# Regional Programme Document for the Arab States, 2010-2013

## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Situation analysis</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Past cooperation and lessons learned</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Proposed programme</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Guiding principles</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Programme focus</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Annex**

Results and resources framework for the regional programme for the Arab States, 2010-2013 | 7
I. Situation analysis

1. The Arab States have joined developing countries in committing to human development and the achievement of internationally agreed development goals. That commitment was enshrined at the global level in 2000, with the adoption of the Millennium Declaration by the United Nations General Assembly. It was reaffirmed by the Arab States at the regional level under the auspices of the League of Arab States at the 2009 Arab Social and Economic Summit.

2. While the region has made significant progress toward achieving those goals, regional aggregates conceal great disparities across countries within the region in terms of levels and rates-of-change of human development. Some countries, particularly the Arab Gulf States, have been able to make great progress over the last few decades, and appear to be on course to meet all or most of the MDG targets. The middle income countries in the region paint a mixed picture, where are on course to meet most of the MDG targets and need to continue to pursue additional objectives, but others appear to be struggling to meet any. The outlook is starker in LDCs and the countries-in-conflict: these countries, mired in development backlogs or devastating cycles of violence and instability, are unlikely to meet the MDGs by 2015.

3. There remains considerable room for progress in human development, however, and the region faces considerable development challenges. Most of these are shared by more than one country, or indeed are common to entire subregions, or to the Arab region as a whole. The shared nature of the challenges creates opportunities for countries to work together and learn from each other. The case for close, effective international cooperation is compelling, as it must encompass close cooperation regionally and between and among subregions and countries.

4. The regional programme modality was conceived as a tool to support strong cooperation. It provides a framework for strengthening country-level development cooperation across countries by supporting the diagnosis of shared development challenges and catalysing development solutions. With regional and global partners, it facilitates the creation of critical development knowledge and encourages development dialogues, processes, programmes and policies based on the best knowledge available at the global, regional and subregional levels. It also addresses emerging regional needs and challenges as they arise – such as food security, the global economic crises and other trans-border phenomena that take shape quickly and threaten human development throughout the region.

II. Past cooperation and lessons learned

5. The independent evaluation of the regional cooperation framework for Arab States, 2006-2009, found that the framework had addressed development issues in the region and had drawn attention to needs that are difficult to address because of their sensitivity. The evaluation also found that the framework had brought key issues – including democratic governance, transparency, accountability, and social issues such as gender equality and HIV/AIDS – to the forefront of discussion in the region. Not only was the RCF able to help the region articulate these issues, but it also contributed to identifying remedies. In particular, the Arab human development reports have generated knowledge and provided a regional platform for discussion on priority topics, including women’s empowerment and the pervasive regional ‘knowledge gap’. The programmes helped develop the capacities of government institutions, non-governmental and governmental organizations, and community leaders – including religious leaders – with whom they facilitated policy dialogue, and built and disseminated knowledge on issues pertinent to the region. The programmes were instrumental to the creation of partnerships with Arab governments, civil society, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and academic and policy institutions.
6. The evaluation also found that the effectiveness and sustainability of the regional programme depend largely on its relevance and linkages to UNDP work at the country level, and thus called for strengthened linkages and communication between the regional programme and country offices.

7. Finally, the evaluation highlighted the importance of focus, recommending limiting the range of activities in order to increase the depth of the programme.

8. The regional programme will seek to strengthen its contributions to building knowledge for development and fostering the regional debate on human development issues. The programme will ensure stronger linkages among its own projects, as well as with country offices and practices, so as to increase its efficiency and impact in pursuit of development results. The programme will seek to work with counterparts and partners from a greater number and variety of countries, including subregional approaches, to draw together countries facing similar challenges and opportunities across different development areas.

III. Proposed programme

A. Guiding principles

9. While aligned with regional development priorities, the regional programme will be guided by the UNDP development effectiveness principles, as set out in its strategic plan, 2008-2011. These include the principle that South-South solutions and cooperation are to be implemented across all intervention areas, and that capacity development is the overarching contribution of UNDP.

