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Regional programme document for Arab States, 2014-2017

Contents

Please recycle

I.   Situation analysis

1. Since 2008, the Arab States region has achieved mixed results in reducing poverty and inequality, strengthening democratic governance, protecting the environment and building resilience to conflicts. Although the region has made progress towards many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the 2013 United Nations report, entitled *The Arab MDG Report: Facing Challenges and Looking Beyond 2015*, reveals that progress has slowed. Countries individually also show wide disparities.

2. Some nations, particularly those in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), have taken long strides over the last couple of decades and appear on course to meet possibly all of the MDG targets. Some middle-income countries are on course to meet most targets, while others are struggling to meet only some of them, in a picture complicated by the political transitions and volatility of recent years. The outlook is even starker in least developed countries and countries in conflict: mired in development backlogs or cycles of violence and instability, they are unlikely to meet any MDG.

3. With such disparities, the region lags behind on important targets, particularly nutrition, food security, access to water and sanitation, and child and maternal mortality. A significant number of people remain trapped between the $2-a-day and $1.25-a-day poverty lines.

4. While aggregate income in the Arab States has increased because of the key oil and gas-exporting countries, inequality between and within countries remains high, with Gini coefficients ranging from 30.8 in Egypt to 41.4 in Tunisia. Unemployment in the region as a whole is quite high (around 15 per cent in 2012), and it exceeds 30 per cent in the Arab countries in the Horn of Africa. Regional unemployment is structural: among the young, it averaged 28 per cent in 2012 – among the world's highest – ranging from 21 per cent in Lebanon, to 30 per cent in Tunisia, to over 40 per cent in countries plagued by conflict or poverty (or both). More than two thirds of Arab women aged 15 to 29 are outside the labour force – the world's highest rate.

5. Such mixed results in poverty reduction, MDG achievement and human development are rooted in various challenges, which require the following set of responses:

a. *Expanding economic opportunities, especially for the increasing youth population.* Creating high-quality employment opportunities for young and better-educated workers remains crucial for many countries in the region, given their demographic and economic background:

   i. The region's total population has doubled since the 1980s, a trend expected to continue in the next few decades: Iraq, Palestine, Sudan and Yemen, for example, are forecast to double their populations in the next 30 years. A third of the region's population is under the age of 15 and the number of young people is expected to rise by 12 million by 2025, increasing the regional total to 58 million.

   ii. According to International Monetary Fund forecasts, oil-importing countries are projected to grow at only 3 per cent in 2013, a rate far below what is required to dent high unemployment and well below the 4.5 per cent average of emerging and developing economies. This 'growth shortfall' is long-term: in real per capita gross domestic product (GDP), Arab States averaged only 0.5 per cent growth between 1980–2010, far below the 3 per cent average of their emerging and developing peers.

   iii. Economic growth and government budgets in some Arab States are vulnerable to oil and gas price and revenue shocks, which may hamper poverty reduction. Incomes for most oil and gas-producing countries have been protected by high prices since 2008, but Yemen, for example, has suffered from a prolonged decline in oil production over the past decade, and in 2012 Sudan suffered from a sharp decline in its oil revenues.

iv. Although 43 per cent of Arab populations are rural, agriculture – their primary economic activity – accounts for no more than 15 per cent of GDP, despite its importance for job creation in several countries. An unstable macroeconomic environment has deterred investment in high-value-added activities and tilted job markets towards unproductive low-value-added sectors, which have little impact on job creation. The public sector is the employer of last resort, even in economies with fiscal constraints, and especially in less rich countries.

v. Regional trade is not a catalyst for inclusive growth and development. The worldwide share of non-oil Arab trade is only 1 per cent (5 per cent including oil). Intra-Arab exports amount to only 5.2 per cent of total Arab exports, the weakest intra-regional figure in the world.

b. *Mitigating impacts of political transitions, conflict, instability and exposure to disasters*. The transitions in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen, conflict and instability in Syria, and outbreaks of violence in Lebanon impede regional development. They add to the pressures of existing crises, such as the violence in Iraq, renewed and unresolved conflicts in Somalia and Sudan, and the occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. These crises have tragic human and serious economic outcomes, spilling over to neighbouring countries, ratcheting up social tensions and harming development prospects. Natural disasters (often climate related) have also become more common in the region over the past decade, threatening lives and livelihoods in urban and rural areas, especially among the poor and vulnerable. The resulting forced migration to cities, for example, brings the newcomers into competition with native populations, sometimes stretching government's capacity to breaking point. The ability of the key institutions to handle both man-made and natural disasters successfully will, to a large extent, determine their credibility and legitimacy, as well as sustainability.

