the ministries, the PCGs are responsible for implementation of UNDAF/UNDAP programmes. Strengthening PCGs in data gathering for policy making, planning, M&E and reporting will eventually create stronger ministries, as strong PCGs will lead to continuous interactions and information sharing across ministries. It will be important to review and update the terms of reference for the PCGs so that the representation in the PCGs is strong and technical. But training alone will not be sufficient; there is a need for problem tree analysis, PCM training, coaching after the training, and most importantly, application of the training through programme implementation.

**6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS: UNDAF/UNDAP (2015-2016) AND UNDAF (2017-2021)**

This section is intended to examine the revisions necessary to make the current UNDAF outputs and targets more realistic during the final two years, as well as making preparations for the next UNDAF.

### **Revision of the UNDAF outputs (2015-2016)**

The MTR team is recommending the following revisions to the current UNDAF outputs. These involve a few areas that need programming, a few outputs that were not placed in the correct place, and some vital areas associated with programming planning and management.

- a) Add a new output for “Livelihood” (output #11) in the programme level Outcome #1. The rationale for this is based on the fact that there is a need for a Livelihood output to meet the government’s economic diversification goals and in particular to boost the competitiveness of the informal sector, which at 20.8% is the largest contributor to GDP. This can include a full range of key actions by various UN agencies, such as UNESCO’s cultural heritage projects (tourism), FAO’s projects aimed at enhancing production and income generation and Youth. This will complement output #9 of the policy level Outcome #2.
- b) Now that the agreement between government and ILO on Decent and Productive Work has been signed, there is an urgent need to develop a programme and start implementation. Unemployment and especially youth unemployment is one of the major challenges facing development in Suriname. This should be programmed in Output #9 along with Trade Policy
- c) The output for Youth/Adolescents (#10) is very weak, with only two key actions identified. This should be developed into a full joint programme with a number of relevant UN agencies, combining a number of interventions into an “integrated approach”, including government priorities such as youth employment and empowerment, skills development, entrepreneurship, etc.
- d) The Trade Policy output (#9) in the policy level Outcome #2 needs to be programmed to meet the government’s economic diversification goals. No key actions have been identified and the only entry is the UN agency (UNDP) and lead government ministry namely the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- e) Output #7 of Outcome #2 (*Enhancing national capacity for forestry management and forestry livelihoods in processing non-timber forest products*) involves community level interventions (not policy), so it should be moved to Outcome #1 and placed under the new Livelihood output #11.<sup>23</sup>
- f) Some thought should be given to whether the REDD+ intervention has been placed in the most appropriate place (output #8, key action #4). Currently it is in the policy Outcome #2, but if the main key actions are at the community level, it might be more appropriately placed under the programme Outcome #1, along with the other community-based environmental interventions (output #8). Like most programs, REDD+ will respond to an overall policy goal (capacity strengthening of NGOs, human rights), but its placement in the UNDAF should be based on the direct results of the intervention, whether they will be felt at the community and NGO levels, or the policy level. Generally, in RBM logic, an activity responds to the next level up the hierarchy, which is the most immediate result and not the ultimate result.
- g) Outcome #3 (Data) has an implicit link between data collection and the need for evidence-based policies. However, the link to the policy Outcome #2 needs to be made more explicit in order to improve the focus of the data being collected and generated. Its

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<sup>23</sup> While many of the ultimate outputs of the national capacity for forestry management are at the policy level (eg., passing of environmental legislation/policy, regulatory enforcement etc.), the majority of interventions are at the programme level, which dictates the placement of the output in RBM terms as the most immediate result in the hierarchy

- key actions and targets should be revised to include links to evidence-based policy-making in the relevant ministries.
- h) To improve the quality of results and targets of the data being collected in Outcome #3, output #2 (*Improved national capacity for monitoring development outcomes*), there is a need to introduce a system of project cycle management (PCM) centrally within the Planning Bureau and throughout all government ministries, involving PCM and RBM training. But more than mere capacity building, there is a need to institute an M&E system at the national and sector levels to monitor the Development Plan, and the contribution of donor agency programmes (like the UNDAF) to national goals.
  - i) It might be an idea to develop an overall goal statement for the UNDAF. This will focus individual UN agency programmes on the overall goal: “Align UN programming to support the government’s policy and planning objectives and contribute to its national development goals”. Currently, the intervention logic does not provide a link between outputs and outcomes to an overall goal. It may be implicit, but it needs to be explicit.

