

EVALUATION OF

THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR EUROPE AND THE
COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES 2006-2010

REGIONAL COOPERATION



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EVALUATION TEAM

Team Leader	Alexey Kuzmin
International Consultant	Natalia Kosheleva
National Consultants	Enver Safar-Zade, Azerbaijan Erkina Ubysheva, Kyrgyzstan Farrukh Tiuriyev, Tajikistan Georgi Tsintsadze, Georgia Irina Dedova, Turkmenistan Jamila Assanova, Kazakhstan Regina Safarova, Uzbekistan
Evaluation Office Task Manager	Michael Reynolds

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Copy editing: Denise Doig
Graphic design: Laurie Douglas Graphic Design (www.lauriedouglas.com)
Printing: Consolidated Graphics

FOREWORD

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) evaluation policy approved in 2006 makes independent evaluation of all regional programmes mandatory. This is the sixth regional programme evaluation conducted by the UNDP Evaluation Office but the first for the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC). The report of the Evaluation of the Regional Programme for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) 2006-2010 report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from the assessment of UNDP performance, achievements and results, and its strategic positioning in the region. The aim of the evaluation is to provide accountability for the achievement of results and resources used, identify successful approaches and challenges, and learn lessons from implementation in a regional setting. Most importantly, the evaluation is intended to feed directly into the development of the new RBEC regional programme to start in 2011. The evaluation was carried out between July and December 2009 and included a comprehensive desk review supplemented with five detailed country studies undertaken by members of the core evaluation team. In line with Evaluation Office policy to utilize national and regional evaluation capacity, the core evaluation team was composed of consultants from the region. National evaluation consultants were also used to increase data collection coverage across the region.

UNDP began the process of establishing offices and programmes in the region in 1992 and RBEC now serves 29 countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union through its 24 country offices. The evaluation concluded that the RBEC regional programme in general, and the RBEC Regional Service Centre in Bratislava in particular, are extremely important for fulfilling the RBEC mission in the region. But it also noted that the combination of projects,

activities and services implemented by the regional programme is beyond what is traditionally called a “programme.” The evaluation team recognized that the Bratislava Regional Centre has a strong capacity and in-depth expertise in most UNDP priority areas, and is a unique source of knowledge and advice for the country offices. The team also noted that the programme is being implemented in a fast changing region and in the complex environment of implementing the UNDP regionalization policy. In this respect the evaluation will also contribute to the ongoing independent evaluation of regionalization in UNDP being conducted by the Evaluation Office.

A number of people contributed to this evaluation and in particular I would like to thank the evaluation team composed of Alexey Kuzmin as Team Leader and Natalia Kosheleva as international evaluation consultant. In addition, thanks go to the national consultants who contributed to the evaluation: Enver Safar-Zade (Azerbaijan), Erkina Ubysheva (Kyrgyzstan), Farrukh Tiuriyev (Tajikistan), Georgi Tsintsadze (Georgia), Irina Dedova (Turkmenistan), Jamila Assanova (Kazakhstan), and Regina Safarova (Uzbekistan). I am also grateful for the contributions of the external reviewers Howard Stewart and Fuat Andic and the internal reviewer, Urs Nagel, whose contributions significantly improved the quality of the report. From the Evaluation Office side I would like to thank the Task Manager, Michael Reynolds, as well as Thuy Hang To, Flora Jimenez, Michelle Sy and Anish Pradhan for providing excellent administrative and technical support.

The research and conduct of the evaluation were completed thanks to the excellent collaboration of the RBEC in New York under the leadership of Kori Udovički, Assistant Administrator and Regional Director and Cihan Sultanoglu, Deputy Assistant Administrator & Deputy

Regional Director. I would also like to thank Jens Wandel, Deputy Regional Director & Regional Centre Director for his support and important insights as well as the many other colleagues in Bratislava who spent time with the evaluation team. Given the very busy schedules and workloads, as identified in the evaluation, their time is much appreciated. Special thanks go to Patrick Gremillet, Andrey Pogrebnyak and Olga Zlatnanska for their support, and above all to Agi Veres as the evaluation counterpart/focal point for her extremely important support and guidance.

Thanks are due to UNDP country office colleagues who shared their insights with the evaluation team. I would especially like to thank the UNDP resident representatives who shared their valuable time and allowed the team to interview their staff: Consuelo Vidal Bruce (Armenia), Haoliang Xu (Kazakhstan), Deirdre Boyd (Macedonia),

Kaarina Immonen (Moldova), and Olivier Adam (Ukraine). Also to the resident representatives and their staff in the countries where national consultants undertook interviews. The evaluation has also benefited from the interest and support of government representatives in the region, regional partners, representatives of civil society and academia.

I hope that the findings and recommendations of this evaluation will assist UNDP in further responding to the challenges of this highly dynamic region and provide broader lessons that may be of relevance to UNDP and its partners regionally and beyond.



Saraswathi Menon
Director, Evaluation Office

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	Assessment of Development Results
BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP)
BDP	Bureau for Development Policy (UNDP)
BRC	Bratislava Regional Centre (UNDP)
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CoP	community of practice
CSO	civil society organization
CST	Country Support Team
ECIS	Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
EPIN	Economic Policy Institutes Network
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
ILO	International Labour Organization
KM	knowledge management
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	non-governmental organization
PAR	Public Administration Reform
RBEC	Regional Bureau for Europe and the CIS (UNDP)
RCPAR	Regional Centre for Public Administration Reform
ROAR	Results Oriented Annual Report
RSC	Regional Service Centre (UNDP)
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound
SURF	Subregional Resource Facility
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present report provides a summary of the findings of the evaluation of the Regional Programme 2006-2010 for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The evaluation was carried out between July and December 2009.

The evaluation was designed to assess the overall programme performance and outcomes of the regional programme in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States as well as to evaluate contributions of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) through the regional programme to development results in the region. In assessing the contribution of the programme, the evaluation covered the following areas:

- **Relevance:** How relevant is the regional programme to regional priority development needs and UNDP corporate strategies?
- **Responsiveness:** How has the regional programme responded to the changing context within which it works?
- **Partnerships:** How has the regional programme used partnership to increase the effectiveness of its support?
- **Effectiveness:** How effective has the regional programme been in achieving its objectives?
- **Efficiency:** Has it used its financial, human and other resources efficiently?
- **Sustainability:** Are the results to which the regional programme contributes sustainable?

The evaluation findings and recommendations are intended to contribute to the formulation of the next regional programme and its alignment with the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2008-2013. The methodology included a comprehensive desk

review and analysis of outcome and programme/project evaluations, monitoring reports, and other self-assessment reports. This was supplemented with five detailed country studies undertaken by members of the core evaluation team. Each was a detailed examination of the role and effectiveness of the regional programme in the country and covered Armenia, the Former Yugoslav Republic (FYR) of Macedonia, Kazakhstan, Moldova and Ukraine. While country studies do present a problem of generalization, they can be used to identify and highlight issues that can be further investigated across the programme. In addition, national consultants conducted six brief country studies (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), and international consultants based in Moscow conducted one brief country study (the Russian Federation).

MAIN FINDINGS

REGIONAL PROGRAMME

The Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC) regional programme document states that the overall goal of the programme is to help governments, civil society and the private sector fulfil the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). To do so the programme has to focus on meeting three key challenges: (1) poverty reduction and economic development; (2) democratic governance; and (3) sustainable energy and environmental practices. In addressing each of these challenges, the programme makes linkages to gender, HIV/AIDS, conflict prevention and recovery, and human security (including trafficking in human beings, narcotics and weapons).

According to the regional programme document, regional programming has to be implemented at the regional, subregional, national and subnational levels to reflect the needs of country offices and external partners. Subregional programming has to expand further, focusing on development challenges and opportunities in Central Asia, groupings of CIS; the Western Balkans; countries seeking to join the European Union (EU); and new EU member countries. One of the key functions of regional programming is to consolidate nascent communities of practice and continue to identify, codify, and disseminate best practices and development successes across the region and globally. Regional programming also has to reinforce and strengthen UNDP national programming by identifying and disseminating best practices and development successes.

The quality of the description of the results framework in the regional programme document is, however, low. It has logical gaps and many results indicators are poorly designed; the regional programme outcomes were revised several times and changed dramatically. Moreover, management and staff of UNDP country offices are not fully aware of the regional programme concept. Their perceptions of the regional programme are contradictory, which reflects inconsistencies in how the programme is described and presented by various parties and in various documents. There is a systemic cause for the above-mentioned contradictions and flaws in the regional programme framework: The UNDP regional programme is different from a country programme, not simply the equivalent to a country programme at the regional level.

The regional programme is managed by the RBEC Bratislava Regional Centre (BRC), which also manages the UNDP global programme interventions at the regional level. Although there are different interpretations of the programme, the de facto UNDP regional “programme” includes: (1) advisory and training services provided to the country offices; (2) design and implementation of ‘regional’ projects; (3) knowledge services and facilitation of the exchange of knowledge

through knowledge networks (communities of practice); and (4) UNDP positioning/marketing/networking in the region.

ADVISORY SERVICES

Overall the consulting component of the regional programme responds to country office requests very well. In fact any consultation should meet some specific client’s need by default; this is the nature of the consulting business. Thus, when the context changes clients’ needs also change and the BRC responds to the changing context by meeting the changing needs of its clients and partners. Remote consultations—via email and phone—provided by the BRC proved very effective. Many respondents in different countries reported on the timely and high-quality advice they had received from the Centre. Advanced information technology will help the BRC become even more responsive to clients’ requests and to the changing context.

While working hard on providing high-quality consulting services to its clients, BRC is facing at least three major challenges. First, the uneven distribution of work between the consultants and the work overload of the lead consultants needs to be overcome. Distribution of work between consultants is uneven because the best BRC specialists are so popular that sometimes country offices and national partners have to wait for months to get the expert they want. Hence a timely BRC/regional programme response to requests for specific experts is sometimes impossible. Some of the consequences of such popularity are extremely intense travel schedules and incredible workloads of the lead BRC experts. Secondly, staff turnover is high and affects BRC performance. There is no one simple explanation for the high level of staff turnover, but all respondents interviewed by the evaluation team agreed that BRC consultants work very hard and under serious pressure. Thirdly, although specialists hired by the BRC in all cases have solid professional backgrounds in their respective areas, not all of them have experience in providing consulting services and the proper

skills specific to consulting services. As a result, in some cases—according to our respondents in the country offices—BRC consulting missions turn out not to be overly effective owing to the ineffective client-consultant interactions rather than the lack of consultants’ expertise.

REGIONAL PROJECTS

At the time this evaluation was conducted, the RBEC portfolio included 189 regional projects implemented since 2004. Approximately 37 percent of regional projects are implemented in the area of energy and environment, which is more than one and a half times as many projects related to poverty reduction and more than twice as many as those implemented in the democratic governance area. This shift could be explained by the availability of funds for energy and environment projects, requests from the country offices and effective work of the energy and environment practice.

Project ideas either result from internal regional discussions or are the regional part of large global programmes, such as the Environment and Security Initiative, the Global Compact, and Growing Sustainable Business for Poverty Reduction. BRC facilitates the project design process, and in many (but not all) cases country offices are consulted with or actively involved in the project design. BRC staff manages regional projects implemented under the regional programme. In most other cases, the Team Leaders of BRC practices are not heavily involved in managing regional projects and are more focused on subject matters as well as on providing and supervising BRC services in their respective areas.

Making an assessment of the regional programme’s contribution to results across a wide range of countries is extremely difficult without outcome evaluations and/or a critical mass of project evaluations. Nonetheless, based on desk reviews and fieldwork, the evaluation team has made the assessments described in the paragraphs below.

Poverty and Economic Development. The major contributions to sustainable development results in the areas of poverty and economic development were made through development and dissemination of knowledge products, capacity-building and consultations. In many countries the regional programme resulted in new policies, strategies and measurement systems implemented at the national level. The BRC poverty practice enhanced its capacity in the course of regional programme implementation and became a strong asset. UNDP flagship knowledge products, such as the regional and subregional Human Development Reports are unique contributions that could hardly be made by any other agency. The creation of Web-based information sources could be considered a potentially sustainable result as well, but only on the stipulation that those recourses are maintained and updated on a regular basis by the BRC and/or its partners. Global Compact projects in the countries visited by the evaluation team did not include exit strategies for UNDP and are coming to a close, while the results achieved are unlikely to be sustained.

Sustainable Energy and Environment. The key contributions of the regional programme to the development results in the area of sustainable energy and environment were made through research, development of subject-specific methods and tools, training and consultations, and dissemination of knowledge products that included Web-based resources. One of the regional projects implemented by this practice had an explicit goal of assisting country offices and UNDP partners in resource mobilization, which was greatly appreciated by the beneficiaries in the Central Asian countries. Several regional projects coordinated by this practice were truly ‘regional’—aimed at all the countries and provided results that could benefit all the countries. Energy and environment differs from other practices and could be explained by the nature of this subject area: Many environmental issues affect all the countries regardless of the economic development and political context. In this respect, energy and environment practice

has very good potential to grow and enhance its contribution to development results in the future.

Democratic Governance. The key contributions to development results were made by this practice through research, development and dissemination of knowledge products, capacity development, and policy advice. Democratic governance places a special emphasis on networking. As compared to the other practice areas, the regional programme made a unique, sustainable and very important contribution to development results by establishing and enhancing a Regional Centre for Public Administration Reform (RCPAR) to support regional cooperation. Since the contribution in the area of democratic governance depends, to a great extent, on the political context and the level of economic development of the countries involved, this practice had to be very sensitive and flexible to adjust to the variety of circumstances in different countries. Respondents in all the countries spoke highly of the potential of the current democratic governance practice. The demand for high-quality policy advice in this practice area is vast and growing. The key challenge for the regional programme will be to provide a proper level of high-quality supply. The potential of professional networks established by this practice will help the process.

Crisis Prevention and Recovery. The major contribution to the development results of the regional programme was made through technical assistance, but not through the regional projects. The practice team includes only three people¹ in Bratislava, hence its ability to send consultants to the RBEC countries is limited. Hiring a new consultant who will be located in Central Asia seems to be a good decision as that region is known for its high risk of natural disasters. It will be useful to assess the effectiveness of this approach in a few months' time when there will be enough evidence to reflect on and lessons learned to share with other practices. Meanwhile the major challenge for the newly hired consultant is coordination.

HIV/AIDS. The regional project on HIV/AIDS launched a new partnership strategy in 2007 that has already demonstrated a significant increase in delivery via strategic partnerships, both within and outside the United Nations system. It was an obvious success. The RBEC regional team has been selected to be the first UNDP regional team to co-locate with the respective Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) Regional Support Team as part of a global UNDP/UNAIDS agreement. Enhanced partnerships with the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Turkish International Cooperation and Development Agency, the Czech Trust Fund, and others, are being pursued. On the other hand, there is no general consensus among UNDP core staff in the region on whether or not UNDP should have an HIV/AIDS component of its regional programme, since the regional support role to country offices could be played by UNAIDS.

Gender Equality. The major contributions made by this practice were knowledge products—reports and publications on gender issues as well as workshops on those issues. Online resources created and maintained by this practice are valued by country offices and UNDP partners. The community of practice facilitated by the BRC Gender Team is one of the most active. The gender-mainstreaming strategy is fully in line with United Nations and UNDP priorities.

Knowledge Management. The provision of knowledge services and facilitation of the exchange of knowledge through knowledge networks is one of the key components of the regional programme and one of the core functions of the BRC. The objective of the knowledge management efforts in Europe and the CIS is to support the achievement of the UNDP development agenda in the region. Knowledge management does this by enabling UNDP to work in a more networked and collaborative fashion, where people's knowledge and practical experiences are leveraged to the fullest extent,

¹ Prior to 2009 the team included only one person.

with the lowest transaction costs and as easily as possible. This is achieved by building on existing experience across UNDP in the region, and the success of communities of practices, utilizing existing networks of professionals, codifying UNDP strengths and weaknesses, and by developing new tools and methods to support knowledge management.

Over the past several years, the BRC has made significant progress to integrate key knowledge management activities into everyday practice work and to ensure that knowledge management is everyone's business. The role of the Knowledge Management Unit at the BRC is to ensure that these elements are constantly present and strengthened throughout the practices, offer support and capacity-building for the communities of practice, and to promote cross-practice fertilization.

Government officials, who were involved in regional networking activities, find them very useful. Benefits are twofold: They can learn about the experience of others and compare their own experience and level of development against others. Personal meetings enable people to learn the practical and detailed experience of others, to find out how things work in reality. Facilitation of partnership development for the country offices is one of the functions effectively implemented by the BRC, which is well positioned to do so. Fieldwork undertaken by the evaluation team revealed that these knowledge management activities are much appreciated by country offices.

Strategic Positioning. RBEC describes the BRC as a purely internal UNDP/RBEC consulting unit focused on helping country offices, which is “also managing regional projects.” The regional programme (defined broadly) is automatically aligned with country programming and subregional/cross-country programming through consulting and knowledge services, which are provided to meet the programming needs of the country offices. With regard to the subregional or regional projects initiated and managed by the BRC the situation becomes more complicated.

Several respondents reported that some regional projects were designed without proper consultation with country offices. Respondents said that those projects could have been more relevant to their respective countries if the country offices had participated in the project design more actively. On the BRC side, such situations could be easily explained by time pressure natural for the ‘sales’ process rather than by a lack of desire to have country offices on board.

Actual development occurs at the country level, and UNDP country offices will always stay at the heart of UNDP activities. Thus the regional programme helps country offices and their national partners develop their capacity, design and implement their plans, and measure the development results. The major strength of the regional programme and its essence are in helping others by mentoring, coaching, consulting, teaching, informing and facilitating. The majority of respondents in the region, including UNDP staff and representatives of UNDP partner organizations, confirmed the relevance of such an approach.

Through its consulting, training and knowledge services the regional programme contributes to achieving the UNDP goal of becoming a ‘go to’ agency in the areas of UNDP specialization. Promotion of UNDP knowledge products and networking at the regional level also contribute to this result. Design and implementation of regional projects and facilitation of exchange of knowledge through knowledge networks contribute to the development of inter-country cooperation as well as to scaling up successful development programmes. According to the majority of respondents, the unique contribution of the regional programme to the projects implemented by three or more countries lies in developing project ideas, facilitation of project design and fundraising, but not in the project management.

The regional programme demonstrated good responsiveness to emerging situations. For example, the BRC response to an emergency

situation relates to the winter of 2008 when Tajikistan experienced a severe energy crisis. In response to the global economic crisis, the BRC implemented a number of activities that included conferences, workshops, region-specific publications and expert presentations.

UNDP has successfully developed strong partnerships with the European Union (EU), especially important since more than half the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have acceded to, or are seeking to join, the EU. The regional programme has also developed important partnerships with the private sector, for example with Coca Cola, aimed at improving access to safe drinking water and other water projects in the region. It has also supported South-South partnerships and knowledge sharing has proved effective. For example, Armenia's experience with the regional programme has been appreciated by Tajikistan and the FYR of Macedonia and disseminated with the help of Armenian consultants. UNDP BRC also partners with a number of United Nations organizations in the region, such as the Economic Commission for Europe, International Labour Organization, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNAIDS, United Nations Development Fund for Women, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, UNODC, United Nations Office for Project Services and United Nations Population Fund.

CONCLUSIONS

The RBEC regional programme in general, and the BRC in particular, are extremely important for fulfilling the RBEC mission in the region. Having a regional centre (BRC) that is closer to the beneficiaries (mostly county offices) than the RBEC office in New York strengthens the RBEC presence in the region. It has performed well across its main areas on intervention, consulting, projects, and knowledge management. The regional programme is in line with the UNDP corporate strategy and corporate

goals in the region. It is also at the forefront of implementing the UNDP regionalization policy.

The combination of projects, activities and services implemented by the regional programme is beyond what is traditionally called a 'programme.' A regional programme is different from a country programme and could not be considered equivalent to a country programme at the regional level since the UNDP 'region' simply does not have some of the essential characteristics specific to a country. Thus, a framework developed for country-level programming cannot be used for regional programming without serious revisions, and the regional programme cannot be put in a country programme framework.

The regional programme has a wide variety of types of project from regional/subregional interventions to umbrella initiatives with nationally implemented components. It is difficult to say which type has the greatest value added or what the appropriate mix should be. Rather the regional programme should remain opportunistic and flexible. The regional projects made substantial contributions to the development results in the region, especially in the areas of poverty reduction and economic development, sustainable energy and environment and democratic governance. The 'regional projects' most often cover only a few countries that face common issues. The region is so big and diverse that one can hardly develop a project relevant to all countries. Country offices find most effective those multi-country and regional projects that are developed with their participation. Participation of the country offices in the project design increases not only ownership but also project relevance. Projects aimed at creation of knowledge products and development of knowledge management and dissemination can potentially be beneficial for the entire region and can use UNDP regional capacity. Thus, such projects can become truly regional as opposed to the projects involving a few countries. Advisory and knowledge services by nature are highly relevant to any country and subregion.

The BRC is at the heart of the regional programme. It has a strong capacity and in-depth expertise in most UNDP priority areas and is a unique source of knowledge and advice for the country offices. The regional programme is aligned with country programmes. The BRC is responsive to country office requests and works hard to provide the best possible services in a timely manner. The BRC was responsive to the recent global economic crisis and implemented a number of activities to help country offices cope with the crisis. It is very well positioned to generate and further develop ideas for new projects that can be implemented at the country level or by two or more country offices. Expertise, access to information and connections with the donor community create unique advantages for BRC as a ‘project design bureau.’ As a well-established professional ‘regionalized’ organization, it plays an important role in positioning UNDP in the region. Although the way it is presented to the external environment (a ‘link’ between headquarters and the country offices, or an internal consulting unit) does not adequately reflect the nature of its services and its contribution to the development results.

BRC activities not only cover a broad range of subject areas, but are diverse by nature: the project management business is different from the consulting/advisory/knowledge management business. High-quality consulting services and project management activities require different organizational capacities and different competencies of people involved. Thus, the BRC has at least two very different modes of operation: a project management mode and a consulting mode. It is important to consider that high-quality timely advisory services provided by the BRC, according to information gathered in the evaluation, are more needed and valued by the country offices than direct project execution. The geographic location of the BRC is convenient for the region because there is little time difference within country offices. Travelling from Bratislava or Vienna is indeed more efficient for the organization and easier for consultants than travelling overseas.

Although the BRC is staffed by high-quality professionals and can provide good consulting services, there is room for improvement.

Consulting services will remain an essential part of BRC business. However to provide high-quality performance BRC staff will need to have not only in-depth subject knowledge and skills in their respective areas, but also excellent communication skills and advanced consulting skills. The BRC staff workload is extremely heavy. This is particularly true of the lead BRC consultants—the core BRC ‘asset.’ Their travel schedules are overwhelming, and each assignment involves very intense work and a high level of responsibility. It is stressful and there is a high risk of staff burnout. In such circumstances, high staff turnover inside the BRC is expected. BRC interventions provide the most sustainable results when capacity development components are included. The only problem with that is staff turnover in the country offices and in the partner organizations: When people leave, organizations lose capacity and sustainability of the results achieved is then at risk.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1. Develop and implement a more relevant approach to programming at the regional level that recognizes the distinctiveness of regional programming within UNDP. RBEC should consider the distinctive nature of regional programming and develop corresponding guidelines based on the existing UNDP documents and RBEC/BRC experience in the region. The new approach might be radical. While results-based policy and strategy remain relevant for RBEC/BRC activities at the regional level, RBEC may not necessarily use the traditional programme framework (similar to the country one) to describe the regional programme.

The regional RBEC strategy based on the United Nations and UNDP policies and strategies sets priorities for all the countries in the region. Countries should develop programmes in accordance with the existing rules and regulations. Projects as well as activities could be

designed and implemented at the regional, subregional, multi-country and country levels. This approach keeps the focus on the country programmes. It allows enough flexibility to include any projects and activities implemented in the region at various levels. BRC consulting, knowledge management and marketing activities can be included as well.

Recommendation 2. Focus on the development of ‘issue-oriented’ regional projects with an emphasis on the subregional level and ensure active participation of the respective country offices in the design of the intervention. Regional projects should be developed predominantly at the subregional level and/or should be issue oriented. Geographic focus of the regional projects might be substituted or supplemented with problem focus and therefore RBEC ‘regional’ projects may even involve countries from outside the region, such as the Islamic Republic of Iran or China. Issue-oriented projects could involve countries that face or are affected by similar problems. Subregional programming is more natural in that respect and is supported by all country offices. In any case, it is crucial to get country offices involved in the project design at the very early stages so that the project can be most relevant to each of the countries involved and consider their similarities and differences.

Recommendation 3. Keep knowledge products and knowledge management services as a top priority of the regional programme and ensure adequate investment in this area. Knowledge products and services that include development and facilitation of communities of practice proved to be relevant to the entire region and much appreciated by the country offices and UNDP partners in the RBEC region. Existing efforts to integrate knowledge management into all activities within the regional programme need to be continued and existing products strengthened.

Recommendation 4. Reconsider the strategic position of the regional programme and its contribution to development results through high-quality development services to Govern-

ments and other UNDP partners in cooperation with the country offices, rather than as a ‘link’ between the headquarters and country offices or an internal consulting unit focused primarily on supporting country offices and managing projects. With regard to strategic positioning of the BRC and the regional programme, it may be better to put an emphasis on contributing to the development results through providing high-quality technical assistance to UNDP partners in the region in cooperation with country offices. In that case, the BRC will not appear to be just an internal ‘link’ or internal unit supporting country offices. It will look like an active partner in regional development, which better reflects what it really is about. It will also help to harmonize what the BRC does with expectations of potential donors.

The BRC needs to make a clear distinction between the project management and consulting modes of operations. The BRC may consider focusing exclusively on the consulting and knowledge management activities, which was recommended by most respondents from the country offices. If the BRC decides to keep both modes, it should revise its organizational structure and systems to separate project management business from consulting. To be effective either as project managers or as consultants the same people should not combine the two roles. Ideally the regional project manager should be based closer to the place where the project is implemented.

