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| **RPD for Asia and Pacific (2014-2017) Mid-term Review – Terms of Reference** |
| November 13, 2015 |

# Background and Context

United Nations Development Program Executive Board has approved the UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 in June 2013 and new Regional Programme Document for Asia and the Pacific (RPD) in January 2014. The RPD for the 2014-2017 period was developed through a consultative process, including inputs from UNDP country offices, and countries of the region. The regional programme is structured around four outcomes selected from the UNDP Strategic plan, 2014-2017, that are considered most relevant to regional needs and the comparative advantage of UNDP in Asia and the Pacific at the regional level.

The four Strategic Plan Outcomes prioritized by the RPD are:

1. Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded
2. Citizen’s expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance
3. Countries are able to reduce the likelihood of conflict, and lower the risks of natural disasters, including from climate change
4. Development debates and actions at all levels prioritize poverty, inequality and exclusion, consistent with UNDP engagement principles

The Regional programme is intended to capture the multi-faceted nature of the work that is carried out at the regional level, which combines inter-country cooperation initiatives in consultation with and approval of the countries involved, and the provision of policy advisory services in support of the implementation of country programmes in the region and the achievement of development effectiveness at the country level. The regional programme focuses on areas of work most relevant to the Asia and Pacific region consistent with priorities identified both at national and global levels. In addition, as explained in the Regional Programme Document, the UNDP work at the regional level will be guided and informed by the five *regionality* principles and a number of key cross cutting issues as in terms of *how* UNDP will work at the regional level.

Total financial resources for the RPD are estimated at $130.2 million over 2014-2017, including expected core resources of $43.7 million and $86.4 million of other or non-core resources, which are to be mobilized.

In keeping with UNDP’s results based approach and to establish clear and measurable indicators of achievement at both output and outcome levels of the RPD, two umbrella Regional Project Documents “*Advancing Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (2014-2017)*” and “*Achieving the simultaneous eradication of poverty and a significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion in the Pacific (2014-2017)*” were developed by the UNDP Regional Policy and Programme support (RPPS), Bangkok Regional Hub and the Pacific Centre respectively. These two Regional Projects operationalizes the implementation of the RPD in the Asia and the Pacific region.

In its decision adopting the Strategic Plan, the Executive Board has requested UNDP to present a midterm review of the SP, including an assessment of results achieved, cost-effectiveness, evaluations, comparative advantages and progress made in achieving the vision of the strategic plan, and report to the Executive Board at its annual session 2016. Corporate decision has also been made that a key focus of the SP MTR will be on the performance of Regional and Global Programmes. Accordingly, all Regional Bureaus have been requested to complete their RPD MTRs latest by January 2016 in order to provide inputs to feed into the larger SP report back to the EB.

Further, the MTR is expected to inform the RPD Management Board, senior management and stakeholders on the status of the regional programme, provide lessons learned and some key findings and recommendations to inform the way forward during the remaining period of the current RPD well as beyond, particularly for the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda. The MTR of the RPD will also feed into its end-term independent evaluation to be conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office later in 2016.

# MTR Objective and Scope

## Objective and purpose:

## Overall, the MTR will assess progress against the RPD results for 2014 and 2015, extract lessons learned, and propose corrective actions and recommendations which will inform the Regional Programme activities and budgets during 2016-2017 and beyond.