#### ***Priority areas to be developed (2015-2016)***

For the remaining 2 years of implementation, it will be important to complete the development of programme areas to ensure that the UNDAF continues to be relevant. For example, when the UNDAF was designed, the long term development plans of the new government may not have been fully formed, so the UNDAF might not have reflected all the priorities of the newly elected government. Also, over the past year the government’s priorities appear to have changed, where there has been a shift in the behaviour of some senior government officials toward development agency programmes, indicating that the government is gaining confidence. Nevertheless, the important issue to consider is whether the UNDAF is flexible enough to respond to shifts in government priority. In this respect, the MTR is recommending some important areas that need to be developed such as Youth, Livelihood and Management and Coordination (described below). In order to ensure that these areas receive the necessary attention, it will be important to establish an on-going dialogue between the UN agencies and government in the JSC meetings.

A few areas were left out of the initial UNDAF design, and these need to be programmed on an urgent basis to make sure there is some progress during the final two years of implementation.

#### **4. Youth**

A Presidential Working Group was established to develop an Integrated Adolescent and Youth Framework. Initially intended to be a 2-year assignment, it created a separate mechanism to plan and monitor an integrated, multi-sectoral programme for adolescents and youth that traditionally cut across a number of ministries (Sports & Youth, Education, etc.). Although the Working Group’s term has been extended, a number of constraints have arisen surrounding the implementation of its recommendations. Basically, the individual line ministries are constrained by lack of funding and lack of capacity. Furthermore, UNICEF could not provide any direct support to the Working Group because it has to implement programmes through other ministries.

The July 2014 JSC meeting made a recommendation to establish a PCG ‘Adolescents’. To facilitate this, the UN agencies could start by developing a “joint strategy”, led by UNICEF and in collaboration with the Presidential Working Group. Following this, they could develop a joint programme to coordinate a joint response by the UN agencies and designed around the notion of supporting implementation of the results of the Working Group.

As funding by the UN agencies may be problematic, such a programme could be funded by the government on a cost-sharing basis.<sup>24</sup>

## **5. Livelihood**

Another area that needs to be programmed is support to the government priority area of Livelihood. There are many opportunities that could be explored in the area of diversifying livelihood away from mining by considering other opportunities associated with tourism, the environment, small business development, etc. Some agencies are already thinking about filling this gap. For example, FAO is in the early stages of programming a value chain development project involving particular commodities and incubators. The project, which was agreed by ministers at a regional conference, is in the initial stages of development, and is part of FAO's strategic plan, slotted to begin before 2016. In addition, UNESCO is adding some activities in cultural tourism, and UNDP is looking at the area of youth development through SIDS and SDGs.

From the government's side there is a need for the various ministries to consolidate their thinking and come up with a number of areas that need support. For example, the Decent Work programme signed between the Government and the ILO provides this opportunity. Also, there is a direct need for support in the area of entrepreneurship, particularly among youth, as the informal sector is the largest contributor to the GDP. This falls under the responsibility of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, which needs to signal the need for UN assistance for things like entrepreneurship training, small business development, access to finance, etc. All of these areas could be folded into the new Livelihood output #11.

## **6. Sector Planning and Project Cycle Management**

Beyond these programming areas, there is a need to improve the overall implementation of the UNDAF. Part of the problem is that the UNDAF is an operational document, while the Government ministries are following broad policy papers without sectoral plans, so there is little guidance and direction between policy and operation. It will be important to close this gap. Three levels of support are needed to make changes in the effectiveness of the UNDAF. First, it will require establishing quantifiable targets and benchmarks for the UNDAF outputs. For this, PCGs need to come up with a set of revised targets that will be more realistic to achieve by 2016. In order to do this the PCGs will need to participate in "problem tree analysis" sessions that will result in the identification of realistic indicators and achievable targets and results.

Second, it will require improved coordination and monitoring within line ministries and centrally (Planning Bureau). For this, the management, planning and monitoring functions of the government will have to be strengthened. This will involve two levels of support: a) Capacities need to be strengthened in line ministries through training in project cycle management, prioritization, sector planning, budgeting, etc., and b) The Planning Bureau needs to establish a central planning and monitoring system that can track implementation of the Development Plan. This can be achieved through the provision of technical assistance for the development of strategic sector plans in line ministries, and the establishment of an M&E system that will enable the Planning Bureau to plan and monitor the Development Plan.