Recommendation 5. Strengthen investment in the professional development of staff, specifically in the skills related to consulting activities, and carefully plan staff workload. The BRC needs to build capacity of its consultants. The programme of BRC staff professional development should include consulting skills and customer service skills training. Training should be provided at various levels (beginner, intermediate, advanced). The BRC has to carefully plan its core staff workload, taking into consideration their travel schedule. Alternating travel and deskwork and remote consultations should

be mandatory. Staff rotation and even turnover should be planned rather than resisted. The BRC can intensely use consultants for a certain period of time and then hire new people, who should be on a BRC-approved list of candidates. Since the demand from the country offices and their

partners for high-quality consulting services is seriously ahead of the existing supply, the BRC should develop and update regional rosters of consultants by practice areas. A network of pre-qualified consultants can help the BRC provide the proper level of supply.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES

The Regional Programme 2006-2010 for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was approved by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Executive Board at its first regular session in 2006. It is an instrument for realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) set out in the Millennium Declaration. The regional programme acts as a bridge between the global and country programming conducted in the countries covered by the Regional Bureau for Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC). It provides a framework for the provision of policy and knowledge-based advisory services to UNDP country offices, governments and civil society organizations, and helps the region exploit its opportunities in the global economy.

The 2006 UNDP Evaluation Policy² states that the Evaluation Office should undertake evaluations of all regional programmes. The overall purposes of these evaluations are to:

- Provide substantive support to the Administrator's accountability function in reporting to the Executive Board.
- Facilitate learning to inform current and future programming at the regional and corporate levels (in this case specifically the new RBEC regional programme to be approved in 2010 and to start in 2011).
- Provide stakeholders in regional programme countries and among international development partners with an objective assessment

of the development contributions that have been achieved through UNDP support and partnerships with other key actors through the regional programme during the period under examination.

At the core of the evaluation is the RBEC regional programme document as approved by the UNDP Executive Board. Specific issues related to identifying the precise nature of the programme and disaggregating it from associated UNDP activities are discussed in Chapter 3. Within this scope, however, the objectives of the evaluation are to:

- Provide an independent account and assessment of UNDP contribution to development results at the regional level in partnership with other development actors since 2006.
- Present key findings, analysis and conclusions in relation to the factors that influenced the degree of contribution.
- Provide a set of clear and forward-looking options for UNDP management to make adjustments in the current strategy and the next RBEC regional programme.

The criteria used for this evaluation were consistent with the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) Standards³ and the UNDP Evaluation Policy and were developed in consultation with stakeholders. The criteria—relevance, responsiveness, partnerships, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability—led to overarching evaluation questions as illustrated in Box 1.

² <http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/Evaluation-Policy.pdf>

³ http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=22

Box 1. Evaluation Questions

- Relevance: How relevant is the regional programme to regional priority development needs and UNDP corporate strategies?
- Responsiveness: How has the regional programme responded to the changing context within which it works?
- Partnerships: How has the regional programme used partnership to increase the effectiveness of its support?
- Effectiveness: How effective has the regional programme been in achieving its objectives?
- Efficiency: Has it used its financial, human and other resources efficiently?
- Sustainability: Are the results to which the regional programme contributes sustainable?

1.2 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation team had to understand the programme concept and how it evolved in the course of its implementation, what worked and what did not work. They also had to understand the complex system of interactions within the programme as well as between the programme and its environment. The evaluation questions were not related to any existing hypothesis or its testing, they were purely empirical. In the course of this evaluation the evaluation team had to remain receptive to any information and use rigorous inductive analysis to develop conclusions and recommendations.

The evaluation team used a ‘purposeful sampling’ strategy typical for qualitative studies: sources of information were selected that were most helpful for answering the evaluation questions. The research literature refers to these sources as “information-rich.” The list of key sources included RBEC and UNDP Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) staff in New York; UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre (BRC) management and staff; Resident Representatives, their deputies and UNDP staff of the selected country offices; and UNDP partners involved in the programme.

Given the number of programme countries in the region (29 with 24 country offices) and time and budget constraints, it was impossible to have an in-depth examination of each. Rather a two pronged approach was used:

- **Detailed country studies:** these provide an opportunity to learn from a sample of programme countries and/or interventions. While country studies do present a problem of generalization, they can be used to identify and highlight issues that can be further investigated across the regional programme. Five detailed country studies were undertaken. Each was an examination of the role and effectiveness of the RBEC regional programme in the specific country. It covered both advisory services and actual projects/programmes being implemented.

The first step in identifying the countries for more detailed exploration was to exclude those countries that have recently been subject to other major evaluations such as an Assessment of Development Results (ADR). The second step was to identify the core criteria for selection: Not simply one country study from each RBEC cluster, but rather a pragmatic (i.e. purposive) selection of countries considering their European Union (EU) accession status, level of income (low-income and middle income) and the size of the country program (large or relatively small). Five countries were selected by the Evaluation Office in consultation with RBEC and the BRC: Armenia, Kazakhstan, the Former Yugoslav Republic (FYR) of Macedonia, Moldova, and Ukraine.

- **Brief country studies:** in addition to detailed country studies brief country studies included a few face-to-face, semi-structured interviews with the key informants. While this approach did not offer the same level of detail as a country study, face-to-face interviews provided richer information than phone interviews, which were considered as an alternative approach. The sample of brief country studies was formed with

consideration of the availability of national consultants who could conduct interviews. Six brief country studies were conducted by the national consultants (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), and one brief country study (Russia) was conducted by international consultants based in Moscow. These studies were not as comprehensive as the detailed country studies, but they also examined the role and effectiveness of the RBEC regional programme in the country and covered both advisory services and actual projects/programmes being implemented.

The evaluation team used four methods of data collection: in-depth, semi-structured individual interviews; group interviews⁴; observation; and document reviews.⁵ Online data sources such as the RBEC service tracking system and internal surveys related to consulting services were also extensively used. A small number of project evaluations was also available. To answer the evaluation questions information was collected from a variety of sources, using different methods, which made it possible to validate findings through data source and methodological triangulations.

Several analytical frameworks were used to organize the data. The first framework was based on the evaluation questions—evaluators grouped data related to specific questions. Then a “critical cases” filter was used—cases that were good illustrations of the general findings on each evaluation question were identified. Assessments in the report were used to make subjective interpretation of the findings according to evaluation criteria, which in turn helped the evaluation team draw conclusions.

The evaluation team made arrangements for all evaluation activities with the heads of participating entities to ensure protection for participants. Evaluators explained the purpose and tasks of the

study to the heads of entities and all interviewees. Permissions to collect and use information were obtained from organizations and individuals. Informal rules of joint work were also negotiated. When asked, evaluators always allowed the interview questions to be read in advance.

1.3 CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

Most of the collected data was qualitative, allowing a comprehensive and multifaceted understanding of people’s experiences with the programme. But collecting such in depth and detailed data is quite time consuming, which restricted the number of people whom evaluators could interview. Another challenge of the qualitative methodology is that an evaluator is an instrument of research and inevitably personal perceptions and values can affect the study. Although all team members—both international and national consultants—are from the RBEC region, none of them had significant experience working with UNDP. They made a special effort to learn more about UNDP operation and culture in the course of this work. During the detailed country studies the core evaluation team also used debriefing meetings with UNDP Resident Representatives to discuss emerging themes with those most familiar with UNDP. At the same time being “native” helped the evaluators grasp the regional programme contexts (political, cultural, socio-economic) and establish good rapport with local UNDP staff, especially national partners, making it possible to communicate without translation.

In terms of documentary evidence the evaluation team had few project evaluations and no outcome evaluations to work with. These decentralized evaluations are the building blocks of a regional programme evaluation and without them collecting evidence across a large number of projects is extremely difficult. At the same time the nature of the results frameworks used in the regional

⁴ Annex 2. List of people consulted.

⁵ Annex 3. List of documents studied.

programme (discussed in more detail in Chapter 4) presents a challenge for making judgments about performance of the programme as a whole.

Detailed country studies were done in September 2009 under incredible time constraints due to circumstances beyond the evaluation team's control. Unfortunately the evaluation team did not succeed in setting up and conducting phone interviews with a number of country offices as originally intended. The evaluation coincided with the change of the national government in Moldova, so very few partners from the government structures were available for interviews. During the evaluation process it was discovered that many UNDP personnel had been on staff for less than a year and had limited experience with regional programme activities. Still, it is important to note that all UNDP staff members were accessible and supportive of the evaluators.

1.4 OUTLINE OF THE REPORT

The remainder of the report is structured as follows:

Chapter 2, "Regional Context," details the environment in which the RBEC regional programme was designed and implemented. It provides brief information on the overall situation in the RBEC region, and a more detailed analysis of the differences and patterns of economic development in different countries

and subregions related to human development and the priority areas of UNDP work.

Chapter 3, "UNDP in the Region," describes the UNDP corporate context in which the RBEC Regional Programme 2006-2010 has been implemented. Since the regional programme is managed by the BRC, special attention was given to the description of the centre.

Chapter 4, "Design of the Regional Programme," discusses the essence of the RBEC regional programme and examines its nature and design. For the purposes of this evaluation it provides a working definition of the regional programme that can be used in the evaluation.

Chapter 5, "Implementation and Management of the Regional Programme," describes three major groups of interventions implemented by the regional programme—consulting services, regional projects and knowledge management initiatives—and examines how the regional programme performed in each.

Chapter 6, "Strategic Positioning of the UNDP RBEC Regional Programme," examines the relevance and responsiveness of the regional programme as well as the use of partnerships as a strategic approach.

Finally, Chapter 7 presents the key conclusions and recommendations made by the evaluation team.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

2.1 OVERALL SITUATION

The region covered by the RBEC regional programme includes the former Soviet Union and countries of Central and Eastern Europe.⁶ The common determinant for most of these countries is their socialist legacy. The socialist system managed to ensure a relatively high level of human development but failed to achieve economic efficiency. This eventually led to the disintegration of the socialist bloc and several socialist countries. Since then many new independent states have been established. This disintegration trend has not yet been completely exhausted and still creates certain tensions in the region.

Radical formal changes in transition countries did not necessarily imply immediate substantial changes in practice. Changing and creating institutions, as well as the promotion of efficient privately owned enterprises, including independent financial institutions, proved difficult. As a result a variety of political and economic approaches emerged. Success in building a market economy and in strengthening national economic performance in the region is heterogeneous. Transition results achieved by a particular country are influenced by such factors as integration into the world trading system, EU accession, ownership of significant natural resources, and conditions before transition started (e.g., some liberalization pre-transition and a broad political consensus in favour of the reform process).⁷

Transition indicators show that there are three distinct groups of countries in the region.⁸ Regarding market economy development the least progress was made in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Moldova and the countries of Central Asia and the Western Balkans. The most advanced group includes countries involved in the EU-integration process. The lowest gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in the region is in Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. At the same time, the lowest levels of human development in the region are in Moldova and the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus. The majority of the countries in the RBEC region are in the high or very high human development categories as illustrated in Table 1. Twelve countries in the RBEC region are EU member states, three others are candidate countries, and another five are potential candidates.

The regional programme was initiated when the region was experiencing a period of economic growth—with half a dozen countries in the region reaching double digit annual growth of GDP. The global financial crisis, which hit the region in the fall of 2008, may wipe out recent gains in many countries. Virtually all have been affected, from relatively wealthy new EU member states, to poor Central Asian countries like Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

⁶ For UNDP, the Central and Eastern Europe subregion includes Cyprus, Malta and Turkey. Although geographically outside the CEE/CIS region, RBEC also covers St. Helena.

⁷ Estrin, S. 'Transition after the crisis,' *Development & Transition*, Issue 13, United Nations Development Programme and the London School of Economics and Political Science, 2009, pp. 6-8.

⁸ The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development assesses progress in transition to a market economy through a set of transition indicators. See EBRD annual Transition Report.

Table 1. Comparative Human Development Categories						
	Medium Human Development		High Human Development		Very High Human Development	
	Armenia Azerbaijan Kyrgyzstan Georgia Moldova	Tajikistan Turkmenistan Ukraine Uzbekistan	Belarus Kazakhstan	Russian Federation		
EU Potential Candidate			Albania Bosnia and Herzegovina	Kosovo ⁹ Montenegro Serbia		
EU Candidate			Croatia FYR of Macedonia	Turkey		
EU Member States			Bulgaria Estonia Hungary Latvia	Lithuania Poland Romania Slovakia	Cyprus Czech Republic	Malta Slovenia

Source: UNDP Human Development Report 2009 and <http://ec.europa.eu/enlargement>

2.2 POVERTY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

The former socialist countries had weak market-supporting institutions; high levels of state intervention and price regulation; and very limited integration into global product, service, or capital markets.¹⁰ Countries had to address these issues before building viable market economies. Rapid economic reforms took a heavy toll on the population. Between 1990 and 1995 human development indexes in the countries in transition dropped; Moldova, Russia and Tajikistan still have not returned to pre-transition levels. In the CIS between 1990 and 1999 the number of extremely poor people (living on less than \$1.25 a day) almost tripled from 3 to 8 percent of the population. In South-Eastern Europe that number increased from 0.1 to 2 percent.¹¹

At the end of the 1990s economic reforms started to pay off. Between 1998 and 2008 labour productivity increased almost twofold.¹² The region enjoyed a decade of steady growth. Human development indexes for all countries in the region improved. Between 1999 and 2005 extreme poverty was reduced from 8 to 5 percent in the CIS and from 2 to 1 percent in South-Eastern Europe. As already noted, Central and Eastern Europe were affected more than any other region of the world by the global financial crisis¹³ and much of the progress in poverty reduction over the previous decade is at risk, which could complicate ongoing political processes, such as the consolidation of peace and stability in the Western Balkans.¹⁴ Many countries of the region depend on work migration and remittances from abroad. Estimates suggest that Europe and Central Asia will be the most severely affected regions with a fall in remittances

⁹ Under UN Security Council Resolution 1244.

¹⁰ Estrin, S. 'Transition after the crisis,' *Development & Transition*, Issue 13, United Nations Development Programme and the London School of Economics and Political Science, 2009, pp. 6-8.

¹¹ UN, 'The Millennium Development Goals Report,' New York, 2009.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Åslund, A. 'Implications of the global financial crisis for Eastern Europe,' *Development & Transition*, Issue 13, United Nations Development Programme and the London School of Economics and Political Science, 2009, pp. 2-4.

¹⁴ This paragraph draws on http://www.undp.org/economic_crisis/europe_cis.shtml

of 10 to 13 percent,¹⁵ which may severely affect Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Tajikistan. In 2006 Moldova and Tajikistan received the highest levels of remittances in the world (as a percentage of GDP), with Kyrgyzstan in fourth place.

Even before the crisis, results of development were unevenly distributed, with women, children and ethnic minorities too often victims of poverty and social exclusion. For example, Roma people remain the most vulnerable group to discrimination and crime in Europe.¹⁶ In many new EU member states, and in the countries of the Western Balkans and the CIS, transition led to reductions in women's wages and employment rates relative to men's; and access to assets, property, and political representation has declined. Women as primary-care providers have been hard hit by the collapse or declines in social services. Poverty data disaggregated by gender generally show that women fare much worse than men. Traditional gender roles have reemerged and may be exacerbating labour market discrimination and domestic violence. Concerns about trafficking, as a particularly negative outcome of labour migration and its impact on women, are likewise growing. But some hardships of transition have fallen disproportionately on men. Male mortality rates in the Russian Federation and Western CIS countries have risen sharply since the 1980s.¹⁷

2.3 DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

The reform of governance systems has been a key aspect of transition in the states of Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS. This governance-centric approach to development in the region is

in many ways unique, it differs from the production/innovation driven development paradigm in Southeast Asia and the basic (physical and human) development driven paradigm in Africa.¹⁸ The establishment of governance systems based on principles of good governance that are effective (deliver essential services), efficient (use resources in the most economical possible way), and democratic remains one of the key development challenges in the region. The situation with democratic reforms is very similar to that of economic ones. While in the initial years of transition views converged around a one-size-fits-all approach of economic shock therapy and radical reduction of the role and size of the state, today the answers to the what, how, and in what way questions are as diverse as the region.¹⁹

However, regardless of the increasing richness of options and the progress that has been made, the transformation of governance systems even in the most advanced states of the region remains incomplete. Many Central and Eastern European and CIS countries continue to face daunting challenges related to inadequate internal and external control systems, public service provision, protecting human rights, and providing access to justice.

In 2007 the Athens-based Regional Centre for Public Administration Reform (RCPAR) conducted a survey among governance practitioners in the region.²⁰ This survey identified the three most important governance challenges in the region:

- weak or insufficient policy coordination
- weaknesses in human resource management
- high levels of corruption

¹⁵ Maddock, N., L. Ramguttee. 'Responding to falling remittances and returning migrants,' *Development & Transition*, Issue 13, United Nations Development Programme and the London School of Economics and Political Science, 2009, pp. 15-17.

¹⁶ http://www.romadecade.org/data_in_focus_report_1_the_roma_2009, October 27, 2009

¹⁷ Hughes, J., B. Slay, 'Gender in Transition', *Development & Transition*, Issue 8, United Nations Development Programme and the London School of Economics and Political Science, 2007, p. 1.

¹⁸ Verheijen, T., 'The what, when and how of governance in Europe and the CIS: a reform agenda *sui generis*,' *Development & Transition*, Issue 12, United Nations Development Programme and the London School of Economics and Political Science, 2009, pp. 3-5.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Established within the framework of the RBEC regional programme. For more details see Section 6.3 of this report.

These challenges are often seen as overlapping. Efforts to improve policy coordination are sometimes frustrated by inadequate staff capacity for coordinated work. Likewise, the effectiveness of human resource development initiatives (e.g., identifying and meeting training needs) are uncertain when they are not accompanied by civil service reforms that reduce the scope for patronage and other non-meritocratic personnel mechanisms. While anti-corruption strategies have been put in place in much of the region, practitioners increasingly see the need to link the fight against corruption with measures ensuring integrity in the public administration system, as well as greater openness and transparency in assessing activities and performance in the public sector.

Efforts are still needed to promote the development of democratic governance in the region: both in low-income countries with fragile state institutions such as Tajikistan (to transfer the benefits of economic growth to those who would not otherwise share them); and in middle-income countries and the new EU states, where capacity in many state institutions is high but gaps and regional and social disparities persist.²¹

Of course, democratization does not automatically improve development outcomes. But in developing and transitional societies, where poverty and social exclusion are high, effective state institutions are needed particularly for market development, social justice and environmental sustainability. During times of unfolding economic, food and climate change crises, the need for enhanced state capacity to manage and deliver has never been more compelling.

2.4 ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

Public opposition to environmental degradation was one of the drives for transition in the region 20 years ago. Since then important progress towards sustainable environmental and energy policies has been made. Still, ordinary people rarely seem to see improvements in environmental quality—particularly in the region's poorer countries of Central Asia and the Southern Caucasus. Energy use per dollar of GDP remains well above global averages for most of the region, particularly in CIS countries. Biodiversity is under threat from urban development and poaching, while rapid growth in consumer spending and automobile travel recorded in Turkey as well as the region's post-communist countries is creating new sources of air pollution and packaging waste.

Like the rest of the world the region faces the challenge of climate change mitigation and adaptation and introducing the institutional frameworks needed to attract carbon finance under the Kyoto Protocol. Some of the climate change implications for this region are different. Many of the countries stand outside the international definitions determining who is, and is not, obliged to reduce carbon emissions. Thanks to sudden and sharp reductions in production and energy use in the 1990s, many states experienced large declines in greenhouse gas emissions, even without significant mitigation efforts. Yet some of the region's poorest countries continue to emit very large amounts of greenhouse gases per dollar of GDP.²²

The Central Asian countries are particularly vulnerable to climate change, as melting glaciers pose long-term threats to water supplies on which some 55 million people, irrigated agriculture, and hydroelectricity infrastructure depend. Rising temperatures and aridity could worsen problems of desertification, land degradation and

²¹ Gercheva, D., J. Hooper, A. Windisch-Graetz, 'Towards more effective state institutions,' *Development & Transition*, Issue 12, United Nations Development Programme and the London School of Economics and Political Science, 2009, pp. 8-10.

²² Hughes, J., B. Slay, 'Climate Change,' *Development & Transition*, Issue 10, United Nations Development Programme and the London School of Economics and Political Science, 2008, p. 1.

falling crop yields. Russia's vast forest cover and soil sequestration classifies it as one of the world's largest carbon sinks, and could likewise benefit from reforms to global governance mechanisms that would reward carbon sequestration as well as reductions in carbon emissions. However Russia could also be one of the countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, as melting permafrost is releasing methane and destroying housing and transport infrastructure.

2.5 HIV/AIDS

The estimated number of people living with HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) in Eastern Europe and the CIS has grown from 630,000 in 2001 to 1.5 million in 2007, a 150 percent increase. According to Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) data, 87 percent of newly reported HIV cases in the region are from the Russian Federation (66 percent) and Ukraine (21 percent). Prevalence of HIV in Estonia is also alarmingly high. In Central Asia and the Caucasus, the number of newly reported HIV diagnoses is also rising. In Eastern Europe and the CIS the rate of newly

diagnosed cases of HIV infections peaked in 2001 at 342.4 per million and then declined to 174.3 per million in 2003. Since then the rate has steadily increased to 210.8 per million reported in 2006. By contrast, in most of Central and Southeast Europe, the rate of newly diagnosed cases of HIV infection has remained stable since 1999 at less than 10 per million.²³

People living with HIV in the region come from all social groups and strata. And all of them face the struggle against the combined physical challenges associated with HIV and the equally, if not more devastating, social vulnerability wrought by stigma, discrimination and social exclusion. Many countries in the region have shown noticeable progress in their response to HIV. Yet the epidemic continues to outstrip the response as it evolves. The most visible successes have naturally come in the areas of least social resistance. But as the number of people living with HIV in the region grows, the scale of stigma, discrimination and rights violations—deplorable at the individual level—takes on massive proportions in the aggregate, serving to undermine those hard-won achievements.

²³ UNDP, 'Living with HIV in Eastern Europe and the CIS. Regional Human Development Report on AIDS,' UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre, 2008.

Chapter 3

UNDP IN THE REGION

This chapter describes the UNDP corporate context in which the RBEC Regional Programme 2006-2010²⁴ has been implemented. Since the regional programme is managed by the RBEC BRC, special attention is given to the description of the BRC.

3.1 UNDP GLOBAL CORPORATE FRAMEWORK

UNDP is the United Nation's global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life.²⁵ In its strategic plan for 2008-2011²⁶ UNDP clearly identifies the focus on "supporting national processes to accelerate the progress of human development with a view to eradicate poverty through development, equitable and sustained economic growth, and capacity development. This means that all UNDP policy advice, technical support, advocacy, and contributions to strengthening coherence in global development must be aimed at one end result: real improvements in people's lives and in the choices and opportunities open to them."

The UNDP strategic plan also describes two mutually reinforcing roles UNDP should play worldwide at the service of the international community, Member States and society at large.

On the one hand, UNDP has to strengthen its role in "supporting the promotion of coordination, efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system as a whole at the country level." On the other, UNDP will continue to provide "policy and technical support by working on and advocating for the multisectoral challenges of poverty reduction, democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery, and environment and sustainable development."

In addition the regional programme has also been implemented during an ongoing regionalization process. In February 2008 the UNDP Administrator released the policy paper 'Functional Alignment of, and Implementation Arrangements for, Regional Service Centres (RSCs).'²⁷ This document has served as the basis for the current regionalization efforts of UNDP. The policy clusters RSC functions in three main areas:

- To strengthen coordination results, RSCs will provide support to Regional Directors' Teams.
- To strengthen development results, RSCs will provide and support the provision of advisory services and delegated regional programme implementation functions.
- To strengthen management results, RSCs will provide and support the provision of management services to country offices.

²⁴ The RBEC Regional Programme (2006-2010) overlaps with two UNDP corporate strategies, the second Multi-Year Financing Framework (MYFF) (2004-2007) and the Strategic Plan (2008-2011). At present the timing of the regional programme does not coincide with the corporate planning cycle and therefore requires mid-term adjustment to take into account the new corporate strategy. Moreover, it has been decided to extend the strategic plan to 2013 meaning that a new programme could face the same problems. To avoid this it has also been decided to have a short RBEC Regional Programme 2011-2013 so that the regional programme and strategic plan cycles can be harmonized.

²⁵ <http://www.undp.org/about/>

²⁶ UNDP Strategic Plan, 2008-2011 Accelerating global progress on human development. Geneva, 2008.

²⁷ The section on Regionalization Policy is taken from the April 2009 'Review of the Functional alignment of the Regional Resource Centres' prepared by the UNDP Operations Support Group.

The policy confirmed the primary objective of the RSCs as supporting country offices in assisting programme countries to achieve development results through:

- advisory services
- implementation of regional programmes
- country operations (where there is no country-based representation)
- support to management results

The policy clarified that while management of any of the above-mentioned support services could be delegated to RSCs, responsibility for regional bureau oversight and quality control functions would remain with the Regional Director and his/her team in New York. UNDP is consistent in implementing its regionalization policy and “plans to bring corporate and regional policy and advisory support closer to where they are needed on the ground, and to make those services more responsive to country programme needs.”

3.2 REGIONAL BUREAU FOR EUROPE AND CIS

UNDP RBEC serves 29 countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Working under a mandate issued by the United Nations Secretary-General, RBEC, formerly the Directorate for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, began the process of establishing offices and programmes in the region in 1992. With its headquarters in New York, RBEC comprises 24 country offices and its Regional Centre in Bratislava.

The UNDP strategy in Europe and the CIS (2008-2011)²⁸ is built on UNDP corporate strategy. The RBEC mission is defined in its strategy as follows: “Helping Europe and CIS countries develop socio-economic structures

and governance systems that ensure sustainable, inclusive, equitable (in terms of access to services), high and growing human development.”

The RBEC strategy goes on to state that RBEC has four strategic goals for 2008-2011:

- To become the “go to” agency for institutional development—strengthening economic and democratic governance—in the countries of Europe and the CIS.
- To scale up successful poverty reduction and local governance programmes within and between countries.
- To help shape UNDP’s middle-income country agenda in the region, especially strengthening platforms for inter-country development cooperation.
- To reinforce the United Nations’ position as an honest broker; a partner that adds value; and an advocate that opens unresolved issues related to economic transition, global concerns such as the distributional effects of global warming, and concerns more specific to the RBEC region.

