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ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY and CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT



PRACTITIONER'S GUIDE:
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

**Practitioner's Guide:
Capacity Development for Environmental Sustainability**

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We are pleased to share this Practitioner's Guide: Capacity Development for Environmental Sustainability, which brings together UNDP's experiences and expertise in both capacity development and environmental sustainability, to provide practical guidance for UNDP staff, development practitioners, and partners. The Guide builds on UNDP's overall approach to supporting capacity development by elaborating specific guidance and tools for strengthening capacities related to environmental mainstreaming and management and to this end is an important addition to UNDP's package of services and associated products.

At the heart of capacity development for environmental sustainability is the inextricable link between the environment and socio-economic development. Ecosystem goods and services play a critical role in the provision of livelihoods, good health, habitable environs and resiliency for poor people around the world. Conversely, if ecosystem goods and services are degraded or access is denied, poverty is exacerbated and the natural resource capital for economic development is compromised. This linkage between environment and development was recognized in Agenda 21, agreed to at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, which sets forth a global plan of action for sustainable development. In the 20 years since Rio, the impacts of climate change on socio-economic development have become clearer, calling for more urgent, improved, and innovative approaches to develop countries' absorptive capacities and socio-economic resilience to environmental perturbations.

To that end, UNDP supports countries' capacity development needs to achieve environmental sustainability. UNDP focuses on supporting countries as they strengthen their institutional frameworks needed to better manage the inherently complex relationship between environment and development in order to meet and sustain socio-economic and environmental outcomes. This Practitioner's Guide is a particularly important tool to catalyze the replication of good practices to develop and sustain national capacities for environmental sustainability. While this Guide provides a set of practical tools, and a series of case studies documenting challenges and lessons learned, it remains a work in progress. This Guide will continue to evolve over time, building upon the application of the tools contained therein, new experiences, and new science. To that end, we invite practitioners to share feedback and lessons learned as part of the larger community of practice on environmental sustainability.

We are confident that this Guide will be an important contribution to the strengthening of the capabilities of our own organization and development partners and practitioners as we advocate, programme for, and measure the impact of capacity development for environmental sustainability.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Vandeweerd', is written over a horizontal line.

Veerle Vandeweerd
Director, Environment and Energy Group
Bureau for Development Policy

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Boesen', is written over a horizontal line.

Nils Boesen
Director, Capacity Development Group
Bureau for Development Policy



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UNDP Advisory Group:

Linda Ghanimé
Holly Mergler
Jennifer Colville
Stephen Gold
Kevin Hill
Paul Steele
Tom Twining-Ward

Consultant:

Susan Abs

Case Studies and Examples:

Marcel Alers and Robert Kelly (Clean Development Mechanism)
Belinda Bowling (UNEP, Case study #4 - Afghanistan)
Andrew Crane-Droesch and Charles Nyandiga (Community-Based Adaptation)
Julia Wolf (Adaptation Learning Mechanism)
Batdelger Luuzan (Public Private Partnerships for Service Delivery)
Patsy Ross (UNDP Guyana)
David Smith and Elise Christensen (Case Study #3 – Poverty-Environment Initiative)
Paul Taylor and Joakim Harlin (Case Study #2 - Cap-Net)
Marco Van der Ree (UN Volunteers)
Alice Ruhweza (Namibia)

Additionally, this guide would not have been possible without the various contributions and feedback received from colleagues involved in capacity development for environmental sustainability.