Implementing an M&E system will provide the practical application needed for the training to be applied. Moreover, because of the frequent movement of personnel between ministries, this training needs to be continuous and on-going.

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<sup>24</sup> There is competition between agencies for funding: UNDP is focused on governance, UNFPA is focused on health, Unicef has \$600,000 from the Dutch Fund and are looking at an "Integrated Framework" but are not in favour of cost-sharing

These elements could form part of the revised intervention recommended for Outcome #3, output #2. FAO has already planned a round of project cycle management, which will be included in its programme in 2016.

### ***Additional Areas of focus for 2015-2016***

Apart from the above areas that were not programming during the initial design, it will be important for the government and the UN agencies to develop additional programme areas to ensure the UNDAF can act as a bridge for the next UNDAF (2017-22). As the government expresses its desire to take ownership over its programmes, it will be important for UN agencies to support its efforts towards developing policies and planning capabilities, while at the same time making sure downstream activities are continued in order to lead to important policy lessons.

But more than continuing the upstream/downstream mix of interventions, with the upcoming election, it will be increasingly difficult for the government to accomplish much on the policy front. In view of this, the MTR is recommending that UN agencies focus their efforts during 2015-16 on downstream programme level interventions. This will be an ideal opportunity to develop pilots that can provide important policy lessons learned for the new government in 2015 as well as the next UNDAF (2017-21). In addition, it will provide an opportunity for UN agencies to develop a cohesive UN approach through joint programmes – something that is missing from the current UNDAF. Following the elections, UN agencies can follow through and support implementation of policy directives informed by evidence gathered through these pilots.

### **1. Area based joint programmes**

This would involve developing a series of comprehensive “area based” programmes in several geographical areas and incorporating a variety of relevant UN programmes including economic diversification/livelihoods, income generating projects, the environment (SGP), indigenous peoples’ issues (e.g. climate change adaptation as their lives and agriculture are changing), health, social services, youth, etc. It would also involve managing support through NGOs and CBOs active in those areas. It would also have implications for data collection, as there is a lack of data due to the fact that the definition of administrative districts are not properly defined, resulting in different data sets for health, census, education, social affairs, etc., all of which have different boundaries. It would also have implications for policy and planning by formulating recommendations on strategic sector plans and monitoring at the community and district levels.

Some of the areas that have been discussed include Moengo (where UNICEF is already active), Wia Wia (which involves indigenous people and the environment), a community in the West near the Guyana border area or in the South near the Brazilian border.

### **2. Civil society**

The UNDAF is designed to respond to national development priorities, and not only those developed by government in the Development Plan. The UNDAF formulation process involves incorporating other stakeholders including social partners, civil society and NGOs. However, while the UNDAF design process may have involved consultations with NGOs and civil society, for the most part these groups appear to have been left out of the implementation process. Planning and implementation of UN programmes is being done primarily by government and parastatals. By excluding NGOs, a vicious cycle develops where the capacity of NGOs is weakened, which provides justification for excluding them from funding in the future, so their capacity becomes even more constrained. In order to bolster their capacity, the UN agencies should collaborate with and support NGOs and civil society organizations directly. This will be particularly important in 2015 and 2016, when government decision makers will be preoccupied

with the elections. Supporting NGOs and CBOs is one way to ensure that self-sustaining capacity is developed in rural communities. There are some ominous signs ahead – for example because of years of neglect the national women’s network will likely disappear within a year. Important “civil society” programmes could be developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Regional Development, but it should involve direct support for NGOs and CBOs.

### **Next generation UNDAF (2017-2021)**

The MTR provides an opportunity for the UN agencies to start preparing to develop the next UNDAF (2017-2021). The planning process of the current UNDAF was very lengthy, and fine tuning is still going on. The next plan (2017-2021) should be developed out of the opportunities and shortcomings of the current UNDAF (2012-2016). In addition, the next plan could look at a fewer number of strategic areas: youth, environment, economic diversification, social protection, etc. using joint programmes instead of the current individual agency approach.

Because of its importance in building national capacity, the next UNDAF should also look at focusing on strengthening planning, coordination and monitoring both within the central government and line ministries. In addition, the next UNDAF should also be linked to the sustainable development goals of post 2015 agenda, through the government’s Development Plan.