The RBEC strategy (as updated in January 2009)²⁹ notes that over the medium-term horizon, the highest priority has to be accorded to “helping programme countries manage their responses to the unfolding global economic crisis, with a particular focus on strengthening and expanding social safety nets. While the poverty caused by transition recessions and restructuring had been declining fast over the past decade, the population at the margin of poverty and vulnerable to any economic reversals has remained very large. The emphasis now needs to be on capacity building for economic crisis management and on protecting the envelope of resources allotted to social protection, employment generation and social services.”³⁰

²⁸ Strategy for RBEC from 2008 to 2011, NY-Bratislava, 2008, updated: January 2009.

²⁹ RBEC strategy gets updated annually, and was recently updated in December 2009 after the draft of this report was finished.

³⁰ Strategy for RBEC from 2008 to 2011, NY-Bratislava, 2008, updated: January 2009.

It should also be noted that the region faces a number of issues that make UNDP work more challenging. The following four challenges are especially important:

- **The word ‘region’ is used here in the sense of a set of geographically proximate countries covered by a regional bureau.** While there is some shared history, particularly the socialist legacy, in the past 20 years countries in the region have taken very different paths—social, economic and political—and move along them at different rates. There is great diversity among these countries as described in Chapter 2 making the concept of a region artificial in the context of the countries covered by RBEC.
- **Much of the Europe and the CIS region is fast-changing in all senses—politically, socially and economically.** The ability of UNDP to respond to these needs demands flexibility (e.g. in the period covered by this evaluation, some RBEC countries joined the EU, countries of the Western Balkans have gone through major changes in their political structure, and all countries in the region face the severe implications of the global economic crisis, etc.).
- **The middle-income country status of the majority of the countries covered by RBEC means that core (regular) resources from UNDP are comparatively limited.** In 2008 the global average for core resources to UNDP country programmes was slightly more than \$3.6 million, while for RBEC country offices the average was half that amount (just under \$1.8 million).³¹ This means many country offices in middle-income countries have to rely heavily on resource mobilization in a situation where foreign aid levels are often declining.

- **At the same time the country offices in the region are also small compared to the corporate average.** In 2008 the global, average UNDP office size was 63 staff members, but for country offices in the RBEC region it was half that size. In the same year the global average number of international staff in county offices was 10, while the average for the 15 RBEC country offices that had international staff in 2008 was just under six.³² This has implications for the provision of advisory and project management services and the need for regional programme support.

3.3 BRATISLAVA REGIONAL CENTRE

3.3.1 EVOLUTION OF BRC

The BRC was established in 1999 to serve the RBEC region but its structure has evolved over time. Originally it housed the BDP-managed Europe and the CIS SURF (Subregional Resource Facility) and the RBEC regional programme, but a July 2003 decision of UNDP senior management led to the merging of the two in 2004. This then led to the introduction of a matrix management system where practice managers would report to both RBEC and BDP.

The merging of SURF and the regional programme led to the establishment of a single Advisory Board for the BRC. Today it includes the RBEC Regional Director, a BDP representative, and four Resident Representatives from the region. Representatives of the Bureau of Management (BoM) and the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) are also members of the Advisory Board.

In April 2008, in line with the regionalization policy, a decision was made to add an RBEC Deputy Regional Director to the BRC as Director of the Centre. At the same time the internal structure of the Centre was changed to accommodate the more streamlined approach

³¹ Calculated from data taken from UNDP Executive Snapshot.

³² Calculated from data taken from UNDP Executive Snapshot.

Table 2. Areas of Intervention

Core Practice Areas	Cross-cutting areas	Other areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty • Energy and environment • Democratic governance • Conflict prevention and recovery • HIV/AIDS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender equality • Capacity development • Knowledge management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management practice

of the regionalization policy as detailed in Table 2. BRC organizational structure is now aligned with corporate practice architecture.³³

While the regional programme could be considered the core of BRC activities, as already noted, it is integrated with activities financed by BDP, BCPR and BoM. This relationship has recently been put on a firmer basis with the agreement of two important documents:

- From 1 January 2009 the ‘Advisory Services for Policy Support and Programme Development’ project helps clarify the alignment of the advisory services with the outcomes of the regional programme.
- In February 2009 a Long-term Agreement³⁴ was signed by RBEC and BDP to define roles and responsibilities for funding operations and management of the BRC. The agreement will cover the period of the UNDP Strategic Plan (2008-2011).

Given the size of the region covered by RBEC and the BRC a decision was made to open a BRC hub in Central Asia. The hub would allow projects to be better managed and advisors to be closer to the subregion, to respond to specificities of the subregion, and rationalize on travel costs. In September 2009 two staff members dealing with the subregional projects were located in the hub. In December 2009 a third, an economist focused on Central Asia, was added to the hub.

The Central Asia hub is an integral part of the practice architecture, and advisors assigned to Almaty, Kazakhstan are part of their respective practices, reporting to the practice leader. These advisors cover mainly Central Asia, but other countries as well when needed. Other advisors posted in Bratislava, Slovakia also service Central Asia in their respective areas upon demand.

3.3.2 THE FUNCTION OF THE BRC

The BRC links country offices and RBEC headquarters in New York, and provides advisory support to country offices and other clients delivered through its practice architecture. The BRC also manages regional projects (involving at least three countries), and helps to capture and spread development successes and best practices throughout the region. The main functions³⁵ of the BRC are set out in Table 3.

The BRC also includes the Country Support Team (CST), which provides UNDP assistance in those RBEC countries without country offices. Most work (98 percent of volume) is in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia and Slovenia although there are two small projects implemented in Malta and three projects in St. Helena. The BRC also provides operational/administrative support to projects in Cyprus and the Project Office in Latvia. Geographically, the main focus in the last two years has been on Hungary and Slovakia where

³³ UNDP practice architecture introduced in 2002 was designed to effectively synthesize the significant experience and expertise based on UNDP activities worldwide, and uses that knowledge effectively across the organization.

³⁴ Long-term Agreement on Regional Service Centre Cooperation: RBEC, Bratislava Regional Centre – Bureau for Development Policy (signed February 2009).

³⁵ Long-term Agreement on Regional Service Centre Cooperation: RBEC, Bratislava Regional Centre – Bureau for Development Policy (signed February 2009).

Table 3. BRC Main Functions

To strengthen development results through providing advisory services to its clients (mainly country offices in the region), manage the regional programme and provide knowledge services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advisory services • Knowledge services and communications • Formulation of regional projects and support of evaluation and direct implementation of regional and sub-regional projects³⁶
To strengthen management results through providing management and operational advisory services to country offices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project and programme management support • Financial management support • Procurement support • HR management • ICT support
To manage national non-core programming in many of the new EU members states where UNDP has no longer office representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing national non-core programming in the states where UNDP has no office representation
To strengthen United Nations coordination results and manage regional development partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing support to the Regional Director's Team and leading the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) Peer Support Group (2008-2009)

programming/partnership building is concentrated in eastern regions, within the Carpathian eco-region framework. The work of the Country Support Team does not fit within the scope of the evaluation.

3.3.3 FINANCING THE BRC

Table 4 sets out the BRC programme expenditure, disaggregating by Regional Programme/ CST and core/non-core expenditures. One of the key characteristics of BRC finance is the

Table 4a. BRC Programme Expenditure (2001-2008)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
BRC Expenditure by Regional Programme (RP) and Country Support Team (US\$)								
BRC	3.7	5	6.8	12.3	19.2	23.6	28.4	17.3
RP	2	2.7	4.3	8.3	15.3	16.8	18.2	13.7
CST	1.7	2.3	2.5	4	3.9	6.8	10.2	3.6
BRC Expenditure by Regional Programme and Country Support Team (%)								
RP	54%	54%	63%	67%	80%	71%	64%	79%
CST	46%	46%	37%	33%	20%	29%	36%	21%

Table 4b. Regional Programme Expenditure by Core and Non-core (2001-2008)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Regional Programme Expenditure by Core and Non-core (US\$)								
Total	2	2.7	4.3	8.3	15.3	16.8	18.2	13.7
Core	1.3	2.3	3.8	5.5	6.7	4.5	6.2	5.7
Non-core	0.7	0.4	0.5	2.8	8.6	12.3	12	8
Regional Programme Expenditure by Core and Non-core (%)								
Core	65%	85%	88%	66%	44%	27%	34%	42%
Non-core	35%	15%	12%	34%	56%	73%	66%	58%

Source: BRC and Executive Snapshot

³⁶ These functions are defined in the Long-Term Agreement as "regional programme functions."

significant and steady increase in the size of the programme since 2001. Table 4 also indicates a decrease in BRC expenditures in 2008 but this is the result of a deliberate change in the way financial expenditures are recorded. Until 2007 all regional programme delivery was the responsibility of BRC, but now country offices account for part of delivery (hence the fall in BRC expenditure). The Roma project in the Balkans could be an example of this shift.

The BRC has been successful in mobilizing significant resources and has experienced a major increase in flows of non-core resources since 2004. Compared to the resource mobilization by the region as a whole (the sum of country programmes) the regional programme has achieved less. The percentage of expenditures from core resources is approximately 33 percent for the regional programme compared with 18 percent for the

region as a whole. The move towards allocating delivery of certain projects within the regional programme to implementing country offices has reduced, and possibly eliminated, competition for donor funds. The BRC is now largely seen as a potential partner in the resource mobilization efforts rather than a competitor.

The issue of cost recovery is also important in the context of an RSC. Although UNDP regionalization policy clearly states that a cost recovery mechanism should be introduced for the services provided, RBEC has not unilaterally introduced a market mechanism yet. At present it only charges a universal travel fee (designed to prevent discrimination against those offices further away from Bratislava). The evaluation team found that the introduction of additional cost recovery measures would not be popular with many country offices.

Chapter 4

DESIGN OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME

This chapter discusses the essence of the RBEC regional programme and examines its nature and design. For the purposes of this evaluation it provides a working definition of the regional programme that can be used in the evaluation.

4.1 WHAT IS THE RBEC REGIONAL PROGRAMME AS A WHOLE?

When the evaluation team initially discussed its scope of work at RBEC headquarters in New York, several important stakeholders explicitly asked for a description of the “regional programme as a whole.” Such a description has to be based on a clear definition of the regional programme. It turned out that the definitions of the regional programme provided in various documents and by various stakeholders differed significantly. In this evaluation RBEC regional programme is defined using different sources of information that include several key documents and opinions from staff based in New York, Bratislava and country offices.

4.1.1 DEFINITION OF REGIONAL PROGRAMME IN THE RBEC REGIONAL PROGRAMME DOCUMENT

The RBEC regional programme document defines the regional programme and sets the overall direction of UNDP activities in Europe and the CIS. The overarching goal of the regional programme is helping governments, civil society and the private sector to fulfil the MDG. Regional programme has to focus on meeting three key challenges:

- poverty reduction and economic development
- democratic governance
- sustainable energy and environmental practices

Addressing each of these challenges, the regional programme has to make linkages to gender, HIV/AIDS, conflict prevention and recovery, and human security (including trafficking in human beings, narcotics, and weapons).

According to the regional programme document, regional programming has to be implemented at the regional, subregional, national and subnational levels to reflect the needs of country offices and external partners. Subregional programming has to further expand focus on development challenges and opportunities in Central Asia, groupings of CIS countries, the Western Balkans, countries seeking to join the EU, and new EU member countries.

One of the key functions of regional programming is to consolidate nascent communities of practice (CoP) and continue to identify, codify and disseminate best practices and development successes across the region and globally. Regional programming has to also reinforce and strengthen UNDP national programming by identifying and disseminating best practices and development successes.

In addition to evolving organically from communities of practice, regional projects under the regional programme document have to be linked to the country office support work of the BRC so as to exploit synergies between national and regional programming. A close collaboration with BDP helps to align regional and global programming.

4.1.2 DEFINITION OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME IN THE LONG-TERM AGREEMENT³⁷

According to the Long-Term Agreement on Regional Service Cooperation, the “regional programme functions that are performed by the BRC include formulation of regional projects, and support to evaluation and DEX [direct] implementation of regional and subregional projects. Through this function development results at the regional level are achieved, national-level results are strengthened and capacities built.”³⁸ Regional projects are defined as projects that involve more than three countries and are managed by the BRC. According to the Long-Term Agreement on Regional Service Cooperation, the core of the regional programme is formulation, implementation and evaluation of the regional projects.

4.1.3 DEFINITION OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME PROVIDED BY BRC LEADERS

BRC leaders (management and the lead specialists) defined the regional programme as a complex activity implemented by the BRC that includes four key components:

- consulting and training services provided to the country offices
- design and implementation of regional projects
- knowledge services and facilitation of the exchange of knowledge through knowledge networks
- UNDP promotion and positioning in the region

4.1.4 PERCEPTIONS AND DEFINITIONS OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME PROVIDED AT UNDP COUNTRY OFFICES

In addition to the formal description of the programme gleaned from various core documents and the key implementers, it is also important to examine perceptions of the programme by the main users, the RBEC country offices. The level of ‘regional programme awareness’ varied in country offices depending on (a) whether or not respondents participated in the regional programme design, (b) on duration of their work with UNDP, and (c) on their previous experience with the BRC. Some of our respondents used to work for the BRC or served on the BRC Board of Directors.

The most common answer to the question “What is the UNDP regional programme?” was: “I don’t know what it is and could not find out—there is no information on the regional programme on any website.” Several respondents defined the regional programme as the “outline of the RBEC strategic programmatic contribution to the development of countries in the region; an equivalent to a UNDP country programme at the regional level.” A few respondents said that the regional programme is a “source of thematic advisory expertise” or “expert strategic recommendations on the direction and operation of projects, publications and regional reports, examples of the international practice and advice on recruiting experts.”

One person provided a definition that was very close to the one given by BRC management and describes the nature of all BRC activities: “This is a centre that accumulates best practices developed in different areas. It attracts funding for country offices. It coordinates programs involving several countries. It helps to bring our best practices to the global level.” Interestingly, another responded: “In our country the regional

³⁷ Long-Term Agreement on Regional Service Cooperation RBEC, Bratislava Regional Center – Bureau for Development Policy (BDP), February 2009.

³⁸ Long-Term Agreement on Regional Service Cooperation RBEC, Bratislava Regional Center – Bureau for Development Policy (BDP), February 2009.

programme is in fact not implemented.... At the same time BRC is quite useful for our country office operations (though this is not a regional programme) through its advisory support.”

4.1.5 BEYOND THE RBEC REGIONAL PROGRAMME

It should also be noted that the UNDP RBEC regional programme is not the only programme in the region than can be considered regional (three or more countries involved). There are many similar projects that are managed by one or more county offices but fall outside the control of BRC and are not within the regional programme being evaluated here. The projects, termed multi-country projects, are often very large in comparison to the regional programme and often in relation to the size of the UNDP programme in the country where they are active. The largest are funded by the EU and include projects:

- Aimed at improved border management:
 - Border Management Programme in Central Asia (BOMCA)
 - Improving Management on the Moldovan-Ukrainian State Border (BOMMOLUK).
- Aimed at supporting the development of a harmonized and coordinated anti-drug capacity, the EU has launched three anti-drug programmes benefiting regions located along heroin routes:
 - Programme of Assistance for the Prevention of Drug Abuse and Drug Trafficking in Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova (BUMAD)
 - South Caucasus Anti-Drug Programme (SCAD)
 - Central Asia Drug Action Programme (CADAP)

These EU-financed, UNDP implemented projects are managed out of relevant country offices in the subregion being covered. In some cases this has reportedly put considerable burden on the responsible country office.

4.2. RBEC REGIONAL PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK

4.2.1 REGIONAL PROGRAMME OUTCOMES AND THEIR EVOLUTION

The regional programme document provides a ‘results and resources framework’ that includes 10 outcomes:

1. Statistical capacities and analytical process for regular MDG reporting established.
2. Increased opportunities for pro-poor growth and sustainable social policy.
3. Policies to support socially and environmentally responsible private sector development.
4. Gender analysis and gender-disaggregated data integrated into policy design.
5. State capacity to promote and protect human rights (including the rights of women) improved.
6. Effective legal and policy frameworks and enhanced capacities for decentralized authority and management in place.
7. Public administration improved and state corruption reduced, including in post-conflict countries.
8. Sustainable management of environment incorporated into poverty reduction strategies and national development frameworks.
9. Transboundary dialogue and processes to improve cooperation on regional and global water challenges in place.
10. Established national policy frameworks that reflect role of energy in poverty reduction and sustainable development.

While there are 10 outcomes in the regional programme document, the Results Oriented Annual Reports (ROARs) for 2006, 2007 and 2008 include 22, 15 and 15 outcomes respectively. In order to evaluate the regional programme, the evaluation team had to consider the evolution of its outcomes (see Annex 4) even though the programme related documents do not include

any explanation for those changes. According to information collected by the evaluation team, the initial set of 10 outcomes did not reflect the emerging priorities. The set of 22 outcomes developed in the course of a short workshop was characterized by all the respondents who participated as very ineffective. Most respondents considered that 22 outcomes were too many. The next version of outcomes has been developed in accordance with the changing regional context and new opportunities. Since 2007 no major changes in the list of the regional programme outcomes occurred. Hence the initial set of 10 outcomes should be used to analyse the original intent of the regional programme, and the latest version of outcomes should be used to describe the current program reality.

It should be noted that the vast majority of the outcomes in the regional programme document pertain to results at the national level (only No. 7 is explicitly regional). They can be achieved only through country offices and in cooperation with national counterparts in their respective countries. 'Regional results' in the regional programme document are interpreted as a combination of national results.

4.2.2 PROBLEMS WITH THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME DESIGN

The evaluation team concluded that the quality of programme design needs considerable improvement. Box 2 illustrates this conclusion.³⁹

The regional programme logic is as follows: Analysis of barriers to employment for vulnerable groups, plus assistance to governments in utilization of donor support, plus capture and dissemination of experiences, will lead to increased opportunities for pro-poor growth and sustainable social policy.

Technically the description of the outcome as a change in development conditions is in line with UNDP standards (see Figure 1). At the same time the regional programme suggests to measure if opportunities are increased by the indicator "poor less dependent on social assistance." This indicator looks more like "intended changes in human development as measured by people's well-being," that is the description of impact (see Figure 1).

Outputs are described more like actions taken (analysis conducted, assistance provided, experiences disseminated) rather than as the

Box 2. Sample Fragment of the Regional Programme Results Framework

Regional Programme Outcome: Increased opportunities for pro-poor growth and sustainable social policy.

Indicator: Poor less dependent on social assistance.

Baseline: Despite progress in reforms, large pockets of poverty remain.

Target: Encourage analytical debate on the nature of economic growth and possible links with employment opportunities; support for public sector reforms.

Regional Programme Outputs:

1. Comprehensive analysis of barriers to employment for vulnerable groups.
2. Assistance to governments in utilization of donor support, particularly in the poverty reduction strategy paper processes.
3. National and regional experiences captured, disseminated.

Regional Programme Output indicators, baselines, targets:

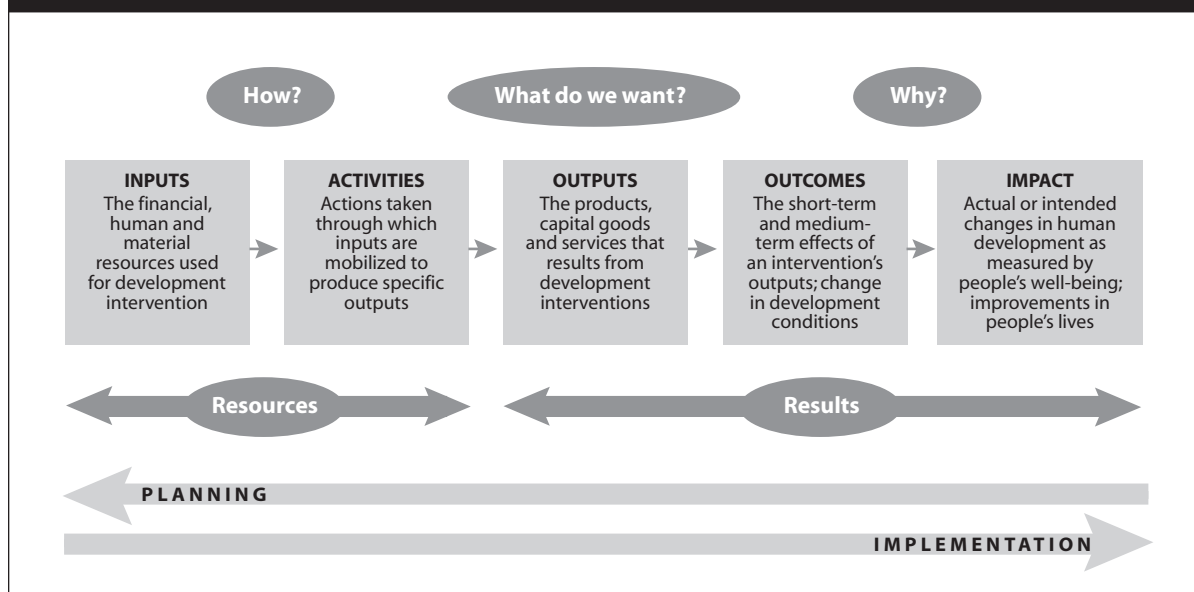
Indicator: Number of countries with effective PRSPs, poverty reduction strategies.

Baseline: Poverty reduction strategies developed and implementation starting in many countries.

Target: Programme implementation, links to the MDGs strengthened.

³⁹ We used only one fragment of the regional programme framework as an illustration of the quality of the entire document. There are several other components of the framework that have similar weaknesses.

Figure 1. RBM Results Chain⁴⁰



“products, capital goods and services that result from development interventions” (see Figure 1). Outputs in the regional programme document look more like activities. That is why the results chain is not clear from the regional programme document—in fact it includes mostly activities and impact.

Indicators in the above mentioned quote from the regional programme document do not meet some of the SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Timely). “Poor less dependent on social assistance” can hardly be measured. “Number of countries with effective PRSPs, PRSs” needs to be more specific (better defined). There should be a clear definition of the term “effective” for this particular context otherwise this indicator will not be measurable. Baseline and target for this indicator as described in the regional programme document cannot be compared and are not properly formulated.

4.3 ASSESSMENT OF REGIONAL PROGRAMME DESIGN

In order to discuss data related to the definition of the regional programme, it is important to consider UNDP guidelines. Existing materials on developing the regional programme are based on the development of country programmes and utilize the same country programme framework. But the nature of the country programme is completely different from that of the regional one. There are at least three major differences between the country programme and the regional programme:

- At the country level one of the key UNDP reference points is the national government priorities,⁴¹ national strategies, capacities of the national UNDP partners, etc. ‘Region’ in that respect is completely different from a country. There is no such entity as ‘regional government.’ Hence, no single body identifies regional priorities, etc.
- Unlike the country programme, the regional programme is aimed at supporting primarily country offices not government entities. Regional programme results such as increased

⁴⁰ UNDP. Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results, NY, 2009, p.55.

⁴¹ UNDP/BDP, UNDP Checklist for Quality Programming, December 2007.

government capacities and improvements in people's lives in the region could only be indirectly achieved through country offices. So even direct execution of regional projects by the BRC is somewhat indirect intervention, let alone provision of consulting services and development of knowledge products.

- The regional programme includes some activities that simply could not be described as a programme because they are not programmatic. Those are consulting and training services provided on an ad hoc basis—networking, knowledge management and marketing.

Inconsistencies in the definitions of regional programme provided in different documents are obvious. The BRC management's definition is inclusive and incorporates all activities implemented by them. According to the BRC, the regional programme is everything the BRC does except for the Country Support Team activities, which manages national-level programming in countries without a UNDP country office. Other documents such as the Long-Term Agreement on Regional Service Cooperation⁴² provide a narrow definition of the regional programme that includes only design and implementation of the regional projects.

As already noted, the description of the regional programme framework in the regional programme document is poor. It has logical gaps and many indicators are poorly designed; the regional programme outcomes were revised several times and changed dramatically. Management and staff of UNDP country offices are not fully aware of the regional programme concept. Their perceptions of the regional programme are contradictory, which creates contradictions in how the program is described and presented by various parties and in various documents.

Consequently the RBEC regional programme is not clearly defined. Interviews at UNDP headquarters in New York lead to the under-

standing that there is a common problem of low quality, regional programmes frameworks consistently noted in regional programme evaluation reports in different regions. The evaluation team believes that there is a system cause for the above mentioned contradictions and flaws in the regional programme framework.

It is important to consider that the UNDP regional programme is:

- different from a country programme
- not equivalent to a country programme at the regional level
- such a combination of projects, activities and services that cannot be put in a country programme framework
- not a programme in its traditional sense

De-facto the UNDP regional programme includes:

- consulting and training services provided to the country offices
- design and implementation of regional projects
- knowledge services and facilitation of the exchange of knowledge through knowledge networks
- UNDP positioning/marketing/networking in the region

In our analysis we shall follow this inclusive definition of the 'regional programme.'

Such a combination of activities cannot be put in a traditional country programme framework and can hardly be described as a traditional 'programme,' which should be based on a clear programme theory (or theory of intervention) and should include explicit hierarchy of goals, results chain, etc. UNDP should consider the unique nature of regional programming and develop specific guidelines for its design.

⁴² Long-Term Agreement on Regional Service Cooperation RBEC, Bratislava Regional Center – Bureau for Development Policy (BDP), February 2009.

Chapter 5

IMPLEMENTATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME

This chapter describes three major groups of interventions implemented by the regional programme—consulting services, regional projects, and knowledge management initiatives—and examines how the regional programme performed in each.

5.1 CONSULTING INTERVENTIONS⁴³

5.1.1 THE SCOPE OF CONSULTING SERVICES

As previously mentioned in Chapter 4, consulting services are at the heart of regional programme (BRC) activities. To better explain the nature of BRC business one of our respondents in Bratislava even used a “Deloitte and Touche”⁴⁴ metaphor. BRC consulting services are provided in the following areas:

- Poverty reduction
- Energy and environment
- Democratic governance
- Crisis prevention and recovery
- HIV/AIDS
- Gender
- Management
- Capacity development
- Communications
- Emerging donors and EU

The BRC divides all consulting services into two broad main categories: missions (involving travel) and desk work (done wherever advisors are based).