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|--------|---|
| AfDB | African Development Bank |
| ALM | Adaptation Learning Mechanism |
| CB2 | Capacity-Building 2 (Global Environment Facility programme) |
| BDP | Bureau for Development Policy (UNDP) |
| CBA | Community-Based Adaptation Programme |
| CBO | Community-Based Organisation |
| CD | Capacity Development |
| CDDES | Capacity Development for Environmental Sustainability |
| CDM | Clean Development Mechanism |
| CIDA | Canadian International Development Agency |
| UNECA | UN Economic Commission for Africa |
| EEG | Environment and Energy Group (UNDP, BDP) |
| EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment |
| ENGO | Environmental Non-Government Organisation |
| ES | Environmental Sustainability |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| GHG | Greenhouse Gas |
| GTZ | German Technical Cooperation |
| HRD | Human Resources Development |
| IWRM | Integrated Water Resource Management |
| IUCN | World Conservation Union |
| MDG(s) | Millennium Development Goal(s) |
| MEA | Multilateral Environmental Agreement |
| NGO | Non-Government Organisation |
| PEI | UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative |
| PEP | Poverty Environment Partnership |
| PPPSD | Public-Private Partnerships for Service Delivery |
| PRSP | Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper |
| RBM | Results-Based Management |
| SGP | Small Grants Programme |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNDG | United Nations Development Group |
| UNCBD | UN Convention on Biological Diversity (Biodiversity) |
| UNCCD | UN Convention to Combat Desertification |
| UNFCCC | UN Framework Convention on Climate Change |
| WSS | Water and Sanitation Services |
| ZOPP | GTZ's Goal Oriented Project Planning |



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Capacity development and environmental sustainability are both central to UNDP's mandate and programming. The purpose of this Practitioner's Guide is to provide practical guidance to UNDP staff, partner countries and other development partners on the nature of environmental capacity and how to support capacity development for environmental sustainability (CDES). The guide builds on UNDP's *Practice Note on Capacity Development* and *Practice Note on Capacity Assessment* and incorporates best practices from CDES experience to date. The main text of this guide presents the UNDP approach to CDES, including guiding principles, an analytical framework and a five-step process that can be adapted to various settings. Annex A provides practical tools to implement this approach, Annex B provides case studies, and Annex C lists references.

Capacity development for environmental sustainability is defined as the process by which individuals, organisations and societies strengthen their ability to address environmental issues, manage natural resource issues, and mainstream environmental sustainability into development policies, plans and decisions. To support the achievement of environmental sustainability, UNDP support to CDES may involve strengthening capacities within one or more of these three interrelated fields of activity:

1. **Environmental Mainstreaming**: including integration of environmental sustainability priorities into national and sub-national policy, legal, planning and budgeting frameworks; across key development sectors; and across various segments of society.
2. **Environment "sector"**, including "traditional" environmental management activities such as air, water and waste management; pollution prevention and control; protection of biodiversity and protected areas management (may include provision of water, sanitation and energy services).
3. **Natural resource sectors**, including sustainable management and use of renewable and non-renewable resources.

Several challenges to CDES efforts arise from the nature of environmental sustainability (ES), including:

- **Diversity of global, national and local ecosystems; ecological conditions; and human-ecosystem interactions**, which requires that CDES be tailored to specific geographical and social contexts;
- **Political nature of environmental decisions**, which raises issues of equity and human rights, as well as government and private sector accountability, responsiveness and leadership;
- **Multi-sectoral nature of environmental issues**, which requires that capacity should be developed across sectors and within various segments of society;
- **Interdisciplinary nature of ES solutions**, which requires developing the capacity to integrate diverse scientific and social science disciplines, and local and traditional knowledge; and
- **Exclusion of ecological goods and services from macro and microeconomics**, which requires building new capacities for including economic valuation of these assets in decision-making.



Young woman carrying sheaf of rice Nepal, Kathmandu Valley, Sankhu village. Source: Getty Images.