Within the UN system, plans are in the works to increase alignment involving renewed leadership in the RC, UNDP and through programme development. This will mean moving closer to a “One Structure” approach that involves decentralizing the role of UN Headquarters to the regional level and strengthening the Regional Hubs (Panama) and Business Centres (operations and knowledge)<sup>25</sup>. However, before the UN system considers developing a more integrated DaO approach in Suriname, two constraints will have to be taken into account. On the one hand, with little funding and many non-resident agencies and a non-resident RC, the UN system does not have much leverage. On the other hand, the government would have to demonstrate that it had sufficient capacity to plan and monitor its development priorities, both at the sector level, and involving integrated programming between the sectors.

This will involve improving programmatic coherence among UN agencies and government ministries. While currently the government may not be ready to develop such an integrated programmatic approach, the capacity of the ministries could be elevated, and the leadership capabilities among the senior levels of government could be improved. On the UN’s side, the agencies will require more funding to develop a more integrated UNDAF programme in Suriname. This will be possible in some sectors, such as the environment, which has ample funding. In fact, the environment sector presents a strategic opportunity with the signing of the agreement for REDD+ and with considerable resources available for climate change. Nationally, environmental considerations permeate many aspects of life in Suriname, including land degradation from illegal mining practices, health, food security, safety, indigenous peoples issues, human rights, climate change impacts on agriculture, etc. So UNDP could develop a programmatic approach for the environment. But it will be important for the government to finalize the implementation structures.

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<sup>25</sup> Interviewed participants from UNDP’s retreat in Suriname, outlining the new UNDP Strategic Plan (2014-2017)

## Annex 1 - List of Stakeholders Interviewed

- Heads of UN agencies, senior UN programme staff, both resident (UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, PAHO) and non-resident (FAO, UNESCO, UNAIDS, UN Women)
- Senior government officials, government members of the PCGs
- The Statistics Bureau
- The Youth Parliament
- The Planning Bureau
- NIMOS (National Institute for Environment)
- Private Sector: Suriname Business Forum
- Development partners: IDB, PADF

## Schedule of Meetings with MTR Consultant

### 1. October 14 to 27, 2014 JUSPOI

Date	Organization/Participants
14 October	UN Country Team meeting
15 October	UNAIDS Representative, Roberto Brant Campos
15 October	UNICEF Deputy Representative, Abheet Solomon
16 October	PS of MoFA and Government PCG focal points
17 October	Deputy PS MoFA, Astrid Belliot and MoFA policy staff member, Jacqueline Warso
17 October	UN Women Representative, Christine Arab (via Skype)
21 October	FAO Officer in Charge, Marion Alleyne (via Skype)
22 October	UNESCO Director Caribbean, Christine Norton and UNESCO programme officer, Janelle Babb (via Skype)
22 October	UNICEF Program Manager, Min Yuan
23 October	UNDP programme staff
24 October	Small Grants Programme, Tanja Lieuw
24 October	Chair National Youth Parliament, Prya Seetal
24 October	PAHO programme staff, Francoise Barten
24 October	UNICEF Program Manager, Min Yuan and UNICEF staff
27 October	Deputy PS of Youth Affairs, Ms. R. Graauw and policy staff member, Margo Linger
27 October	Ministry of Education: Deputy PS of Education, Mr. Narain; Head of Bureau Interior Education, Mr. E. Eersteling; Head of the Guidance dept Education, Ms H. Gambier; Head Internal Control Education, Mr. G. Singorawi; Head Research & Planning Education, Ms. R. Leeftland; Staffmember Research & Planning Education, Mr. Sheombar; Manager PCU Education, Mr. Moertabat; Policy advisor Education, Mr. H. Blinker and Head Bureau International Affairs, Usha Adhin; UNICE Programme Manager Min Yuan and UNICEF Education officer, Myrthe Lionarons