## In doing this, the MTR will:

1. Review the RPD’s cumulative development results achieved at the regional level from January 2014 to the end of 2015, through the implementation of the regional projects and initiatives, both in Asia and the Pacific, and specifically through the implementation of the two umbrella Regional Projects, highlighting progress, value add to the CO development results using the regionality principles, drivers of success, main gaps, and recommending mid-course adjustments.
2. Review relevance and effectiveness of the policy advisory services provided in support of the implementation of country programmes in the region. In this regard, review the theory of change and identify the development effectiveness component delivered through support to COs in the achievement of planned development results at the country level.
3. Review and clearly identify results of the RPD’s multi-faceted nature of the work that is carried out at the regional level supported through global funds, Global UNDP TTFs, and other sources of funding from RBAP. This should include review of the effectiveness and relevance of regional knowledge products supported by the RPD such as the production of RHDRs and RMDGRs, and regional initiatives like development solution teams, innovative solutions and approaches to working, support to the UN Office for REDD+ Coordination in Indonesia (UNORCID), International Centre for Human Development (IC4HD), the UNDP Singapore Centre, etc.
4. Assess whether the RPD outcomes are likely to be met by its end period or what are the additional resources and partnerships needed?
5. Assess the impact of the UNDP structural review and the reduced core budget envelope for the RPD and provide a forward-looking view about the current and future priorities and positioning of the RPD.

v. Review at least three regional flag ship projects – two from Asia and one from the Pacific as selective case studies to investigate in greater depth and provide the evidence needed to showcase results which contribute to the delivery of the RPD/SP Outcomes. The effectiveness of using the RPD Regionality Principles and cross-cutting priorities to guide the design and implementation of these regional projects, and the relevance and sustainability of these principles should also be assessed.

viii. Review and relevantly update the RPD situational analysis to reflect current situation and context in the Asia-Pacific region.

ix. Provision of a “way forward” for the RPD that includes both short (during the remaining period of the current RPD) and medium-term recommendations, and which outline future priorities and positioning of the next RPD and beyond given the evolving external and internal UNDP regional development context and the regional level work for the new SDG agenda.

## Scope:

1. The MTR should cover the Asia and the Pacific region and provide an initial assessment of the contributions of UNDP to the development results in the areas set out in the RBAP RPD (2014- 2017) and provide recommendations based on an assessment of changes and context specific issues at the regional and sub-regional levels. The Regionality Principles and cross-cutting priorities should be used to inform this assessment to the extent possible.
2. Further, the MTR should cover and be informed by areas or issues of special focus for RBAP such as the evolving regional development context, and how the mainstreaming of the 2030 sustainable development agenda and the SDGs can be a powerful opportunity for UNDP positioning in the region in terms of engaging and supporting countries proactively.

**3. Structure and Content**

RPD MTR will be undertaken structured around a common set of questions and resultant recommendations aligned with the MTR objective and scope as listed below:.

***Relevance:***

1. How have UNDP’s operating environment shifted in the region since the adoption of the SP (2014-2017) and the RPD? What strategic opportunities and risks are emerging as a result? (Update the RPD situation analysis)
2. Context analysis and an understanding of how the partnership environment is evolving based on both UNDP and non- UNDP sources of information, and how can the RPD benefit from this?

***Programme Effectiveness:***

1. Qualitatively and quantitatively access:

* Whether the RPD is on track to achieve the expected development results at the regional level, mainly guided by the regionality principles, what are the gaps left to achieve UNDP's targets in the region and is the pace good enough to do so?
* What has been the value add of the RPD supported advisory services and products for the achievement of country level development results and development effectiveness

1. What has been initial results of the UNDP reforms/structural change on the RPD
2. What has been the RPD’s contributions towards supporting UNDP’s role in the Regional UNDG and engagement with regional bodies?
3. What are the underlying causes of underperformance and key drivers of success?
4. Where does the RPD and the Regional Projects stand vis-a-vis the corporate quality standards? (Refer to the CPDs standards as reference).
5. What improvements could be made for improving Regional Program formulation and monitoring in the future? Should the present RPD RRF be revised to reflect necessary updates and changes?

***Programme efficiency:***

1. What resources have been used to achieve/produce the results?
2. How can the regional projects and programme improve their value for money?
3. Was there an effective partnership strategy to leverage resources and collaboration?

***Sustainability:***

1. How is the resource situation evolving with regard to the RPD budget outlay?
2. What is the likelihood that the programme interventions are sustainable?
3. What changes should be made in the current set of regional projects and programme partnerships in order to promote sustainability

***Lessons learnt and recommendations:***

1. What are the key thematic, operational and institutional lessons to be drawn?
2. What are the main recommendations for 2016-17 and beyond, including the positioning of the Regional Programme vis-a-vis the SDGs?