5.1.2 HOW CONSULTING SERVICES ARE MANAGED

Consulting services are demand driven. Clients (country offices) send their applications to the BRC via an online system (“requests pipeline”) in a standard format that includes service subject, brief summary of expected service, name of request originator, request type (desk work or mission), request area and expected delivery date. The online application system is easy to use.

BRC specialists review requests and either accept them and forward them to the proper person or reject them. In many cases negotiations between the BRC and the client take place before the parties come to a final agreement. Indeed, desk work for the most part is less time consuming and easier to negotiate than a field mission. Sometimes due to various reasons requests are cancelled by the originators.

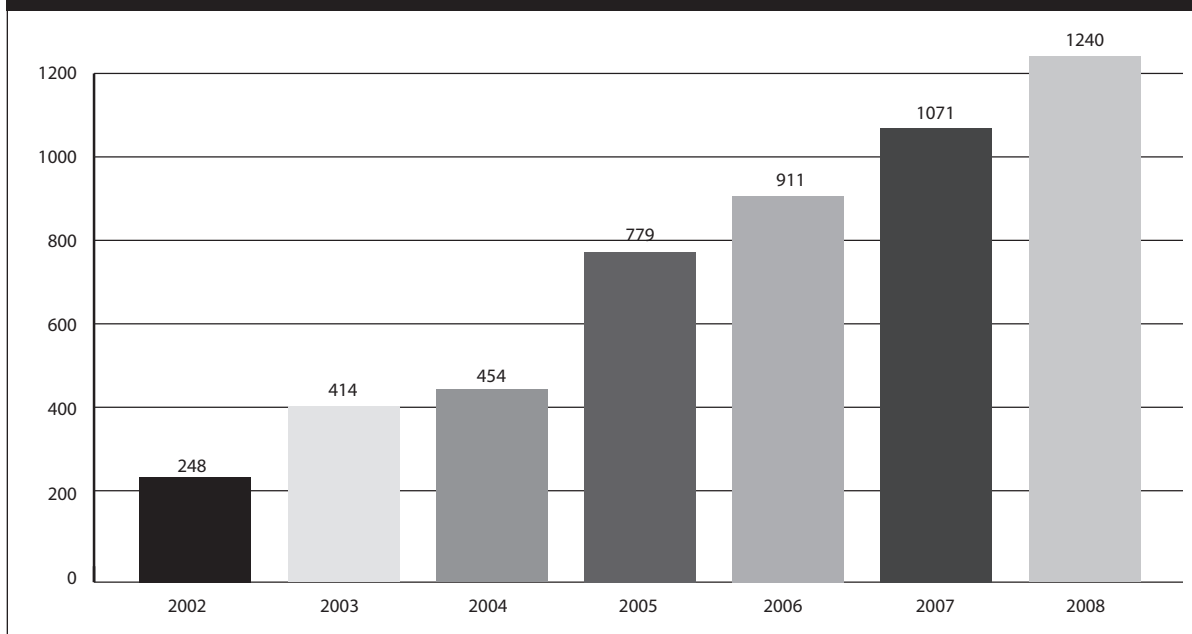
To assess and monitor its services the BRC uses the following mechanisms:

- Annual Client Survey that assesses the quality and effectiveness of services and support offered by the BRC.
- Service Tracker that records and manages requests from clients. Besides a comprehensive reporting capability, the system includes a feedback mechanism enabling clients to rate the services of advisory missions.
- Headquarters-led Products and Services Survey, which includes qualitative questions on services provided by the BRC to country offices.

⁴³ Consulting is not only provided by the regional programme (i.e. it also comes from advisors financed by other sources), but it is impossible to disaggregate it.

⁴⁴ Major international accounting and consulting firm.

Figure 2. Total Client Requests (2002–2008)



In 2008, based on the Service Tracker data,⁴⁵ the BRC completed a total of 1,240 service requests, amounting to 3,497 person days. As seen in Figure 2, clients demand for BRC services continues to increase, reaching its peak in 2008.

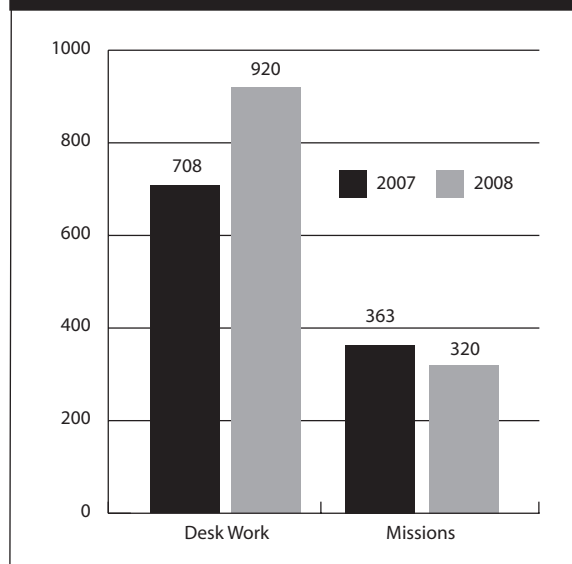
Desk work encompasses the majority of requests that are serviced by the BRC and the number of requests for desk work has increased substantially over the last two years, while the number of requests for mission decreased slightly (see Figure 3).⁴⁶

5.1.3 USE OF SERVICES

As shown in Figure 4, the three practices receiving most requests for 2008 are the three largest practices at the BRC; the number of requests has in general remained consistent for the last two years. Those practices are energy and environment, democratic governance and poverty reduction.

Service Tracker data reveals that the number of services provided by the BRC to its primary

Figure 3. Total Client Requests by Categories (2007-2008)



beneficiaries, UNDP country offices, varied by year and by country. In particular, Figure 5 shows the most recent statistics—number of BRC services by country office in 2009.

⁴⁵ BRC Services – 2008 Report, Service Tracker Analysis and Annual Client Survey Results.

⁴⁶ BRC Services – 2008 Report, Service Tracker Analysis and Annual Client Survey Results.

Figure 4. Number of Requests by Area (2008)⁴⁷

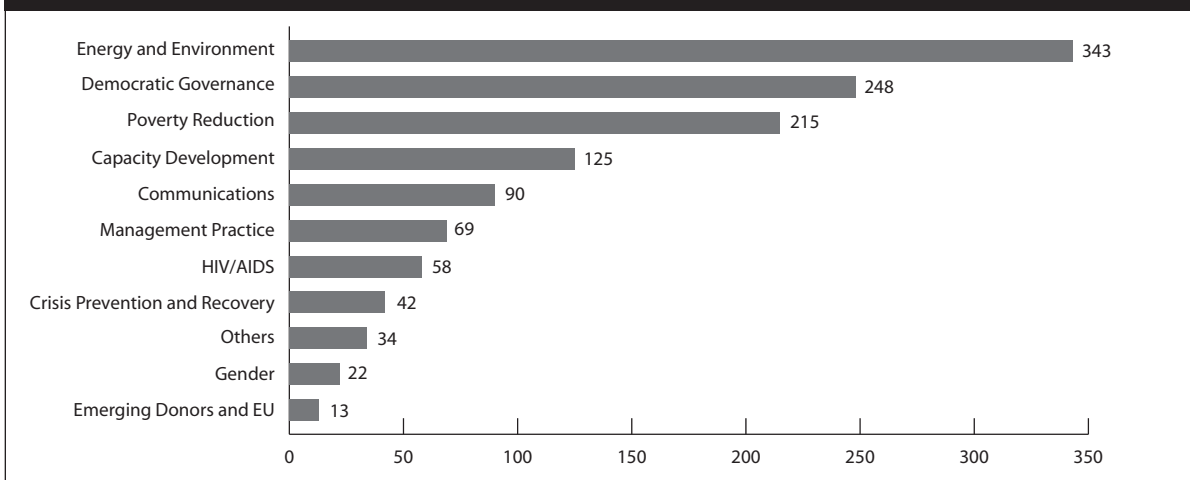
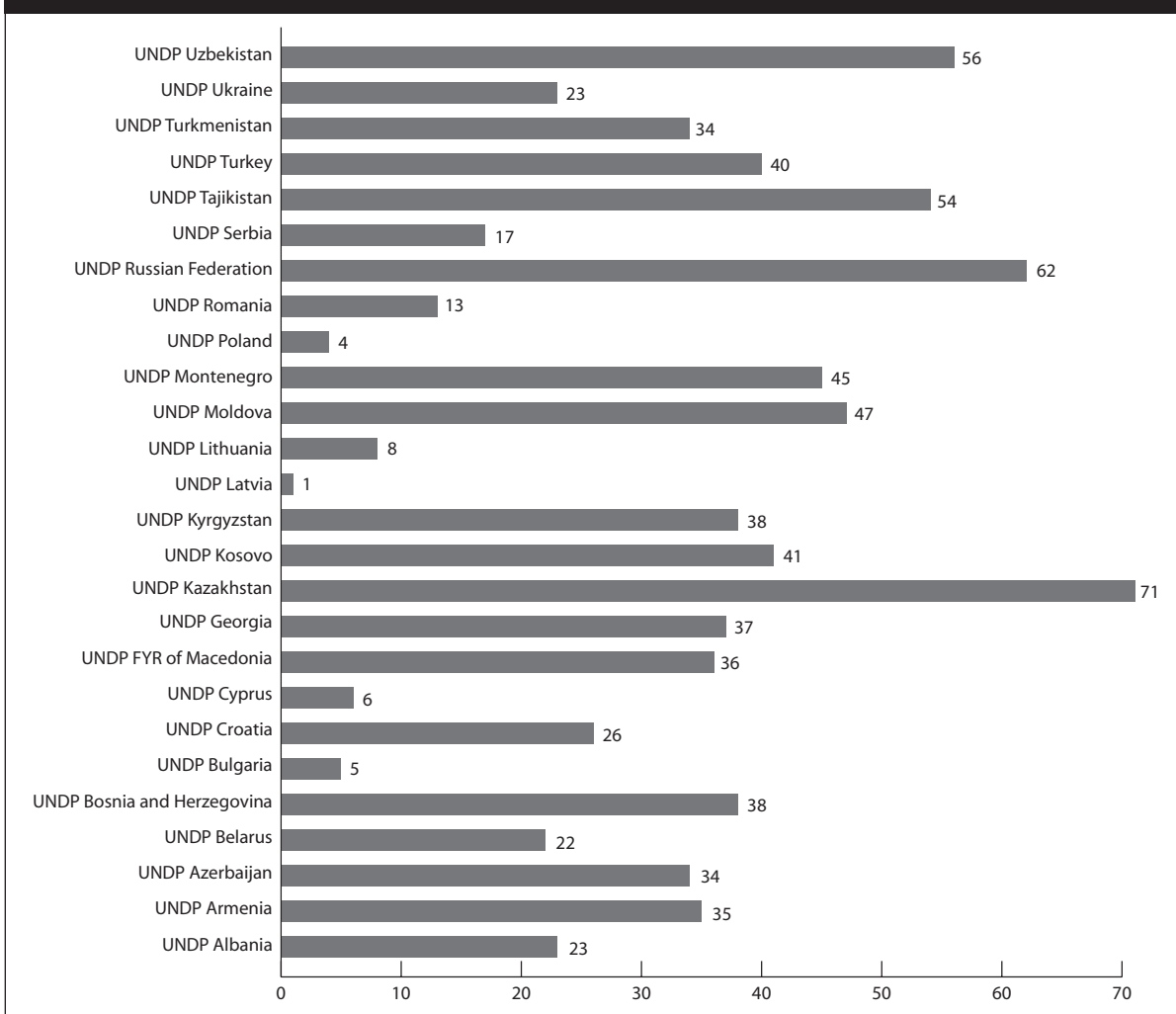


Figure 5. Number of BRC Services Provided to Country Offices (2009)⁴⁸



⁴⁷ BRC Services – 2008 Report, Service Tracker Analysis and Annual Client Survey Results.

⁴⁸ Service Tracker, <http://km.undp.sk/index.cfm?event=st.reportByClient>

UNDP country offices in Kazakhstan, Russia, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan were four most active BRC clients in 2009 with 71, 62, 56 and 54 BRC services respectively. At the same time such countries as Albania, Belarus and Ukraine used three times less BRC services than Kazakhstan. Kosovo, Montenegro and Turkey used a similar number of services (40–45). Such distribution cannot be explained simply by the size of the country office (number of people working there) or by the size of the Country Program budget. The number of services provided was determined by a variety of factors that included—according to information we received from the country studies—the right fit between client and consultant, types of services requested (desk work or mission), availability of other than BRC service providers (including local consultants), and availability of local expertise in the country and country office.

5.1.4 PERFORMANCE OF CONSULTING SERVICES

An annual survey conducted by the BRC demonstrated high levels of client satisfaction with BRC missions (see Figure 6). The survey results were consistent with the findings from field work although the levels of satisfaction were not consistent. A clear message is that satisfaction depends largely on the quality of the consultants.

On the other hand, country offices are mostly neutral about BRC contribution to the achievement of country office results (see Table 5). They consider BRC contributions to regional networking and country office project formulation as most important.

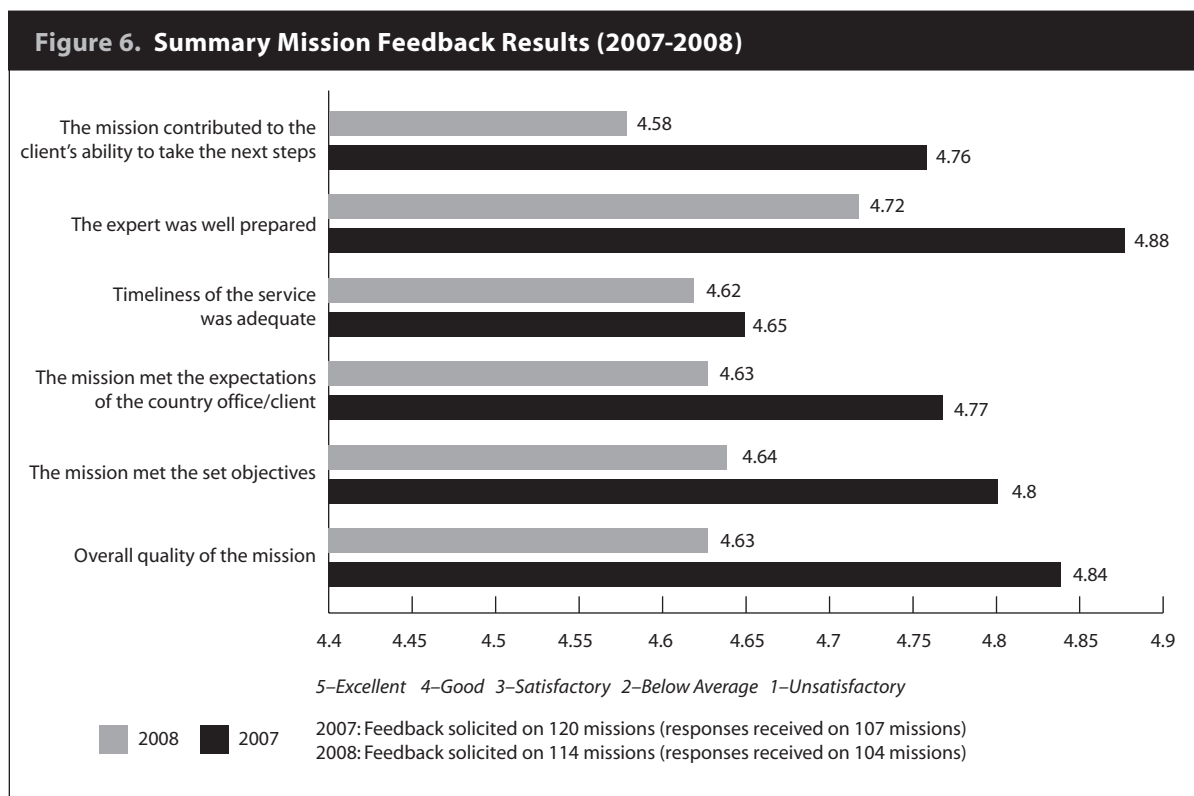


Table 5. Contributions of BRC Services to Country Office Results			
Services	2006	2007	2008
<i>Scale used: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neutral; 4=agree; 5=strongly agree</i>			
CoP activities have improved your networking with other practitioners in the region	3.7	3.7	3.8
Advisory support has facilitated the country office in project formulation	3.6	3.6	3.7
Sharing lessons and good practices helped the project formulation process in your country office	3.5	3.6	3.4
Knowledge management has helped in sharing regional lessons and good practices	3.5	3.5	3.5
Knowledge (best practices, lessons learnt, publications, etc.) generated in BRC has contributed to capacity building in the country office	3.5	3.5	3.5
Overall, BRC advisory support contributed to the achievement of country office outcomes	3.2	3.5	3.5
Advisory support has improves the visibility of the country office	3.2	3.5	3.5
Advisory support has resulted in the expansion of country office programme portfolio	3.3	3.4	3.5
Advisory support has facilitated the country office in the implementation and management of development projects	3.2	3.4	3.5
Overall, regional programming has contributed to the achievement of country office Country Programme outcomes	3.2	3.3	3.2
Knowledge management has contributed to improved, evidence-based programming in your country office	3.2	3.3	3.2
Regional programmes have resulted in the expansion of country office programme portfolio	3.1	3.3	3.3
Regional programmes have improved the visibility of the country office	3.1	3.3	3.2
Advisory support has contributed to mobilization of additional resources for the country office	3.2	3.2	3.4
Advisory support has facilitated the country office in the formulation of its Country Programme	3.2	3.0	3.3
Advisory services contributed to the quality formulation of UNCT/UNDAF	n/a	n/a	3.4
CoP activities have improved your ability to delivery on your job	n/a	n/a	3.5
Regional programmes have enhanced partnerships between the country office and other stakeholders	3.1	3.3	3.1
Regional programmes have mobilized additional resources for the country office	3.1	3.3	3.1
Regional programmes have enhanced country office relationship with donors	2.9	2.9	3.0
Average	3.2	3.4	3.4

5.1.5 CHALLENGES FOR PROVIDING HIGH-QUALITY CONSULTING SERVICES

While working hard on providing high-quality consulting services to its clients, the BRC is facing at least three challenges related to: uneven distribution of work between the consultants and work overload of the lead consultants, staff turnover and involvement of subject experts in consulting activities.

Distribution of work between consultants is uneven because the best BRC specialists are so popular that sometimes country offices and national partners have to wait for months to get the expert they want.⁴⁹ Hence, timely BRC/regional programme response to requests for specific experts is sometimes impossible. Some of the consequences of such popularity are extremely intense travel schedules and incredible workloads for the lead BRC experts (see Box 3).

Staff turnover in the BRC is relatively high and affects BRC performance. This fact has been recognized by many respondents, who are current BRC staff and management or former BRC personnel. For example, in 2008 democratic

governance practice had a drop in the total number of requests and in time spent; most likely due to staff turnover and a change in practice leader.⁵⁰

There is no one simple explanation for the high level of staff turnover. But all of the respondents agreed that BRC consultants work very hard and are under serious pressure. It is a very stressful environment and people are simply worn-out. On the other hand, while the BRC provides good opportunities for professional growth by involving its employees in challenging projects, it can provide only limited opportunities for their career growth. After some time spent with the BRC people begin searching for new jobs.

Specialists hired by the BRC have solid professional backgrounds in their respective areas, but not all of them have experience in providing consulting services and the proper skills specific to consulting services. Some of those who develop those skills over time eventually leave the BRC. According to our respondents in the country offices, some BRC consulting missions are not overly effective due to the ineffective client-consultant interactions rather than due to the lack of consultant's expertise.

Box 3. An Example of a Leading BRC Consultant's Travel Schedule for 2009

Destination	Dates	Destination	Dates
Istanbul	12 Jan–13 Jan	Minsk	17 Jun–18 Jun
Geneva	26 Jan–27 Jan	Vilnius	19 Jun
Dushanbe	28 Jan–6 Feb	Moscow	29 Jun–3 Jul
Bishkek	9 Feb–12 Feb	Yerevan	6 Jul–9 Jul
Brussels	2 Mar–4 Mar	Almaty	16 Jul–22 Jul
Tirana	13 Mar–27 Mar	Tashkent	23 Jul–24 Jul
Athens	30 Mar–2 Apr	Dubrovnik	10 Oct–14 Oct
Tashkent	6 Apr–8 Apr	Rome	15 Oct–16 Oct
Dushanbe	9 Apr–15 Apr	Bishkek	17 Oct–24 Oct
Bishkek	16 Apr–17 Apr	Tashkent	25 Oct–31 Oct
Washington/NY	27 Apr–1 May	Ashgabat	1 Nov–7 Nov
Kiev	18 May–21 May	Warsaw	20 Nov–21 Nov
Zagreb	15 Jun–16 Jun		

⁴⁹ This challenge is typical for any consulting group in any part of the world.

⁵⁰ BRC Services – 2008 Report, Service Tracker Analysis and Annual Client Survey Results.

5.1.6 PROBLEM WITH ASSESSING AND MONITORING BRC SERVICES

The existing system is very impressive and provides valuable data for assessment and decision making. The BRC should be proud of being able to monitor its activities in such an effective manner.

We fully agree with the BRC that although its two service monitoring and assessment tools “are by no means perfect, they nevertheless act as a compass highlighting trends in both where country office needs are moving to and responses BRC needs to take in the future to improve its services. In addition, they complement each other, the survey being based partially on perception, while the tracker records feedback on actual services provided. Therefore, comparing results in both, for elements which are identical, can also offer a valuable analysis, especially when there are gaps between the two.” This comparison is in fact a combination of methodological and data source triangulations that are used in social sciences and programme evaluation as a way of data verification.

The key problem with the above mentioned tools is the extent to which they provide a true picture. Several respondents in different countries told us that when they were satisfied with the service quality they provided positive feedback, and when they were unhappy about service provided they give no feedback (instead of providing negative feedback). In some countries such behaviour was interpreted as a cultural norm. Hence the numbers indicating service quality and customer satisfaction are likely to be higher than they should be. The BRC may want to consider this effect.

It may also happen that when country offices become familiar with the monitoring tools, they will provide feedback in all cases, and monitoring data will become more valid. The decrease in the feedback results for missions (see Figure 6) may mean that the change already occurs. If it takes

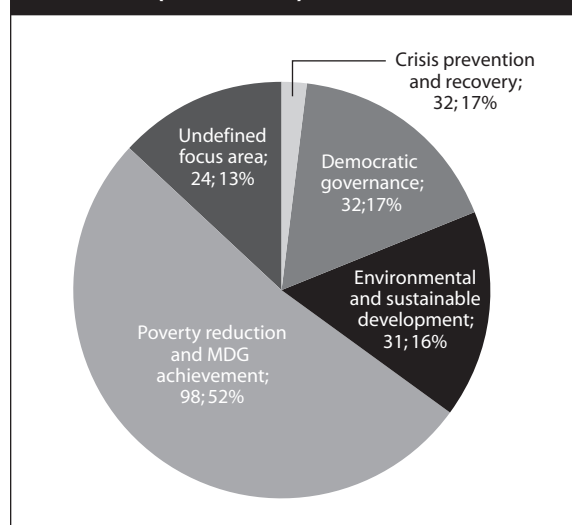
place, feedback results for 2009 should be even a bit lower than in 2008.

5.2 PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

5.2.1 OVERVIEW OF THE RBEC REGIONAL PROJECTS

At the time when this evaluation was conducted the RBEC portfolio included 189 regional projects⁵¹ implemented since 2004. Figure 7 shows distribution of those projects by practice areas. Eighty-five percent of the regional projects were implemented in the RBEC priority areas: poverty reduction, democratic governance, and environment and sustainable development (now more often called energy and environment). More than 50 percent of the total number of regional projects were implemented in the area of poverty reduction.

Figure 7. Number and Percent of Regional Projects by Practice Areas (2004-2009)⁵¹

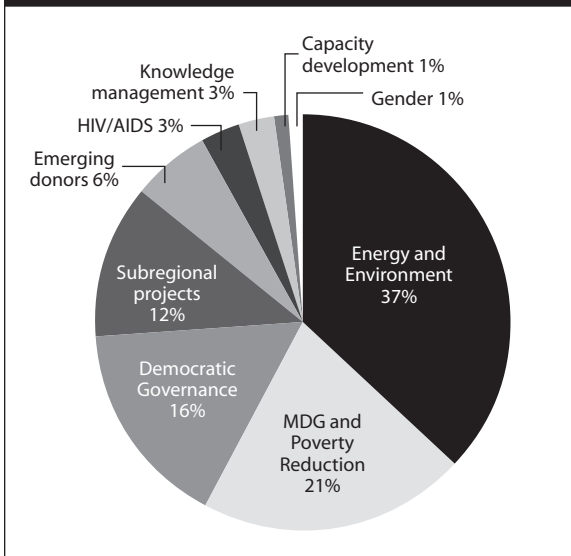


Seventy-one projects (including eight subregional projects) out of 189 were under implementation when the evaluation was conducted. Figure 8 shows distribution of regional projects under implementation by practice areas.