10. The main contributions of the regional programme to developing capacity for human development in the Arab States region will be building knowledge for development and developing the capacity of stakeholders to generate, acquire and apply knowledge in policy processes. The scope and quality of data on development trends in the Arab States is limited at present, so decision-makers in the public sector, civil society, academia, the media and the private sector have insufficient evidence on which to base their consideration of development-policy options.

11. Closely related to facilitating the creation and use of development knowledge, the regional programme strives to build capacity for policy debate and to impact policy change by providing regional platforms for discussion and by piloting initiatives in several countries. The main mechanism for these processes is the Arab human development report, which since 2002 has championed the creation and flow of people-centered development knowledge and ideas throughout the region. The regional programme will continue to support the production of this flagship publication. The programme will also allow the Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS) to build knowledge on the development dynamics, policy processes and best practices within their respective areas.

12. Informed by the knowledge it generates and other available development information, the regional programme will contribute to UNDP results by implementing regional and subregional interventions through the following services:

   (a) Development and management of strategic and catalytic projects and programmes in three of the four UNDP focus areas, with gender equality, youth issues and capacity development mainstreamed throughout;

   (b) Analysis and advocacy of key challenges facing the region and its subregions, as well as capacity development of stakeholders to do the same;

   (c) Developing capacity for policy analysis and debate by creating and facilitating spaces and tools to bring stakeholders together for evidence-based policy dialogue on priority development issues; and

   (d) Initiation and cultivation of partnerships for development results with partners based within and beyond the region.
B. Programme focus

Focus area 1: Poverty reduction and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

13. At the regional level, income poverty, while lower than in some developing regions, has decreased by only a fraction since 1990, and human poverty tends to be high compared to many other countries with similar levels of per-capita income. The unemployment rate is higher in the Arab region than in any other region of the world, and women and youth bear the brunt disproportionately. Regional trends over the last decades indicate that growth alone will not bring about human development throughout the region. Further progress in human development, the Millennium Development Goals and other international goals will require employment and social policies that are oriented towards more inclusive growth.

14. Moreover, the Arab States have not been able to capitalize sufficiently on the benefits of globalization. Despite considerable reform toward market liberalization, the Arab economies have not become appreciably more integrated in the global economy, forgoing opportunities for economic diversification, job creation, and broad-based growth.

15. The regional programme document will provide a framework for RBAS to make strategic interventions that support processes and policies toward inclusive growth and seizing the benefits of globalization, focusing on:

(a) Providing knowledge and diffusion of best practices on poverty reduction for use by country partners;
(b) Monitoring progress and analysing policy options for inclusive growth, including in the areas of women’s economic empowerment, social protection, and employment (in particular for youth), the latter in cooperation with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Arab Labour Organization;
(c) Advocating for regional cooperation and building capacities for regional cooperation on poverty reduction, trade, responding to HIV/AIDS, and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals; and
(d) Providing support for policy analysis and formulation to address emerging poverty-related issues.

Focus area 2: Democratic governance

16. The Arab region has made progress toward inclusive participation, accountable and responsive governance institutions, and grounding governance in human development. More progress is needed. The regional programme document will provide a framework for RBAS to make strategic interventions in cooperation with stakeholders in the region to support processes and policies towards democratic governance, focusing on:

(a) Developing government capacity to increase citizen participation; empowering civil society for increased access to information on governance processes affecting their lives by building and disseminating knowledge on the rights and duties of citizens and state, including information on legislation and public services;
(b) Developing government capacity to become more accountable and responsive through knowledge-building, technical assistance, and diffusion of best practices in the areas of public administration, parliamentary strengthening, modernization of independent judicial systems, and anti-corruption, the latter in line with the United Nations Convention against Corruption and with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC);
(c) Developing governments’ capacity to fully implement commitments under the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including the political empowerment of women, through knowledge-building, capacity-development and advocacy, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM); and
(d) Developing capacity for informed debate on policy options for governance reform grounded in human development

**Focus area 3: Crisis prevention and recovery**

17. In line with the UNDP Evaluation Office recommendation in its evaluation of the regional cooperation framework, 2006-200 that “…given the serious resource constraints of the regional programme, and the existence of a dedicated [crisis prevention and recovery] bureau in UNDP, the evaluation cautions against spreading the programme to the area of crisis prevention and recovery”, the programme will limit interventions in this area to:

