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Second country cooperation framework for the United Arab Emirates (2002 - 2006)

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DP/CCF/UAE/2

Introduction

1. The second country cooperation framework (CCF) for the United Arab Emirates, covering the years 2002-2006, has emerged from a consultative process between the Government of the United Arab Emirates and UNDP, along with United Nations system agencies, civil society organizations (CSOs), academic institutions, and the private sector. The framework also reflects: (a) findings and recommendations of the Country Review of 2000, (b) development conditions and emerging trends in the United Arab Emirates, (c) UNDP corporate strategy and UNDP comparative advantage in the United Arab Emirates, (d) strategy of the UNDP Regional Cooperation Framework, and (e) the Country Office Strategic Results Framework (2000-2003).

I. Development situation from a sustainable human development perspective

2. The United Arab Emirates is a federation of seven emirates: Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Sharjah, Ajman, Umm al Qawain, Ras al Khaimah and Fujairah. It enjoys a sustained record of human development, with demonstrable results in the development of its economic, education and healthcare systems, and improvement in nutrition, sanitation, housing and environment. The total population of the United Arab Emirates is estimated to be 3.1 million, with a population growth rate of 5.6 per cent per annum.

3. Total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in 2000 was dirhams 217 billion (US\$ 59.3 billion). Per capita annual income is about \$18,000 (although it varies between \$7,000 and \$22,000 among the emirates). Over 55 per cent of the GDP accrues to Abu Dhabi, 25 per cent to Dubai, 12 per cent to Sharjah and 8 per cent to the other four emirates.

4. Adult literacy reached 75 per cent in 1998 compared to 21 per cent in 1968. Education in the United Arab Emirates is free at all levels and universal primary school enrolment has been achieved. In 1999, the number of schools reached 1,085, representing remarkable growth for a country with virtually no

educational system before the 1970s. There is also ready access to higher education in the United Arab Emirates, with more than 90 per cent of those leaving high school applying for higher education (95 per cent of women and 73 per cent of men). In 1998/99, 80 per cent of total student enrolments at University of the United Arab Emirates were women.

5. Despite the above achievements, there is continued reliance on foreign labour and currently, up to 85 per cent of the 1.3 million people in the labour force are non-nationals. Activities such as construction, transport, utilities, mechanical, electrical, other labour-intensive and service-oriented industries are dominated by foreign labour, both skilled and unskilled.

The Government of the United Arab Emirates is 6. increasingly looking at the private sector, where expatriates make up 96 per cent of the workforce, to employ more nationals. The Government has established a National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority (Tanmia) to focus on training and securing employment for more than 15,000 nationals over the next five years. Particular emphasis is being placed on the participation of national women in the labour force, as their participation remains very low in comparison to the high proportion of women graduates.

The government institutions have embarked on 7. several public sector reform programmes aimed at improving public sector management and efficiency. Several federal-level reform programmes are being spearheaded by the Ministry of Finance and Industry, including implementation of quality management and ISO 9000:2000 certification in all federal ministries; public expenditure management reform; public sector procurement reform; implementation of e-government; and strengthening central statistical data systems. There is also growing commitment to public sector reform at the emirate level, with quality management and e-government programmes being widely implemented, particularly in the emirate of Dubai.

8. Fluctuations in oil prices cause uncertainty in revenues, which impose constraints on the Government to make any long-term development plan. The Government has made a significant effort to diversify the economy, and 62 per cent of national income is currently from the non-oil sectors. The efforts of the

Government include diversifying the hydrocarbon sector, as well as expanding in other sectors, such as commercial activities, tourism, infrastructure projects, free zone industrial activities and financial services.

9. Since it became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1996, there has been growing concern in the public and private sectors of the United Arab Emirates regarding WTO issues and how to derive maximum benefit from the multilateral trading system while protecting the interests of the country. With support from UNDP, efforts are now being directed raising at awareness, increasing understanding, and building capacity in dealing with WTO matters effectively both in government and the private sector.

