



Putting a Human Rights-Based Approach to Poverty Reduction into Practice

Experiences and Lessons from a UNDP Pilot Project

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I. Executive Summary

In the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, world leaders reaffirmed their support to "the further mainstreaming of human rights throughout the United Nations system". At the same time, UN agencies in their internal programming process have agreed on the UN Common Understanding of a Human Rights Based Approach to Programming. This means that all development cooperation and technical assistance should further the realization of human rights; be grounded in human rights standards and principles; and contribute to the development of the capacities of 'duty-bearers' to meet their obligations and of 'rights-holders' to claim their rights. The challenge is to specify what this means for programming for poverty reduction.

UNDP has implemented a pilot project – "Operationalising Human Rights Approaches to Poverty Reduction" – designed to generate practical lessons which address this challenge. The project teams developed and applied context-specific methods which allowed them to test a human rights-based approach to poverty reduction strategies and MDG strategies at the national or local level. The pilots were implemented in eight countries – Argentina, Armenia, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Comoros, Ecuador and Macedonia – from 2004 to 2007.

In the course of the project, the teams identified a number of tangible results as well as some practical lessons including the following:

Results

- In Argentina, Bosnia & Herzegovina and Macedonia, local development plans were adopted to address the priorities of the most vulnerable groups and shortcomings of key social sectors, such as health and education. The plans were formulated in highly participatory processes and they applied human rights based analysis to identify priorities.
- In at least four countries, national or local stakeholders' capacities for MDG and other development planning have been strengthened in order to better address the situation of the most vulnerable groups as well as issues of inequality, social exclusion, and national accountability for development targets.

- In Ecuador, the government is preparing a National Development Plan with a view to addressing issues of inequality in the country. The government draws on human rights based local MDG reports, which were prepared with the support of UNDP's pilot team.
- In Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the methodology of the Rights-Based Municipal Assessment Programme is being considered for country-wide roll-out to address issues of social exclusion in view of EU accession.

Lesson Learned:

- Human rights based analysis requires systematically disaggregated data. Therefore, it is critical to collaborate closely with national and local statistical and develop their capacity to provide quality data.
- Showcasing the instrumental value of using an HRBA (e.g. the potential of an HRBA to facilitate more targeted investment of government resources; as potentially preventing conflict) can facilitate the understanding of its benefits.
- In order to ensure the practical relevance and effectiveness of capacity development efforts on HRBA, they should ideally be integrated into the work processes which they are supposed to support
- In the case of UNDP, efforts to work with the approach are often inadequately integrated into the broader work of the organisation's Country Offices. Similarly, policies related to the human rights based approach are inadequately linked with policies at the corporate level. Both "bottom-up" and "top-down" pushes for mainstreaming are needed for human rights to truly be integrated at all levels.

This document highlights results and entry points as well as challenges, responses and lessons emerging from the Pilot Project. It focuses on programming practice and is written for UNDP colleagues, those who are more and those who are less familiar with the application of the Human Rights Based Approach.

II. Abbreviations and Acronyms

AECI:	Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional / Spanish agency for international cooperation
AME:	Asociación de municipalidades ecuatorianas / Association of Ecuatorian municipalities
BDP:	Bureau for Development Policy (at UNDP)
BiH:	Bosnia and Herzegovina
BIM:	Ludwig Boltzman Institute (Vienna)
CO:	Country Office (of UNDP)
CONCOPE:	Consortio de consejos provinciales del Ecuador / Consortium of provincial councils of Ecuador
CSO:	Civil Society Organization
COSUDE:	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
DECRP:	Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategic Document (Cape Verde)
DRSP:	Draft PRSP
HR:	Human Rights
HRBA:	Human Rights-Based Approach
HQ:	Headquarters
MDGs:	Millennium Development Goals
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organization/s
PRS:	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP/DRSP:	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RMAP:	Rights-Based Municipal Assessment Programme (UNDP BiH)
SNV:	Netherlands-based international development organisation
SODEM:	National Secretariat of the Millennium Development Goals (Ecuador)
ToR:	Terms of Reference
UN:	United Nations
UNCT:	UN Country Team

III. Background

The UN Secretary General's UN Reform introduced in 1997 called on all UN agencies to mainstream human rights into their various activities and programmes, within the framework provided by their respective mandates. In the context of that appeal, UN agencies agreed in 2003 on a Common Understanding of a Human Rights Based Approach to development cooperation and programming by UN agencies. The UN Common Understanding stipulates that

■ All programmes of development co-operation, policies and technical assistance should further the realisation of human rights as laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments (GOAL),

■ Human rights standards contained in, and principles derived from, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights instruments guide all development cooperation and programming in all sectors and in all phases of the programming process (PROCESS),

■ Development cooperation contributes to the development of the capacities of 'duty-bearers' to meet their obligations and/or of 'rights-holders' to claim their rights (OUTCOME).