28 October	Management Team Planning Bureau: Ms. T. Phoelsingh; Ms. J. Karijdimedjo; Ms. L. Menke
28 October	Acting PS of Labour, Mr. J. Belfor and policy staff members Ms. S. Chotkan and Ms. G. Mangroe
28 October	PS of Foreign Affairs, Ms. E. Naarendorp and MoFA staff member, Ms. Fa Lu Liao
28 October	UNDAF Working Group Gender: Mr. Firoz Abdoelkariem (Ministry of Education); Judith Brielle (Assistant Representative UNFPA); Sharon Tjokro (Ministry of Home Affairs); Elly van Kanten (UNICEF)
28 October	Co-Chair PCG Emergencies, Guno van der Jagt (PAHO)
29 October	PCG Data: Jo-Ann Fung A Loi (General Statistics Bureau); Anjali Kisoensingh (General Statistics Bureau); Armstrong Alexis (UNDP DRR); Ruben Martoredjo (UNDP); Robertal Leeftland (Ministry of Education)
29 October	UNDP DRR, Armstrong Alexis
29 October	PCG Environment: Chair Haydee Aroma (Ministry of Labour, Environment and Technological Development); Rachele Rijker (policy staff member Ministry of Labour); Bryan Drakenstein (UNDP)
29 October	PS of Justice and Police, Inez Huyzen and policy staff members Geeta Harpal, Jornell Vinkwolk and Navissa Waterberg

## 2. November 17 to 21, 2014

Date	Organization/Participants
17 November	UN RCO, Fara Pahalwankhan and local consultant, Annette Tjon Sie Fat
18 November	Chair Presidential Task Force Children & Youth, Lilian Ferrier
18 November	Deputy PS of Social Affairs, Thomar Lingrisie & policy staff members Anita Forst and Raoul Dankoor
19 November	Chair Suriname Business Forum, Wilgo Bilkerdijk & member of Board SBF
19 November	IDB Operations Specialist, Musheer Kamau
19 November	PS of Health, Marthelise Eersel and chair and members PCG Health
20 November	Deputy PS Judicial and Gender Affairs Ministry of Home Affairs, Mr. J. Joemambaks & policy staff members Chitra Mohanlal and Sharon Tjokro
20 November	PS of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries, Mr. G. Breinburg & policy staff members Ashmi Jairam and Ellen Mijland
20 November	PADF Suriname Programme Coordinator, Carlo Arze
21 November	PS of Regional Development, Ifna Vrede & policy staff members Peggy Panka and Negretha Amiamba
21 November	Director NIMOS, Cedric Nelom & NIMOS staff

**Annex 2 - Terms of Reference Mid-Term Review Suriname UNDAF/UNDAP 2012-2016**

**Terms of Reference**  
**UNDAF Mid-Term Review Consultant**

<b>I. Position Information</b>	
Job code title:	<b>Consultant, UNDAF Mid-Term Review</b>
Duration:	26 working days
Location:	Paramaribo
Expected start date	October 2014
UN Contact :	UNRC Office Suriname
<b>II. Context for the Mid-Term Review</b>	
<p><b>Government of Suriname – United Nations collaboration</b></p> <p>The United Nations (UN) in Suriname and the key partners in the Government of Suriname have been working together since 2005 to enhance UN coordination and coherence at the country level in support of national priorities. In 2006, the Government of Suriname took the stand point to develop a “One UN” programme and coherent approach in Suriname.</p> <p>A mechanism to materialize this collaboration is the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is becoming more strategic and better aligned with national priorities and aligning the UNDAF process with national planning as well.</p> <p>Suriname is a ‘self starter’ on the ‘Delivering as One’ (DoA) approach with the objective to increase the impact of the UN system at country level. One of the key principles is the ‘One Programme’ with the aim to align UN programmes and funding more closely to national priorities as well as strength government leadership and ownership and ensure that governments have access to the experience and expertise of a wider range of UN organizations.</p> <p>Other aspects are the increase of participation and joint programming among UN organizations and enhancing understanding among UN agencies about mandates, expertise and business models. Other principles of DoA are ‘One Leader and Team’, ‘One Budgetary Framework’ and ‘One Office’. The latest UNDAF for Suriname was developed for the period 2012 – 2016. Aside from the UNDAF, an Action Plan (UNDAP) was also prepared, which fully coincides with the policy framework of the Government installed in 2010. The UNDAP seeks to contribute to the national development objectives set out in the <i>Ontwikkelingsplan 2012 – 2016</i> (Development plan) of Suriname concluded by the Government in December 2011.</p> <p>The UNDAF and UNDAP is the SURINAME One programme.</p> <p>The Government agreed to institutionalise the coordination mechanisms of the UNDAF and appointed UNDAF focal points in all 17 Ministries for implementation and monitoring of UNDAF and UNDAF Action plan. The ‘One UN programme’ is nationally executed under the overall co-ordination of the Government’s lead Ministry. The Government and the UN Agencies jointly conduct Annual Planning meetings; and Semi-annual and Annual Programme Performance and Expenditure Review meetings.</p>	

The UNDAF and UNDAP describe the collective response of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) based on its comparative advantage to address national socio-economic, development, and humanitarian priorities in line with Millennium Declaration/Millennium Development Goals and the Post 2015 Development Agenda. The UNDAF/UNDAF Action Plan process is primarily nationally owned and is guided by the Government for greater ownership, mutual accountability, alignment and better management of development results and priorities.