# MTR Team and Methodology/Review Process

* 1. The MTR team will be recruited by RBAP consisting of two consultants – one of whom would be designated the lead consultant and the other will be a supporting consultant. Both the consultants should have advanced university degree and at least five years of work experience on programme/project evaluations and reviews.

Between them, the team members should have substantive knowledge and previous evaluation expertise and demonstrated experience to cover all the practices covered under the RPD.

4.2 The Team Leader will perform the following tasks:

• Be overall responsible for the satisfactory completion of the MTR exercise, and as such lead and manage all aspects of the MTR exercise, with the specific inputs of the other team members as noted below;

• Review documents (such as programme, project documents and knowledge products, etc. emanating or related to RPD work);

• Undertake interviews and consultations with all stakeholders identified with the assistance of RBAP;

• Design the scope and methodology of the review in detail and ensure its implementation;

• Decide the specific division of labour within the MTR team in addition to what has been specified below for the second team member;

• Design the web-based surveys and questionnaires;

• Finalise the MTR report and be responsible for direct liaison with RBAP MTR management on the all aspects of the MTR exercise.

* 1. Under the guidance and advice of the TL, the other Team member, an Evaluation Specialist, will provide the required technical expertise and inputs with respect to the practice areas of governance and poverty;

• Review documents in line with the agreed upon division of responsibility with the TL;

• Undertake interviews and consultations with stakeholders as determined by the team leader;

• Participate in the design of the scope and methodology and assist the TL in undertaking the review;

• Assist the team leader in the analysis and reporting on the exercise, with specific responsibility for focus areas assigned;

• Draft relevant parts of the review report;

• Assist with the finalization of the report and presentation to RBAP.

* 1. The MTR will adhere to the UNDP Evaluation Policy and UNDG Norms & Standards with its findings and judgements based on sound evidence and analysis, clearly documented in the review report. Information will be triangulated (i.e. verified from different sources) to the extent possible, and when verification is not possible, the single source will be mentioned. Analysis leading to evaluative judgements should always be clearly spelled out. The limitations of the methodological framework should also be spelled out in the review reports.
  2. The RPD MTR will be undertaken guided by the Objective and Scope, and the Structure and Content outlined in section 2 and 3 above
  3. It will be conducted over a period of 30 working days each by the two international consultant under the overall responsibility and management of the RBAP Directorate (see Section 7.1).
  4. As this is a mid-term review, particular attention should be given to assessing the performance and contributions of the RPD and identifying possible challenges and issues that should be resolved to enhance the current programme performance. The MTR should also provide the basis for concrete and realistic recommendations for the way forward in the short as well as for the medium term

1. **Data sources and Tools**

The RPD MTR will make use of the following tools and data sources:

