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■ INSPIRED BY CHINA: DESIGNING BETTER GOVERNMENT SERVICES FOR URBAN BANGLADESH

Improving the efficiency of public services is a priority for most governments. In a rapidly urbanizing Bangladesh, efficient delivery of basic services has come under considerable duress. In Gazipur city for instance, citizens frequently face a variety of complexities in registering a birth or death, paying bills (e.g. tax, fees), or requesting connections to municipal water supply.

UNDP's Bangkok Regional Hub responded to Bangladesh's desire to learn from China's one-stop social services centre

model by conceiving an innovative approach to transfer knowledge. By employing design thinking tools, UNDP worked with four mayors from Bangladesh, beneficiaries of basic services, municipal government officials from both China and Bangladesh, and design thinking experts from Singapore and Malaysia to build 'prototypes' of a one-stop shop that would work for cities in Bangladesh. By relying on collective experience and local knowledge, service providers and users worked together to create these prototypes, thus providing an easy way to test how their ideas would function in practice.

Through this approach, UNDP offered a meaningful and ready-to-use methodology for South-South learning and exchange that went far beyond a typical study tour. This experience shows the promise of using unconventional tools and processes to improve services in a partner country, as well as to facilitate the process by which insights, innovations and knowledge are adapted from one context to another.

For more information on this initiative please contact Taimur Khilji (taimur.khilji@undp.org), Programme Specialist, Jobs and Livelihoods, UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub.





■ IMPROVING STATISTICAL REPORTING AMONG SOUTH ASIAN NATIONS

Twenty five experts from South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries participated in a one-week learning programme on Accelerating Progress on the SAARC Development Goals, which was organised by the International Center for Human Development (IC4HD) and UNDP in November 2014, in New Delhi, India. The participants included policy makers, statisticians, academicians, and practitioners who focused on tracking progress on 22 SAARC Development Goals agreed to by Member States in the areas of livelihood, health, education and the environment. Participants discussed issues relating to accessing reliable data, collection methodologies, and reporting.

The outcome statement presented by the experts urged member states to increase investment in improving capacities of national statistical systems to better collect and analyse data on human development. Such measures will allow for a comparative monitoring of human development progress, ensure effective monitoring and evaluation, and promote evidence-based decision making and accountability. This is the first time since the formulation of the goals that a strong attempt has been made by multiple stakeholders from the region to identify challenges faced in statistical reporting.

The International Centre for Human Development established by UNDP and the Government of India supports countries in the Global South to incorporate human development concerns as an integral part of planning processes and policy making. The Centre offers high quality training and research opportunities to government officials, policy makers, academia and other development practitioners and aims to encourage South-South dialogue and understanding on key human development issues.





■ STRENGTHENING SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION BETWEEN INDONESIA AND MYANMAR

On 22 April 2015, during the Asia-Africa Conference in Jakarta, the Governments of Indonesia and Myanmar met to discuss the importance of the 2013 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on Capacity Building Partnership signed between the two Governments. The representatives of the two governments noted that the technical assistance provided by UNDP Indonesia and UNDP Myanmar since 2013, under the umbrella of South-South cooperation, played a crucial role in facilitating a series of knowledge exchanges of best practices and lessons learnt in the areas of social cohesion as well as women empowerment and participation in social cohesion. UNDP agreed to continue giving support and facilitating the planned sessions in knowledge sharing and learning between Indonesia and Myanmar in 2015.

During the event, representatives from both countries reviewed the action plan for 2015 and agreed to hold knowledge-sharing sessions, with the support of UNDP under the umbrella of South-South and triangular cooperation in the areas of:

- Development planning and budgeting, particularly in the areas of poverty eradication to improve basic services for the poor, to increase the quality and access of education for the people and in the area of international aid management.
- The enhancement of women empowerment and participation to strengthen social cohesion.

The representatives acknowledged that the ongoing cooperation between Indonesia and Myanmar have the potential to unleash a series of strategic benefits that could further improve the lives of the people in the two countries.

For more information on this initiative please contact Mariski Nirwan (mariski.nirwan@undp.org), Project Manager, Secretariat of the National Coordination Team for SSTC, UNDP Indonesia.