While the majority of the ongoing regional projects (71 percent) relate to the three priority areas mentioned above, distribution of projects between

⁵¹ <http://home.undp.org/monitor/index.cfm?bundle=1839>

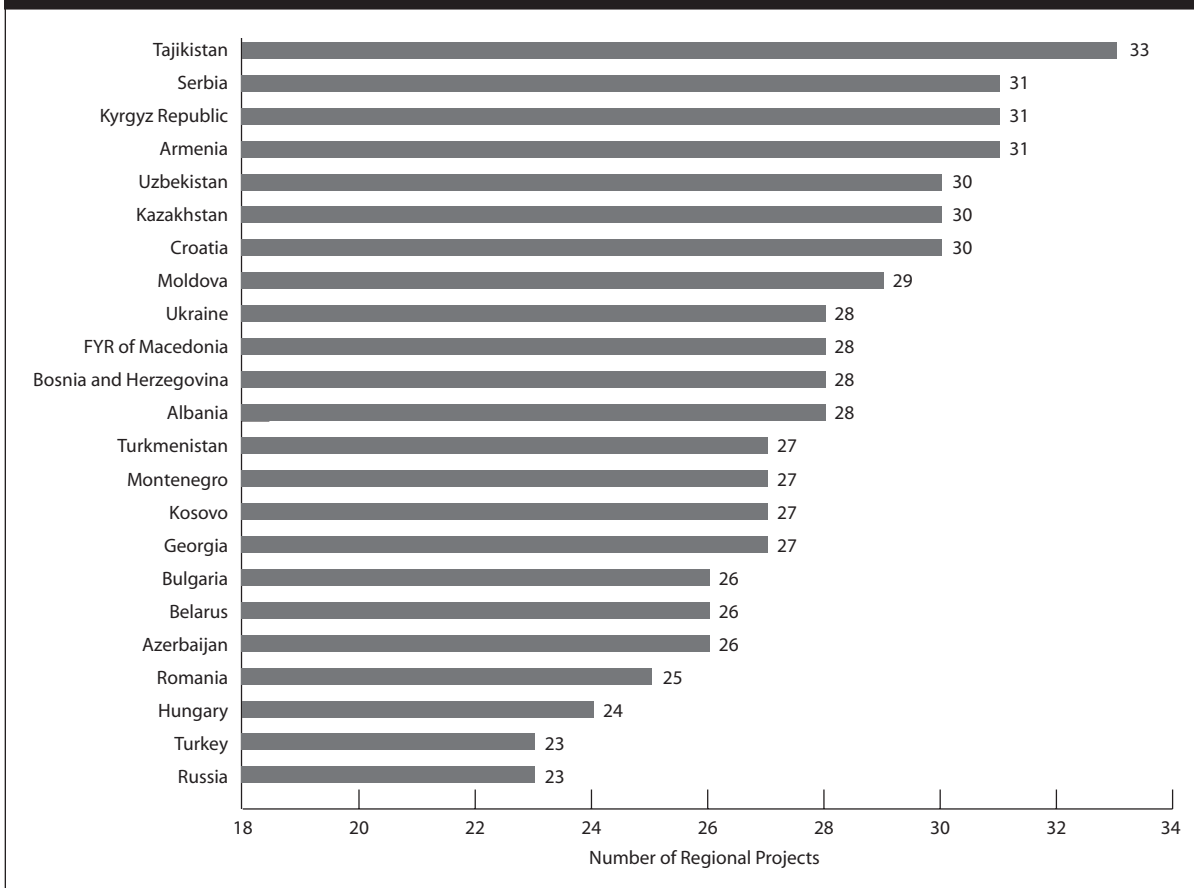
Figure 8. Number and Percent of Regional Projects Under Implementation by Practice Areas (2009)⁵²



those areas is different from those in Figure 7. Thirty-seven percent of regional projects are implemented in the area of energy and environment, which is 1.5 more than the number of projects related to poverty reduction (21 percent) and more than two times more than the number of projects implemented in the democratic governance area. This shift could be explained by the availability of funds for energy and environment projects, requests from the country offices and effective work of the energy and environment practice.

Geographic coverage of the regional projects is shown in Figure 9. The evaluation team noted that available data on geographic coverage was incomplete and not always clear. Geographic focus of some projects was described as ‘all region’; in those cases we included all the countries. There were 20 such projects.

Figure 9. Geographic Coverage of the RBEC Regional Projects



⁵² <http://europeandcis.undp.org/home/regionalprojects>

5.2.2 HOW THE REGIONAL PROJECTS ARE DEVELOPED AND MANAGED

Project ideas either result from internal regional discussions or are the regional part of large global programmes such as the Environment and Security Initiative, Global Compact, and Growing Sustainable Business for Poverty Reduction. The BRC facilitates the project design process, and in many cases country offices are consulted with or actively involved in the project design.

Regional projects implemented under the regional programme are managed by BRC staff. Since 2004 there were 58 people appointed as project managers by the BRC,⁵³ some of whom are no longer working for the BRC. For instance, we had a chance to talk to ex-BRC project managers in New York, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan. As Figure 10 shows in most cases the same person managed only one or two regional projects (37 cases out of 58, or 64 percent), in 13 cases people managed three to four projects (22 percent), and only a few managers (eight people or 14 percent) were responsible for more than five projects.

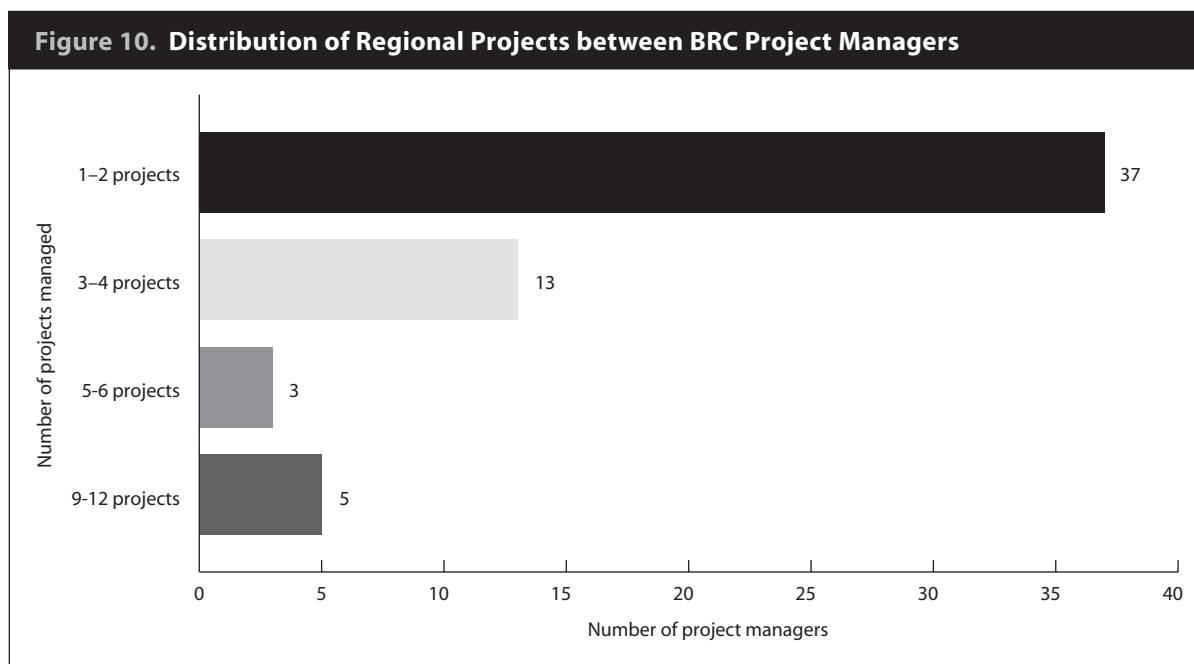
In most other cases the Team Leaders of BRC practices are not heavily involved in managing

regional projects and are more focused on subject matters as well as providing and supervising BRC services in their respective areas. There were only few cases when the lead BRC experts managed more than one or two regional projects. This is also natural since subject experts are normally more interested in their professional work than in project management, do not necessarily combine high level of expertise with good project management skills, and the BRC is more interested in using its best experts in the capacity of consultants rather than project managers.

5.2.3 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE REGIONAL PROJECTS TO THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

In the area of poverty reduction and MDG achievement a vast majority of regional projects made contributions to the following outcomes:

- Improved local and national capacities for sustainable development (28 projects).
- Country offices, policy makers and civil society organizations (CSOs) have improved statistical and analytical capacities in respect to the MDGs and human development monitoring (20 projects).



⁵² <http://home.undp.org/monitor/index.cfm?bundle=1839>

In the area of democratic governance most project contributions facilitated the following outcomes:

- Public administration integrity and capacity for evidence-based policy development and public service delivery improved (19 projects).
- Enhanced capacities of local governments for effective local development (10 projects).

In the area of energy and sustainable development a maximum number of projects (15) contributed to the following outcome:

- Improved national systems for integrating environment into countries' development frameworks, and addressing the environment and security risks.

Annex 5 summarises the various projects by focus area and Annex 6 shows the number of regional projects that contributed to various regional programme outcomes.

As already noted, without outcome evaluations and/or a critical mass of project evaluations, making an assessment of the regional programme's contribution to results across a wide range of countries is extremely difficult. Based on desk reviews and the field work, the evaluation team have made the following assessments:

Poverty and Economic Development. The major regional programme contributions to sustainable development results in the areas of poverty and economic development were made through development and dissemination of knowledge products, capacity building, and consultations. In many countries regional programme resulted in new policies, strategies and measurement systems implemented at the national level. The BRC Poverty Practice enhanced its capacity in the course of the regional programme implementation and became a strong asset.

UNDP flagship knowledge products such as the Regional Human Development Reports are a unique contribution that could hardly be made by any other agency. They are truly 'regional' in that they relate to the entire region. The creation

of Web-based information sources could be considered a potentially sustainable result as well, but only on the stipulation that those recourses are maintained and updated on a regular basis by BRC and/or its partners. Global Compact projects in the countries visited by the evaluation team did not include exit strategies for UNDP and are coming to a close, while the results achieved are unlikely to be sustained.

Sustainable Energy and the Environment. The key contributions of the regional programme to the development results in the area of sustainable energy and environment were made through research, development of subject specific methods and tools, training and consultations, and dissemination of knowledge products that included Web-based resources. One of the regional projects implemented by this practice had an explicit goal of assisting country offices and UNDP partners in resource mobilization, which was greatly appreciated by the beneficiaries in the Central Asian countries.

Several regional projects coordinated by this practice were truly 'regional'—aimed at all the countries and provided results all the countries could benefit from. Energy and environment differs from other practices and could be explained by the nature of this subject area: Environmental issues affect all the countries regardless of the economic development and political context. In this respect energy and environment practice has very good potential to grow and enhance its contribution to the development results in the future.

Democratic Governance. The key contributions to the development results were made by this practice through research, development and dissemination of knowledge products, capacity development, and policy advice. Democratic governance places a special emphasis on networking. As compared to the other practice areas, regional programme made a unique, sustainable and very important contribution to the development results by establishing and enhancing a Regional Centre for Public Administration Reform (RCPAR) to support regional cooperation.

Since contribution in the area of democratic governance depends, to a great extent, on the political context and the level of economic development of the countries involved, this practice had to be very sensitive and flexible to adjust to the variety of circumstances in different countries. Respondents in all the countries spoke highly of the potential of the current democratic governance practice. The demand for high-quality policy advice in this practice area is vast and growing. The key challenge for the regional programme will be to provide a proper level of high-quality supply. The potential of professional networks established by this practice will help the process.

Crisis Prevention and Recovery. The major contribution to the development results of the regional programme was made through technical assistance, but not through the regional projects. The practice team includes only three people⁵⁴ in Bratislava, hence its ability to send consultants to the RBEC countries is limited. Hiring a new consultant who will be located in Central Asia seems to be a good decision as that region is known for its high risk of natural disasters. It will be useful to assess the effectiveness of this approach in a few months time when there will be enough evidence to reflect on and lessons to share with other practices. Meanwhile the major challenge for the newly hired consultant is coordination.

HIV/AIDS. Regional Project on HIV/AIDS (often mentioned in the RBEC documents simply as ‘regional programme’) launched a new partnership strategy in 2007 that has already demonstrated a significant increase in delivery via strategic partnerships, both within and outside the United Nations system. That was an obvious success. The RBEC Regional Team has been selected to be the first UNDP regional team to co-locate with the respective UNAIDS Regional Support Team as part of a global UNDP/UNAIDS agreement. Enhanced partnerships with United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC), The Turkish International

Cooperation and Development Agency, the Czech Trust Fund, and others are being pursued.

On the other hand, there is no general consensus among UNDP core staff in the region on whether or not UNDP should have an HIV/AIDS component of its regional programme since the regional support role to country offices could be played by UNAIDS.

Gender Equality. The major contributions made by this practice were knowledge products—reports and publications on gender issues as well as workshops on those issues. Online resources created and maintained by this practice are valued by country offices and UNDP partners. The CoP facilitated by the BRC Gender Team is one of the most active. Gender mainstreaming strategy is fully in line with the United Nations and UNDP priorities.

5.3 KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge management, such as provision of knowledge services and facilitation of the exchange of knowledge through knowledge networks, is one of the key components of the regional programme and one of the core functions of the BRC. A separate knowledge management practice responsible for technical aspects of knowledge management and helping other practices develop and strengthen their knowledge management activities has been established by the BRC.

The objective of the knowledge management efforts in Europe and the CIS is to support the achievement of the UNDP development agenda in the region. Knowledge management does so by enabling UNDP to work in a more networked and collaborative fashion, where knowledge and practical experiences are leveraged to the fullest extent with the lowest transaction costs, and as easily as possible. This is achieved by building on existing experience across UNDP in the region and the success of CoP,

⁵⁴ Prior to 2009 the team included only one person.

utilizing existing networks of professionals, codifying UNDP strengths and weaknesses, and developing new tools and methods to support knowledge management.

Over the past several years, the BRC has made significant progress to integrate key knowledge management activities into everyday practice work and to ensure knowledge management is everyone's business. The role of the knowledge management unit at the BRC is to ensure these elements are constantly present and strengthened throughout the practices, offer support and capacity building for the CoP and to promote cross-practice fertilization.⁵⁵

The BRC knowledge management team includes three specialists—Web Associate, Knowledge Management Analyst and Editor, and Regional Publications Manager—and offers the following services:

- Intellectual support to and collaboration on good ideas for knowledge management at country level.
- Providing guidance and resources for knowledge management at the global, regional, and country levels. The knowledge management practice helps to create new opportunities for networking, collaboration, knowledge sharing and problem solving.
- Advice on comparative experiences and best practices.
- Expert roster maintenance that allows a focused search for expertise.
- Maintenance of the directory of knowledge products and publications that are the outputs of UNDP work in the region.
- Organization and facilitation of CoP(s) meetings.

In 2008 the total knowledge management budget was a slightly more than US\$126,000.⁵⁶ This budget did not include other knowledge management activities performed by the practices under the decentralized knowledge management approach in the BRC. The budget managed by the knowledge management unit covers the following activities:

- Supporting regional and subregional CoP; enhancing the collaboration between practitioners in CoP through capacity development, financial support and targeted support to CoP facilitators. In particular, the knowledge management unit organized training for CoP facilitators. Knowledge management support was also extended to external CoPs focusing on HR management in public administration in the Western Balkans. The uniqueness of this CoP is that it consists of members from government institutions in the regions dealing with HR management in public administration and focuses on knowledge and experience exchange supported by the expertise of UNDP and other academic institutions. This subregional external network is managed and facilitated by the Bosnia and Herzegovina country office. The BRC provided expertise and support as well as funds to organize regular CoP meetings.
- Capturing and sharing knowledge and experience through enhanced communication, strategic knowledge products and publications. Twenty-nine publications and knowledge management products, including training materials and other knowledge summaries, were published/issued in 2008.
- Developing and improving knowledge management tools, which support the above (see Table 6).⁵⁷

⁵⁵ BRC. Knowledge Management support for Europe and the CIS Project document for 2008-2010, Bratislava, 2008.

⁵⁶ BRC. 'Knowledge Management Annual Report for 2008.'

⁵⁷ Information retrieved from 'BRC Knowledge Management Report' for 2008.

Table 6 Knowledge Management Tools Developed by the Knowledge Management Practice

Categories of KM tools	Brief descriptions
<p>KM tools in support of Practice Work</p>	<p><i>RBEC Knowledge Portal (Regional Intranet)</i>⁵⁸ The Knowledge Portal is the traditional Intranet approach (Web 1.0) focusing on: service offerings of the regional practices (what's available, who is who), access to 'static' information regarding the practice areas (reports, documents, knowledge products, lessons learnt, comparative experiences, etc.), and regional news entry point to practical information.</p> <p><i>'Groups' Workspaces</i>⁵⁹ Workspaces were created in the spirit of the Web 2.0 approach as an interactive online platform for regional CoPs to enhance communications and exchange among CoPs members.</p> <p><i>Online publications</i></p> <p><i>Projects database</i> The project database is set up to feed project information into the online tools, such as the RBEC Knowledge Portal, public website, etc. It is also tied to a visual knowledge map. The project database is connected to the content management system. A list of regional projects is available on the RBEC public website.⁶⁰</p> <p><i>Projects Knowledge Map</i> Online knowledge maps are available for different purposes; so far they have been developed to map projects in specific practice areas. The knowledge maps make the content of projects searchable and reusable in a Google-based map visually.</p> <p><i>RBEC online calendars</i>⁶¹ An online tool to show information on events, including regional events, missions, travel schedule of senior management in the bureau, etc. It allows search based on various criteria. Calendars can be created by UNDP staff; they can be public or private.</p> <p><i>Who's who—online RBEC and BRC directory</i></p> <p><i>Country office focal points list</i>⁶² Country office focal points include UNDP staff in the region according to their practice field. The list is searchable based on countries and practice fields/areas. It can be accessed from the RBEC Knowledge Portal home page.</p> <p><i>'Insights' Newsletter—RBEC internal quarterly newsletter</i>⁶³ An internal knowledge-sharing and informational newsletter published every quarter online and distributed via email distribution. Sections of the newsletter are featured stories (top stories), past and future events and publications, colleagues on the move, 'meet a colleague' to feature UNDP staff from another angle than just work, 'did you know' stories, interviews, as well as travel stories of RBEC countries.</p> <p><i>Online resources</i> A selection of links to databases, newsletters, journals and online media that are relevant for the work of UNDP staff.</p> <p><i>Donors' matrix</i>⁶⁴ This website is meant to be used as donors' database, targeting internal UNDP audiences.</p>

⁵⁸ <http://europeandcis.undp.org/intra>

⁵⁹ <http://ws.undp.sk/groups>

⁶⁰ <http://europeandcis.undp.org/home/regionalprojects>

⁶¹ <http://calendar.undp.sk/>

⁶² <http://europeandcis.undp.org/intra/focalpoints/>

⁶³ <http://europeandcis.undp.org/insights>

⁶⁴ <http://europeandcis.undp.org/partners>

Table 6 Knowledge Management Tools Developed by the Knowledge Management Practice (cont.)

Categories of KM tools	Brief descriptions
External Communications	<p><i>RBEC public website</i>⁶⁵ A website for the public with customized language and news elements.</p> <p><i>RBEC public website–Russian corner</i>⁶⁶ A website targeting CIS countries and Russian speaking partners and colleagues.</p>
Supporting tools for Advisory services	<p><i>Service Tracker</i>⁶⁷ A tool to track services provided by the centre. It tracks services by type of service, mode, advisor, team, practice area, client, etc. with sophisticated reporting capabilities. Each service recorded in the system has associated documents, such as TOR, presentations, email exchanges, back to the office reports etc.; and as such, the Service Tracker also serves as an invaluable knowledge base.</p> <p><i>Feedback mechanism</i> Services in the tracker are also tied to an online feedback mechanism to solicit feedback on missions from clients.</p> <p><i>Expert Roster</i>⁶⁸ A part of the federated corporate WIDE roster tool, it serves to keep track of a diverse group of development professionals to be considered for long- and short-term consultancies. The roster is used to recommend consultants to clients who can assist with the implementation of various projects. To be an active expert in the roster, the expert needs to be recommended by UNDP staff.</p>
Supporting tools for Office Management	<p><i>Bratislava Regional Centre intranet</i>⁶⁹ Internally used by BRC staff to access information on issues such as security, human resources, procurement, finance, IT and travel issues. It is the so called 'operations intranet' with all useful information for staff working in Bratislava and living in Slovakia.</p>

Field work undertaken by the evaluation team revealed that these knowledge management activities are much appreciated by country offices. The following represent the tools and processes most appreciated:

- online resources
- Regional Human Development Reports were used in advocacy efforts at the country level
- CoP (exchange of project ideas between country offices, getting connected quickly to the right people, getting answers and references, an opportunity to go beyond the region and get connected with experts from other regions)
- CoP meetings
- research products
- information on methodology (research methodology, program design, methods specific to particular subject areas)

⁶⁵ <http://europeandcis.undp.org/>

⁶⁶ <http://europeandcis.undp.org/russian>

⁶⁷ <http://km.undp.sk/index.cfm?event=st.list>

⁶⁸ <http://tcdc.undp.org/expertsearch/default.aspx?key=W42P7V15G60393I62550>

⁶⁹ <http://intra.undp.sk/index.cfm?>

Chapter 6

STRATEGIC POSITIONING OF THE UNDP RBEC REGIONAL PROGRAMME

This chapter analyses the relevance of RBEC regional programme, and its responsiveness and effectiveness of its partnership approach. These three characteristics of the regional programme are important for devising of its desired future position the region.

6.1 OVERALL STRATEGIC POSITIONING

BRC image—Professional technical adviser versus Internal link. As per the RBEC website: “The Bratislava Regional Centre (BRC) links the country offices and the RBEC headquarters in New York. The BRC supports country offices by providing policy advice and backstopping services delivered by UNDP Bureau of Development Policy, as well as by RBEC regional specialists. BRC also manages regional projects (conducted in at least three countries), and helps to capture and spread development successes and best practices throughout the region.”⁷⁰ This describes the BRC as a purely internal UNDP/RBEC consulting unit focused on helping country offices, that is “also managing regional projects.” Regarding the strategic positioning of the BRC and the regional programme, it may be better to emphasize contributions to development results by providing high-quality technical assistance to UNDP partners in the region in cooperation with country offices. In this case the BRC will not look just like an internal ‘link’ or internal unit supporting country offices. It will have an image of an active partner in the regional development, which better reflects what it really is about. It will also help to harmonize what the BRC does with expectations of the potential donors.

Consulting services versus Project management. The regional programme (defined broadly) is automatically aligned with country programming and subregional/cross-country programming through consulting and knowledge services provided to meet the programming needs of the country offices. When it comes to the subregional or regional projects initiated and managed by the BRC, the situation becomes more complicated. Several respondents reported some regional projects were designed without proper consultations with country offices and noted that those projects could have been more relevant to their respective countries if the country offices actively participated in the project design. On the BRC side such situations could be easily explained by time pressure natural for the ‘sales’ process rather than by the lack of desire to have country offices on board. So the challenge is to involve country offices into the project design process from the very beginning and to consider diversity of political, cultural and other contexts while developing projects.

The evaluation team would like to emphasize that despite the complexity of this task the BRC is very well prepared and positioned for facilitating the design of regional projects and exploring funding opportunities. Such BRC activities will be highly relevant. There is potentially a contradiction between the project management and professional support functions of the regional programme. Several stakeholders mentioned the possibility of direct competition⁷¹ between the BRC and country offices especially if the BRC broadens its project implementation activities in the region and takes a management role in those

⁷⁰ <http://europeandcis.undp.org/home/show/4E7C732A-F203-1EE9-B29BFE6A235923A0>

⁷¹ In fact some mentioned actual competition but none of them provided details, thus we have no evidence to treat it as reality.

projects. In theory competition emerges when two or more entities provide similar services or products to the same group(s) of customers and look for the same source of funds. Such competition can be avoided if the BRC does not enter the country office ‘market niche’ and implements only projects that cannot be implemented by country offices. Another solution would be for the BRC to exclude project implementation from its agenda and focus on other kinds of services.

Regional projects—Issue focus versus Geographic focus. Several UNDP respondents suggested that the geographic focus of the ‘regional’ projects might be substituted with problem focus and therefore ‘regional’ projects may even involve countries from outside the region (such as Iran or China). While such an approach may be challenging to administer, it makes perfect sense. As one of the UNDP environmental specialists said: “The birds and animals do not know that our countries have borders and may belong to different regional bureaux.”

Convenient location—‘go to’ agency should be located in the region. The BRC is a very well-known professional organization in the region. Its local presence helps UNDP strategically position itself as a ‘go to’ agency,⁷² which could hardly happen if the customer will have to go overseas for advice.

6.2 RELEVANCE

Regional programme alignment with the RBEC strategic goals. The level of regional programme alignment with the RBEC strategic goals depends on the definition of the regional programme. In Chapter 3 of this report we explained the rationale for selecting an inclusive definition of the regional programme for the purposes of our analysis. According to that definition regional programme includes:

- consulting and training services provided to the country offices

- design and implementation of regional projects
- knowledge services and facilitation of the exchange of knowledge through knowledge networks (CoP)
- UNDP positioning/marketing/networking in the region

Through its consulting, training and knowledge services regional programme contributes to achieving the UNDP goal of becoming a ‘go to’ agency in the areas of UNDP specialization. Promotion of UNDP knowledge products and networking at the regional level also contributes to this result. Design and implementation of regional projects and facilitation of exchange of knowledge through knowledge networks contributes to the development of inter-country cooperation as well to scaling up successful development programmes. According to the majority of our respondents in the regions, the unique contribution of the regional programme to the projects implemented by three or more countries lies in developing project ideas, facilitation of project design, and fundraising, but not in the project management.

Synergies between regional programme and other UNDP initiatives. There are synergies between the regional programme and other UNDP initiatives, such as Roma Decade and the Environment and Security Initiative. A number of regional projects and activities were implemented in the context of broader United Nations initiatives.

Supporting development at the country level. Actual development occurs at the country level, and UNDP country offices will always stay at the heart of UNDP activities. Regional programmes that help country offices and their national partners develop their capacity, design and implement their plans and measure the development results are most relevant. The major strength of the regional programme and its

⁷⁰ See RBEC strategic goals.

essence are in helping others by mentoring, coaching, consulting, teaching, informing and facilitating. Relevance of such an approach was confirmed by the majority of respondents in the region including UNDP staff and representatives of UNDP partner organizations.

The regional programme should not put too much emphasis on managing regional projects.

6.3 RESPONSIVENESS TO CHANGING CONTEXT

Regional programme responsiveness to the changing context through consulting services.