5.1 A **desk review** of relevant documents including, but not limited to:

* RBAP RPD (2014-2017), Strategic Plan (2014-2017); the two umbrella Regional Project Documents and the cumulative progress reporting for 2014 and 2015 of the “*Advancing Inclusive and Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific (2014-2017)*” and “*Achieving the simultaneous eradication of poverty and a significant reduction of inequalities and exclusion in the Pacific (2014-2017)*”,
* Regional projects and regional initiatives which contribute to the RPD in Asia and the Pacific
* Annual Work plans and budgets, progress reports for the RPD as prepared by BRH and Pacific centre in 2014 and 2015, Annual Report on the Advisory Services provided to COs from the BRH service tracker and other sources, etc.
* RBAP IWPs and ROARs, RPD related decentralized evaluations, evaluation and MTRs of regional projects, relevant external evaluations by donors and partners, etc.
* Progress reports and related documentation of selected regional projects contributing to the RPD results both in Asia and the Pacific, including websites, articles and other relevant reports
* Annual Management Board, Pacific Programme Board and RBAP Advisory Panel Meeting Reports pertaining to Regional Priority setting, annual work planning and progress reporting both in Asia and the Pacific
* Regional knowledge products, knowledge management and innovation initiatives supported by the RPD both through the two umbrella Regional Projects as well as others supported through Global Funds, Global TTFs, other sources of RBAP funding, etc.
* UNDP Structural review information and related documents pertaining to RBAP and the RPD
* Other relevant non-UNDP sources of information which will in particular benefit and better inform context analysis and an understanding of how the partnership environment, resource mobilization opportunities, development priorities in the region evolving
  1. **Semi-structured interviews** held over the phone or though virtual meetings with a sample of key informants, stakeholders and participants bearing relevance to the RPD, drawn from:
* Government stakeholders, including ministries participating in regional project PACs, Steering Committees; Outcome and Programme Boards
* Current and potential donors and other external partners, both UN and non-UN
* Selected RRs/RCs from countries with RPD related regional project interventions and receiving policy advisory services
  1. Undertake detailed **Case studies of at least three flagship regional initiatives** (two from Asia and one from the Pacific) to selectively investigate some results and their value add in greater depth.
  2. **Consultations with and inputs from various stakeholders will be critical** and **will be sought virtually through relevant web-based surveys, virtual meetings, electronic exchanges, use of studies** and reviews undertaken by other relevant stakeholders (donors, regional organizations, etc.)
  3. In-depth interviews by the consultant with relevant staff in BRH, including RPPS staff, Pacific Centre, RBAP NY, BPPS and other relevant HQ Bureaus, etc.

# Expected Deliverables

* 1. **Inception Report:**

Following the contracting, the MTR team will prepare a brief inception report that contains:

* A proposed schedule and division of tasks, list of activities and deliverables
* Proposed Table of Contents of the MTR Report and Annexes
* The Review Framework which provides a more detailed list of review questions and sources/methods of data collection, including a list of key stakeholders and other individuals, who should be consulted, developed with the assistance of the BRH Directorate
* A preliminary list of documents that will be reviewed and consulted by the review team.
* The Inception Report will be finalized after its been reviewed and cleared by the RBAP Directorate and the Reference Group from UNDP (see Section 7.1)

**6.2 MTR Report:**

The key product expected from this MTR is a comprehensive analytical report in English

meeting the required criteria outlined for objective, scope, structure and content, and that

should, at least, include the following content:

1. Executive summary
2. Introduction
3. Description of the review methodology
4. An analysis of the situation in line with the scope of the MTR;
5. Key findings;
6. Conclusions and recommendations
7. Annexes: TOR, field visits, people interviewed, documents reviewed, etc.
8. Finalization of the report based on comments received followed by either face-to-face or video-conference presentation of the Final Report key findings and recommendations.
9. In the report, to the extent feasible, there should be segregation of the data, analysis and presentation by sub-region, as for example for the Pacific.
10. The recommendations included in the draft report will be addressed to the different stakeholders and prioritized: they will be evidence-based (with references to the relevant findings in the report), relevant, focused, clearly formulated and actionable.
11. The Draft MTR Report will be submitted first to the RBAP Directorate and the MTR Reference Group, who will review the document for quality and completeness and request enhancements from the consultants as needed.
12. Comments will be incorporated as deemed appropriate by the MTR team. A “Response to comments matrix” will be prepared by the MTR team to show how comments received have been dealt with in the Final MTR Report.
13. Final Mid-Term Review Report – should be in English and about 20 pages (8,500 words maximum) of the main text of the report (excluding annexes). The report should be strategic, future-oriented, results-driven and analytical.
14. Annexes to the MTR report will include, though not limited to, the following as relevant:

* Terms of reference for the MTR;
* Additional methodology-related documentation (for example – web based survey results, relevant record of stakeholder consultations and meetings, etc.);
* The two cumulative progress reports of the umbrella Regional Projects for Asia and the Pacific
* Case Studies of selected flagship regional initiatives
* List of documents reviewed;
* List of Country Offices, regional institutions, and external stakeholders consulted and interviewed by the MTR team;
* Others as deemed necessary by the MTR team to support the MTR findings and recommendations in the final MTR Report