■ LAO PDR FRAMERS TO LEARN ORGANIC FARMING APPROACHES FROM CAMBODIAN NEIGHBOUR

Flood and drought are frequent occurrences in Lao PDR. In efforts to address these challenges, the Lao government is encouraging its farmers, who make up 80 percent of the population, to change crop farming practices as adaptation measures to climate change. For example, if conditions do not allow for rice cultivation, farmers are encouraged to grow vegetables instead. Since Cambodia faces similar climate conditions, Lao PDR sought to learn from Cambodia's successful experiences with integrated farming methods for improving livelihoods and resilience to climate change.

In Cambodia, farmers are learning how to implement different farming practices to address the impacts of climate change through various UNDP supported projects. The project 'Promoting Climate Resilient Water Management and Agricultural Practices', which has received funding from the Government of Canada, has provided training on gender and climate change, integrated farming systems, revolving fund management, water management, food

processing and weather early warning. To date, a total of 13,581 people, of which 51 percent are women, in four districts in Preah Vihear and Kratie provinces, have benefited from the project.

To learn from such experiences, 25 representatives from the project 'Improving Resilience of the Agriculture Sector to Climate Change Impacts (IRAS)' in Lao PDR made a four-day study tour to Cambodia in February 2015 through UNDP facilitation. The delegation visited several project sites and gained experience on climate change adaptation practices in the agriculture sector. During the South-South knowledge exchange visit, the delegation also met with Cambodian farmers who have been benefiting from project interventions such as the solar water pump systems and seed purification techniques, which allow farmers to select resilient rice seeds by themselves.

Mr. Pinreak Suos, the project advisor from Cambodia, stated: "We try to establish a culture of sharing through visits and other channels to increase the awareness and replication of best practices in order to improve the livelihood of the poor in the changing climate".

For more information on this initiative please contact: Naratevy Kek (naratevy.kek@undp.org), UNDP Cambodia.





PROMOTION OF THE GREEN VILLAGE APPROACH BETWEEN RWANDA AND BURKINA FASO

To support the Government of Rwanda in addressing the impacts of climate change and promoting sustainable development, the UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) initiated a country programme in 2005, which focuses on enhancing the contribution of sound environmental management to poverty reduction, sustainable economic growth and the achievement of the MDGs. Since its implementation, the poverty-environment objectives have been integrated in key planning frameworks for poverty reduction and growth and in relevant sector policies, plans and implementation processes.

To build on this success, the Government of Rwanda with the support of PEI launched the RUBAYA green villages in 2010, which was launched to address poverty and environmental issues by focusing on agricultural practices, land cultivation and job generation in selected pilot villages that were successful in overcoming poverty and promoting sustainable environmental practices.

Building on this success, PEI Burkina Faso, with UNDP's support, conducted a study tour in Rwanda in September 2014 to learn about Rwanda's experience in environment

and natural resources mainstreaming in the development agenda and to understand the contribution of the Green villages in the poverty reduction process. The delegation undertook field visits in RUBAYA green villages and met with different Rwandan institutions involved in environment and natural resource management. The exchange between the two countries has provided Rwandan authorities with a plan to develop toolkits of green village standards to be shared with other countries (Mozambique and Malawi) under the South-South cooperation framework. Burkina Faso has committed to apply the green village approach within its country.



BAHRAIN HOSTS A LEARNING PROGRAMME ON GOVERNANCE INNOVATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

UNDP, the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs, and the E-Government Authority of Bahrain organized a learning programme to Bahrain on 24-29 January 2015 for 21 representatives from 19 countries from Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean encompassing mostly Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to learn and exchange knowledge on governance innovations for sustainable development. Delegates were introduced to the e-governance experience of Bahrain and were enabled to engage in interactive discussions on related good practices and lessons learned.

The learning programme also featured initiatives in other countries. For instance, in Jordan, the platform called "Sharek" (i.e. "participate" in Arabic) enables citizens to participate in monitoring the quality and integrity of health services provided at the local level. It is linked to the Ministry of Health and the Jordanian Anti-Corruption Commission (JACC) who will be responsible for its management and enabled to use the collected data to inform related reform actions. The initiative is implemented with the support of UNDP's Regional Project on Anti-Corruption and Integrity in the Arab Countries (ACIAC), in cooperation with UNDP Jordan and the Global Anti-corruption Initiative (GAIN).