(a) Developing capacity through analysis and advocacy for awareness of the impact of conflict on Human Development; and

(b) Developing capacity through analysis and advocacy regarding options and mechanisms at the national and regional levels on how to reduce the possibilities of conflict, including research on the cost of conflicts

**Focus area 4: Environment and sustainable development**

18. The Arab region is endowed with rich natural resources, particularly fossil fuels, but it faces threats to human development emanating from resource pressure and environmental degradation. It is the most water-scarce region in the world. Desertification continues to erode opportunities for human development. And climate change will intensify the threats from changes in rainfall regimes and sea level associated with global warming. It is of the utmost importance that governments in the region mainstream environment into national and regional development policy, and adapt to climate change. The regional programme document will provide a framework for RBAS to implement strategic interventions in order to support processes and policies addressing environmental issues in the context of human development and adapting to climate change, focusing on:

(a) Developing capacity and enhancing regional debate in favour of mitigating and adapting to climate change; and

(b) Developing capacity of governments, national and regional partners to develop strategies for integrated water resources management through technical assistance and knowledge-building, including through specific support for climate change adaptation and mainstreaming gender into integrated water resource management plans so as to capitalize on increased women’s empowerment in environmental decision-making.

**Cross-cutting areas: Gender equality and the empowerment of women, and youth**

19. The first Arab human development report series identified the cross-cutting theme of ‘women’s empowerment’ as one of the three main deficits impeding human development in the Arab region. Gender equality is a central development goal, while women’s empowerment is an essential factor in achieving other Millennium Development Goals in accordance with the UNDP approach to gender mainstreaming. Similarly, gender equality and women’s empowerment is part and parcel of human development, and essential to progress across the focus areas of the regional programme. The regional programme document will allow RBAS to implement strategic activities to mainstream gender equality and women’s empowerment across the focus areas, in coordination with UNIFEM, concentrating on:

(a) Mainstreaming gender equality and women’s empowerment within regional projects;

(b) building knowledge and developing the capacity of leaders by implementing catalytic gender empowerment activities; and

(c) Developing capacity for debate through analysis and advocacy on policy options for mainstreaming women’s empowerment and gender equality into national and regional development plans.
20. In view of the youthful demographic profile of the region and in line with the evaluation recommendations, the issue of youth will be mainstreamed across all focus areas of the regional programme and managed as a cross-cutting issue.

IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

21. The management, monitoring and evaluation of the regional programme document will be grounded in the programming arrangements set out in the UNDP programme and operations policies and procedures, and informed by the UNDP strategic plan, 2008-2011, including those aspects related to programme/project monitoring and evaluation, the regionalization process, and United Nations reform and coordination. Monitoring and evaluation will be strengthened through indicators against which to measure progress and development results: RBAS will implement an evaluation plan (see annex). The document will be implemented through regional projects, which will be developed following a broad-based consultative process involving national stakeholders and UNDP country offices in the region.

22. The Director of RBAS will approve and exercise overall oversight and accountability for the implementation of the regional programme and the related regional projects, in line with the RBAS organizational structure and the UNDP regionalization process.

23. The regional programme document calls for close cooperation between UNDP and the countries of the region, as well as regional actors, particularly the League of Arab States, the Arab Funds, the African Development Bank, and the Islamic Development Bank. It also calls for UNDP to play a strong role in United Nations coordination in the region, working closely with United Nations entities such as ILO, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Division for Economic and Social Affairs, UNODC, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, as well as the broader family of multilateral bodies, including the World Bank, bilateral cooperation agencies and emerging partners.

24. The programme will contribute to strengthening and facilitating networks that can contribute to development results, including the media, academic institutions, civil society organizations, foundations, and the private sector. Such alliances will help ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the activities and projects of the regional programme.