UNDP’s analytical framework for CDES recognises three levels of capacity – the individual, the organisation and the enabling environment (or “system level”), which includes the political, social, economic, policy, legal and regulatory systems within which organisations and individuals operate. The framework also identifies key capacities that can be strengthened in order to achieve specific environmental sustainability goals. These include *functional capacities* needed to undertake the core functions involved in implementing CDES initiatives, including capacities to:

1. Assess a situation, define goals, and analyse and choose options;
2. Formulate policies, legislation, plans and strategies;
3. Budget, manage and implement, including mobilising resources;
4. Monitor, evaluate, report and learn;
5. Engage stakeholders and undertake multi-sectoral collaboration;
6. Generate, manage, use and communicate information and knowledge; and
7. Design and/or reform environmental institutional arrangements



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They also include *technical capacities* needed to carry out specific environmental and natural resource management activities and to promote mainstreaming of ES, including capacities to:

1. Protect, manage and sustainably use ecological goods and services;
2. Design and manage pollution prevention, abatement, and control programmes;
3. Protect, manage and sustainably use natural resources;
4. Assess, reduce and manage environment-related risks, using the precautionary approach;
5. Use legal and regulatory tools for environmental sustainability;
6. Use awareness and education tools for environmental sustainability;
7. Use economic instruments as tools for environmental sustainability;
8. Use voluntary instruments as tools for environmental sustainability;
9. Mainstream environmental sustainability across development sectors; and
10. Implement MEAs and international cooperation programmes.

UNDP has identified four common “core issues” that seem to have the greatest influence on capacity development:

1. ***Institutional Arrangements***: the overall framework for development planning and decision-making, including political, legal, regulatory, policy and organisational frameworks and processes;
2. ***Accountability***: includes reporting relationships within institutions and the two-way relationship between public and private sector organisations and those who are affected by their actions;
3. ***Environmental Leadership***: the ability of organisations and individuals to influence change, motivate action and mobilise stakeholders on ES issues and
4. ***Knowledge and information***: the basis for ensuring that development decision-making and initiatives are informed by sound scientific and technical information related to ES and the content for environmental education and training in support of CDES.

This analytical framework can be used during the five-step process for CDES, as follows:

1. Engage stakeholders in capacity development (this should continue through the following steps),
2. Assess capacity assets and needs,
3. Formulate the capacity development response,
4. Implement the capacity development response, and
5. Evaluate capacity development results.



UNDP has a renewed role and solid track record to offer as a development agency entrusted to deliver on CDES. The agency's *Strategic Plan 2008-13* states that capacity development is its "core service to programme countries" and positions "environment and sustainable development" as one of four practice areas. The agency has been a key contributor to the evolving theory and practice of CDES since the early 1990s, and has considerable experience at the country level and in developing CDES guidance and tools, especially in its role as an implementing agency for the Global Environment Facility.

UNDP support to CDES can include multiple approaches within the following broad categories:

- Advisory and technical support to programme/project design, implementation and monitoring;
- Policy dialogue, advocacy and awareness-raising on CDES;
- Information-sharing and collaboration among stakeholders;
- Knowledge management for environmental sustainability;
- Integration of CDES across UNDP Practice Areas; and
- Global partnerships and joint programmes on environmental sustainability.

There is increasing recognition that a programmatic approach to CDES, based on long-term investment, is a key to success. For UNDP, this means making CDES part of its strategic approach to mainstreaming environmental sustainability across agency programming. At the *enabling environment level*, UNDP can support country-led capacity development responses to strengthen the political, social, policy, legal and regulatory frameworks and conditions that support environmental sustainability across sectors. At the *organisational level*, UNDP can support initiatives to strengthen institutional arrangements and improve the accountability and responsiveness of government. It can also help expand the capacities of civil society, local communities and the private sector to contribute to achieving environmental sustainability. At the *individual level*, UNDP can support activities to ensure that environmental education and training activities complement efforts to build capacity at the other two levels.



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1 INTRODUCTION

An essential ingredient in the UNDP capacity development approach is transformation that is generated and sustained over time from within.¹

Capacity development and environmental sustainability are both central to UNDP's mandate and programming. This Practitioner's Guide provides a common analytical framework and practical guidance for agency support to capacity development for environmental sustainability (CDES).² The main target audience is UNDP staff involved in programme/project design, management and monitoring, and their national partners. It may also be useful for experts and project teams providing policy advice and programme delivery services, as well as capacity development practitioners in the wider UN system and in other organisations. This guidance will evolve based on experience in its application, and new tools may be developed based on emerging needs.