Overall the consulting component of the regional programme responds to country office requests very well. In fact any consultation should meet some specific client's need by default: This is the nature of consulting business. When the context changes, clients' needs also change and BRC responds to the changing context by meeting the changing needs of its clients and partners. Remote consultations—via email and phone—provided by the BRC proved very effective. Many respondents in different countries reported on the timely and high-quality advice they received from the BRC. Advanced information technology will help the BRC become even more responsive to the clients requests and to the changing context. The degree of responsiveness of the CoPs does not directly depend on the BRC or on technology. UNDP country office respondents said that some CoPs are far more responsive than the others. It probably depends on the individual members of CoPs and CoPs subcultures. Several people said that CoP annual meetings helped establish personal contacts that in turn increased their responsiveness.

Regional programme responsiveness to the emergent and emergency situations.

The regional programme demonstrated good responsiveness to the emergent situations. For example, in Central Asia, in addition to global climate change threats, vulnerability of the region to natural disaster is increased by such factors as population density in disaster prone areas,

high population growth, overall poverty, and land and water use related issues. Central Asian countries vary greatly in terms of their preparedness and response capacity. As most of these disasters are transboundary in nature, response and preparedness action taken in one country may have negative consequences for neighbouring countries. Therefore it is important to cooperate with and coordinate the related interventions. A joint programme of UNDP BRC, BCPR and OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe) on natural disaster preparedness and risk reduction for communities in high-risk districts in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan aims to contribute to social stability in these countries by strengthening national and local capacities in natural-disaster risk management, and foster community work and cooperation towards reducing future natural disaster risk as a conflict-generating factor.

Another example of BRC response to an emergency situation relates to the winter of 2008 when Tajikistan experienced a severe energy crisis. The BRC suggested doing a Rapid Needs Assessment to identify the priority areas for international assistance and performed the assessment using BRC consultants. According to the Tajikistan country office, a resulting high-quality document was successfully used to mobilize donor resources. While the very same assessment exercise helped to build capacity of local UNDP staff working with BRC experts.

In response to global economic crisis the BRC implemented a number of activities that included conferences, workshops and region specific publications and expert presentations.

6.4 STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships with the EU. UNDP has successfully developed good partnerships with the EU, especially important since, as previously noted, more than half the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have acceded to, or are seeking to join, the EU. The EU also seeks to strengthen cooperation between its members

and neighbours to the east and southeast—a particularly important means of support during the current economic crisis. In response, UNDP has developed an initiative to facilitate cooperation across EU borders. As part of this initiative, new EU member states share their knowledge and expertise on transition and development and lessons learned with EU accession countries. UNDP provides guidance, seed money and raises additional funds from governments, the EU and the private sector.

Another interesting example of a partnership initiative with the EU has been recently launched. Experts from around the world will deliver lectures on development and development cooperation at universities in 12 new EU countries beginning with the University of Tartu in Estonia. These lectures are part of the 'Kapusinski Lectures' series named after Ryszard Kapuscinski, a Polish reporter and writer who covered developing countries. The lectures will be jointly organized by the European Commission, UNDP and partner universities. The lecture series will offer students from the 12 new member states an opportunity to learn and discuss MDG and issues related to development cooperation.

Partnerships with governments. There are numerous examples of UNDP partnerships with governments. One of the most well-known success stories was the creation of RCPAR. This is a five-year Regional Project on Public Administration Reform implemented by the BRC and primarily financed by the Hellenic Government. Through multi-country initiatives generated by network members and implemented in cooperation with UNDP country offices, the project aims at facilitating professional networking and cooperation between the countries in the region of Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS. Thematically, the project focuses on strengthening capacities for policy making and coordination, improving public finance management and public service delivery, and enhancing organization and staffing in the public sector.

UNDP also has partnerships with the private sector. RBEC and the Coca-Cola Company signed a \$6 million partnership agreement to collaborate on water projects in the region. The joint project was announced in Vienna at a conference on responsible investing in Eastern Europe and the CIS organized by UNDP, the Austrian Development Cooperation and United Nations Industrial Development Organization. The five-year partnership between RBEC and the Coca-Cola's Europe and Middle East Division will initially focus on projects in Croatia, Kazakhstan, Romania and Turkey to improve rural communities' access to safe drinking water, as well as on industrial water use along the Danube River, and providing advocacy on regional water issues.

The three-year UNDP Black Sea Trade and Investment Programme is co-financed by the Governments of Greece and Turkey, UNDP and the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation to foster economic cooperation in the Black Sea region using private-sector led initiatives.

Government officials who were involved in regional networking activities find them very useful. Benefits are twofold: government can learn about other's experience and possibly use this knowledge, and compare their own experience and level of development against others. Personal meetings enable people to discover the heart of other's experiences, to find out 'how it works' in reality. Some noted that it would be more beneficial if the same people went to international meetings at least twice. They felt meeting once was not enough to get to know colleagues from other countries to the extent that you can correspond with them after the meeting. Facilitation of partnership development for country offices is one of the functions effectively implemented by the BRC that is very well positioned to address that challenge.

The ‘South-South’ partnerships. ‘South-South’ partnerships and knowledge sharing proved effective. For example, Armenia’s experience with regional programme development has been appreciated by Macedonia and Tajikistan and was disseminated with the help of Armenian consultants.

Partnerships with United Nations organizations. To support the Regional Directors’ Team, UNDP BRC partners with a number of United

Nations organizations in the region such as the International Labour Organization, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Development Fund for Women, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Industrial Development Organization, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, United Nations Office for Project Services, and United Nations Population Fund.

Chapter 7

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section describes the overarching conclusions and recommendations resulting from the evaluation. Conclusions are based on the data analysis and assessments included in the previous chapters of this report, and provide brief answers to the evaluation questions. Recommendations, in turn, are based on the conclusions and provide more information for future planning and decision making.

7.1 CONCLUSIONS

The RBEC regional programme in general, and the BRC in particular, are extremely important for fulfilling the RBEC mission in the region. Having a regional centre (BRC) that is closer to the beneficiaries (mostly county offices) than the RBEC office in New York strengthens RBEC presence in the region. It has performed well across its main areas on intervention, consulting, projects, and knowledge management. The regional programme is in line with the UNDP corporate strategy and corporate goals in the region. It is also at the forefront of implementing the UNDP regionalization policy.

The combination of projects, activities and services implemented by the regional programme is beyond what is traditionally called a 'programme.' A regional programme is different from a country programme and should not be considered equivalent to a country programme at the regional level since the UNDP 'region' simply does not have some of the essential characteristics specific to a country. Thus, a framework developed for country-level programming cannot be used for regional programming without serious revisions, and the regional programme cannot be put in a country programme framework.

The regional programme has a wide variety of projects from regional/subregional interventions to umbrella initiatives with nationally implemented components. It is difficult to say which type has the greatest value added or what the appropriate mix should be. Rather the regional programme should remain opportunistic and flexible. The regional projects made substantial contributions to the development results in the region, especially in the areas of poverty reduction and economic development, sustainable energy and environment and democratic governance. The 'regional projects' most often cover only a few countries that face common issues. The region is so big and diverse that one can hardly develop a project relevant to all countries. Country offices find most effective those multi-country and regional projects that are developed with their participation. Participation of the country offices in the project design increases not only ownership but also project relevance. Projects aimed at creation of knowledge products and development of knowledge management and dissemination can potentially be beneficial for the entire region and can use UNDP regional capacity. Thus, such projects can become truly regional as opposed to the projects involving a few countries. Advisory and knowledge services by nature are highly relevant to any country and subregion.

The BRC is at the heart of the regional programme. The BRC has a strong capacity and in-depth expertise in most UNDP priority areas. The BRC is a unique source of knowledge and advice for the country offices. The regional programme is aligned with country programmes. The BRC is responsive to country office requests and works hard to provide the best possible services in a timely manner. The BRC was responsive to the economic crisis

and implemented a number of activities to help country offices cope with the crisis. It is well positioned to generate and further develop ideas for new projects that can be implemented at the country level or by two or more country offices. Expertise, access to information, and connections with the donor community create unique advantages for the BRC as a ‘project design bureau.’ As a well-established, professional, ‘regionalized’ organization, it plays an important role in positioning UNDP in the region. Although the way it is presented to the external environment (a ‘link’ between headquarters and the country offices, or an internal consulting unit) does not adequately reflect the nature of its services and its contribution to the development results.

BRC activities not only cover a broad range of subject areas, but are diverse by nature: project management business is different from consulting/advisory/knowledge management business. High-quality consulting services and project management activities require different organizational capacities and different competencies of people involved. Thus, the BRC has at least two very different modes of operation: a project management mode and a consulting mode. It is important to consider that high-quality, timely advisory services provided by the BRC, according to information gathered in the evaluation, are more needed and valued by the country offices than direct project execution. The BRC geographic location is convenient for the region. The BRC has little time difference with county offices. Travelling from Bratislava or Vienna is indeed more efficient for the organization and easier for consultants than travelling overseas.

Although the BRC is staffed by high-quality professionals and can provide good consulting services, there is room for improvement. Consulting services will remain an essential part

of BRC business but to provide high-quality performance, BRC staff will need to have not only in-depth subject knowledge and skills in their respective areas, but also excellent communication skills and advanced consulting skills. The BRC staff have an extremely heavy workload. This is particularly true of the lead BRC consultants—the core BRC “asset.” Their travel schedules are overwhelming, and each assignment involves very intense work and a high level of responsibility. It is stressful and there is a high risk of staff burnout. In such circumstances, high staff turnover inside the BRC is expected. BRC interventions provide most sustainable results when they include capacity development components. The only problem is staff turnover in the country offices and in the partner organizations: When people leave, organizations lose capacity and sustainability of the results achieved are then at risk.

7.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1. Develop and implement a more relevant approach to programming at the regional level⁷³ that recognizes the distinctiveness of regional programming within UNDP. RBEC should consider the distinctive nature of regional programming and develop corresponding guidelines based on the existing UNDP documents and RBEC/BRC experience in the region. The new approach might be radical. While results-based policy and strategy remain relevant for RBEC/BRC activities at the regional level, RBEC may not necessarily use the traditional programme framework (similar to the country framework) to describe the regional programme.

The regional RBEC strategy based on United Nations policies and UNDP policies and strategies sets priorities for all the countries in the region. Countries should develop programmes in accordance with the existing rules and regulations.

⁷³ We understand that RBEC is obliged to develop a regional programme under the current rules to be approved by the Executive Board. Allocation of regional core resources is upon the approval of the regional programme document. Thus, flexibility for RBEC is limited in this area and only UNDP at the corporate level has the ability to introduce such a policy change. But RBEC may consider raising this issue at the corporate level and suggest what should be changed and how.

Projects as well as activities could be designed and implemented at the regional, subregional, multi-country and country levels. This approach keeps the focus on the country programmes. It allows enough flexibility to include any projects and activities implemented in the region at various levels. BRC consulting, knowledge management and marketing activities can be included as well.

Recommendation 2. Focus on the development of ‘issue-oriented’ regional projects with an emphasis on the subregional level and ensure active participation of the respective country offices in the design of the intervention. Regional projects should be predominantly developed at the subregional level and/or should be issue-oriented. Geographic focus of the regional projects might be substituted or supplemented with problem focus and therefore RBEC ‘regional’ projects may even involve countries from outside the region, such as the Islamic Republic of Iran or China. Issue-oriented projects could involve countries that face or are affected by similar problems. Subregional programming is more natural in that respect and is supported by all country offices. In any case, it is crucial to get country offices involved in the project design at the very early stages so that the project can be most relevant to each of the countries involved and consider their similarities and differences.

Recommendation 3. Keep knowledge products and knowledge management services as a top priority of the regional programme and ensure adequate investment in this area. Knowledge products and services that include development and facilitation of CoP proved to be relevant to the entire region and much appreciated by the country offices and UNDP partners in the RBEC region. Existing efforts to integrate knowledge management into all activities within the regional programme need to be continued and existing products strengthened.

Recommendation 4. Reconsider the strategic position of the regional programme and its contribution to development results through high-quality development services to

governments and other UNDP partners in cooperation with the country offices, rather than as a ‘link’ between the headquarters and country offices or an internal consulting unit focused primarily on supporting country offices and managing projects. With regard to strategic positioning of the BRC and the regional programme, it may be better to put an emphasis on contributing to development results by providing high-quality technical assistance to UNDP partners in the region in cooperation with country offices. In that case, the BRC will not appear to be just an internal ‘link’ or internal unit supporting country offices. It will look like an active partner in regional development, which better reflects what it really is about. It will also help to harmonize what the BRC does with expectations of potential donors.

The BRC needs to make a clear distinction between the project management and consulting modes of operations. The BRC may consider focusing exclusively on the consulting and knowledge management activities, which was recommended by most respondents from the country offices. If the BRC decides to keep both modes, it should revise its organizational structure and systems to separate project management business from consulting. To be effective either as project managers or as consultants, the same people should not combine the two roles. Ideally, the regional project manager should be based closer to the place where the project is implemented.

Recommendation 5. Strengthen investment in the professional development of staff, specifically in the skills related to consulting activities, and carefully plan staff workload. The BRC needs to build capacity of its consultants. The programme of BRC staff professional development should include consulting skills and customer service skills training. Training should be provided at various levels (beginner, intermediate, advanced). The BRC has to carefully plan its core staff workload taking into consideration their travel schedule. Alternating travel and deskwork and remote consultations should

be mandatory. Staff rotation and even turnover should be planned rather than resisted: The BRC can intensely use consultants for a certain period of time and then hire new people, who should be on a BRC-approved list of candidates. Since the demand from the country offices and their

partners for high-quality consulting services is seriously ahead of the existing supply, the BRC should develop and update regional rosters of consultants by practice areas. A network of pre-qualified consultants can help the BRC provide the proper level of supply.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

EVALUATION OF THE RBEC REGIONAL PROGRAMME 2006-2010

A. EVALUATION OVERVIEW

The Regional Programme 2006-2010 for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was approved by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Executive Board at its first regular session in 2006. It is an instrument for realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) set out in the Millennium Declaration. By promoting regional programmes to sustain human development in the region, the regional programme acts as a bridge between the global and country programming conducted in the countries managed by UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC). It provides a framework for the provision of policy and knowledge-based advisory services to UNDP country offices, governments and civil society organizations, and helps the region exploit its opportunities in the global economy.

Evaluation Rationale and Purpose: The 2006 UNDP Evaluation Policy⁷⁴ states that (a) the Evaluation Office should undertake evaluations of all regional programmes, and (b) that these should be financed by the programme itself. The overall purpose of the evaluation is to:

- Provide substantive support to the Administrator's accountability function in reporting to the Executive Board
 - Facilitate learning to inform current and future programming at the regional and corporate levels, specifically the new RBEC regional programme to be approved in 2010 and to start in 2011.
- Provide stakeholders in regional programme countries and among international development partners with an objective assessment of the development contributions that have been achieved through UNDP support and partnerships with other key actors through the regional programme during a given multi-year period.

Scope of the Evaluation: At the core of the evaluation is the regional programme itself as approved by the UNDP Executive Board in 2006. It is, however, extremely difficult to disengage the programme from other activities undertaken by RBEC Bratislava Regional Centre (BRC) with regional impact. For example, the advisors financed by the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) are fully integrated into the regional programme and an attempt to evaluate the regional programme in isolation would be impossible.

Objectives of the Evaluation:

- Provide an independent account and assessment of UNDP contribution to development results at the regional level in partnership with other development actors beginning in 2006.
- Present key findings, analysis and conclusions in relation to the factors that influenced the degree of contribution.
- Provide a set of clear and forward-looking options for UNDP management to make adjustments in the current strategy and the next RBEC regional programme.

Overall Approach: The Evaluation Office has no specific guidelines for evaluating regional programmes but will draw on the guidelines for

⁷⁴ <http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/Evaluation-Policy.pdf>

Assessment of Development Results (ADRs) and the methodology manuals being developed by the Evaluation Office for its programmatic and thematic evaluations. All Evaluation Office work is guided by the UNDP Evaluation Policy and the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards.⁷⁵ The overall approach is to identify and pose a series of evaluation questions reflecting the issues around which we want to make judgements about the programme and at the same time learn from it. Based on these questions it is possible to develop an evaluation plan that examines how each question can be answered. To do so, the evaluation plan sets out the various sources of data that already exist and then identifies the most appropriate methods of data collection. Once collected the data (factual findings) will be analysed allowing conclusions to be made leading to recommendations for the future.

B. THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

The region covered by the RBEC regional programme includes the former Soviet Union and countries of Central and Eastern Europe.⁷⁶ These countries recorded major development successes during 2001 and 2005. By the start of the Regional Programme 2006-2010, Human Development Index rankings in the region were uniformly better than they were in 2001. Economic growth had been strong across much of the region and countries in the Western Balkans and Central Asia continued to recover from the conflicts of the 1990s. The May 2004 accession of 10 countries to the European Union (EU) changed the shape of the region.

These hopeful trends were offset, however, by troubling tendencies. The relatively high development levels in the region, combined with its improving economic picture, deflected attention from the global development agenda articulated in the Millennium Declaration and the MDG. The rapid economic growth of 2001-2004 was often accompanied by less robust progress—and sometimes regression—in poverty alleviation. Progress in extending the benefits of globalization and democratization to all of the region's citizens remained uneven, with women, children, and ethnic minorities too often victims of poverty and social exclusion. Ensuring high standards of democratic governance remained a challenge for many countries.

Rapid economic growth continued across the region following the start of the regional programme with half a dozen countries in the region reaching double digit GDP growth. The recent onset of the global financial crisis, however, looks set to wipe out recent gains in many RBEC countries. Among the developing countries, those in Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS, are the most integrated in the global financial structure—with high levels of foreign exchange borrowing—and thus were the first to be hit by the 2008 collapse of the financial and banking system.

Virtually all countries have been affected ranging from the relatively wealthy new EU member states, to the poor Central Asian countries like Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. Much of the progress in poverty reduction made over the previous decade is at risk, which could complicate ongoing political processes, such as the consolidation of peace and stability in the Western Balkans.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=22
http://www.uneval.org/papersandpubs/documentdetail.jsp?doc_id=21

⁷⁶ Central and Eastern Europe includes Cyprus, Malta and Turkey. Although geographically outside the Central and Eastern Europe/CIS region, RBEC also covers St. Helena.

⁷⁷ This paragraph draws on http://www.undp.org/economic_crisis/europe_cis.shtml.

C. THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME 2006-2010

Although this section is focused on the BRC and the RBEC regional programme, it is necessary to establish the corporate context within which they sit. The RBEC Regional Programme 2006-2010 overlaps with two UNDP corporate strategies, the second Multi-Year Financing Framework (2004-2007)⁷⁸ and the Strategic Plan (2008-2011). Therefore the regional programme has had to take into account changing corporate priorities and approaches. In addition the regional programme has also been implemented during an ongoing regionalization process. In February 2008 the Administrator released the policy paper ‘Functional Alignment of and Implementation Arrangements for Regional Service Centres (RSCs).’⁷⁹ This document has served as the basis for the current regionalization efforts of UNDP.

Working under a mandate issued by the United Nations Secretary-General, RBEC, formerly the Directorate for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, began the process of establishing offices and programmes in the region in 1992. RBEC now serves 29 countries in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union through its 24 country offices. A full list of countries is provided in Annex 2. In light of the region’s characteristics, RBEC has a long-term mission to help Europe and CIS countries develop socio-economic structures

and governance systems that ensure sustainable, inclusive, equitable (particularly in terms of access to services), high and growing human development. The RBEC Strategy⁸⁰ makes the clear distinction between the work of RBEC in New York and at the BRC:

- RBEC-NY will remain (a) predominantly organized geographically and by country office, and (b) oriented towards policy/strategy and monitoring/oversight.
- The BRC will focus on thematic work, acting in partnership with central UNDP Bureaux.

The BRC was established in 1999 to serve the RBEC region but its structure has evolved over time. Originally it housed both the ECIS Subregional Resource Facility (SURF) managed by BDP and the RBEC regional programme, but a July 2003 decision of the Strategic Management Team led to a merging of the two in 2004. Subsequently a matrix management system where practice managers would report to both RBEC and BDP was then introduced. In April 2008, in line with the regionalization policy, a decision was made to add a Deputy Regional Director of RBEC to the BRC as Director of the Centre. The current organizational structure of the centre is aligned with corporate practice architecture as set out in the table below:

Table 1. Corporate Practice Architecture

Core Practice Areas	Cross-cutting areas	Other areas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty • Energy and environment • Democratic governance • HIV 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender • Capacity development • Conflict prevention and recovery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge • Management practice

⁷⁸ MYFF paragraphs 72-74 cover regional support and introduce the concept of matrix management for regional service centres.

⁷⁹ The section on Regionalization Policy is taken from the April 2009 ‘Review of the Functional alignment of the Regional Resource Centres’ prepared by the UNDP Operations Support Group.

⁸⁰ A strategy for RBEC from 2008-2011 (updated January 2009).

The programme set out two broad areas of interventions:

- **Regional Programming:** Regional programming will help consolidate nascent communities of practice and will continue to identify, codify and disseminate best practices and development successes across the region and globally. It covers the areas of:
 - poverty reduction and economic development
 - democratic governance
 - sustainable energy and environmental practices
 - cross-cutting themes of gender, HIV/AIDS, conflict prevention and recovery, and information and communication technology
- **Subregional programming:** Central Asia, the Caucasus, etc.

D. METHOD AND METHODOLOGY

The evaluation criteria define the areas where the evaluation will make judgements about the programme. Within each criterion will be one or more evaluation questions. The questions are not the ones that will be directly asked to stakeholders. Rather they are questions the evaluation team will answer through the evaluation process. It should also be noted that the process of answering the evaluation questions should examine the factors explaining the answer. Moreover the evaluation process is forward looking and will result in recommendations; it is therefore unnecessary to have specific questions referring to recommendations. The key evaluation questions are:

- **Relevance:** How relevant is the regional programme to regional priority development needs and UNDP corporate strategies?
- **Responsiveness:** How has the regional programme responded to the changing context within which it works?

- **Partnerships:** How has the regional programme used partnership to increase the effectiveness of its support?
- **Effectiveness:** How effective has the regional programme been in achieving its objectives?
- **Efficiency:** Has it used its financial, human and other resources efficiently?
- **Sustainability:** Are the results to which the regional programme contributes sustainable?

The need to be cost effective while at the same time ensuring rigour in terms of data collection and analysis. As noted above there are two main sources of data: documentation and stakeholders.

- **Documentation:** The documentation described above is an initial overview and further efforts need to be made before the evaluation team can start to collect, map and analyse documents including using the corporate self-assessment systems.
- **Stakeholders:** In practical data collection terms, stakeholders can be divided into three groups:
 - Headquarters (RBEC and partner units)
 - BRC
 - Programme countries (county offices, government, civil society, development partners)

For Headquarters and BRC a combination of individual and group interviews will be undertaken. Interviews will be semi-structured. Given the number of programme countries in the region (29 with 24 country offices) it will be impossible to have an in-depth examination of each. Rather a two pronged approach is suggested:

- **Detailed case studies:** These provide an opportunity to learn from a sample of programme countries and/or interventions. While case studies do present a problem of generalization, they can be used to identify and highlight issues that can be further investigated across the regional programme.

- **Interviews with remaining programme countries:** In addition to case studies, telephone interviews will be conducted with remaining programme countries. Semi-structured telephone interviews are preferable to structured surveys since they allow a larger degree of flexibility and engagement with the interviewee.

For all types of interviews an interview protocol will be prepared. The protocol will guide the semi-structured interview.

E. PROCESS, ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

The evaluation should take between six and nine months from initiation to completion of the ADR report. The deadline will be set by the need (a) to upload the fully edited and designed evaluation report six weeks in advance of the June 2010 Executive Board meeting and (b) to submit the Board Summary to the Executive Board Secretariat 16 weeks before the Executive Board meeting.

The evaluation will also attempt to be as cost effective as possible, not at the expense of rigour, but through use of information technology and limiting the travel costs of consultants and staff involved.

1. Management arrangements

UNDP Evaluation Office: The UNDP Evaluation Office Task Manager will manage the evaluation and ensure coordination and liaison with RBEC at headquarters, other concerned units at headquarters level and the BRC. The Task Manager will be supported by a Programme Assistant responsible for logistical and administrative matters.

The Bratislava Resource Centre: The BRC will take a lead role in supporting the evaluation team in liaison with the key partners, and make available to the team all necessary information

regarding UNDP activities in the region. A substantive focal point will be identified to liaise with the Evaluation Office and the evaluation team. The office will also be requested to provide additional logistical support to the evaluation team as required and identify a logistical focal point to coordinate with the Evaluation Office and the evaluation team.

The BRC will meet all costs directly related to the conduct of the evaluation (from the budget of the regional programme itself). These will include costs related to participation of the Team Leader, international and national consultants, as well as the preliminary research and the issuance of the final evaluation report. The BRC will also cover costs of any stakeholder workshops as part of the evaluation.

The Evaluation Team: The evaluation team will consist of:

- Consultant Team Leader, with overall responsibility for providing guidance and leadership, and coordinating the draft and final report;
- Consultant Team Specialist, who will provide the expertise in the core subject areas of the evaluation, and be responsible for drafting key parts of the report.

The Team Leader must have a demonstrated capacity in strategic thinking and policy advice and in the evaluation of complex programmes in the field. All team members should have in-depth knowledge of development issues in the Europe and CIS region. The Evaluation Office tries to ensure gender and regional balance in its consultants. To facilitate regional balance relevant networks can be utilized to identify professional evaluators (for example, the International Program Evaluation Network,⁸¹ which covers Russia and the Newly Independent States).

⁸¹ International Program Evaluation Network www.eval-net.org

Table 2. Division of Labour Among Evaluation Team

Data Collection	Team Member
BRC interviews (BRC is base)	Team Leader (TL)/Team Specialist (TS)
NY interviews	TL
Country case studies	TS and TL divide between the countries between them, but both work on pilot. Each will also work with a local counterpart evaluator
Project case study	TS will undertake and will have been selected for expertise in the area of the project.
Telephone interviews	TS and TL divide but use the same protocol

The evaluation team will be supported by a Research Assistant based in the New York Evaluation Office. The Evaluation Office Task Manager will support the team in designing the evaluation, will participate in the case study pilot mission and provide ongoing feedback for quality assurance during the preparation of the inception report and the final report.

The evaluation team will orient its work by UNEG Norms and Standards for evaluation and will adhere to the ethical Code of Conduct.⁸²

2. Evaluation process

The ADR process will also follow ADR Guidelines, according to which the process can be divided into three phases, each including several steps.