25. RBAS will strive to ensure that the indicative amount of $18,000,000 from regular UNDP resources is committed as base funding for the execution of the present regional programme document, subject to availability of funds. A portion of the committed regional programme resources will be allocated to the funding of programme development and monitoring, the cost of pilot projects and emerging regional initiatives intended to ensure greater flexibility to the emerging needs of the Arab States. Specifically, between 3 and 5 per cent of project and programme costs will be earmarked for monitoring, evaluation, resource mobilization, and responding to emerging needs. An additional $500,000 will be retained from regular resources as a strategic reserve facility to support unforeseen regional programming needs. RBAS will intensify its resource mobilization efforts, striving to mobilize complementary resources in the projected indicative amount of $30,000,000 from other sources, subject to donor interest. RBAS will implement innovative approaches to resource mobilization, involving regional partners and the private sector. Should resource mobilization efforts not yield the expected results, RBAS will review and re-prioritize the activities and focus of intervention of the regional programme document.
### Focus area 1: Poverty reduction and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key result area</th>
<th>Regional results/outcomes</th>
<th>Regional programme outputs</th>
<th>Output indicators</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting inclusive growth, gender equality and MDG achievement</td>
<td>Improved achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in reducing poverty and promoting inclusiveness</td>
<td>1. Policy options for inclusive growth analyzed, in particular in the areas of financial crisis, unemployment, women and youth. 2. Regional cooperation on poverty reduction and achievement of MDGs promoted through provision of knowledge and diffusion of best practices. 3. Capacities of key stakeholders developed for HIV/AIDS mainstreaming with a human-based approach in national development plans.</td>
<td>Indicators: 1. Number of countries in which gender-disaggregated poverty data is available. 2. Arab trust fund for poverty reduction initiatives set up and funded by donors from the region. 3. Number of national development plans where HIV/AIDS is mainstreamed using a human-based approach. Baseline: 1. Available poverty data is insufficient throughout the region, and gender disaggregation of available poverty data is almost non-existent. 2. No Arab trust fund for poverty reduction initiatives established. 3. HIV/AIDS is mainstreamed in the national development plans of 2 countries in the region and stigma around the epidemic is prevailing. Target: 1. Gender-disaggregated poverty data available in 4 countries. 2. Arab trust fund for poverty reduction initiatives set-up and funded by donors from the region. 3. HIV/AIDS is mainstreamed through a human-based approach in the national development plans of five additional countries in the region.</td>
<td>Governments, League of Arab States, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Arab Labour Organization (ALO), ILO, civil society organizations (CSOs), research institutions, media, United Nations country teams (UNCTs)</td>
<td>Regular $3 million Other $5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fostering inclusive globalization</td>
<td>Regional cooperation and integration fostered for enhanced trade flows leading to increased employment and poverty reduction</td>
<td>Government and stakeholder capacity developed for human development oriented regional integration.</td>
<td>Indicator: Number of support activities for national and regional bodies to monitor and assess human development oriented and gender responsive regionalism. Baseline: Insufficient integration of human development objectives in regionalization process. Target: One regional initiative and mechanisms to support implementation of pro-poor trade policies.</td>
<td>Governments, World Bank, World Trade Organization, the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development, International Trade Center, International Development Bank, League of Arab States, CSOs, private sector</td>
<td>Regular $1 million Other $2 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Focus area 2: Democratic governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key result area</th>
<th>Regional results/outcomes</th>
<th>Regional programme outputs</th>
<th>Output indicators</th>
<th>Partners</th>
<th>Resources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promoting rule of law through effective, responsive, accessible and fair justice systems</td>
<td>Inclusive policy reform on key issues related to justice policy and citizen rights fostered</td>
<td>Access to justice improved with due consideration to the rights of vulnerable groups (including the poor, youth and women).</td>
<td>Indicator: Number of countries with legal aid schemes funded and implemented. Baseline: Legal aid schemes for vulnerable groups are provided for by law in most countries but are not implemented. Target: Legal aid schemes funded and implemented in 4 countries.</td>
<td>Governments, CSOs, lawyers’ associations, paralegal bodies, judicial institutions, academia.</td>
<td>Regular $1.2 million Other $2 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus area 3: Environment and sustainable development</td>
<td>Regional results/outcomes</td>
<td>Regional programme outputs</td>
<td>Output indicators</td>
<td>Partners</td>
<td>Resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promoting democratic principles and combating corruption</td>
<td>Levels of transparency increased and incidence of corruption reduced in beneficiary countries</td>
<td>Knowledge produced and inclusive policy reform supported for the implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).</td>
<td>Indicator: Number of countries having developed reports identifying UNCAC compliance and capacity gaps, technical assistance needs and related priorities.</td>
<td>Governments, UNODC, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, CSOs, media</td>
<td>Regular $1.3 million Other $4 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstreaming environment and energy</td>
<td>Integrated approach to water resources management in the Arab region promoted</td>
<td>Technical and policy support, capacity development, and seed funding, provided for effective water governance, taking into account the environmental, economic, social and gender dimensions.</td>
<td>Indicator: Number of countries in the region having acquired the necessary technical support to develop an integrated water resources management plan.</td>
<td>Governments, League of Arab States/Arab Water Ministers’ Council, United Nations organizations</td>
<td>Regular $2 million Other $5 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapting to climate change and catalyzing environmental finance</td>
<td>Government capacities developed for the development and implementation of national climate change adaptation plans</td>
<td>Regional/subregional climate change development agenda formulated in support of regional/subregional policy debate.</td>
<td>Indicator: Number of subregional climate change development plans formulated.</td>
<td>Governments, United Nations organizations, private sector</td>
<td>Regular $2 million Other $2 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key result area**