c. *Meeting increasing popular demands for transparency, voice and accountability*. Rapid social, economic and political changes underline the critical importance of inclusive and effective governance systems and the need to support them, yet multiple global indices still rank the Arab region poorly on voice and accountability. Arab countries also score very low on indices of perception of corruption in the public sector. Still, the region's 'e-participation' has climbed steeply, with a surge in Internet use from 1.6 per 100 users in 2001 to 30.8 in 2011. Most social and income groups have increasing demands – and are expressing them – for more political and economic participation, highlighting the need to institutionalize the channels for achieving human rights and social justice among all groups.

d. *Counteracting food, water and energy insecurity*. The region is facing serious challenges in food insecurity and water scarcity, exacerbated by climate change. In Yemen, for example, nearly half the population may be food insecure, while fifteen Arab countries are still below the international water poverty line of 1,000 cubic metres per person a year. Some 80 per cent of surface water comes from shared water resources – vital for agriculture – inflaming trans-boundary river and water tensions. Many countries have already seriously depleted their aquifers, including Qatar and Yemen. Yemen may become the first Arab country to run out of water, as soon as 2015, in some of its highly populated areas; a similar threat looms over Djibouti. High-income countries can afford expensive desalinized water, but not most of the poorer nations. Inefficiencies in energy consumption are also alarming, often made worse by energy subsidies that are a fiscal burden in non-oil and gas countries, and underscore the need to accelerate investments in energy efficiency and in renewable energies such as wind, solar and biomass. Land degradation is a concern for several countries – as with food, water and energy insecurity – hitting the most vulnerable groups hardest.

e. *Plugging the continuing gaps in women's participation and empowerment*. Gender equality and women's empowerment in the Arab region are generally assessed lower than elsewhere. According to the Global Gender Gap Index of 2012, the Arab region has the world's highest Global Gender Gap, including political empowerment, and economic

participation and opportunity. Political instability and change often cost women some of their hard-won gains. Female labour force participation is just under 24 per cent – among the lowest by region. The female share of GDP in the Arab region is only about 29 per cent, against 50 per cent of men's share in all developing countries. Similarly, the poverty rate is more than half as high for women than men, at around 32 per cent versus 19 per cent. While support for equality and women's empowerment has grown – if slowly – legislative and institutional frameworks still discriminate against women, and the share of Arab women in lower and upper houses of parliament is the world's lowest at 13 per cent.

f. *Boosting capacity of regional institutions to promote integration and South–South cooperation*. Regional and sub-regional bodies – such as the League of Arab States (LAS) and the GCC – are critical for helping poorer Arab countries deal with their political, economic and social challenges and develop responses through South-South cooperation and exchange. This and the above issues were highlighted at the Third Arab Economic and Social Development Summit in January 2013 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The regional institutions with a mandate for regional integration have yet, however, to upgrade their capacity along the lines of other regional groupings. Such steps would allow them to strengthen cooperation and adopt a development agenda for the region.

II. Lessons learned

6. The 2013 evaluation of the regional programme on Arab States (2010-2013) and numerous individual consultations with partners at project or programme level have singled out lessons to incorporate in the next phase of regional programme development and implementation:

a. *Consultations are important to increase national ownership*. The 2012 regional programme evaluation underlined the importance of consultations when regional projects are formulated. In the 2010-2013 cycle, the UNDP through its regional programme invested in consultations when developing the Arab Climate Resilience Initiative (ACRI) and the Aid for Trade Initiative for the Arab States. UNDP also adopted a consultative approach in order to involve beneficiaries in project implementation through 'networking' and to increase the chances of ownership and sustainability of interventions. UNDP will continue to invest in consultations for the regional programme while aiming to strike a balance between efficiency and effectiveness of processes and the legitimacy and ownership that consultations provide. To optimize use of time and resources, UNDP will move from project-based to thematic consultations at the outcome level to guide project initiation. It will also invest in the capacity of national and/or regional partners to sustain results after a project ends.

b. *Better institutional alignment is needed to ensure complementarities in regional programme delivery*. The regional programme is guided by 'regionality principles' (see below), whose application requires close cooperation across all UNDP units. The 2012 evaluation recommends that UNDP step up its country office engagement in regional programme implementation and utilize its knowledge architecture better. UNDP ensured that several projects in the 2010-2013 cycle benefitted from close country office engagement through a 'focal points' system, a common approach that UNDP will apply to all projects in the new cycle. The regional bureau will continue to engage with the UNDP Regional Service Centre whose advisory capacities remain critical in helping UNDP to find the best complementarities for the regional programme. UNDP will seek to institutionalize engagement with its corporate knowledge architecture in the delivery of the regional programme through project and thematic-based or country-based advisory teams.