The UNDAF and its action plan are Results-Based and outline a set of Outcomes and Outputs to be delivered as part of the UN and Government of Suriname Programme of Cooperation. The key actions below the UNDAF outputs outline what each UN agency would do to support the achievement of the planned results. In addition, annual targets have been established to monitor collective progress against the mutually agreed outputs and outcomes.

In the process of reviewing the progress made up to date on the UNDAF/UNDAP and the effect of the programmes and project for the Surinamese citizens, it must also be taken into account how the pre-election period will influence the implementation of programmes and projects. What will be the political priorities in this pre-election year and how will the transition of an after election period take place.

### **III. Purpose of the Mid-Term Review and Review Framework**

#### **Purpose of the Mid-Term Review**

The UNDAF Mid-Term Review (MTR) will provide an opportunity for the Government of Suriname and UN to:

- i. Ascertain the cumulative progress made to date against the planned outcomes/outputs in the UNDAF/UNDAP;
- ii. Identify issues and opportunities emerging from the implementation of the current UNDAF/UNDAP and provide support and quality assurance in making the necessary adjustments for the remaining duration (2014-2016) of the UNDAF/UNDAP; Pillars of UNDAF
- iii. Assess how the 'Delivering as One' has been materializing including efforts for joint programming as well as efforts to further progress the DaO and provide recommendations for further improvement;
- iv. Discuss strategic partnership between UN and the Government of Suriname and the way forward to support the country in realizing the UNDAF results.

#### **Review framework**

The review will focus on the national government's development priorities, plans and strategies and on the UN response to address those priorities.

The Development Priorities for the UNDAF 2012 – 2106 pertain:

1. Social, Economic and Environmental programmes
2. Legislation, Policies and Budgets
3. Data Collection and Analysis and Harmonized Information

The Review Framework considers:

- The **relevance** (the responsiveness to the needs and priorities of the countries)
- The **effectiveness** (the implementation of better processes and production of development outputs, and when possible the assessment of development outcomes and impacts)
- The **efficiency** (the reduction of transaction costs for the countries)
- The **sustainability** of the DaO initiatives (the probability of long term benefits of continuing the approach over time)

The review will also analyze the implementation of the Delivering as One approach expressed in the five components: One Programme, One Budgetary Framework, One Operations, One Communications and One House, in order to assess its contribution and real progress, if any, towards the achievement of national development goals.

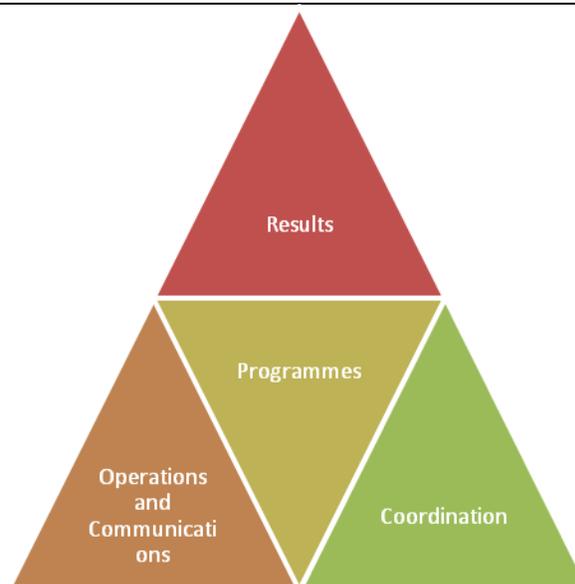
The review will assess the operational initiatives initiated and conducted within the DaO process since its inception. This should entail, all programme activities falling under One Programme and other initiatives that are not falling under One Programme that affected the performance of DaO. The emphasis of the review is on the contribution of DaO to development results.