But what does that mean?

In 2003, UNDP's Bureau for Development Policy (BDP) elaborated a Practice Note on "Poverty Reduction and Human Rights" in order to begin to clarify what "furthering realisation of human rights" meant in the poverty context. The Practice Note clarifies the practical relevance of the HRBA to poverty reduction programming. It does, however, not provide project managers with 'hands-on' guidance on how exactly to make use of the HRBA in their day-to-day work.

Recognizing the need for practical examples of how the ideas of the Practice Note could be applied, UNDP initiated a two-year pilot project in 2004. The project intended to generate experiences and lessons that would help UNDP and the development community begin to form a real, practical understanding of how human rights can be used to inform poverty reduction programmes.

As it turns out, this link has been made in different ways in the different pilot countries, at different levels and in different states of the policy and programming cycle: From providing guidance to PRSP committees of how an HRBA can be used in the process of reviewing the IPRSP in Comoros; to involving civil society in the formulation of human rights based MDG action plans at the local level in Argentina; to designing 'human rights checklists' for UNDP staff and government partners to assess local service delivery in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The experiences gained in the course of this pilot project show the diversity of options available to project teams and partners who are seeking to use an HRBA to poverty reduction programming.

The present document intends to be a resource for UNDP colleagues who are interested in finding out what human rights based work can look like and what it can accomplish in practice. It is therefore directly based on monitoring results and review findings and focuses on the practice rather than the theory of the HRBA.¹ It is written for those who are more and those who are less familiar with a Human Rights Based Approach to poverty reduction. While Section IV. and V. provide a brief overview of results, entry points and interventions from the pilot countries, Section VI. looks at some of the experienced challenges, responses and lessons learned.

Further details on the mentioned methods and activities can be obtained by referring to the documents and contacts provided in Section VII.

1 For an overview of the concept of a Human Rights Based Approach, the Interim Pilot Project Report as well as other documents listed in the reference section below (VII.) may be useful.

IV. Pilot Project – Overview

The overall objective of the project "Operationalising Human Rights Approaches to Poverty Reduction – Pilot Project" (Pilot Project) was to "lay the foundations for the successful implementation of a human rights-based approach in Poverty Reduction Strategies and MDG Strategies at country programme level".

The framework developed at the beginning of Pilot Project envisaged the following possible entry points ranging from the macro to micro level:

- 1. "Advocacy for and policy advice on a HRBA including building the capacities of local human rights actors to promote and foster a HRBA in all development partners, both national and international. This would include advocacy for the implementation of the country's international commitments, especially through HRBA in poverty reduction.**
- 2. Specific HRBA initiatives at the macro policy and strategy levels.** Here PRS(P)s, MDG strategies, macro-economic and social policy frameworks, constitutional and legal frameworks that give effect to and institutionalize the country's international commitments, and capacities to apply a HRBA lens at these levels are possibilities. This could include, for example, the articulation of human rights preconditions for effective decentralization and/or privatization policies, addressing problems of excessive fiscal tightening, agricultural/land reform policies infringing women's rights, potential rights implications of hasty trade liberalization measures, the importance of social impact assessment ex ante and throughout, and encouraging genuine debate of nationally and locally appropriate policy options (mindful of the capacities issue).
- 3. Specific programme initiatives that seek to implement a HRBA in a particular area, sector or at a particular level.** For example, a HRBA in social service provision (or in a specific sector, such as health or education) at the municipal or local community level.
- 4. Development of instruments and indicators** for the operationalisation of immediate or intermediate human rights targets to be achieved in HRBA policies, strategies or programmes, and **building capacities of data and information systems** to provide the properly disaggregated data to ensure data availability on key indicators and to ensure that vulnerable groups are included. Possibilities here include human rights-based budgeting and adapting DevInfo for the purposes of monitoring human rights realization and/or specific HRBA targets.
- 5. Catalytic initiatives to demonstrate the effectiveness of a HRBA** in reducing poverty or making progress on the MDG targets. Such catalytic initiatives could be undertaken at any level, but are particularly effective at the local level. Usually these would be indicated as preferred entry points in situations where there is interest in HRBA, but skepticism or doubts about its feasibility or effectiveness or its opportunity costs."