c. *Improving efficiency and effectiveness of programme delivery*. Reflecting the lessons learned of the 2012 evaluation, UNDP will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the regional programme while strengthening its regional presence. UNDP will pool its

human resources in a region-based project management support unit to reduce overheads and improve coherence in delivering projects. These measures will also address the issue of 'remote management' that the evaluation raised. UNDP will invest the associated savings in the technical capacity in the projects requiring delivery specialization.

d. *It is important to enhance the responsiveness of the regional programme given the region's changing circumstances*. In line with the 2012 evaluation recommendations, UNDP will adjust the focus of the regional programme in some thematic areas. Poverty reduction through inclusive growth and employment, for example, requires further investment, particularly as governments have asked UNDP to stay focused on youth. UNDP will seek to develop a regional project that builds on current interventions for youth employment. Addressing governance issues in the changing environment is also essential. UNDP faces the challenge of how to address new needs, such as drafting constitutions, while continuing to respond to ongoing persistent needs, such as fighting corruption and strengthening accountability. Through the regional programme, UNDP will pursue a framework approach to transparency and accountability that will support the capacity and networking among, for example, parliaments, political parties, civil society and local governance actors. The regional programme will also feature an outcome area on gender with dedicated output-based indicators in other outcome areas to mainstream gender-focused activities in delivery.

e. *It is necessary to adopt a differentiated approach in project delivery across different contexts*. The approach of the new regional programme will require a differentiated, even nuanced, approach in transition, recovery and conflict settings. This will entail investment in conflict analysis to better understand local context and needs as well as and cross-country dimensions. UNDP will ensure that the programme remains vigilant to the needs of least developed countries through dedicated focus on those related projects.

f. *New regional partnerships should be targeted to enhance programme delivery and outreach*. Acknowledging the need to strengthen partnerships with regional organizations, the regional bureau will continue its efforts to establish strategic partnerships with regional actors, particularly the League of Arab States. It will continue using the regional United Nations Development Group teams to engage United Nations system partners and the regional coordination mechanism. The new programme builds on already set networks between governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, such as the Arab Anti-Corruption and Integrity Network (ACINET).

III. Proposed programme

7. The proposed programme is designed to respond to development challenges in a region that may well stay volatile, at least for a while. Popular demand is gaining traction in some places for increasing well-being and participation in decisions related to public resources and policy, but space for citizens to voice their demands and responsive institutions are often circumscribed. So the programme accentuates inclusion and resilience as cross-cutting, overarching principles for all its proposed areas of work and outcomes. It targets the means to improve economic opportunities, enable institutional transformation and actively manage risks, consolidate gains and prevent backsliding, by strengthening policies, systems and institutions. It focuses on high-quality analysis of development conditions and options, consensus-building around sensitive issues, a wider and deeper set of partnerships, institutional innovations and intensive South–South and triangular exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise with other countries and regions.

8. The programme is designed based on the above situation analysis and lessons learned, recalibrating its focus to stay on inclusive growth and youth employment, gender equality and women's empowerment, transparency and accountability, and risks related to climate change, disaster, conflict and transition. Continuous feedback from regional partners, especially during Executive Board discussions, regional consultations on the post-2015 development agenda and project-specific exchanges have been instrumental in its design.

9. Aligned with regional development priorities, the programme will be guided by UNDP development effectiveness principles set out in its strategic plan, 2014-2017 (DP/2013/40). These include twin spotlights on sustaining and expanding South-South solutions and cooperation in all intervention areas and on capacity development (the overarching contribution of UNDP).

10. A core focus will be to build knowledge for development and expand stakeholders' capacity to generate, acquire and apply knowledge in policy processes. Through the regional programme, UNDP strives to build capacity for policy debate and to contribute to policy change by providing regional platforms for discussion and by piloting initiatives in targeted countries. The main mechanism is the flagship *Arab Human Development Report* (AHDR), which since 2002 has championed the creation and dissemination of people-centred development knowledge and ideas throughout the region. The programme will continue to support this publication for thought leadership and advocacy. Although this and other knowledge-related outputs are only under selected outcome areas, their scope applies to all outcome areas.

11. Through the programme, UNDP will support countries and its country offices to improve national statistical systems (for national benefit) and data collection capacity, in order to strengthen monitoring and reporting as highlighted in the seven outcomes of the strategic plan, 2014–2017.