Phase 1: Preparation

- **Document Collection and Mapping:** Initially carried out by the Evaluation Office (identification, collection and mapping of relevant documentation and other data) and continued by the evaluation team. This will include general development related documentation related to the specific country as well as a comprehensive UNDP programme overview for the period being examined.
- **Initial Scoping mission to BRC:** A mission to BRC in order to:

- Identify and collect further documentation.
- Get BRC perspectives on key issues that should be examined.
- Ensure country offices and key stakeholders understand ADR objectives, methodology and process.

■ **Draft Inception Report:**

- Address logistical issues related to the main mission including timing.
- Identify the appropriate set of data collection and analysis methods.
- Validate the mapping of the country programmes.
- Address management issues related to the rest of the evaluation process including division of labour among the team members.

Phase 2: Inception

Following agreement on the basis design and approach to the evaluation a team leader will be recruited.

Inception Meetings: Interviews and discussions in UNDP Headquarters with the Evaluation Office (process and methodology), RBEC (regional context and programme), as well as with other relevant bureaux (including BDP and BCPR).

⁸² The UN Evaluation Group Guidelines (UNEG) 'Norms for Evaluation in the UN System' and 'Standards for Evaluation in the UN System' (April 2005).

Finalize Inception Report: The development of a short inception report including the final evaluation design and plan, background to the evaluation, key evaluation questions, detailed methodology, information sources and instruments and plan for data collection, design for data analysis, and format for reporting.

Phase 3: Data Collection

- **BRC Mission:** A three-day mission to interview BRC staff.
- **Case Study Missions:** The pilot and four other case study mission.
- **Telephone Interviews:** Telephone interviews from home base.
- **Team Meeting in the BRC:** After completion of the case studies to undertake analysis. The Evaluation Office task manager is to join the meeting.

Phase 4: Analysis and Reporting

- **Analysis and reporting:** The information collected will be analysed in the draft ADR report by the evaluation team within three weeks after completion of the main mission.
- **Review:** The draft will be subject to a series of reviews as part of Evaluation Office quality assurance mechanism:
 - (a) The first draft will be subject to an internal review by the Evaluation Office and two external advisors. The external advisors will be development experts with a deep knowledge of the region and development assistance.
 - (b) A second draft will be developed that incorporates the reviewers' comments and corrections. RBEC Headquarters and the BRC will then be invited to identify factual corrections, errors of omission and errors of interpretation.

(c) The Evaluation Office will prepare an audit trail to show how these comments were taken in to account. The Team Leader, in close cooperation with the Evaluation Office Task Manager, shall finalize the ADR report based on these final reviews.

- **Stakeholder meeting:** A meeting will be held to discuss the report with RBEC Headquarters, the BRC and the supervisory board and other stakeholders as appropriate. If possible the meeting will coincide with a regional cluster meeting, regional Resident Representative meeting or similar.

Phase 5: Follow-up

Management response: The UNDP Associate Administrator will request RBEC to prepare a management response to the ADR, which will be uploaded to the UNDP Evaluation Resource Centre.⁸³ As the unit exercising oversight of the regional programme, RBEC will be responsible for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of follow-up actions in the Evaluation Resource Centre.

Communication: The ADR report and brief will be widely distributed in both hard and electronic versions in the Europe and CIS region and at UNDP Headquarters. Copies will also be sent to evaluation units of other international organizations, evaluation societies and research institutions in the region. Furthermore, the evaluation report and the management response will be published on the UNDP website⁸⁴ and made available to the public. Its availability should be announced on relevant UNDP and external networks.

Presentation to the Executive Board: The evaluation report will be presented to the UNDP Executive Board at its June 2010 meeting together with the new regional programme document for Europe and the CIS.

⁸³ <http://erc.undp.org/>

⁸⁴ <http://www.undp.org/eo/>

Tentative Implementation Timetable

The following represents a summary of the implementation of the evaluation.

Table 3. Tentative Implementation Timetable	
Phase	Estimated Timing
1. Preparation	April
2. Inception	May
3. Data collection and analysis	June/July
4. Reporting	August
5. Follow-up	September

3. PRODUCTS

The expected outputs from the evaluation team are:

- an inception report (maximum 20 pages without annexes)
- a comprehensive final report on the 'Evaluation of the RBEC Regional Programme (2006-2010)' (maximum 50 pages plus annexes)
- a two-page evaluation brief⁸⁵
- a presentation for the Executive Board

The final report of the regional programme evaluation to be produced by the evaluation team will follow the following format:

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Regional Context
- Chapter 3: UNDP in the Region and the Regional Programme
- Chapter 4: UNDPs Contribution to National Development Results
- Chapter 5: Strategic Positioning of the UNDP RBEC Regional Programme
- Chapter 6: Conclusions, Lessons and Recommendations

⁸⁵ A detailed outline for the evaluation brief will be provided to the evaluation team by the Task Manager.

Annex 2

LIST OF PEOPLE CONSULTED

ARMENIA

Ms. Aida Arutyunova, Expert, EU Advisory Group to the Republic of Armenia

Ms. Alla Bakunts, Democratic Governance Portfolio Analyst, UNDP

Ms. Anna Gyurjyan, HIV/AIDS Focal Point, UNDP

Mr. Aram Gabrielyan, Head of Environmental Protection Department, UNFCCC National Focal Point, Ministry of Nature Protection

Mr. Armen Martirosyan, Portfolio Analyst, Environmental Governance, UNDP

Ms. Armine Hovhannisyan, Programme Associate, UNDP

Mr. Arshak Papoyan, Medical Doctor, Head of the Epidemiological Surveillance Department, National AIDS Center of the Republic of Armenia, Head of Armenian Delegation

Ms. Consuelo Vidal, United Nations Resident Coordinator, UNDP Resident Representative

Mr. Dirk Boberg, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP

Mr. Hovhannes Ghazaryan, National Coordinator GEF Small Grants Programme

Mr. Levon Barkhudaryan, Senior Adviser, AVAG Solutions Ltd

Ms. Marina Malkhasyan, Project Coordinator, Promoting Human Rights and Human Rights Education, UNDP

Ms. Narine Melikyan, USAID Corporate Governance Expert, Vice President for Corporate Governance Issues, “Ashtarak-Kat” CJSC

Ms. Nelli Cholakhyan, Executive Director, Armenian National AIDS Foundation

Mr. Sevak Amalyan, Project Coordinator, United Nations Global Compact Project, UNDP

Mr. Vache Terteryan, First Deputy Minister, Ministry of Territorial Governance, Republic of Armenia

Mr. Vahan Movsisyan, Chairman, Communities Finance Officers Association

AZERBAIJAN⁸⁶

Ms. Nura Hamlaji, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP

Ms. Verena Linneveber, Cluster Team Leader, UNDP

KAZAKHSTAN

Mr. Alexandr Bragin, Director of Department of Legal and Security International Cooperation, Ministry of Environmental Protection

Mr. Amir Yelchibekov, Country Manager, Border Management and Drug Action Programmes in Central Asia (BOMCA/ CADAP)

Ms. Bakhyt Abdildina, Head of the Governance and Local Development Programme Team, UNDP

⁸⁶ The UNDP office in Azerbaijan decided to conduct an internal survey to consider opinions of all the staff.

Mr. Haoliang Xu, United Nations Resident Coordinator, UNDP Resident Representative

Ms. Inkar Kadyrzhanova, Head of Unit, Energy and Environment Unit, UNDP

Mr. Michel Thurman, Regional Disaster Risk Reduction Advisor, ECIS, UNDP, Regional Center for Europe and CIS, Almaty Office

Ms. Natalia Alekseeva, Water Program Coordinator for Central Asia, Unit of Environments and Energy, UNDP, Regional Center for Europe and CIS, Almaty Office

Ms. Steliana Nedera, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP

Mr. Sukhrob Kurbanov, HIV/AIDS Project Coordinator, UNDP, Almaty Office

GEORGIA

Ms. Natia Natsvlishvili, Democratic and Governance Team Leader, UNDP

Ms. Nestan Khuntsaria, Environment and Energy Program Assistant, Focal point of project, UNDP

KYRGYZSTAN

Ms. Aidai Ashiralieva, Program Assistant, UNDP

Mr. Denis Babadjanov, Leadership Component Coordinator, UNDP

Ms. Gulnura Dyikanbaeva, Senior Economist, Poverty Reduction Programme, UNDP

Mr. Kumar Kylychev, Program Assistant, Environmental Programme, UNDP

Ms. Lilia Ormonbekova, Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist, UNDP

Ms. Shakirat Toktosunova, Senior Adviser to the UNDP Resident Representative

Ms. Zhanyl Rakhmanova, HIV/AIDS Program Specialist, UNDP

Mr. Zharas Takenov, International Adviser on the Environmental Issues, UNDP

FYR OF MACEDONIA

Mr. Aco Preskakulev, Counselor for Active Employment Policies, Employment Service Agency

Ms. Aferdita Haxhijaha Imeri, Social Inclusion Practice Head

Ms. Anita Kodzoman, Environment Practice Head

Ms. Ann-Marie Ali, UNDP Resident Representative a.i.

Mr. Boran Ivanoski, Inter-municipal Cooperation Component Leader

Mr. Dragi Delev, Local Development Agency staff and former mayor of Gevgelija

Mr. Dragoljub Matovski, Member of EXCO, Bioreactor-M

Mr. Fatmir Musa, Project Manager

Mr. Goran Gavrilovski, Chief of Cabinet, Mayor's Office, Gevgelija

Mr. Goran Lazarevski, Chief Operations Officer, ECS Computers, President of Global Compact

Ms. Gordana Milosevic Jurukovska, Programme Manager

Ms. Guinka Kapitanova, Programme Advisor on Inter-municipal Cooperation

Mr. Ilmiasan Dauti, Inter-municipal Cooperation Component Leader

Ms. Irena Jakimova, United Nations Communications Officer

Mr. Laro Gonzales, Programme Officer

Ms. Mabera Kamberi, Head of Department for International Cooperation, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy

Ms. Maja Koneva, Programme Advisor, State Anti-Corruption Commission

Mr. Metodija Dimovski, Secretary General,
Civil Servants Agency

Ms. Mihaela Stojkoska, Decentralization
Practice Head

Mr. Nikola Gjurovski, Advisor, Employment
Service Agency

Mr. Plamen Georgievski, Deputy Head of
Department for Support to the Cabinet
and International Cooperation, Ministry of
Local Self Government

Mr. Riste Atanasovski, Head of Local
Development Agency in Gevgelija

Ms. Sofka Pejovska Dojcinovska, Secretary
General, State Anti-Corruption
Commission

Ms. Sonja Stefanovska-Trajanoska, Programme
Associate

Ms. Suzana Ahmeti Janik, Social Inclusion
Programme Associate

Ms. Teodora Grncarovska Obradovic, State
Counsellor, Ministry of Environment

Mr. Toni Popovski, Independent Consultant

Ms. Vesna Dzuteska-Bisheva, Assistant
Resident Representative

Ms. Vesna Milcevska, Advisor, Employment
Service Agency

Ms. Violeta Spasovka, Advisor, Employment
Service Agency

MOLDOVA

Mr. Andrei Timush, Executive Director,
Moldovan Investment and Export
Promotion Organization, Ministry of
Economy and Trade of the Republic of
Moldova

Ms. Angela Dumitrasco, Portfolio Manager,
Justice/Human Rights

Ms. Aurelia Braguta, Project Manager, Global
Compact Moldova

Ms. Doina Munteanu, Portfolio Manager, Civil
Society

Mr. Evgeniy Josan, Deputy Head of Legal
Department, Moldova-Agroindbank

Ms. Kaarina Immonen, Resident Representative

Ms. Lovita Ramguttee, Assistant Resident
Representative/Poverty Reduction
Portfolio Manager

Ms. Matilda Dimovska, Deputy Resident
Representative

Mr. Mihai Bilba, Director of Foreign Relations
and International Cooperation Department,
Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the
Republic of Moldova

Ms. Radiyka Verbenyuk, Head of Department
of Corporate Communications, Moldcell

Mr. Ruslan Codreanu, Head of Policy
Coordination Section, Government Office
of the Republic of Moldova

Mr. Sergiu Harea, Director of Economic
Development Department, Chamber of
Commerce and Industry of the Republic
of Moldova

Mr. Vitalie Vremis, Programme Analyst,
Governance

RUSSIA

Mr. Dudley Tarlton, Regional HIV/AIDS
Policy Advisor, Europe and the CIS United
Nations Development Programme

Mr. Frode Muring, United Nations
Resident Coordinator, UNDP Resident
Representative

Ms. Nastya Kamlyk, CSO Partnership
Coordinator

Mr. Sasha Graumann, Deputy Resident
Representative, UNDP

Mr. Shombi Sharp, Regional HIV/AIDS
Practice Leader, Europe and the CIS
United Nations Development Programme

TAJKISTAN

- Mr. Alisher Karimov, Project Manager,
Project 'State Enhancement for improved
Governance/promoting transparency and
accountability,' UNDP
- Mr. Khusrav Sharifov, Programme Manager,
Disaster Risk Management project, UNDP
- Mr. Michael P. Jones, Resident Coordinator,
UNDP
- Mr. Rastislav Vrbensky, Country Director,
UNDP
- Mr. Sukhrob Khoshmukhamedov, Programme
Coordinator, UNDP
- Mr. William Lawrence, Chief Technical
Adviser, Border Management Badakhshan
Afganistan (BOMBAF), UNDP
- Mr. Yusuf Kurbonkhojaev, Deputy Programme
Manager, Local Governance, UNDP
- Ms. Ziyoda Kurbanova, Media and
Communication Officer, UNDP

TURKMENISTAN

- Ms. Mary Rizaeva, Program Manager,
Democratic Governance Programme,
UNDP
- Mr. Rovshan Nurmuhamedov, Program
Manager, Energy and Environment
Programme
- Mr. Richard Young, UNDP Country
Representative

UKRAINE

- Mr. Alexander Sapogov, Ministry of Emergency
of Ukraine
- Ms. Alexandra Zayarnaya, Corporate Social
Responsibility Manager, System Capital
Management

Ms. Antonina Istchenko, Head of Division for
Integrated Medical and Sanitary Support
to Affected Population, Department
for Protection of Population from
Consequences of Chernobyl Catastrophe,
Ministry of Emergency of Ukraine

- Mr. Ercan Murat, Officer-in-Charge
- Ms. Ilaria Carnevali, Head of Democratic
Governance Cluster
- Ms. Iryna Khromuliak, Head of Department
for Protection of Population from
Consequences of Chernobyl Catastrophe,
Ministry of Emergency of Ukraine
- Ms. Joanna Kazana-Wisniowiecka, Deputy
Resident Representative
- Ms. Kateryna Rybalchenko, Senior Programme
Manager
- Mr. Mykhailo Minakov, Senior Programme
Manager on Democratic Governance
- Ms. Nataliya Harchenko, Executive Director,
Kyiv International Institute of Sociology
- Ms. Oksana Remiga, Senior Programme
Manager
- Ms. Ricarda Rieger, Country Director
- Mr. Sergei Volkov, Senior Programme Manager
- Mr. Taras Trotsky, Head of Department for
International Cooperation and European
Integration, Ministry of Environment
Protection of Ukraine
- Ms. Yulia Shcherbinina, Public-Private
Partnerships Officer

UZBEKISTAN

- Ms. Aziza Umarova, Head of Good
Governance Unit, UNDP
- Mr. Abduvakkos Abdurakhmanov, Head of
Environment and Energy Unit, UNDP
- Ms. Elena Danilova-Cross, Human
Development Coordinator, UNDP
- Ms. Kyoko Postill, Deputy Resident
Representative, UNDP

Ms. Laura Rio, Programme Coordinator on Enhancement of Living Standards, UNDP
Mr. Sherzod Akbarov, Head of Economic Governance Unit, UNDP

UNDP BRATISLAVA REGIONAL CENTRE

Ms. Agi Veres, Senior Programme Coordinator, BRC
Mr. Andrey Pogrebnyak, Assistant Director (Operations), BRC
Ms. Annie Demirjian, Practice Leader, Democratic Governance Practice, BRC
Mr. Balazs Horvath, Practice Leader, Poverty Reduction Practice, BRC
Mr. Dan Dionisie, Policy Specialist, Public Administration Reform and Anti-corruption, BRC
Mr. Daniel Hanspach, Emerging Donors Policy Specialist, BRC
Mr. Jaroslav Kling, Project Manager, Poverty Reduction Practice, BRC
Mr. Jens Wandel, RBEC Deputy Director and Director of Bratislava Regional Centre
Mr. John Macauley, KM HIV/AIDS Analyst, BRC
Mr. Juerg Staudenmann, Water Governance Advisor, BRC
Ms. Kerstin Eppert, Peace and Security Analyst, BRC

Ms. Koh Miyaoi, Gender Practice Leader, BRC
Mr. Massimiliano Riva, Trade and Economic Development Officer, BRC
Ms. Olga Zlatnanska, Programme Monitoring Officer, BRC
Mr. Pascal Bonzom, Private Sector Engagement Policy Specialist, BRC
Mr. Patrick Gremillet, Regional Project Management Advisor, BRC
Mr. Rustam Pulatov, Policy Analyst, Human Rights and Justice Policy, BRC

UNDP HEADQUARTERS

Mr. Jason Pronyk, Management Specialist, Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) Directorate
Ms. Kori Udovicki, Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC)
Ms. Mads Svendsen, Deputy Coordinator, Management Consulting Team (MCT), UNDP
Mr. Moises Venancio, Senior Programme Manager and Team Leader, RBEC
Mr. Pervez Hassan, Policy Specialist, United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office, UNDG
Mr. Sanjar Tursaliev, Programme Specialist, Central Asia, RBEC

Annex 3

LIST OF DOCUMENTS STUDIED

PROGRAMME AND RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Mid-term Evaluation of the Second RCF for Europe and the CIS 2002-2005 and the development support functions of the Bratislava Regional Centre (June 2004)
- Regional Programme Document and Regional Programme Action Plan for 2006-2010 (November 2005)
- RBEC Regional Programme Document 2006-2010 (December 2005)
- Request for Authorisation of direct execution for RBEC's regional programme (Letter approved 14 December 2005)
- Long-term agreement on Regional Service Centre Cooperation: RBEC, Bratislava Regional Centre (BRC) and the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) (February 2009)

RBEC DOCUMENTS

- Review of RBEC Functions and Organization (December 2006)
- A Strategy for RBEC from 2008-2011 (updated January 2009)

PROJECT AND OUTCOME EVALUATIONS/REVIEWS

- Final Evaluation of the UNDP Regional Projects 'Capacity Building for Kyoto Protocol implementation in Eastern Europe and CIS' 00047511 (2008)

- Review, Identification and Recording of Best Practices and Lessons learnt from ENVSEC Activities in Central Asia as a basis for Developing a Strategy for ENVSEC Follow-up in the Region (2008)
- Natural Disaster Preparedness and Risk Reduction for Communities in High Risk Districts in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan: Mid-Term Review (2007)
- Review of Growing Sustainable Business Project: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia and Turkey (2007)

PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENTS, SELF-ASSESSMENTS AND REPORTS

- Annual Report by some practice areas/units: Capacity Development (2006, 2007, 2008)
 - Governance (2007, 2008)
 - Knowledge Management (2008)
 - Policy Support Programme Development Office (2006, 2007)
- Capacity Statements—all practice, cross-cutting and other areas (March 2009)
- BRC Services Annual Report (2008)
- Survey Results and Analysis for BRC Internal Knowledge Management Services Evaluation (July 2008)
- ROAR 2006, 2007, 2008

REGIONAL CONTEXT

- RBEC Brief: The Regional Impact of the Global Financial Crisis (November 2008)
- Europe and the CIS Regional MDG Report—National Millennium Development Goals: A Framework for Action (2006)
- Development and Transition, Issue 13, UNDP and the London School of Economics and Political Science (2009)

UNDP CORPORATE STRATEGIES

- UNDP Administrator's message on practices of February 12, 2002
- UNDP MYFF 2004-2007
- UNDP Strategic Plan 2008-2011

REGIONALIZATION POLICY

- Proposal for implementing the Practice Architecture at the Regional Service Centres (OSG, November 2007)
- Functional Alignment of and implementation arrangements for the Regional Service Centres (December 2007)
- Review of the functional alignment of the Regional Service Centres (OSG, April 2009)

OTHER DOCUMENTS

- Confessions of a Former Regional Centre Director (October 2008)
- UNDP Annual Report 2008
- UNDP Fast facts (June 2009)
- UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results (2009)

Annex 4

EVOLUTION OF THE REGIONAL PROGRAM OUTCOMES

(Based on the regional programme document, RPD, and the results-oriented annual reports, ROARs)

2006 (Original RPD) - 11	2006 (ROAR)	2007 (ROAR)	2008 (ROAR)
1. Statistical capacities and analytical process for regular MDG reporting established.	1. Country offices, policy makers and CSOs have improved statistical and analytical capacities in respect of MDG and human development.	1. Country offices, policy makers and CSOs have improved statistical and analytical capacities in respect of MDG and human development.	1. Country offices, policy makers and CSOs have improved statistical and analytical capacities in respect of MDG and human development.
2. Increased opportunities for pro-poor growth and sustainable social policy.	2. Improved understanding by country offices, policy makers, CSOs of MDG and human development issues.	2. Enhanced development cooperation between Emerging Donor Countries and the recipient countries with a special focus on South East Europe and CIS.	2. Significantly increased private sector participation in development projects in the region.
3. Policies to support socially and environmentally responsible private sector development.	3. Growth, private sector development and employment creation in border regions and other marginalized areas.	3. Increased adoption of pro-poor trade reforms introduced in the region by governments, CSOs, donors and implementing agencies.	3. Increased civic engagement in human-development initiatives (including pro-poor policy dialogue and advocacy) in the region.
4. Gender analysis and gender-disaggregated data integrated into policy design.	4. Enhanced development cooperation between emerging donor countries and the recipient countries with a special focus on South East Europe and CIS.	4. Private sector development.	4. Improved protection and promotion of human rights and justice respectively.
5. State capacity to promote and protect human rights (including the rights of women) improved.	5. Increased adoption of pro-poor trade reforms introduced in the region by governments, CSOs, donors and implementing agencies.	5. Enhanced capacity and skills to apply gender analysis and mainstreaming for more effective policymaking and planning.	5. Public administration integrity and capacity for evidence-based policy development and public service delivery improved.
6. Effective legal and policy frameworks and enhanced capacities for decentralized authority and management in place.	6. Increased adoption of pro-poor micro, small and medium-sized enterprise development reforms introduced in the region.	6. Civil society participation and influence in policy dialogue and processes ensured, especially with regard to the MDG and PRS.	6. Improved national systems for integrating environment into countries' development frameworks and for addressing the environment and security risks.

2006 (Original RPD) - 11	2006 (ROAR)	2007 (ROAR)	2008 (ROAR)
7. Public administration improved, state corruption reduced, including in post-conflict countries.	7. Increased adoption of pro-poor micro, small and medium-sized enterprise development reforms introduced in the region.	7. Poor and disadvantaged groups empowered to seek remedies for injustices, and justice institutions enabled to be responsive to claims, consistent with international human right norms.	7. Strengthening regional capacity to address water governance challenges within national and trans-boundary sustainable development frameworks.
8. Sustainable management of environment incorporated into poverty reduction strategies and national development frameworks.	8. Significantly increased private sector participation in development projects in the region.	8. Enhanced capacities of local governments for effective local development in more than 15 countries.	8. Increased access to investment financing for sustainable energy and climate change adaption, including through clean development mechanism.
9. Trans-boundary dialogue and processes to improve cooperation on regional and global water challenges in place.	9. Enhanced capacity and skills to apply gender analysis and mainstreaming for more effective policymaking and planning.	9. Public administration reform for efficient, effective, responsive, and pro-poor public services promoted.	9. Enhanced capacities of local governments for effective local development in more than 15 countries.
10. National policy frameworks that reflect role of energy in poverty reduction and sustainable development established.	10. Improved capacity of economic policy institutes and other CSOs in the region so as to provide these countries with independent, advanced, analytically rigorous support in policy related issues.	10. Sustainable management of environment incorporated into poverty reduction strategies and national development frameworks.	10. Increased adoption of pro-poor trade reforms introduced in the region by governments, CSOs, donors and implementing agencies.
11. Governments and local communities empowered to better manage biodiversity.	11. Increased contribution of CSOs to employment generation and income diversification for vulnerable constituencies through the promotion of social enterprises and other CSOs engaged in work integration and direct or indirect employment generation.	11. Trans-boundary dialogue and processes to improve cooperation on regional and global water challenges in place.	11. Government and local communities empowered to better manage land and biodiversity in the ECIS region.
	12. Improved legislative, financial and regulatory frameworks for civil society (and their respective organizations) to engage in local and national policy/planning debates.	12. Access to energy services, electricity or cleaner fuels in rural areas increased.	12. Enhanced development cooperation between emerging donor countries and the recipient countries with a special focus on SEE and CIS.
	13. National capacity increased to promote and protect human rights through justice, oversight and redress mechanisms.	13. Government and local communities empowered to better manage land and biodiversity in the ECIS region.	13. Enhanced capacities and skills to apply gender analysis and mainstreaming for more effective policymaking and planning.

2006 (Original RPD) - 11	2006 (ROAR)	2007 (ROAR)	2008 (ROAR)
	14. Increased government capacities to understand, design and implement e-democracy initiatives that improve transparency of and participation in public policy making.	14. A conflict-sensitive approach integrated into UNDP development programming in the region in terms of design, implementation and evaluation.	14. A conflict-sensitive approach integrated into UNDP development programming in the region in terms of design, implementation and evaluation.
	15. Enhanced capacities of local governments for effective local development.	15. Enhanced effectiveness of national response to HIV/AIDS, including progress towards achievement of MDG 6.	15. Enhanced effectiveness of national response to HIV/AIDS, including progress towards achievement of MDG 6.
	16. Improved capacity of national governments in ECIS countries to utilize quality policy making methodologies to more effectively develop and implement MDG/PR-related policies.		
	17. State institutional capacity to confront public corruption improved, including that in post-conflict countries.		
	18. Sustainable management of environment incorporated into poverty reduction strategies and national development frameworks.		
	19. Trans-boundary dialogue and processes to improve cooperation on regional and global water challenges in place.		
	20. Increased access to investment financing for sustainable energy, including through the clean development mechanism.		
	21. Government and local communities empowered to better manage biodiversity.		
	22. A conflict-sensitive approach integrated into UNDP development programming in the region in terms of design, implementation and evaluation.		