As a result, activities were initiated at both the global level and in eight pilot countries. The purpose was to provide practical examples and to generate processes of mutual learning among all participants. The role of the country-level activities was that of "assessment, adaptation and preparation for implementation" of pilots at the national or sub-national level. Global-level activities were intended to facilitate and backstop the country-level activities, for example by exchanging and assessing methods, experiences and lessons learned during two global and three regional workshops.

At the conclusion of the Pilot Project, a project review was conducted by two external consultants, who synthesized the workshop outputs, conducted in-depth interactive studies of two country pilots and provided a number of findings and recommendations on how to take the pilot efforts forward.

Snapshot of projects in eight pilot countries

Argentina "Targeting MDGs at local level with an HRBA"

Objectives: "Increase knowledge among citizens about their rights to development" & strengthen "the role of civil society in advocating for and participating in public policies to achieve the MDGs at the local level, responsible for the achievement of the MDGs, adopting a human rights perspective"

Results:

- Local MDG action plans in 2 municipalities formulated and adopted which prioritize action on the MDGs from the perspective of citizens (including marginalized groups) and are based on participatory, human rights based 'diagnostics' of existing policies, programmes and responsibilities.
 - Capacities of public officials in 2 municipalities strengthened to apply a human rights based methodology for the development of cross-sectoral local MDG action plans with timeframes and indicators.
 - Permanent space created in 3 municipalities where civil society and local government can periodically debate and follow-up the action plan.
- ⇒ Replication in 2 more municipalities planned.

Partners: Abuelas de Plaza de Mayo (implementing partner), municipal governments in Moron, La Plata and Rosario, National Secretariat for Human Rights

Armenia "Human Rights Approach to Regional Development Planning"

Objectives: "To incorporate the human rights aspects/issues into PRSP review and MDG localization processes and content through survey of ordinary citizens' attitude and opinion on MDGs in Armenia. MDGs would be discussed from the viewpoint of basic human rights and public services."

Results:

- Baseline data collected on citizens' perceptions regarding the most important targets for improvement in their regions and regarding human rights, poverty lines & levels and public policies & services.
- Data shared with working groups on PRSP and MDG localization in order to prompt discussions at the national level and to thus influence national decision-making.
- Awareness of these issues raised among polled citizens.

Partner: Armenian government

Benin "Support to follow-up of the DRSP and MDGs based on respect for socio-economic rights, working in two communities"

Objectives: "To contribute to the participatory monitoring of the DRSP in the communities of Sègbana and Gogounou in the province of l'Alibori, based on respect for socio-economic rights."

Results: Targeted population in selected communities sensitized on the integration of human rights in local development policies.

Partner: Development Ministry of Benin

BiH "Localizing MDGs in Bosnia & Herzegovina within the Rights-based Municipal Development Programme (RMAP)"

Objectives: "Within RMAP, to use the pilot project funds to deepen its analysis of rights-based municipal development, in particular assess poverty levels and identify the most vulnerable beneficiaries via focus groups; and to use the RMAP municipal development process for localizing MDGs."

Results:

- Multi-annual local development plans in 15 municipalities elaborated and adopted which address priorities of most vulnerable groups as well as shortcomings in social sectors such as health and education, as identified through human rights based analysis.
 - Implementation of (>30) municipal priority projects supported.
 - Capacities of local officials for human rights based policy development, planning and project cycle management strengthened in a number of municipalities.
 - Focus Group methodology for vulnerability assessment developed and tested.
- ⇒ Upscaling of methodology for country-wide application being addressed in 3-year follow up programme on integrated local development planning.

Partners: Local municipalities, Economic Policy and Planning Unit

Cape Verde "Mainstreaming and assessing a Human Rights Based Approach in Cape Verde's Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategic Document"

Objectives: "To tackle the problem of limited integration of a human rights based approach into the current Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategic Document (DECRP) of Cape Verde."