12. The regional work of UNDP in the Arab States is based on five 'regionality' principles, which define the value added of regional and sub-regional approaches to addressing development challenges:

a. Promotion of regional public goods based on strengthened regional cooperation and integration;

b. Management of cross-border externalities and spillovers that are best addressed collaboratively on an inter-country basis;

c. Advancement of awareness, dialogue and action on sensitive and/or emerging development issues that benefit strongly from multi-country experiences and perspectives;

d. Promotion of experimentation and innovation that overcomes institutional, financial and/or informational barriers that may be too high for an individual country to surmount;

e. Generation and sharing of development knowledge, experience and expertise, for instance, through South-South and triangular cooperation, so that countries can connect to, and benefit from, relevant experiences from across the region and beyond.

13. These principles are not mutually exclusive and are often interwoven in practice. UNDP may apply all five in a specific sub-programme as, for example, in its regular preparation of regional and/or sub-regional human development and MDG reports.

14. While efforts at country and regional levels have unique advantages in addressing development challenges, there is an additional dimension of work that contributes to maximizing development potential. It is the ability to connect, advance and utilize learning, knowledge, expertise and experiences across regions. This ability is central both to the value added of UNDP as well as to its effectiveness as one of the few truly global multilateral institutions. Building on all five regional programmes and a large and varied portfolio of country programmes – with the global programme providing the catalyst – UNDP will address interregional cooperation around a selected, strategic set of issues. An initial set of issues has emerged already from the bottom-up process of formulating regional programmes. These are the post-2015 development agenda and future sustainable development goals; climate and disaster risk management, including close linkages with natural resource management; conflict prevention; and recovery from crises.

15. The regional programme – following the UNDP strategic plan, 2014–2017 – will focus on three substantive areas of work: sustainable development pathways for the region;

inclusive and effective democratic governance systems; and resilience. It will go beyond what was done under the MDG framework by sharpening the focus on inequality, promoting inclusive growth and employment, ensuring safety from violence and greater access to justice, paying more attention to environmental degradation and pursuing more integrated, holistic developmental approaches that include social, youth and gender elements. The two driving elements are inclusion and resilience.

16. The proposed 2014–2017 regional programme for Arab States will focus on contributing to four outcomes of the UNDP strategic plan, 2014-2017.

Outcome 1. Growth and development is inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded (Strategic plan outcome 1)

17. In contributing to the efforts of regional institutions and countries to expand economic opportunities, the regional programme will support analysis, policies and interventions that facilitate employment and business opportunities in productive sectors, with an emphasis on engagement in trade, particularly intra-regionally. These will include: promoting the access of small and medium-size enterprises and matching skills of youth to regional trade opportunities in productive sectors in order to generate jobs and income; and establishing value chains and supporting export readiness that link smaller enterprises to the opportunities in the region, especially in poorer countries. Bringing together these aspects, UNDP will continue to support analysis and capacity for improved trade policy under the Aid for Trade Initiative for the Arab States, developed jointly by the International Islamic Trade and Finance Corporation and four other organizations of the United Nations Trade and Productive Capacity Cluster – the International Labour Organization (ILO), International Trade Centre, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

18. Building on specific national projects that support youth employment, the regional programme will address them through a regional approach and analysis, and mobilize regional institutions for a more systematic engagement and South–South exchange. It will introduce cross-country interventions and comparative analysis that promote youth self-employment through access to technical, vocational and entrepreneurial skills, matched with rising industries and sectors, supported by targeted financial services. UNDP will explore opportunities and lessons of exchange on employment schemes created through public sector and large infrastructure projects, and will link interventions to employment policies nationally and to cross-country exchanges and collaboration regionally. The programme will provide knowledge and disseminate best practices for use by country partners, offering support for policy analysis and formulation in order to monitor and address emerging poverty-related issues and advocate for stronger regional cooperation capacity.

19. The programme will focus on key regional and sub-regional aspects of the climate-resilient development agenda, including water, food and energy security, as well as moves towards energy efficiency and renewable energies. The programme will continue to cluster its interventions under ACRI and influence policy discussions and regulatory frameworks on natural resources (including new legislation and integration into national planning). ACRI will continue to support capacity development for climate change negotiators from the region on legal and technology-transfer issues (such as energy, water and other natural resources as well as environment-related areas). UNDP will support the development of capacities to access, deliver, monitor, report on and verify the use of climate finances, with the aim of using some of those finances to reduce vulnerabilities, especially among the poor.