Bilateral meetings were also conducted for delegates that provided them with additional opportunities to deepen their exchanges and explore opportunities of future cooperation with their counterparts in Bahrain.



■ KAZAKHSTAN: PROMOTING A STRONG CIVIL SERVICE AND FURTHERING EAST-EAST COOPERATION

The Regional Civil Service Hub was a joint project launched by UNDP and the Government of the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2013. The Hub aims to contribute to the development of effective systems of civil service in the region, to promote regional collaboration, knowledge exchanges, and provide a multilateral platform for engagement to support good decision making by governments.

Due to the success of the hub in promoting better relationships between countries and in conducting valuable training programmes, the Government of Kazakhstan has decided to expand institutional and financial support to the hub, for the next few years under UNDP support. The new changes include establishing a permanent position of Chairman of the Steering Committee of the Regional Hub of Civil Service in Astana, strengthening the Secretariat and establishing a Civil Service Research Centre.

To date the hub has published two editions of an e-journal, held technical workshops and training sessions and conducted a global conference within the Astana Economic Forum. Currently, 31 countries participate in the hub along with five international bodies.



■ TURKISH AND TAJIK ENTREPRENEURS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS STRENGTHEN BUSINESS RELATIONS AND UNDERSTANDING ON GLOBAL TRADE

In January 2015, more than 84 entrepreneurs from Tajikistan had an opportunity to learn how to do business with their Turkish counterparts, in special information sessions organized by the Trade Promotion Center of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tajikistan with the support of UNDP's Aid for Trade project (AFT) and the Turkish Embassy to Tajikistan. The trainings were on conditions of foreign trade, partnerships, investments, and employment opportunities in Turkey. The sessions were attended by government officials and business representatives from the agriculture, construction, textiles and energy sectors.

This training session was a follow-up to an event that took place in November 2014, in which the Turkish Ministry of Economy and Turkish Patent Institute hosted a Tajik high-level delegation representing the Presidential Executive Office and the Ministry of Economic Development and

Trade on a two-day study tour to learn about Turkey's experience in joining the World Trade Organization (WTO). The Tajik delegation agreed to further coordinate the implementation of WTO obligations by establishing a Working Group on the WTO with assistance from UNDP. The study tour was organized by UNDP Tajikistan in the framework of its Aid for Trade Project, in close cooperation with the Embassy of Turkey in Tajikistan.

The Aid for Trade programme continues to support inclusive growth and national efforts to reduce poverty and improve people's lives by promoting trade and enhancing competitiveness. The overarching goal of the project is to contribute to human development with the help of trade, while paying close attention to the cross cutting themes of gender equality, securing the rights of the most vulnerable groups in society, and environmental sustainability.





BUILDING CAPACITY THROUGH THE GFATM: SOUTH-SOUTH EXCHANGES

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) is a partnership between governments, civil society, private sector and people affected by AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. It was established in 2002 to mobilize resources and invest in programmes working towards accelerating the end of AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria in low and middle income countries. UNDP has been a partner of the Global Fund since 2003. In conflict and crisis affected countries, UNDP is invited to act as interim Principal Recipient of Global Fund grants.

In countries where UNDP is a Principal Recipient, it has leveraged its country presence to facilitate South-South exchanges between countries. For example, Cuba was the first country in the Latin America and Caribbean

region to receive Global Fund grant approval. When the Dominican Republic was preparing a concept note on HIV and key populations for submission to the Global Fund, a delegation from Cuba, which included representatives of the Ministry of Health, with UNDP facilitation, went to the Dominican Republic to provide technical assistance to the development of the concept note and its structure. Keen to learn more for the Cuban experience, a team from the Dominican Republic went to Cuba to review the Cuban HIV programme supported by the Global Fund Grant and to receive further technical inputs in finalizing the concept note. Since countries that receive Global Fund grants are mandated to establish a Country Coordinating Mechanism (CCM), Panama conducted South-South exchanges with El Salvador to learn about its experience in developing a CCM comprised of representatives from Government, Civil Society and Development partners.