Results: No project activities were implemented since it was not possible to identify a suitable senior consultant. Strengthened staff capacities are, however, being used to apply an HRBA in work on participatory budgeting.

Partners: Cape Verde government, UNCT

Comoros "Applying the HRBA in the process of reviewing and finalizing the interim PSRP"

Objectives: "Accompany the process of reviewing and finalizing Comoros' interim PRSP in order to ensure that proposed policies, actions and budgets be formulated in a way conducive to realizing human rights."

Results:

- Awareness raised among members of the PRSP Committees and the National Planning Commissariat on how to use an HRBA to revise the PRSP

- Awareness raised among members of the PRSP Committees on the need to reform their composition and ToR in order to ensure their function as a communication channel with the grass roots level

- Awareness raised and feedback obtained from local communities and vulnerable groups on the proposed changes to the PRSP and the Committee structure before discussing those with national government partners

⇒ Activities at national level now integrated into an ongoing capacity development project

Partners: Commissariat au Plan, Délégation Générale des Droits de l'Homme, NGOs, CSOs, UNCT, donors.

Ecuador "Integrating the HRBA into the national PRS elaboration and MDGs Monitoring System in Ecuador"

Objectives: "To support the integration of the HRBA into the national PRS and the MDGs monitoring system. To mainstream the HRBA to all stakeholders involved in the elaboration process of the PRS."

Results:

- Ecuador's policy-focused 2nd MDG Report is based on additional indicators (e.g. on inequality, political participation of women, violence against women) and, as a result, explicitly addresses how inequality relates to poverty in the country.

- 7 local MDG reports prepared based on the mentioned additional indicators and disaggregated data.

- Capacity of national and local stakeholders strengthened on participatory planning, indicator development and MDG monitoring

⇒ Government preparing National Development Plan drawing on MDG Reports and based on explicitly human rights based objectives

Partners: SODEM, CONCOPE, AME, local government, CSOs, donors (COSUDE, AECI, World Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, SNV, UNCT)

Macedonia "Supporting the elaboration of an MDG-based National Development Programme 2005-2015 for Macedonia"

Objectives: "To contribute towards the elaboration of the National Programme for socio-economic development, incorporating specific needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups. To involve vulnerable groups in planning processes on local and national level and create safe and friendly atmosphere for respect and fulfilment of human rights."

Results:

- Awareness of citizens and other stakeholders in 5 municipalities raised on MDGs and the potential of an HRBA to address social exclusion

- Local capacities for human rights based strategic planning strengthened and partnerships among local stakeholder fostered in 3 municipalities by convening and training of multi-stakeholder "Local Leadership Groups"

- Local development strategies in 3 municipalities elaborated and adopted (in 2 cases with Annual Action Plans for Social Protection) which address the priorities of marginalized groups in different areas of economic development and which include human rights sensitive indicators

- National Development Plan 2007-2009 informed by quantitative and qualitative data from the 3 target municipalities

⇒ Replication in 4 additional municipalities started with funding from an NGO donor

Partners: Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Local Self Government, Association of Municipalities, Ludwig Boltzmann Institute Vienna (BIM), CSOs