20. The programme will feature a dedicated sub-programme on water governance and security. Building on the recommendations and analysis of the *Human Development Report* 2006 and *Water Governance in the Arab Region: Managing Scarcity and Securing the Future* (2013), it will support interventions demonstrating integrated water-management approaches, including non-conventional water supply systems. The

programme will continue to support Southern-driven scalable innovative solutions that inform research and policy debate nationally and regionally. It will also facilitate mechanisms and approaches promoting sub-regional dialogue on shared trans-boundary water systems in order to contain threats of escalating tensions.

21. ACRI and water governance interventions are linked in the programme to ensure complementarities with UNDP country programmes that support sub-national planning. This approach will help to expand potential of the interventions and connect their efforts in rural, peri-urban and urban areas to national and regional priorities, policy and knowledge.

22. To achieve the above objectives, UNDP will continue to work with the League of Arab States under the cooperation agreement that includes support in monitoring MDG achievements and in promoting youth employment, in accord with the targets set at the January 2013 Arab Economic and Social Development Summit in Riyadh.

23. As part of its collaboration with the League of Arab States, UNDP will South-South cooperation initiatives that promote inclusive growth and sustainable development, especially between the region's least developed, middle-income and net contributing countries.

24. Regionally, UNDP will continue to provide through the programme intellectual leadership, technical analysis and capacity development for sustainable development. The programme will be a platform for continuing regional debate on human development, bringing together stakeholders from government, civil society and the private sector. UNDP will work to ensure that regional debate is inclusive, targeting youth and women's groups, and that it draws on experiences and solutions from Southern partners in the region. UNDP will maintain production of its flagship AHDRs to support the debate.

25. Regional consultations on the post-MDG and post-2015 development agendas will continue to provide opportunities to revisit UNDP and United Nations system expectations in an era of political and development change. The programme will pursue its work to engage stakeholders in the development debate, as shaped by post-2015 consultations and the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). It will also strengthen the engagement and voices of Southern partners in regional policy dialogue.

26. In the 2010-2013 programme cycle, the different volumes of the UNDP *Arab Knowledge Report* helped build and share development knowledge, experience and expertise across the region and with other regions. At least four new knowledge products on economic and social reform, based on the Arab and national human development reports, will be developed by 2017 with national, regional and international partners.

Outcome 2. Citizen expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance (Strategic plan outcome 2)

27. Through the programme, UNDP – working with regional/sub-regional actors (such as parliaments, political parties, trade unions, civil society, youth groups, women's groups and national institutions for the rule of law, justice and human rights) – will continue prioritizing key governance interventions, regionally and sub-regionally, focused on inclusive citizenship and transparent and accountable political processes and institutions.

28. UNDP will seek to support efforts to strengthen the institutional capacity of legislatures to help them perform their core functions. It will assist in reviewing and formulating policies and undertaking a critical role in oversight. It will also facilitate civic participation in oversight processes. In line with outcomes 3 and 4, it will pay particular attention to the role of parliaments and political parties in contributing to women's empowerment as well as mediating social dialogue and reconciliation.

29. UNDP will support efforts to create a vibrant, responsible and capable civil society, which will contribute to more accountable and open governance systems and, more broadly, to regional development. In proposing such work, UNDP will remain alert and

ensure that the regional programme does not duplicate efforts at the country level and that the focus of the proposed area of work will be on linking country work to regional exchange, on supporting regional networks of key actors and on deploying expertise to facilitate catalytic interventions.

30. UNDP will work with countries seeking to improve quality of service delivery for citizens through better local governance, including moves to decentralization. In this way, it will demonstrate the importance of local governance for human development by promoting transparent, accountable institutions and by strengthening the delivery of basic social services, especially in conflict and post-conflict settings. Strengthening local governance remains a regional priority because it is the governance level closest to citizens, especially to secure more equitable access to services for the poor and other excluded groups. In order to keep local governance as part of the region's broader development debate and to promote best practice, UNDP will seek collaboration with networks of national and regional organizations.

31. Building on the successes and lessons from the 2010-2013 cycle, the programme will continue supporting ACINET in an effort to promote innovative approaches in key vulnerable areas and sectors, and to integrate anti-corruption and integrity principles and practices in national reform.

32. As several countries continue to undergo political transition, there is still a strong need for advocacy at the regional level on good governance and the rule of law. The AHDRs will remain the analytical tool of choice in contributing to the debate on democratic governance in the Arab world. These reports will also be a key link throughout other outcome areas of the proposed programme.

33. In implementing projects, the regional programme will focus more intently on cooperation with and capacity support for key regional institutions. Under the cooperation agreement between UNDP and the League of Arab States signed in September 2012, they will enhance their collaboration in executing regional projects. Through the programme, UNDP aims to work with the League on regional governance, including inclusive and responsive political processes and institutions.