For more information on this initiative, please contact Ludo Bok (ludo.bok@undp.org), Policy Specialist, Health and HIV Team, UNDP HQ.

SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION BETWEEN EL SALVADOR AND CHILE ON SOCIALLY APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

In October 2014, UNDP Chile and UNDP El Salvador, with the financial support from the Chile Fund Against Hunger and the Chilean NGO 'El Canelo de Nos', jointly organized a training session for 180 families in four communities from El Salvador to provide training on the construction, use and maintenance of almost 700 Socially Appropriate Technology (TSA) machineries. The project works with poor rural families on developing new techniques for improved cook stoves (rocket stove pots, fruit dryers and solar ovens). These stoves are more energy efficient than traditional ones since they consume 50 percent less firewood.

The aim of using TSA in these communities is to contribute towards the achievement of the MDGs, the forthcoming SDGs, as well as to the reduction of deforestation through efficient use of firewood. The training on TSA will help reduce the exposure to wood smoke and reduce time to preparing food which can be allocated to other income generating activities. The project will sustainably contribute to human development in vulnerable communities.

The training was targeted towards men, women, and the elderly people living in the rural area of El Salvador, where conditions are highly vulnerable to poverty and hunger. The training was designed and implemented in a participatory manner by Chilean experts under the "learning by doing" methodology.

For more information on this initiative, please contact Pablo Basz (pablo.basz@undp.org), Policy Specialist, South-South Cooperation Team, UNDP Panama Regional Service Centre.



BLOG

South-South cooperation -- how can we maximize its impact on sustainable development?

South-South Cooperation (SSC) is gaining new momentum as global political and economic realities change rapidly. It is also adding critical value to development. So how can we ensure that the larger potential of SSC is reflected in ongoing discussions on financing for development, while recognizing its differences from more traditional forms of 'North-South' development cooperation?

SSC encompasses elements of trade, investment and technology transfer as well as direct financial assistance between developing countries. In 2013, South-South trade in goods was valued at about US\$ 5 trillion. South-South grants, concessional loans, debt relief and technology transfer were estimated between US\$16 to 19 billion in 2011, and continue to rise. These figures undoubtedly underestimate the true scale of such flows since they are not reported in any systematic way. Much of it is also not directly quantifiable such as the amount of knowledge shared or technology transferred through SSC.

SSC made, and continues to make, an important contribution to development and to people's lives. It is also becoming more diverse. For example, while SSC continues to favour infrastructure investments (around 55% of its activities), it also supports the social sectors, agriculture and food security and, increasingly, social protection, as well as renewable energy. All these are important elements of sustainable development in the post-2015 period.

At UNDP, our work on SSC is based on the recognition of its growing potential and its positive impact on sustainable development. Our role is to broker knowledge exchanges, facilitate partnerships, and strengthen the capacities of countries to engage in South-South and Triangular cooperation.

For example, we supported Indonesia to share best practices with the Philippines in the recovery efforts related to **Typhoon Haiyan**. We have also facilitated **knowledge transfer between Cuba and Jamaica** on the issue of risk reduction. During the **Ebola crisis**, we partnered with the Government of South Africa in deploying autoclaves in Ebola affected countries (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) to safely dispose medical waste. We assisted Mexico (AMEXCID) in consolidating its experiences as a SSC provider, and supported the government of Iraq in establishing a SSC unit in the Prime Minister's Advisory Commission.

Triangular cooperation is also a valuable mechanism to help scale up the impact of SSC for sustainable development. With support from Denmark, we worked with the Governments of China to support renewable energy in **Ghana and Zambia**.

In our discourse on development cooperation, it is time to recognize beauty in diversity. SSC is to be warmly welcomed while recognizing its distinct characteristics. It is not just about 'how much' financial assistance emerging economies provide. It is about how much knowledge and technology are transferred among all countries in the global South, to address common challenges. It is about how we can maximize the sustainable development impact of SSC through its dynamic processes and various modalities.

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