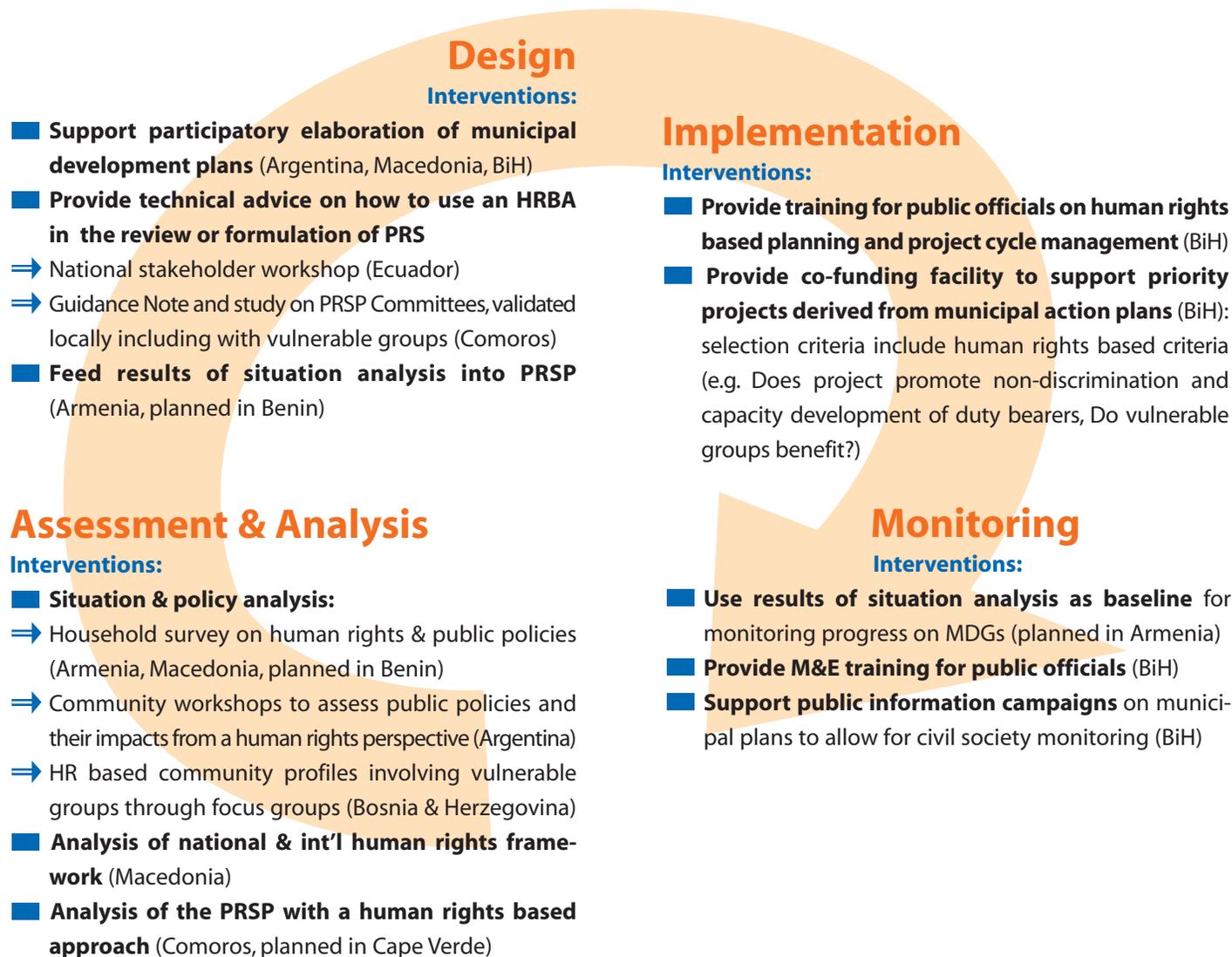
V. HRBA to Poverty Reduction

– *Entry Points and Interventions along the Policy Cycle*

To meet the objectives outlined in Chapter IV., the pilot teams developed a range of methods for interventions, each suited for a particular entry point or stage in the policy cycle – i.e. for assessment and analysis; design; implementation; or monitoring and evaluation of poverty reduction strategies. The following diagram depicts the entry points along the policy cycle at which interventions using different methods were pursued:

Using a Human Rights Based Approach to develop national or local Poverty Reduction and MDG Strategies

Entry Points and Interventions from a Pilot Project



Details on the methods and tools developed and used by the eight pilots can be found in the Pilot Project's Interim Report of April 2007 (see reference in Section VII.). Additional information can be obtained by contacting the pilot teams (see contact details in Section VII.). The experiences and tools of those pilots who explored ways of using an HRBA for work on achieving the Millennium Development Goals are also presented on the following website: www.hurilink.org.