Outcome 3. Faster progress is achieved in reducing gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment (Strategic plan outcome 4)

34. The regional programme will focus on supporting country transitions and post-conflict recovery, particularly women's participation in parliamentary, electoral and constitutional processes. It will include support for countries in the region in implementing their international commitments, for example, with regard to the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination against Women and issues related to gender-based violence, especially in more volatile conflict, post-conflict or transition settings. It will emphasize cross-country analysis and monitoring of women's political, economic and social life in such settings, in order to guide the drafting new laws and regulations, and constitutions if necessary, including support mechanisms for women's livelihoods and economic opportunities in conflict and post-conflict settings. The analysis will also contribute to the development debate at the regional, sub-regional and national levels to inform policy making through evidence and best practices. UNDP will assist target countries in implementing its eight-point Agenda for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality in Crisis Prevention and Recovery. The analysis will be used to develop a regional gender strategy in line with the UNDP global gender equality strategy.

35. The programme will follow and update the analytical framework as presented in the 2005 AHDR entitled *Towards the Rise of Women in the Arab World*, which focused on the roots, manifestations and implications of gender inequality. UNDP will update the report for the Beijing+20 World Conference on Women in 2015, reflecting recent changes in the region and focusing on the economic, political and social empowerment of women in the Arab world. Regional projects will continue to stress gender mainstreaming and sensitivity, women's representation and access, and their use and control of natural resources.

36. Through the regional programme, UNDP will seek to integrate its previous work on HIV/AIDS with its gender work, focusing on poor mobility and higher risks and vulnerabilities, as well as stigma and discrimination that women face in such settings, particularly in the Horn of Africa. This new focus builds on previous successes and lessons, and will allow the programme to concentrate more in higher-risk areas and population groups.

37. The programme will expand collaboration with regional bodies and regional civil society and non-governmental organizations in order to advance gender equality, empowerment and mainstreaming.

Outcome 4. Early recovery and rapid return to sustainable development pathways are achieved in post-conflict and post-disaster settings (Strategic plan outcome 6)

38. The regional programme will pay close attention to mechanisms for assessing natural and human-made risks nationally and sub-nationally. Building regional and sub-national knowledge while recognizing the differences among and within countries is essential to facilitating a deeper understanding of issues affected by conflict and leading to it, and to guide solutions that could address them. The programme will pursue integrated risk and vulnerability assessments to address the multiple stressors in regional governance, administration and institutional capacity. These assessments entail scanning risks to prepare for and manage future shocks, which will require a cross-sectoral approach through mobilizing expertise, including that from the South.

39. Through a component under ACRI, and with the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa, the regional programme will support the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in facilitating efforts to put in place institutional, legislative and policy frameworks to bolster disaster and climate risk-management measures, focusing on the Horn of Africa.

40. The programme will highlight social cohesion and reconciliation, especially in transition and recovery settings, aspects that are becoming increasingly important in the Arab region. It will also feature a new project to support selected post-conflict/transition countries, recognizing the vast differences across countries. Other emphasis will be on reinforcing the rule of law and citizen security, based on reforming legal systems to deal with discrimination that may be undermining reconciliation efforts. Linked to the proposed emphasis under outcome 1, the programme will keep its focus on transitional justice in the work under this outcome and will work with national institutions for human rights and rule of law institutions to facilitate social cohesion and reconciliation.

IV.   Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

41. 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, including those aspects related to programme/project monitoring and evaluation, the regionalization principles, and United Nations reform and coordination. They will also be guided by the 2012 quadrennial comprehensive policy review, which includes findings of the United Nations General Assembly on United Nations operational activities for development.

42. UNDP will strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of the regional programme by using targeted indicators to measure progress and development results. In addition, UNDP will commission a baseline study to further assess the current development context against the indicators developed in the attached integrated results and resources framework. UNDP will implement the regional programme through regional projects, which will be developed following a broad-based consultative process involving national stakeholders and UNDP country offices in the region.

43. 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 towards increased regional presence.

44. In order to maximize the level of complementarity with country programmes and take full advantage of UNDP strategic guidance on how best to respond to changing country contexts and emerging challenges, UNDP will institutionalize the regional programme's engagement with the in-house knowledge architecture and expertise through programme-wide and project/thematic-based advisory teams. UNDP will strengthen country level coordination by designating and working with UNDP country office and partner focal points, based on mutual understanding of partnerships around agreed work plans and the participation of the focal points in the advisory teams mentioned above.