10. Extensive exploitation of oil and gas has brought an extended period of economic boom that has enabled rapid urbanization. This, in turn, has increased demands on the environment and scarce water resources. High population growth also exacerbates the situation. Given the scarcity of water, the priority of the United Arab Emirates environmental policy is to conserve and protect its water resources, and the Government at the federal and emirate levels is considering policies and strategies for water management and conservation.

11. The country's coastal zones extending along the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman represent a valuable economic source for development. The United Arab Emirates marine environment is under stress due to urban development on the coastline, oil spills, ballast water discharge, dredging, and landfill for coastal development. Rational planning and management of the use of marine resources are therefore vital.

12. There is strong political commitment at the highest level to environmental protection, as well as growing awareness of environmental issues and concerns among policy-makers and civil society. New environmental laws came into force in 2000, and further strengthening of institutional mechanisms and technical capacity is required for enforcement of environmental standards and sustainable management of natural resources.

II. Results and lessons of past cooperation

13. The first CCF prepared for the period 1997-2001 focused on three programme areas: (a) sustainable natural resources management; (b) human resources development; and (c) governance. The mid-term review of the 1997-2001 CCF concluded that UNDP United Arab Emirates has responded effectively to national priorities and endorsed the substantive contribution of the programme areas of intervention. Cooperation between UNDP and the Government at both the federal and emirate levels has generated upstream outputs of importance at the national and emirate levels.

14. The results of UNDP cooperation during the 1997-2001 CCF enabled the Government to prepare the following key national and emirate-level policies, plans and strategies: (a) Dubai Strategic Plan (1996-2000); (b) Abu Dhabi Strategic Development Programme (2000-2020); (c) Ras Al Khaimah Development Vision (2000-2009); (d) National Environmental Strategy and National Environmental Action Plan, (e) National Strategy for the Advancement of Women; (f) National Health Policies and Action Plan; (g) healthcare financing study for the emirate of Abu Dhabi; (h) agriculture policy analysis for the emirate of Abu Dhabi, which led to the preparation by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries of a Strategic Framework on agricultural development. In addition, as a result of discussions between UNDP. UNFPA and the Government, a trust fund is to be established to finance the work of several national committees on population and to conduct population studies.

15. While the outcome in terms of rate and success of implementation of the above policies and strategies has not yet been assessed, the process of formulation of these strategies has increased the use of sustainable human development concepts and helped to develop national capacity in development planning. The formulation of these frameworks is also considered vital to prioritizing national concerns and goals, mobilizing the Government's commitment, and identifying modalities to address them.

16. UNDP support to institutional development led to significant advances in government reform initiatives. At the federal level, a flagship UNDP initiative was implemented with the Ministry of Finance and Industry

using a quality improvement approach based on the 9001 standard, which resulted in rapid ISO improvements in efficiency and the establishment of clear and transparent systems in the Ministry. The approach is now being extended to other ministries under the supervision of the Ministry of Finance and Industry as a result of a cabinet resolution directing all ministries and public sector agencies to implement the ISO 9000:2000 series within three years. At the emirate level, UNDP provided support to institutional strengthening and reform in key organizations, including Dubai Municipality, Abu Dhabi Municipality (Food and Environment Control Centre), Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry. In support of institutional development, UNDP has been a partner in two award programmes, the "Dubai Government Excellence Programme" and the "Khalifa Excellence Award for Industry and Services", which recognize and encourage organizational development, quality service and customer care in the public and private sectors.

17. UNDP direct support to the Government in WTO negotiations in Seattle resulted in the launch of a capacity-building/policy formulation project on WTO issues with the Ministry of Economy and Commerce. The project aims to enhance understanding of WTO rules and mechanisms, support participation in WTO processes, and maximize the benefits and opportunities offered by the multilateral trading system.

18. The mid-term review of the 1997-2001 CCF, experience of the Country Office and feedback from government partners point to the following major lessons learned:

(a) UNDP cooperation in the United Arab Emirates should continue to focus on the provision of innovative advisory services, policy studies, advocacy, and capacity-building in priority sectors, rather than mere exchange of operational expertise.

(b) UNDP should continue to encourage national institutions and individuals to participate in the implementation of projects/programme activities as a means of further developing national capacity.