VI. HRBA to Poverty Reduction

– Challenges, Responses and Lessons Learned

Building on monitoring and review findings from the project, the pilot teams have identified experiences which translate into lessons learned in five main issue areas:

1. Participation
2. Engaging government partners
3. Capacity and capacity development
4. Data and measuring change
5. Organizational mainstreaming

1. Participation

a. Challenges:

- An HRBA requires the **participation of the most vulnerable and marginalized** who are often very hard to identify and involve. This can be due to difficulties in defining who is actually considered poor in a given context (definition); to difficulties in ensuring that organizations truly represent their constituencies views (risk of 'elite capture'); and to difficulties to physically reach certain individuals which are often related to their vulnerability (e.g. elderly, disabled, minorities living in remote areas).
- **Creating new, ad hoc structures** to facilitate participation of individuals or their organisations in policy development processes may be easier, but generates less ownership and sustainability.

b. Responses:

- Some pilots **employed standard methodologies** in innovative ways in order to allow for more effective participation of vulnerable groups: A household survey in Armenia assessed citizens' perceptions on human rights, poverty and public services. A focus group methodology developed in BiH made it possible to identify and involve vulnerable groups more effectively² so that their concerns and priorities could be addressed through municipal projects and programmes.
- The elaboration of local development plans in Argentina, BiH and Macedonia was based on **highly participatory processes** which involved as many as 150 individuals per community. This way, civil society was able to systematically assess local poverty and marginalization, government responsibilities and responses, and local priorities from a human rights perspective.
In Argentina, the involvement of a strong, well-respected national NGO as implementing partner gave the planning process visibility and legitimacy. This opened access to different parts of local government and large parts of the local civil society, including "non-organized" individuals.
In Macedonia, "Local Leadership Groups" (LLGs) were formed to involve representatives from civil society, government and the business community in the formulation of local development strategies. It turned out that they have fostered mutual trust and local partnerships even beyond the immediate project scope.³
- In some countries, methodologies for participatory planning and their results from the local level have now been **linked to work at the national level** (e.g. use of survey results to inform national development strategies in Macedonia and Armenia; scaling-up of the BiH RMAP methodology for country-wide use). This is increasing their potential for broader impact.

- 2 In one case, it turned out that among the most vulnerable groups were not only refugees – as initially expected – but also the elderly unemployed, a group which both UNDP staff and policy-makers had not considered as most vulnerable before.
- 3 E.g. in several cases, local governments are now supporting local NGOs (with whom they collaborated in the LLGs) in running municipal citizen support centers for the elderly, the disabled etc. by providing them with rent-free venues; some NGOs have started to apply jointly for projects.

Lesson Learned:

- **Assessing and tying-in with existing institutions, structures and practices** is a critical factor for efficient and sustainable participation, as well as for strengthening these very same structures.
- **Working closely with local actors** (research institutions, NGO/CSO networks, thematic experts) is instrumental for identifying and reaching vulnerable groups and creating ownership and visibility of policy processes.
- At a global and regional level, more research is needed to obtain **practice-relevant definitions of multi-dimensional poverty, vulnerability and deprivation**.

2. Engaging with Government Partners

a. Challenges:

- It can be difficult to **identify partners** within government institutions that are open to innovative approaches to development planning as well as to the required operational or conceptual changes.
- **Political instability or restructuring** often leads to shifts in political priorities and timelines. This can cause major disruptions or delays in the engagement with government partners.
- There is often a **lack of political awareness** regarding the priorities or even the existence of vulnerable and marginalized populations, also at the local level.

b. Responses

- Where reactions of public officials towards innovative work approaches such as an HRBA have been mixed, it has proved very useful to **include in work teams** both staff who are skeptical and staff who are more convinced of the new approach. This has worked better than simply involving 'outsiders' which can, in fact, contribute to further opposition.
- Some government partners (e.g. in Ecuador) have responded enthusiastically when **introduced to the potential of an HRBA** to address perceived restrictions of more traditional development approaches, e.g. by using additional MDG indicators in order to address inequality or social exclusion.
- Responsibility (or role pattern) analysis has allowed the pilots to **determine the accountability of different levels of – decentralized – government**, e.g. to identify what duties national, regional or local governments have with regards to funding or provision of programmes and services.
- Some of the pilots have invested in **highlighting the situation of specific vulnerable groups** to government partners who were often quite open to learn more about the situation, priorities and rights of vulnerable and marginalized groups in their communities (e.g. Macedonia).⁴

Lesson Learned:

- To ensure sustainable engagement and buy-in at the policy level, it is critical to understand **government priorities** and to take into account the **timelines** of existing policy processes from the outset.
- Equally, it is one of the most important tasks to identify a proactive government partner with the political will to make use of an HRBA so that the policy process can count on effective (as opposed to merely formal) institutional support.
- At the working level, it is then key to engage with those levels of the government that are tasked with the actual drafting of policies and strategies. These units are also often less affected by political dynamics.