45. A consolidated unit in the region will spearhead project management to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in delivery. Through this unit, the regional programme will further invest in building resources and results monitoring, reporting, and communication capacity based on results-based management principles for programme delivery.

46. RBAS will strive to ensure that the indicative amount of $20 million from regular resources is committed as base funding for the execution of the present regional programme document, subject to availability of funds. RBAS will allocate a portion of the committed regional programme resources to programme development and monitoring, including funding pilot projects and emerging regional initiatives intended to ensure greater flexibility when responding to emerging needs of the Arab States. RBAS will also intensify its resource mobilization efforts, and strive to raise additional resources in the projected amount of $29 million from other sources, subject to donor interest. Furthermore, RBAS will seek innovative ways of mobilizing resources, involving regional partners and the private sector. Should resource mobilization efforts not yield expected results, RBAS will review and reprioritize the activities and focus of interventions in the regional programme document.

V. Partnerships

47. The RBAS regional programme is conceived as a framework for strengthening development cooperation across countries by supporting shared development challenges and by catalysing development solutions. Through the programme, UNDP will strive to build common visions among beneficiaries and development partners, and thereby achieve targeted solutions by merging contributions of financial resources and knowledge sharing. In this context, the regional programme will build thematic partnerships with several actors within each outcome.

48. The regional programme will build partnerships with regional and global entities, particularly from the South, in an effort to promote and facilitate dialogue, processes, programmes and policies based on the best knowledge available. The regional programme will be instrumental in connecting countries of the region to development partners, regionally and globally. These efforts will in turn spur debate around priority development issues and introduce innovative ideas and initiatives, particularly from the South, which will help to identify the right solutions for development challenges.

49. The programme will contribute to establishing, strengthening and facilitating networks in the region that contribute to development results, including the media, academic institutions, foundations, and the private sector. UNDP will make special efforts to enhance cooperation and dialogue with existing and emerging civil society organizations in the region. Such alliances will help to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the activities and projects of the regional programme.

50. Within this strategy, the regional programme will establish close cooperation with regional actors and build further on the existing strategic partnership with the League of Arab States. Through the regional programme, UNDP will also cooperate with the Gulf Cooperation Council. It will partner with regional funds such as the Arab funds, the Islamic Development Bank and the African Development Bank, and will expand its

partnerships with traditional donor partners active in the Arab region. Forms of partnerships will include substantive, and where feasible, financial engagement.

51. UNDP will use the regional programme to strengthen coordination and collaboration with the United Nations system in the region, working closely with the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Economic Commission for Africa as well as other entities such as ILO, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Division for Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Environment Programme, UNCTAD and the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. It will also work with the broader family of multilateral institutions, such as the World Bank, and World Trade Organization.

52. South-South and triangular cooperation will be key elements of the programme, and will focus on areas identified in the proposed programme, especially targeting transition and post-conflict countries as well as least developed countries. These partnerships and cooperation will be an important component in conceptualizing regional programme activities. They will include supporting cross-country and neighbourhood initiatives, and regional integration efforts through harmonization of policies, legal frameworks and regulations for sustaining and expanding South-South and triangular cooperation that maximize mutual benefit, in partnership with relevant regional and sub-regional entities. The regional programme will also facilitate collaboration with other regions, targeting exchanges that promote access to technology and finances and to specialized knowledge on innovative, scalable development solutions.

Annex. Results and resources framework for the regional programme for Arab States (2014-2017)

REGIONAL PRIORITY OR GOAL: (Related to MDGs/SDGs and/or other regionally agreed development goals)		
Regional programme outcome 1: Growth is inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded (Strategic plan outcome 1)		
Regional programme outcome: baseline, indicator(s), targets, and sources of data	**Indicative regional programme outputs**	**Indicative resources by regional programme outcome**
Outcome 1: Growth is inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded (Strategic plan outcome 1) **Outcome indicators (Strategic plan):** 1. Employment rate (formal and informal), (disaggregated by sector and sub-sector and by sex, age and excluded groups) 2. Coverage of social protection systems (disaggregated by sex, age, income, rural/urban and at risk groups) 3. Annual emissions of carbon dioxide (in million metric tons) 4. Coverage of cost-efficient and sustainable energy (disaggregated by energy source and beneficiary, sex, rural/urban and excluded groups) 5. Number of hectares of land that are managed sustainably under an access and benefits sharing regime	**Output 1.1.** National and sub-national systems and institutions enabled to achieve structural transformation of productive capacities that are sustainable and employment and livelihoods intensive (Strategic plan output 1.1) **Output 1.2.** Solutions developed at national and sub-national levels for sustainable management of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystem services (Strategic plan output 1.3) **Output 1.3.** Scaled up action on climate change adaptation and mitigation across sectors is funded and implemented (Strategic plan output 1.4) **Output 1.4.** Legal and regulatory frameworks, policies and institutions enabled to ensure the conservation, sustainable use, and access and benefit sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, in line with international conventions and national legislation (Strategic plan output 2.5) **Output 1.5.** Global (regional) consensus on completion of MDGs and the post 2015 agenda informed by contributions from UNDP (Strategic plan output 7.1)	*Regular resources* $8,000,000 *Other resources* $10,000,000