1. Review time required by UNDP - At least one working week after submission of each deliverable for review/approval
2. **MTR management and timeline** 
   1. The over-all management of the RPD MTR will be by the RBAP Directorate under the guidance of a RBAP DRD/BRH Director and coordinated and supported by the Regional Programme Specialist in BRH.
   2. A Reference Group comprising of the Chief of RPPS; the Regional Manager of the Pacific Centre; and the RPPS and Pacific Centre Practice Team Leaders and relevant representation from other parts of RBAP and UNDP will provide advice and support and will be consulted for inputs and feedback on the MTR deliverables
   3. The MTR will be conducted by the two member international consultant’s team for a duration of 30 working days each. It is proposed that the MTR team schedule the first 5 work days of the consultancy to be used for desk review and the preparation of the Inception Report; 16 days for data collection, inclusive of a 3 to 4 days mission to Bangkok for briefings and meetings, 7 days for MTR report writing; and 2 days for appropriate revisions of final draft MTR Report following review and feedback from relevant stakeholders.
   4. One mission to Bangkok will be carried out by the MTR Team (assuming the consultant is from outside Bangkok) at the beginning of the MTR for relevant briefings and meetings with BRH. The option for a presentation to RBAP and the RPD Management Board of the final Report by the MTR Team Leader or Team in Bangkok will be discussed and decided.
   5. The RPD MTR report preparation timeline will be from 23rd November 2015 with the Final MTR Report submission to RBAP latest by the 15th of January 2016.
3. **Qualifications of the RPD MTR consultants**

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| * 1. ***The MTR Team Leader***   The Team Leader will have the responsibilities as defined in Section 4 of the ToR and should have following qualification/competencies:   * Advanced university degree in relevant social science areas. * Good knowledge of evaluation and assessment methods with the professional working experience of having conducted and led at least 3-4 reviews/evaluations as the Team leader and related report writing; preferably for UNDP * At least 6-8 years of solid experience in undertaking evaluations, reviews and strategic analysis and report writing for international organizations, including UNDP * Minimum 6 years of experience working on similar evaluation/review assignments which require extensive consultations and interactions with national governments and senior government officials; and also with other stakeholders such as donors, regional organizations, CSOs, etc.; * Good knowledge and technical understanding of the UN, and in particular UNDP programmes in Asia and Pacific in the relevant thematic sectors of the RPD, good understanding of the Asia and Pacific region in terms of its development programmes, development issues and other evolving environment * Strong analytical capability; openness to change and ability to receive and integrate feedback; * Strong interpersonal skills and communication skills and ability to adhere to agreed timelines and to meet tight deadlines * Excellent report writing, presentation and editing skills in English   1. ***The other MTR team member***   The second consultant will have the responsibilities as outlined in Section 4 of the ToR and will work under the guidance of the Team Leader to provide the required evaluation and MTR related technical expertise and inputs and other MTR tasks as and as decided by the TL.  S/he will have the following qualifications and competencies:   * Advanced university degree in a relevant social science area * At least 4-5 years of solid experience in undertaking evaluations and reviews, and similar strategic analysis and report writing for international organizations, preferably for the UNDP and for regional programmes and projects * Good knowledge of evaluation and assessment methods with the professional working experience of having conducted at least 2-3 global, regional and country level reviews/evaluations and related report writing; preferably for UNDP following UNEG guidelines * Good knowledge and technical understanding of the UN, and in particular UNDP programmes in Asia and Pacific region both at the country and regional level. * Prior experience of working in Asia-Pacific region is required along with in-depth knowledge and good technical understanding of the Asia and Pacific Region and its development issues and challenges * Good analytical, strategic thinking skills, inter-personal, teamwork, and communication skills * Excellent report writing and editing skills in English |
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