4 It can be seen as an indication of increased local ownership that some of the local governments in Macedonia took it on them to carry out additional surveys among vulnerable groups in order to validate whether their views were fully reflected in the draft local development strategies.

3. Capacity and Capacity Development

a. Challenges:

- **Capacities** of both UNDP Country Offices and government partners to work with an HRBA are often still weak. Moreover, there tends to be a **lack of consultants** with these capacities at country level while international consultants may not always be able to fully grasp local dynamics.
- **Capacity development** efforts on HRBA at the UNDP Country Office or project level tend to be **isolated, non-specific and not based on thorough capacity assessment**. This is particularly problematic since the ability to work with an HRBA very much depends on general capacities such as strategic planning, project management, data collection and analysis. 'HRBA trainings' that do not also strengthen some of these capacities are therefore often ineffective.
- Efforts to work with an HRBA often run into an **'analytical trap'**: They remain restricted to general desk-based analyses of the national or international human rights framework while it is difficult to get input from 'below' (see point 1.) as well as to feed the results of the analysis 'up' to the policy level (see point 2.).
- Efforts to work with an HRBA also often focus merely on human rights *principles* such as participation, and much less on **making use of the content of human rights standards** (e.g. right to health, right to education).

b. Responses

- By **involving international consultants directly in a project team's work** rather than just commissioning outputs from them, some pilots (e.g. Macedonia) have managed to intensify the learning experience. This has contributed to the development of capacities on both sides.
- As a response to the generic lack of **capacities for development planning at the local level, RMAP in BiH built capacity development measures into development planning and implementation processes**: Capacity development activities in the form of on-the-job training and workshops were tailored to the identified needs of local stakeholders. These increased the stakeholders' knowledge on human rights in general and its added value within development planning processes. It also allowed them to apply the acquired skills immediately in their work.
- The pilot in BiH has also made an effort to break down the content of human rights standards into **"human rights checklists"** for sectors such as health and education. The checklists present the human rights standards as targets and provide indicators to monitor progress so that they can be used to prepare local "community profiles".

Lesson Learned:

- In order to ensure the practical relevance and effectiveness of capacity development efforts on HRBA, they should be **targeted** (based on capacity assessment) and, ideally, **integrated** into the work processes which they are supposed to support (e.g. project or policy development or implementation).
- Analyses of the international human rights framework are available in many forms and do not need to be repeated continuously. Where analyses of the national human rights framework do not yet exist, **interactive collaboration with research institutions as well as CSOs** (see also point 1.) can help strengthen local capacity.
- More support is needed by practitioners seeking to work with an HRBA, to make use of the **content of human rights standards** (incl. of the practical interpretations of these standards offered by the human rights treaty bodies). A systematic effort at global and regional levels of organisations such as UNDP is therefore necessary to develop hands-on programming tools in collaboration with their Country Offices and partners.

4. Data & Measuring Change

a. Challenges:

- For development practitioners seeking to work with an HRBA, it is critical to link disaggregated data to human rights standards in order to identify, for example, inequitable access to basic services. This is difficult to accomplish when **official data is not accessible, insufficiently reliable or inappropriate** (e.g. not disaggregated on the basis of gender, geography etc).
- It proves **difficult to measure human rights-based outcomes** with traditional indicators and available data.

b. Responses

- Some pilots have **generated required data themselves**, often by using standard methodologies in innovative ways (household survey, focus groups; see also under point 1.). Some government partners (e.g. in Argentina) have subsequently expressed an interest to use this data for their own purposes, e.g. information on the full range of norms and government programmes at different levels. This can be seen as a sign of increased awareness and acknowledgement of the relevance of such systematized data.
- Others used simple means to **strengthen government and public capacity and opportunity to monitor change**, e.g. in BiH monitoring and evaluation training was offered for public officials; public information campaigns including poster displays in public places made citizens aware of the action the local government had committed to.

Lesson Learned:

- In order to monitor and evaluate human rights based work, development agencies should start by integrating an **HRBA systematically into their own Results Based Management systems**
- For human rights based work, close collaboration is required with **national and local statistical institutions**. Their capacity development will often need to be prioritized to ensure data collection through established and sustainable mechanisms.
- There is a strong demand among development practitioners for **research that facilitates measurement** at the operational level particularly of: the impact of participatory and interdisciplinary approaches to poverty reduction; changes in human rights capacities of duty-bearers and rights-holders; changes in the quality of processes (process indicators); changes in the realization of human rights.