(c) A participatory approach in the formulation of national or emirate-level strategies ensures greater ownership and endorsement of policies, as well as providing opportunities for national capacity-building. (d) Upstream policy advice and strategies should be supported by, and actively followed up with advice on implementation of proposed policies.

(e) UNDP should further develop and leverage existing partnerships and cooperation with the media, professional societies, universities, academic and training institutions and the private sector.

(f) Adequate UNDP staff capacity has to be put in place to support UNDP activities in order to ensure effective financial management and evaluation of results.

(g) Linkage with related regional initiatives offers significant opportunities to increase the impact of UNDP efforts in the United Arab Emirates.

III. Objectives, programme areas and expected results

19. Impartiality and well-established national partnerships give UNDP a unique role. Unlike consultancy firms and other profit-seeking sources of advisory services, the UNDP sustainable human development mandate and public service goals position it to address a special niche as a trusted partner of the Government.

20. UNDP will continue to leverage its comparative advantage to support national development priorities in three key areas: institutional and human resources development; integration into the global economy; and protection, management and regeneration of natural resources and the environment.

21. Efforts will continuously be exerted to secure support and technical cooperation to the less resourceendowed northern emirates of Ajman, Umm Al Qawain, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah. Bearing in mind the financial constraints in these emirates, the approach taken will be through advocating small-scale projects with government organizations such as municipalities, chambers of commerce and economic departments.

22. The main services provided by UNDP will be: policy advice; support to policy formulation and implementation; advocacy and awareness creation; and capacity-building. UNDP will also aim to enhance the access of policy-makers in the United Arab Emirates to information on relevant comparative experiences and best practices.

23. Inter-linkages and synergy with UNDP-supported regional and sub-regional efforts will be pursued. UNDP will help to develop shared regional agenda where appropriate and ensure that feedback of local development programmes is communicated to the regional level. Pilot activities will be used for promoting policy reform, at the national and subnational levels, as well as the sub-regional (Gulf), and regional (Arab) levels. This can build on pioneering efforts in the United Arab Emirates, including those related to institutional development, information and communication technology (ICT) and e-government. UNDP resources available at the regional level, such as the proposed advisors and various tools and guidelines in the thematic areas of globalization, governance and growth, will be utilized.

A. Institutional and human resource development

24. UNDP will support institutional development at the federal and emirate levels with the aim of supporting the public sector in providing high-quality services, improving effectiveness and efficiency, and developing the capacities of national human resources. Institutional development and reform will also lead to greater including governance, advances in accountability and empowerment. transparency, Gender considerations and policies will be advocated through organizational development initiatives.

25. At the federal level, UNDP will cooperate with the Ministry of Finance and Industry in mobilizing technical advisory services for its key reform programmes across Ministries and national government institutions. At the emirate level, UNDP will continue to support local government organizations in reform and management improvement initiatives, including quality management, human resource planning and development, and e-government. Particular focus will be given to institutional capacity-building and strengthening in the northern emirates of Ajman, Umm Al Qawain, Ras Al Khaimah and Fujairah.

26. Strengthening management and leadership skills of United Arab Emirates nationals in government and the private sector will be an integral aspect of institutional and human resource development. UNDP will aim to incorporate leadership training in all its institutional development initiatives.

27. Initiatives aimed at upgrading the business and management skills of the increasing number of United Arab Emirates nationals entering private businesses will be supported by UNDP through collaboration with chambers of commerce to provide training for business managers and entrepreneurs. Particular emphasis will be given to providing learning opportunities for women.

28. Opportunities for facilitating implementation of ICT initiatives within government organizations will be sought and advocated, either as a culmination of reform and change management, or as a catalyst for institutional development and change. The areas of e-government support that UNDP will aim to provide will include cooperating in institutional reform as a prerequisite for e-government, supporting human capacity development in e-government, providing advisory services in formulating e-government strategies, advocating and sharing information on e-government applications and benefits.

29. Drawing on the expertise of specialized United Nations agencies, UNDP will develop partnership with the newly established National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority (Tanmia) to provide policy advice and technical assistance in formulating and implementing policies and strategies for increasing participation of nationals in the workforce. Opportunities for partnership with the Ministry of Education and Youth, the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, as well as educational institutions and the private sector, will be sought to develop human resource strategies and initiatives.