#### IV. Specific objectives

The specific objectives of the MTR will be:

##### a) *RESULTS AND PROGRAMMES*

- Assess the current relevance of the planned results in UNDAF and UNDAF Action Plan
- Assess key achievements and shortfalls, enablers and bottlenecks: this could be done through case studies of best practices and through a PCG led process in determining the top three in each category.
- Manage and quality assure a revision of agency key actions 2014-2016 as an outcome of PCG deliberations
- Assess progress made in coherence and improved division of labour over time
- Assess progress in mainstreaming of cross-cutting considerations and quality assure updates on cross-cutting considerations for revised key actions/outputs
- Review and finalize programme logic, including any adjustments to Outputs and Outcomes



##### b) *OPERATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS:*

- Assess progress/bottlenecks and provide guidance and quality assurance for the development of an action plan for Operating as One 2014-2016 e.g. joint programming; achieving expectations from Government
- Assess progress/bottlenecks and provide guidance and quality assurance for the development

<p>action plan for Communicating as One</p> <p>c) <b>COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess progress/bottlenecks and provide guidance and quality assurance for the development of an action plan for strengthening coordination for achieving planned results.</li> </ul>
<p><b>V. Duration of consultancy</b></p>
<p>This short term consultancy is expected to take 26 working days, with at least 12 working days in Suriname.</p>
<p><b>VI. Management</b></p>
<p>The consultant will report to the Resident Coordinator.</p> <p>A UNDAF MTR Guidance Team will be constituted and this will comprise of designated agency focal points and Government of Suriname representatives for the process. The MTR team will guide the MTR process at the design, implementation and reporting stages and regularly report back to the UNCT on progress through the office of the RC.</p> <p>The RCO will prepare, as far as possible, the necessary documentation for the consultant to complete the desk review in advance of the start of the consultancy. The RCO will provide support to the consultant in obtaining documents and organizing interviews throughout the period of the MTR to enable his/her timely and effective analysis of the data and information gathered. The consultant will be entrusted with the MTR based on the information and documents gathered, working with the MTR Guidance team and the RC Office.</p> <p><b>Budget</b></p> <p>All cost directly related to the conduct of the Evaluation will be covered through the RC Fund, based on the agreement reached within the UNCT.</p>
<p><b>VII. Methods and process</b></p>
<p>The MTR will be an interactive process involving all PCGs, UN agencies and RCO.</p> <p>The methodology proposed is through a combination of the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Undertake a comprehensive desk review (synthesis and data analysis) of existing studies, surveys, and evaluations conducted by the UN agencies and their partners during the current UNDAF cycle as well as the documents from the Government on national policies and strategies;</li> <li>2) Interviews with the head of UN agencies; Senior UN Programme Staff and (Senior) Government Officials</li> <li>3) Focus group sessions with relevant stakeholders</li> <li>4) Participation in PCG meetings and JSC meeting</li> <li>5) Participation in OMT meeting &amp; Interviews with OMT chair and members</li> <li>6) Participation in UN Communication Group meeting &amp; Interviews with UN Communications Group members</li> </ol>

- 7) Feedback from Agency reviews
- 8) Case Studies on success stories, enablers and bottlenecks
- 9) Independent consultant quality assurance of products from various Groups
- 10) Products of quality assurance by focal points for cross-cutting issues
- 11) Literature review, including a process evaluation of the PCG

### **VIII. Deliverables**

- 1) A work plan for the consultancy period outlining in detail the steps and the process that will be necessary to achieve the planned objectives
- 2) Suriname UNDAF and UNDAP 2012-2016 MTR Report
- 3) Revised UNDAF Action Plan Results Matrix, including key actions, cross-cutting considerations and targets for 2015-2016
- 4) Operating as One 2014-2016, including targets for 2015-2016
- 5) Communicating as One 2014-2016, including targets for 2015-2016
- 6) Updated ToRs for Coordination and Management Structures

The MTR report will be a brief report (max 15-20 pages) for dissemination to the UNCT and Government. The report will be structured and have the following sections:

1. An Executive Summary
2. Introduction and Rationale
3. Scope of the MTR and Methodology
4. Findings against the purposes of the MTR
5. Conclusions, and
6. Recommendations for the UNDAF/UNDAP implementation 2014 – 2106 as well as next generation Suriname UNDAF 2017-2021

The Consultant will also be expected to present preliminary and summary findings to the JSC and UNCT.