Regional programme outcome 2: Citizen expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance (Strategic plan outcome 2)		
Regional programme outcome: baseline, indicator(s), targets, and sources of data	**Indicative regional programme outputs**	**Indicative resources by regional programme outcome**
Outcome 2: Citizen expectations for voice, effective development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance (Strategic plan outcome 2) **Outcome indicators (Strategic plan):** 1. Number of countries with open access to data on budgets, expenditures and public procurement 2. Voter turnout (disaggregated by sex, age, and excluded groups) 3. Proportion of women to men in parliaments 4. Peaceful completion of electoral and constitutional processes	**Output 2.1.** Parliaments, constitution making bodies and electoral institutions enabled to perform core functions for improved accountability, participation and representation, including for peaceful transitions (Strategic plan output 2.1) **Output 2.2.** Institutions and systems enabled to address awareness, prevention and enforcement of anti-corruption measures across sectors and stakeholders (Strategic plan output 2.2) **Output 2.3.** Frameworks and dialogue processes engaged for effective and transparent engagement of civil society in national development (Strategic plan output 2.4) **Output 2.4.** Mechanisms in place to generate and share knowledge about development solutions (Strategic plan output 7.7)	*Regular resources* $7,550,000 *Other resources* $12,000,000
Regional programme outcome 3: Faster progress is achieved in reducing gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment (Strategic plan outcome 4)		
Regional programme outcome: baseline, indicator(s), targets, and sources of data	**Indicative regional programme outputs**	**Indicative resources by regional programme outcome**
Outcome 3: Faster progress is achieved in reducing gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment (Strategic plan outcome 4) **Outcome indicators (Strategic plan):** 1. Wage gaps between men and women, (disaggregated by rural and urban) 2. Women's access to credit (commercial and micro-credit) 3. Proportion of women subjected to physical or sexual abuse in the last 12 months	**Output 3.1.** Country led measures accelerated to advance women's economic empowerment (Strategic plan output 4.1) **Output 3.2** Measures in place and implemented across sectors to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence (Strategic plan output 4.2) **Output 3.3.** Evidence-informed national strategies and partnerships to advance gender equality and women's empowerment (Strategic plan output 4.3) **Output 3.4.** Measures are in place to increase women's participation in decision-making (Strategic plan output 4.4)	*Regular resources* $1,000,000 *Other resources* $4,000,000

4. Proportion of decision making positions (executive, legislative and judicial) occupied by women at national and sub-national levels 5. Proportion of decision making positions in peace building processes which are occupied by women		

Regional programme outcome 4: Early recovery and rapid return to sustainable development pathways are achieved in post-conflict and post-disaster settings (Strategic plan outcome 6)

Regional programme outcome: baseline, indicator(s), targets, and sources of data	Indicative regional programme outputs	Indicative resources by regional programme outcome
Outcome 4: Early recovery and rapid return to sustainable development pathways are achieved in post-conflict and post-disaster settings (Strategic plan outcome 6) **Outcome Indicators (Strategic plan):** 1. Extent to which the agreed post 2015 agenda and SDGs reflects sustainable human development concepts and ideas 2. Existence of an initial global agreement on financing mechanisms for the post 2015 agenda and SDGs 3. Number of countries integrating and adapting the post 2015 agenda and SDGs into national development plans and budgets 4. Existence of a global succession plan to ensure unfinished MDGs are taken up post 2015 5. Number of countries with post-2015 poverty eradication commitments and targets	**Output 4.1.** Recovery processes reinforce social cohesion and trust and enable rapid return to sustainable development (Strategic plan output 6.4) **Output 4.2.** Effective institutional, legislative and policy frameworks in place to enhance the implementation of disaster and climate risk management measures at national and sub-national levels (Strategic plan output 5.2) **Output 4.3.** Mechanisms are enabled for consensus-building around contested priorities, and address specific tensions, through inclusive and peaceful processes (Strategic plan output 5.6)	*Regular resources* $3,655,000 *Other resources* $3,000,000