30. The intended results by the end of the CCF include: (a) implementation of quality management and ISO certification in most public administrations; (b) introduction of programme and performance-based budgeting; (c) reform of government procurement systems; (d) implementation of an e-government strategy for the federal ministries; (e) strengthened national statistics for policy formulation and public expenditure management; (f) strengthened organizational management and national capacity within at least three emirate-level government for the

government organizations of the northern emirates, (h) at least one project designed and resources mobilized for implementation of institutional and human resource development within the northern emirates: (i) at least one nationwide seminar a vear on either governance/public sector reform or human resources development, resulting in broad participation of stakeholders, opportunities for UNDP partnership building. and strengthened commitment to implementation of initiatives arising from policy advice; (j) partnership with the National Human Resource Development and Employment Authority, (k) a central data base for national human resources, including up-to-date information on education, training and employment sectors, and a gender disaggregated employment and skills survey to identify the skill set of the national workforce; (1) increased access of national businessmen and businesswomen to training opportunities in business, management and ecommerce.

B. Integration into the global economy

31. As a result of the neutrality of UNDP, and as it is the only international agency represented in the United Arab Emirates, UNDP is a trusted source of access to international expertise and advisory support on international trade issues for the Government and the private sector. The main thrust of UNDP support to the United Arab Emirates integration into the global economy will be to continue to assist the Government and the private sector in building up the required capacities to deal with WTO matters effectively. UNDP cooperation will also contribute to building women's skills for greater participation in the global economy.

32. UNDP will continue its cooperation with the Ministry of Economy and Commerce in strengthening the Government's capacity to implement and follow up WTO agreements. Formal and on-the-job training will focus on (a) strengthening national technical capacity to analyse and understand WTO issues and their implications for United Arab Emirates external trade, (b) strengthening negotiating skills for trade negotiations, and (c) strengthening national capacity in adapting existing laws, rules and regulations and procedures, and formulating trade policies. 33. The proposed reorganization of the WTO Department within the Ministry of Economy and Commerce will be implemented as part of ongoing UNDP cooperation.

34. Opportunities for sub-regional cooperation and coordination will be sought in meeting common capacity-building needs in trade issues. Inter-linkage with the UNDP regional programme on globalization is expected to facilitate sub-regional coordination and synergies.

35. UNDP will assist in the formulation of a long-term national economic vision addressing the benefits and costs to the national economy of economic globalization and the changing scenarios in production and technology worldwide.

36. UNDP will continue to collaborate with the private sector through its representative institutions, such as the Chambers of Commerce and Industry as well as educational institutions, to train, guide and empower private businesses, particularly small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs), to benefit from the opportunities of globalization and address the challenges it poses.

37. ICT will be advocated as an integral tool for participation in the global economy, and support will be given to initiatives aimed at building ICT-based national capacity and knowledge, particularly among national women. Focus will be given to developing capacity in e-business/e-commerce, and accessing information, knowledge and expertise through the Internet.

38. In order to support the United Arab Emirates in achieving internationally competitive standards in the private sector, opportunities will be sought for knowledge enhancement and access to best practices in areas such as product specifications and standardization, quality control and management, certification and intellectual property, and pre-export inspections.

39. UNDP will cooperate with national research and policy institutions and universities to stimulate policy debate and analysis on the social dimensions of globalization and to address national and regional concerns regarding the impact of globalization on social and cultural norms.

40. The intended results by the end of the CCF include: (a) strengthened national capacity within government and the private sector in analysing and

understanding WTO issues and their implications; (b) strengthened trade negotiation skills within the Ministry of Economy and Commerce; (c) operational units established within the Ministry of Economy and Commerce to follow up and implement WTO agreements and provide expertise and information on global best practices in trade-related fields; (d) a national seminar held in cooperation with the Ministry of Economy and Trade as a preliminary step towards the formulation of the national economic vision; (e) a national economic vision formulated, using а participatory approach; (f) policy analysis carried out on how the private sector can best position itself to capitalize on the opportunities and face the challenges of WTO; (g) increased access to information and training on WTO issues for SMEs through partnership with chambers of commerce; (h) at least one partnership agreement signed between UNDP and the private sector to jointly research and advocate the application of ICT for development.