5. Organizational Mainstreaming

During the course of this Pilot Project, many questions have come up among the pilot teams about the challenges of mainstreaming the HRBA into the structure of an organisation such as UNDP. While these experiences are certainly UN(DP)-specific, they may be interesting also for other organizations facing similar issues.

a. Challenges:

- Both at global and country level, pilot efforts to operationalise the HRBA have tended to be **insufficiently integrated in the overall work** of the UNDP Country Office or Headquarter unit. In many cases this has resulted in a lack of visibility of the efforts and missed opportunities for mutual learning among colleagues and for programmatic synergy effects in related work areas (e.g. decentralization, fiscal policies).
- Perhaps related to this, there is often still a **lack of "connectivity" within UN agencies** between proponents of an HRBA and proponents of other existing approaches. This situation is often characterized by mutual lack of knowledge and skepticism about each other's work.

b. Responses

- Some pilots have made use of staff's different perspectives and experiences, and their different technical languages by deliberately **working in "mixed" (i.e. multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional) teams**: This way, colleagues' intense discussions were used to inform and improve their work. In BiH, for example, the development of implementation tools carefully balanced the rigour required for human rights based analysis, on the one hand, and practical usefulness and transferability, on the other.
- Some pilot teams reported that by **showing results** and therefore the instrumental value of the HRBA (e.g. the potential of the HRBA to facilitate more targeted investment of government resources; as potentially preventing conflict), their work became so accepted among CO colleagues that they now collaborate actively, for example, on developing project proposals.

Lesson Learned:

- At the institutional level, unequivocal leadership can facilitate the corporate use of the HRBA **"from the top"** (e.g. integration in an agency's programming manual).
- At the operational level, it will continue to be necessary for staff to make individual efforts **"from the bottom"** to use the HRBA in their work across teams and work areas.
- Success at both levels can be strongly facilitated by **showcasing also the instrumental value** of using the HRBA.

VII. Outlook and Resources

Based on a UNDP Pilot Project, this document tries to illustrate some results and practical entry points that can be used in an effort to take the Human Rights Based Approach to the practice of poverty reduction programming. It also highlights some of the key challenges, responses and lessons learned in the process.

This can, however, only be a first step in operationalizing the HRBA to programming. As a next step, it is necessary to systematically devise hands-on instruments for staff without expert knowledge across the organization to make use of the HRBA in their day-to-day work – be it at operational, programming or policy level. This work has started and will be intensified.

Selected Resources:

United Nations (2003), *The Human Rights Based Approach to Development Cooperation: Toward a Common Understanding among UN Agencies*.

<http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=221>

UNDP (2003), *Poverty Reduction and Human Rights*, Practice Note.

<http://www.undp.org/policy/docs/povertyreduction-humanrights0603.pdf>

UNDP (2005), *Human Rights in UNDP*, Practice Note.

<http://www.undp.org/policy/docs/Human-Rights-PN.doc>

UNDP (April 2007), *Operationalizing Human Rights-Based Approaches to Poverty Reduction – Interim Pilot Project Report*.

English: http://content.undp.org/go/practices/poverty/docs/download/?d_id=1462548

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Spanish: http://content.undp.org/go/practices/poverty/docs/download/?d_id=1462559

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Pilot Teams – contact details for further information:		
Argentina	Milena Leivi	milena.leivi@undp.org
Armenia	Narine Sahakyan	narine.sahakyan@undp.org
Benin	Pierre Kouhevi	pierre.kouhevi@undp.org
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Christian Hainzl www.rmap.undp.ba	CHAINZL@undp.ba
Cape Verde	Oumar Diallo	oumar.diallo@cv.jo.un.org
Comoros	Maturafi K. Mbae	maturafi.k.mbae@undp.org
Ecuador	Natalia Garcia	natalia.garcia@undp.org
Macedonia	Liljana Alceva http://www.undp.org.mk/Default.asp?where=focusarea&project=89	liljana.alceva@undp.org
Global	Julia Kercher	julia.kercher@undp.org



United Nations Development Programme
Bureau for Development Policy
304 East 45th Street
New York, NY, 10017

www.undp.org