REGIONAL PROGRAMME PROJECTS

1. POVERTY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Overall UNDP capacity in the region to promote poverty reduction is demonstrated through its portfolio of 418 active projects in 28 countries with an annual budget of more than US\$137 million in 2009. Roughly two-thirds of these projects contribute to fulfilling the UNDP goal of “promoting inclusive growth, gender equality and the MDG.” About 17 percent of the above mentioned projects (70 out of 418) are regional (involve more than three countries) and their total budget in 2009 was US\$9.75 million—about 7 percent of the portfolio annual budget.

- **‘Improving Human Development Literacy and Strengthening Capacities for Implementation of MDG in Central, Eastern Europe and the CIS,’ ‘MDG Government Support’ and ‘Rolling out MDG Support.’** The objectives of these projects were to provide country offices and governments with adequate human development support, conduct in-depth research on human poverty to build and share knowledge, improve MDG literacy in Europe and CIS, and help the countries pursue their MDG agenda. The BRC was offering consultancy to national governments in developing a new round of MDG-based national development strategies. These projects resulted in increased capacities of country offices and governments in the region in MDG implementation. Country offices were supported in incorporating MDG into national development strategies in their respective countries through on-the-site advisory and workshops on MDG needs assessment. A number of countries such as the FYR of Macedonia, Romania and Serbia included quantitative indicators in their National Action Plans. Most

of National Human Development Reports produced in the region were reviewed by BRC Human Development adviser creating quality improvements. In Kyrgyzstan the BRC provided advisory support to the Ministry of Economic Development and Trade. Most of the recommendations on poverty reduction offered by the BRC expert were incorporated in the National Action Plan of the Coordination Council on MDG of the Kyrgyzstan Government.

- **‘Vulnerable Groups Socioeconomic Status in SEE (South-Eastern Europe) and CEE’ and ‘Reducing Vulnerability of Roma in the Western Balkans.’** These projects were focused on the exploration of status of vulnerable groups in the region such as Roma people, people living with HIV/AIDS, and disabled people and focused on reducing their vulnerability. The BRC produced regional vulnerability reports. National vulnerability reports were produced in a number of countries such as Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovakia. Roma people are one of the groups that are most vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion in Europe. UNDP plays an important role in addressing this issue. UNDP is one of the founding partners of the Decade of Roma Inclusion 2005–2015, which currently includes 12 countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia and Spain. BRC staff helps national partners in these countries with development and implementation of various activities within the framework of the Decade. Those activities included socioeconomic data collection on status of Roma and other vulnerable groups. BRC staff helped the FYR of Macedonia to develop indicators for

monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of a National Action Plan. Regular meetings of government officials from participating countries stimulate an exchange of experience between countries. Successful experience of the FYR of Macedonia in the area of inclusion of Roma children into the preschool education system has been already implemented in Croatia and there are plans to use it in Bulgaria.

- **‘Black Sea Trade and Investment Promotion Programme.’** The project was designed in order to support the regional integration process among the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation member states. It promoted economic development of the countries in the Black Sea basin. The project organized a series of thematic trade fairs that bring together business people from all participating countries. For example, the Moldovan Trade Chamber brought a delegation of representatives from 15 Moldovan companies involved in the grain business to a grain trade fair in Ukraine. Several of these companies found partners at this fair and purchased grain at a better price than in Moldova. The project also brings together representatives of national investment agencies. At the seminar in July 2009 they have decided to establish an organization that would coordinate investment in the Black Sea region. The idea was offered by UNDP staff who presented to the participants the experience of the association of investment promotion agencies of Mediterranean countries.
- **‘Growing Sustainable Business for Poverty Reduction.’** This project is part of the UNDP global initiative, which facilitates business-led solutions to poverty in advancement of the MDG. The project was implemented from 2005 to 2008 in six countries: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the FYR of Macedonia, Moldova, Serbia and Turkey. In each country one local broker who had to identify, develop and support specific pro-poor investment projects was

hired. This broker was usually based in the UNDP country office. Brokers were reporting directly to and were receiving assistance from BRC. The idea behind the project is very innovative. The goal is to stimulate business to invest in projects that would bring both commercial profit and create income-generation opportunities for most disadvantaged social groups. Brokers were truly the pioneers of this approach in their countries. So it is no surprise that project results were quite modest, e.g. project directly supported nine small and medium enterprises and helped to create about 140 jobs. The main problem is that the project did not ensure national ownership of the idea, so once the project was over, any activity related to promotion of the pro-poor business stopped.

- **‘The CSR Western Balkans Baseline Study.’** This baseline survey assessed the level of corporate social responsibility practices among companies operating in Southeast Europe.
- **‘Fostering Multi-stakeholder Partnerships to Achieve the MDGs in the Western CIS and Caucasus in the Framework of the UN Global Compact.’** The Global Compact Networks that were created by several regional projects are facing a similar problem. These projects are definitely a success in terms that networks are growing. They implement their own projects, for example, in Moldova businesses that are members of the Global Compact developed and adopted—with assistance of consultants from the BRC and hired through the BRC—the code prohibiting employment of children and the green office code. At the same time all expenses for the operation of these networks—secretarial support and cost of training and consultations—are covered by UNDP. Some member companies say that if UNDP withdraws, activities will stop. Actually this has already happened in the FYR of Macedonia, where the Global Compact project has already concluded.

- **‘Civic Engagement in Poverty’ and ‘Social Impact Assessments Economic Policy Institutes Network.’** In 2004 RBEC established the Economic Policy Institutes Network (EPIN) to support the capacity of economic institutes in the region to provide quality policy advice. The first phase of EPIN focused on establishing networks and developing the capacity of the institutes involved. The second phase of this initiative addressed deficiencies and related gaps by: (1) strengthening national policy analysis and development capacity through support to independent economic policy research institutes, and (2) facilitation of the transfer of knowledge from successful transition countries (especially the new EU member states, but not only) to the socio-economic development of other states farther east. The EPIN Web portal⁸⁷ is constantly updated and offers free of charge online services to researchers and partner institutions in the region (i.e. latest publications, individual profiles, online learning, online communities and a job portal). It is intended to facilitate knowledge and information exchange among the network members and the wider public interested in economic policy. In 2008 a new small grants scheme for young researchers has been launched.
- **‘Promoting Good Governance through Improved Civic Legislation.’** Under this initiative reviews of the legal environment for civic existence, expression, and engagement in several countries of the CIS were conducted. Project activities included: sensitization workshops and seminars on regulatory parameters for government officials; capacity development initiatives to strengthen legal awareness for both CSOs and national and local awareness; redrafting of non-governmental organization (NGO) legislation; development of new methodologies and tools such as a ‘How-to-Guide on Strengthened Legal Principles for Citizen Participation in Central Asia,’ and an indicator to measure the robustness of NGO law in the CIS.
- **‘The Role of Social Enterprises in Employment Generation’ and ‘Social Enterprise Development.’** These projects were implemented to promote the role of work integration social enterprises in employment creation in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the CIS. Project activities started with research to map the existing social enterprise activity and identify key obstacles to their expansion and further development. As a result of research findings, an assessment on the viability of social enterprises eastward of the EU and terms of references were prepared to specify proposed activities, criteria for country-selection, and possible target institutions in support of social enterprises. Feasibility studies in three selected countries (Poland, Serbia and Ukraine) were conducted to review legal and regulatory frameworks, labour market policies, government and CSO involvement in addressing socially disadvantaged groups, examination of market demand, sector trends and capacities, and to identify potential partners. On the basis of research and feasibility studies, an analytical report was prepared—including examples of existing social enterprises, major obstacles to their expansion, and recommendations for further development of social enterprise. Then demonstration activities were undertaken in Poland and Serbia to improve favourable legal and institutional environment/framework for social enterprise development in terms of recognizing and using their potential in employment generation and provision of social services.

⁸⁷ www.epinetwork.org

2. SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

The current portfolio supported by the environment and energy practice in Europe and CIS consists of 128 projects under implementation with a total budget value of approximately US\$660 million, of which more than US\$240 million is from the Global Environmental Facility. The portfolio budget in 2009 was more than US\$51 million. Thirty-one regional projects with a total budget in 2009 of US\$5.66 million constituted 24 percent of the total number of projects in the portfolio and 9 percent of the 2009 annual portfolio budget.

The following brief descriptions of UNDP regional projects⁸⁸ in the area of environment and energy include overview of activities implemented and contributions made (or being made) by those projects.

- **‘Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative: Phase II.’** The ENVSEC Initiative builds on the combined strengths and field presence of the lead organizations to perform three key functions: assessment of environment and security risks, capacity building and institutional development to strengthen environmental cooperation as well as integration of environmental, and security concerns and priorities in international and national policy-making. The overall goal of this project is to improve the impact of ENVSEC activities. This will contribute to the reduction of environment and security risks, and to the increased cooperation both between and within countries. Through linking environmental, foreign, and development policies, the project contributes to incorporation of sustainable management of environment into poverty reduction strategies and national development frameworks by establishing institutions for integrated and participatory sustainable development planning processes.
- **‘Capacity building for Kyoto Protocol in Europe and CIS.’** The objective of the project was to build institutional and project development capacities in the countries of Eastern Europe and CIS to enable their participation in the flexible mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol and other carbon trade schemes. The project contributed to: (1) institutional capacity building for Kyoto Protocol implementation, including support to establishment and operationalization of the designated national authorities, and (2) building capacities for Joint Implementation/CDM project development, in particular those greenhouse gas reduction projects that can provide for a broader range of national and local environmental and development benefits than those that currently prevail at Joint Implementation/CDM market.
- **‘Regional Environmental Action Plan (REAP) Implementation Support.’** The project was aimed at coordinated and joint promotion of the idea of sustainable development, strengthening the role and participation of civil society in formulating sustainable development policy in Central Asia (all five countries) on the basis of existing experience and best practices through the use of information and communication technologies. The project contributed to the following key areas: (1) creating an effective knowledge management and networking based on CARNet⁸⁹, (2) identifying systems and operational mechanisms for cross-cutting interaction and civil society participation in the implementation of environmental and sustainable development programs (including REAP, EnvSec, etc.) at all levels in Central Asia; and (3) strengthening civil society and decision makers’ potential for effective resource mobilization.
- **‘Climate Risk Management in Eastern Europe and CIS.’** This project covers Armenia, Croatia and Macedonia. The

⁸⁸ This is a comprehensive but not a complete list of regional projects implemented in the area of energy and environment.

⁸⁹ Informational Network on Environment and Sustainable Development in Central Asia and Russia.

project is two-fold. On the one hand, it is improving knowledge of the costs of climate change impacts and available policy options for adaptation to create conditions for increasing the number of climate change sensitive policies and decisions. Beneficiaries of this project component are national authorities in charge of climate change policies and United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change implementation, CSOs, meteorological departments, research institutes and think-tanks focusing on socio-economic development. On the other hand, this project is aimed at enhancing UNDP country offices' capacities to address country adaptation needs and catalyse financial resources for adaptation activities. The second group of beneficiaries are country offices whose focal points are training and support to introduce and test a practical application of climate screening tools and methods. The project is targeted at the flagship programmes under the poverty reduction and MDG achievement practice. A climate proofing exercise will ensure that the target programmes reduce vulnerability through sustainable economic growth that is tied to livelihood diversification and reduced reliance on climate sensitive sectors and resources. These programmes will provide critical entry for catalyzing additional resources for adaptation measures under the country office programme framework. Key lessons will be captured and widely disseminated in the region and beyond in a form of a detailed guidance of climate proofing for practitioners.

- Several regional projects were related to **water management**. Some of them were aimed at specific issues. Those projects were *'Fostering Dialogue between Riparian States for Development and Establishment of Initial Legal and Institutional Frameworks for Increased Cooperation and Joint Management of the Kura-Aras River Basin'* and *'Reducing Trans-boundary Degradation of the Kura-Aras River Basin through Public Involvement and Stakeholder Inclusion in Governance.'*

Such projects as *'National Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Planning and Transboundary Dialog in Central Asia'* contributed to strategic development of water management at the subregional level. And there was a project implemented at the regional level, *'Strategic Workplan for Strengthening the Water Governance Sub-Practice in Europe & CIS,'* that contributed to important results for the entire region: development of a regional 'UNDP Water Strategy' addressing emerging strategic priority areas, strengthening portfolio with new projects and partners (on national and regional level), and development of 'WaterWiki.2'—the next generation of UNDP regional knowledge map and on-line collaboration tool on 'water governance.'

- Several projects included **environmental assessments and feasibility studies**: *'Environment & Security Assessment and Capacity-building in the Eastern Caspian Region and Amu-Darya River Basin,'* *'Environmental Assessment of Development Planning and Environment-security Monitoring in the Crimea,'* *'Feasibility Study for the Closure of Lojane Mine,'* and *'Feasibility Study for the Remediation of the Bor Mine Surface and Groundwaters.'* Another initiative related to this area was *'Capacity Development for the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Application,'* which supported development of the national SEA systems and effective application of SEA through: (1) increasing capacity of countries' environmental authorities (ministries and/or other specialized agencies) to implement the SEA Protocol, and (2) increasing understanding and capacity in application of SEA among countries' environmental assessment practitioners, planners, as well as UNDP staff in the in the Europe and the CIS region.
- Several other regional projects were implemented in the areas of sustainable transport management, use of alternative sources of energy, work on protected areas and land management.

3. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

The ongoing portfolio for the democratic governance practice in the region consists of more than 450 initiatives in 31 countries. In 2009 its total budget was more than US\$127 million, while its regional programme component included 60 projects (13 percent of the entire number of projects) with a total budget of US\$9.26 million (7 percent of the total budget).

The following brief descriptions of UNDP regional projects in the area of democratic governance include overview of activities implemented and contributions made (or being made) by those projects.

- **‘Anti-Corruption Practitioners Network Phase 2.’** The project aims at the establishment of a regional mechanism supporting knowledge sharing and strengthening institutional capacity to fight corruption. The project supports anti-corruption agencies and practitioners in the region through knowledge management and capacity development activities developed within the framework of the existing Anti-Corruption Practitioners Network.⁹⁰ The project ensures the maintenance and facilitation of the Network and of the related website and database through research and information sharing with the members of the network. The project contributes to the enlargement of the network through seeking the participation of new experts and practitioners and contacting relevant agencies for the establishment of official partnerships. The project designs and implements capacity assessments of selected anti-corruption agencies in the region and then deliver capacity development support. Targeted capacity development activities include study tours and staff exchanges. Through the utilization of regional expertise, the project aims at delivering relevant and effective technical assistance.
- **‘Strengthening Regional Capacity for Human Rights and Justice in Europe and the CIS.’** The project enhances the capacity of human rights and justice institutions and UNDP country offices for protecting and promoting human rights and improving access to justice. The project is set up as a subpractice platform and vehicle, spanning across the whole human rights and justice sector, to provide high-quality services to UNDP country offices, government counterparts and other clients. The project builds on the experience gained thus far and capacities developed in the area of human rights and justice, and further promote East-East transfer of knowledge and best practices. The project supports catalytic initiatives which trigger action at the national level by country offices and government counterparts.
- **‘Policy Impact Assessment.’** The project is implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Moldova and Serbia. It is aimed at improving policy development in Eastern Europe and the CIS through strengthening capacities for ex-ante impact assessment. Project conducted initial research for mapping experiences with introducing and using ex-ante impact assessment in the central governments in the region and training needs assessment. Professional meetings/workshops were organized to share lessons learned in the introduction and application of impact assessment in the region, particularly between countries in Central Europe and countries in other subregions. Pilot ex-ante impact assessments were supported by the regional project in participating countries. Regional training on impact assessment, with particular focus on poverty reduction and on ensuring equal opportunities for the

Another anti-corruption project implemented subregionally in the Western Balkans is *‘Western Balkans Sub-Regional Mechanism for Facilitation of Anti-Corruption Initiatives.’*

⁹⁰ <http://anticorruption.undp.sk>

vulnerable and marginalized groups, was organized for public officials in targeted offices (parliament, centre of government, key ministries) who are involved in policy impact assessment as part of their regular work. A knowledge product (manual or reference guide) and a virtual resource centre on ex-ante impact assessment methodologies and practical experiences will be developed.

- **‘Promoting Oversight and Greater Regional Engagement.’** The project is implemented in eight countries. It contributes to (1) the development of parliamentary network on security sector oversight, (2) an inclusive dialogue process to increase understanding and cooperation among parliamentarians and representatives of executives, security services and CSOs, (3) development of technical training materials and training delivery on oversight techniques and the concept of human security, and (4) institutional capacity development.
- **‘Regional Centre for Public Administration Reform/RCPAR.’** The project is developing regional cooperation and mutual learning on policy-making and coordination; public finance management; organization and staffing in public sector; and public service delivery, enhanced through demand-driven programmatic activities and targeted technical assistance. The project contributes to the expansion of regional network

of public administration reform practitioners and experts, enhancing its knowledge infrastructure, and strengthening its capacity to engage in regional public administration reform programming. The project will establish and enhance a regional facility to support the regional cooperation on public administration reform.

- **‘Regional Cooperation for e-Leadership Capacities in the Western Balkans to Strengthen Good Governance and European Integration.’** This project was implemented in the Western Balkans. It developed and localized e-governance educational programmes for public administration schools to nurture e-leaders among civil/municipal servants (e-governance curriculum). The project also developed and delivered training and advisory services for end-user groups, including women, in specific e-governance areas to expand e-leadership beyond central government. The project contributed to raising awareness among policy-makers and e-governance practitioners about e-transparency, e-accountability, e-participation, and e-inclusion instruments to promote democratic governance practices.
- Regional project **‘Strengthening Decentralized Service Delivery’** piloted the technology of capacity assessment in a number of municipalities in several countries of the Western Balkans. The project was developed

Box 4. The Gevgelija Case (the FYR of Macedonia)

Local authorities in Gevgelija had a previously successful experience working with UNDP within the framework of the ‘Model municipality’ project and they were very eager to participate in the new project. They welcomed a report produced by the national consultant as an opportunity to get an independent assessment of capacity of municipal agencies. Recommendations presented in this report served as the basis for the Action Plan to their build capacity. The Action Plan was officially adopted by the Municipal Council. The municipality has already raised 3 million denars from the Ministry of Local Development to build a pipeline due to this Action Plan. The new mayor of Gevgelija, who was elected after the adoption of the Action Plan, is also committed to its implementation. He actually presented the results of the project in Gevgelija at an international conference for project participants. So at the level of this particular municipality the regional project ‘Strengthening Decentralized Service Delivery’ is definitely a success and its’ results are sustainable. The capacity assessment methodology developed by the BRC proved effective and useful. The project created cadre of local consultants able to use this methodology. Other municipalities, at least in the FYR of Macedonia, express some interest to this new instrument but they do not have necessary financial resources to use it.

by the BRC, which trained a group of local consultants who then conducted participatory assessments of the local municipal agencies and developed suggestions on building this capacity. Gevgelija, Macedonia was one of the pilot municipalities involved in the project.

4. CRISIS PREVENTION AND RECOVERY

The Crisis Prevention and Recovery Practice in Europe and the CIS portfolio includes 314 projects in 28 countries with a total budget of US\$208 million since 2004. In 2009 alone Crisis Prevention and Recovery projects amounted to US\$84 million spread across 181 ongoing projects. Due to the complexities and scope of the development challenges facing the region, many of these projects are integrated into other thematic portfolios such as democratic governance, poverty reduction and MDG, and environment and sustainable development emphasizing the strategic and cross-thematic nature of crisis prevention and recovery. In 2009 Crisis Prevention and Recovery included only four regional projects (2 percent of the total number of projects) with a total budget of US\$0.5 million (less than 1 percent of the 2008 portfolio budget).

The *'Chernobyl'* project is one of the major UNDP initiatives in this area. Implemented in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine the project aims to promote the recovery and development of communities affected by the Chernobyl nuclear accident. The project contributes to three areas: information, policy advice and community development. The project develops creative ways of disseminating information in a way that induces people to change their behaviour and lead healthy, productive lives. In the area of policy advice, the project concentrates on overcoming the culture of dependency that has developed among many affected communities, targeting scarce funds to the truly needy, and investments that promote growth and new jobs. The project also contributes to restoring a sense of community self-reliance by showing local residents that they themselves hold the key to their own recovery.

5. HIV/AIDS

The annual programme portfolio of the practice consists of a regional programme with a budget of approximately US\$1 million and some 30 active country office projects with a combined budget of approximately US\$4 million. This figure does not include Global Fund grants in the region, which play an important role in support to the HIV responses. UNDP serves as Principal Recipient in five countries of the region—Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Tajikistan—and provides implementation support to Principal Recipients in Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, with a total averaged portfolio of US\$48 million per year. In Central Asia UNDP supports the flagship World Bank/UK Department for International Development-funded Central Asia AIDS Control Project through a joint regional project in four countries, with a delivery of US\$2 million in 2008. This partnership provides capacity building and implementation support to the five-year initiative in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. In total, through combined regional and country level efforts, the UNDP HIV/AIDS practice implements projects in the region with a combined estimated budget of US\$55 million per year. The share of regional project in this budget is only approximately 2 percent.

6. GENDER EQUALITY

The RBEC Gender Project portfolio includes 59 active projects with a total budget in 2009 of more than US\$13 million.

There was one regional project implemented in this practice area from 2005 to 2008: 'Capacity Building for more Effective Gender Mainstreaming.' The project supported implementation of corporate commitments to promote gender equality through a two-pronged approach: (1) building capacities of key practices and subpractice areas (integrated local development, democratic governance, poverty, energy and environment, and others) to mainstream gender concerns into their work, through regional

programming for the next cycle (2006-2010); and (2) facilitate capacity building in gender mainstreaming for UNDP country offices in general and in particular for the gender community of practice for more effective gender-sensitive programming through training, consolidation of existing knowledge and updating of the tools developed by UNDP Bratislava.

In 2008 the BRC started to work on a Policy Note for Enhancing Women's Political Participation that involves six country offices (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Turkey and Ukraine). The Policy Note addresses the challenges of transition and development processes in the region that have been occurring without the full participation of women, weakening women's position

in political and socio-economic life. The report published in 2009 identifies and analyses the reasons for women's low political participation (such as electoral systems, stereotypes, historical legacy etc.) and proposes concrete actions to address them. Importantly, the Policy Note aims to mobilize local stakeholders and partners to collect information and support building of a broader gender community of practice consisting of policy makers, academics, NGO activists and UNDP gender focal points in country offices of the region.

Another important regional initiative implemented in 2006 was an inter-agency project with UNDP/ILO/UNIFEM titled 'Advancing the Implementation of Gender Equality Legislation in the Workplace.'

Annex 6

NUMBER OF REGIONAL PROJECTS CONTRIBUTING TO REGIONAL PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

Focus area	Key result area	Outcome Description	No. of Projects
Poverty reduction and MDG achievement	Promoting inclusive growth, gender equality and MDG achievement	COs, policy makers and CSOs have improved statistical and analytical capacities in respect of MDG and HD monitoring	20
	Promoting inclusive growth, gender equality and MDG achievement	Significantly increased private sector participation in development projects in the region	12
	Promoting inclusive growth, gender equality and MDG achievement	Increased civic engagement in human development initiatives (including pro-poor policy dialogue and advocacy) in the region	3
	Promoting inclusive growth, gender equality and MDG achievement	Enhanced capacity and skills to apply gender analysis and mainstreaming for more effective policymaking and planning	4
	Promoting inclusive growth, gender equality and MDG achievement	National capacities and awareness of government, business associations and Global Compact members on CSR implementation strengthened; relevant ministries involved in CSR promotion and national CSR agenda developed	3
	Promoting inclusive growth, gender equality and MDG achievement	Improved local and national capacities for sustainable development	28
	Promoting inclusive growth, gender equality and MDG achievement	Replicable local poverty initiatives linked to policy change, undertaken	8
	Fostering inclusive globalization	Increased adoption of pro-poor trade reforms introduced in the region by governments, CSOs, donors and implementing agencies	4
	Fostering inclusive globalization	A new type of partnership for Official Development Assistance (ODA) created	7
	Promoting East-East cooperation and supporting ODA capacities in emerging donor (non-DAC) countries	Enhanced development cooperation between emerging donor countries and the recipient countries with a special focus on SEE and CIS	7
	Mitigating the impact of AIDS on human development	Enhanced effectiveness of national response to HIV/AIDS, including progress towards achievement of MDG 6	2

Focus area	Key result area	Outcome Description	No. of Projects
Democratic governance	Strengthening responsive governing institutions	Improved protection and promotion of human rights and justice respectively	3
	Strengthening responsive governing institutions	Public administration integrity and capacity for evidence-based policy development and public service delivery improved	19
	Strengthening responsive governing institutions	Enhanced capacities of local governments for effective local development	10
Environment and sustainable development	Mainstreaming environment and energy	Improved national systems for integrating environment into countries' development frameworks and for addressing the environment and security risks	15
	Mainstreaming environment and energy	Governments and local communities empowered to better manage biodiversity	4
	Mainstreaming environment and energy	Sustainable development incorporated into sectoral policies and mainstreamed into local, regional and national authorities' action plans and programs	1
	Expanding access to environmental and energy services for the poor	Strengthened regional capacity to address water governance challenges within national and transboundary sustainable development frameworks	6
	Catalysing environmental finance	Increased access to investment financing for sustainable energy and climate change adaptation, including through the CDM	5
Crisis prevention and recovery	Enhancing conflict and disaster risk management capabilities	A conflict-sensitive approach integrated into UNDP development programming in the region in terms of design, implementation and evaluation	4



United Nations Development Programme
Evaluation Office
One United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel. (212) 906 5059, Fax (212) 906 6008
Internet: <http://www.undp.org/evaluation>