C. Protection, management and regeneration of natural resources and the environment

41. Under the CCF, UNDP will assist the United Arab Emirates in implementing the National Environmental Action Plan within the framework of Agenda 21, according to the priorities approved by the Government. The programme of cooperation will focus on strengthening institutional capacity and coordination among all agencies of the federal government and individual emirates, with NGO involvement.

42. National capacity in environmental science, management, law and economics will be strengthened through national professional training programmes developed in collaboration with United Nations agencies, United Arab Emirates universities, research institutions and environmental organizations. At the emirate level, UNDP will cooperate with municipalities in strengthening institutional capacity in environmental protection and management. Support to the northern emirates is foreseen, particularly in areas such as water supply and sanitation, coastal preservation and management, waste recycling and air pollution control. By the end of the CCF, UNDP support will have contributed to building the capacity of environmental authorities to enforce standards that promote sustainable natural resource management.

43. Access to environmental information will be facilitated, and participation in environmental conferences and forums at the international, regional and sub-regional levels will be encouraged, in order to build environmental knowledge and exchange of best practices.

44. Technical assistance and policy advice will be mobilized to develop strategies for the management and protection of water resources at the national and emirate levels. Partnership with the Office of H.H. the President, Department of Water Resources Research and Studies, will be established to support water research and policy studies. Cooperation will be sought with United Nations bodies such as ESCWA, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, and WMO, as well as academic and research institutions, NGOs and the private sector to provide technical and advisory services. Priority will be given to assessment and management of ground water resources, new water-conserving irrigation methods, and water pollution.

45. Support will be given to environmental NGOs to enhance skills in accessing knowledge and information, advocacy, networking, fund raising, awareness campaigns, and other priority needs as identified by NGOs. Activities of NGOs will be supported, particularly in areas providing opportunities for greater participation of national women.

46. The private sector will be engaged in environmental training, policy debate, and awareness initiatives, with the aim of securing a greater contribution and responsibility of commercial and industrial firms in protecting and cleaning the environment.

47. Intended results by the end of the CCF include: (a) technical advisory services mobilized for the implementation of selected priority areas of the National Environmental Action Plan; (b) strengthened coordination among all agencies of the federal government and individual emirates as well as NGOs academia: strengthened and (c) capacity of authorities environmental in enforcement of environmental standards, (d) needs assessment of the environmental capacity-building requirements of the northern emirates, and at least one capacity-building initiative implemented in one of the northern emirates:

(e) partnership with the Office of H.H. the President, as well as government organizations in individual emirates, to prepare water strategies and action plans for their implementation; (f) one workshop per year aimed at strengthening capacity and skills of NGOs; and (g) environmental management seminars in partnership with, and targeted at, the business and industry sectors.

D. Cross-cutting issues

48. Gender, sustainable governance, ICT and knowledge management issues, will be integrated into the above three thematic areas in addition to being the focus of specific interventions.

49. Gender. Support to the implementation of the National Strategy for the Advancement of Women will be provided in cooperation with UNIFEM. Gender issues will be integrated into programme areas by (a) incorporating gender considerations in institution-building initiatives and supporting the upgrading of skills of national women to meet the requirements of the current labor market, (b) supporting the participation of women in the global economy through building women's skills in business management, entrepreneurship and information technology, and (c) recognizing and promoting the role of women in the protection of the environment and the management of natural resources.

50. Sustainable governance. UNDP experience in the United Arab Emirates has shown that support to institutional development can have a significant impact in enhancing transparency, accountability and empowerment in the public sector. Initiatives aimed at supporting integration into the global economy, such as supporting the Government and the private sector in meeting international standards to enhance competitiveness, will also have a positive impact on governance issues. In the area of environmental governance, the participatory approach adopted in formulating the National Environmental Action Plan facilitated greater transparency and empowerment, and will be the approach taken in further environmental cooperation.