**Regional results/outcomes**

- Improved inclusive participatory processes in policymaking
- Knowledge produced and inclusive policy reform supported for the implementation of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).

**Regional programme outputs**

1. Inclusive participation of stakeholders, in particular civil society and women, supported in decision making processes.
2. Public administration reforms aiming at more responsive public services for the poor and vulnerable supported.

**Output indicators**

- Indicator: 1. Country-level pilots projects formulated along set criteria implemented in participating countries. Projects need to (a) reflect the needs identified in each country through the national-level preparatory work; (b) involve men as key supporters to women’s political empowerment; and (c) employ a multi-sectoral approach and target women’s participation in more than one area of public life.
- 2. Mechanisms to rate service users’ satisfaction established in a number of countries.

**Partners**

- Governments, CSOs, Parliamentary associations, bilateral donors

**Resources**

- Regular $1 million Other $4 million
## Focus area 4: Promotion of knowledge for human development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge for human development in the Arab region strengthened</th>
<th>Other (per enhanced-results based management platform)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Indicator:</strong> Number of knowledge products in Arabic made available to policy makers and the broader public through RBAS regional projects.</td>
<td>Mohammed Bin Rashid Foundation, research institutions, academia, CSOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baseline:</strong> There is a critical and broadly acknowledged lack of development knowledge products available in the Arabic language.</td>
<td>Regular $6 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Target:</strong> At least 10 new knowledge products in Arabic produced per year.</td>
<td>Other $6 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Analysis and advocacy of key challenges in the region produced and spaces created for regional debate and knowledge sharing/dissemination.
2. AHDRs produced for human development advocacy and as a tool to foster development dialogue and debate on emerging issues, including gender issues.
3. Research on the impact of conflict on human development and the cost of conflict conducted; efforts to identify national and regional mechanisms at to reduce possibilities of conflict supported.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator:</th>
<th>Number of Arab knowledge reports produced and disseminated.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Number of Arab knowledge reports produced and disseminated.</td>
<td>2. Number of AHDR themes covered and number of AHDR advocacy events supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Number of studies produced on the cost of conflict and its impact on human development in the region.</td>
<td>3. Number of high-level meetings convened by UNDP to discuss national and regional mechanisms for reducing the possibility of conflicts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. No high-level meetings convened by UNDP to discuss national and regional mechanisms to reduce the possibility of conflicts.</td>
<td>Target: Two Arab knowledge reports produced and disseminated.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Two Arab knowledge reports produced and disseminated. |
2. Two new AHDR series produced and # advocacy events conducted in # countries. |
3. At least two studies produced on the cost of conflict and its impact on human development in the region. |
3. At least two high-level meetings convened by UNDP to discuss national and regional mechanisms to reduce the possibility of conflicts.