51. Information and communication technology and knowledge management. ICT and knowledge management will be advocated as an integral aspect of

institutional and human resource development through ICT/e-government interventions and through initiatives aimed at upgrading human resource skills in ICT. Efforts to build ICT skills for greater competitiveness and participation in the global economy will be supported. The framework will also aim to strengthen national capacity in the use of ICT solutions for environmental management, connectivity, research and information exchange.

IV. Management arrangements

A. Implementation

52. While United Nations agency execution was almost exclusive in the previous cycle, national execution (NEX) will be encouraged and considered as an alternative modality whenever feasible. It will result in providing opportunities to build up new partnerships and to further national capacity-building.

53. The implementation of the CCF will enjoy guidance and technical advice in the specific thematic areas from leading international or national experts, members of the public and private sectors, and of civil society. This will ensure the continuous relevance and quality of the programme.

54. The overall performance and results achieved will be monitored through the Strategic Results Framework (SRF), and annually documented through the Results Oriented Annual Report (ROAR). A full evaluation will be conducted at mid-point.

55. The oversight, at the framework level, will be provided by a steering committee of senior managers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Planning, Ministry of Finance and Industry, and UNDP. The committee will normally meet twice a year to assess progress made in the implementation of the CCF and decide on corrective measures as necessary.

56. At the programme level, steering and technical committees in which national counterparts, national and international executing agents and UNDP are represented will monitor the achievement of results. UNDP staff will undertake regular monitoring visits to activities sites. Project managers and short-term consultants will be requested to submit progress and

final reports. Evaluations will be carried out for largerscale activities. All information generated will be analysed and reflected in the ROAR and in other results-based management tools.

B. Resource mobilization

57. The United Arab Emirates is a net contributor country and is not entitled to core funding from UNDP. The CCF will be fully funded by national clients through cost-sharing arrangements. Significant efforts will be made to develop new partnerships and expand the client base, both at the federal and the local level, as a vital step to mobilizing the needed resources. Partnership with the Ministry of Finance will be particularly strengthened to implement the framework understanding of the memorandum of for programmes/projects/activities to be carried out at the federal level.

58. The success of the resource mobilization efforts will largely depend on the demonstrated capability of UNDP to offer high-quality services to its clients. UNDP will endeavour to increase and strategically use its own limited resources to secure high-level advisory services. The Country Office will also seek in-kind support from the Bureau for Development Policy and SURF, as well as the Regional Framework, and from United Nations specialized agencies.

59. The United Arab Emirates Country Office will sustain its efforts, partly successful so far, to recover cost sharing overdue from previous cycles. The principle that expenditures cannot, under any circumstances, exceed the available income is already strictly enforced and will remain in force. Meanwhile, discussions have been initiated on programme costsharing as an additional safeguard to avoid recurrence of overdue cost-sharing but, moreover, as a means to generate resources to offset past overdue cost-sharing and for capacity and programme development.

60. The Resource Mobilization Target has been set at \$20 million, an average of \$4 million a year, in the light of the previous CCF where the same targets have been fully achieved. It is envisaged that 60 per cent of resources will be mobilized in the area of institutional and human resources development, and 40 per cent will be mobilized for activities in the areas of integration into the global economy and for the

protection, management and regeneration of natural resources and the environment.

Annex

Resource mobilization target table for the United Arab Emirates (2002 - 2006)

	Amount		
Source	(In thousands of United States dollars)	Comments	
UNDP regular resources			
Estimated carry-over	-	Includes carry-over of TRAC 1, TRAC 2 and the earlier AOS allocations.	
TRAC 1.1.1	-	Assigned immediately to country.	
TRAC 1.1.2	0 to 66.7 per cent of TRAC 1.1.1	This range of percentages is presented for initial planning purposes only. The actual assignment will depend on the availability of high-quality programmes. Any increase in the range of percentages would also be subject to availability of resources.	
SPPD/STS	-		
Subtotal	-		
UNDP other resources			
Government cost-sharing	20 000		
Third party cost-sharing	-		
Funds, trust funds and other	-		
Subtotal	20 000		
Grand total	20 000		

Abbreviations: AOS = administrative and operational services; SPPD = support for policy and programme development; STS = support for technical services; TRAC = target for resource assignment from the core.