This guide complements UNDP Practice Notes on [Capacity Development](#) (UNDP, 2008a) and [Capacity Assessment](#) (UNDP, 2008b) and incorporates best practices and lessons learned from extensive global experience in environmental capacity development. The main body of the guide outlines an analytical framework and approach for CDES, while Annex A provides practical planning and programming tools to implement the approach. The guide is organized as follows: Section 1 provides a rationale for CDES and defines key concepts. Section 2 outlines UNDP's approach to CDES, including guiding principles, levels of capacity/entry points, key environmental capacities and four "core issues" in capacity development. Section 3 summarizes a five-step process for undertaking CDES. Section 4 discusses programming implications and options for UNDP. Section 5 presents selected lessons learned regarding each of the four core issues. Short "Example Boxes" illustrate key points throughout the guide. Annex A provides three practical CDES programming tools. Annex B provides four case studies and Annex C lists selected references.

1.1 What is Capacity Development for Environmental Sustainability?

While CDES concepts and definitions are subject to discussion and continue to evolve, Box 1 presents "working definitions" for the purposes of this guide. As noted in these definitions, a key characteristic of environmental capacity development is its cross-cutting, multi-sectoral nature. To be successful, CDES should be integrated into multiple development sectors, going beyond "traditional" environmental management functions. While national environmental governance systems vary greatly, most countries are involved in three interrelated fields of activity, all of which can benefit from improved capacity:³

¹ Adapted from UNDP, 2009d. Capacity Development: A UNDP Primer. www.undp.org/capacity

² The terms "capacity development for environment" and "environmental capacity development" are also used.

³ Some practitioners prefer not to position environment as a "sector" since many environmental management functions involve regulating other sectors. However, this document proposes this three-part typology for analyzing capacity at an operational level, which parallels the typical division of roles among government agencies. Clearly, the three categories overlap in practice. Other typologies can be used, e.g., "green issues" can be said to cover air, water, soil and biodiversity issues, while "brown issues" relate to managing the environmental impacts of human activities such as transportation and industry; however, these two categories also overlap.



1. **Environmental mainstreaming:** includes integration of environmental sustainability priorities (a) into national and sub-national policy, legal, regulatory, planning and budgeting frameworks, (b) across key development sectors, at policy, planning and operational levels; and (c) across various segments of society, including government, civil society and the private sector.
2. **Environmental “sector”:** This includes environmental management activities such as air, water, soil and waste management; pollution prevention and control; protection of biodiversity, including ecosystems, species and genetic resources; and protected areas management. This field may include provision of water, waste management, sanitation and energy services, although these functions are often provided by separate agencies, usually at the local level.
3. **Natural resource sectors:** includes protection and sustainable management and use of renewable resources, in sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, aquaculture, hunting and harvesting of wildlife; and sustainable use of non-renewable resources, such as oil, gas and other minerals.

The framework and tools provided in this guide can be applied to capacity development to address climate change. However, more detailed guidance may be needed to address the broad climate change agenda, which includes mitigation, adaptation and community resilience⁴ and may also be needed for other specialized environmental sustainability topics.



Source: GEF Small Grants Programme, Ecuador

⁴ See, for example, OECD 2009, UNDG 2009, UNDG 2010b and UNDP 2010.



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BOX 1. KEY CDES DEFINITIONS

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| CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT | The process through which individuals, organisations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain their capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time. Components of capacity include skills, systems, structures, processes, values, resources and powers that together, confer a range of political, managerial and technical capabilities. |
| ENTRY POINTS FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT | Capacity development can occur at the level of the individual, the organisation and the enabling environment, which refers to the policy, legal, regulatory, economic and social systems within which organisations and individuals operate. |
| CAPACITY ASSESSMENT | An analysis of desired capacities against existing capacities, in order to develop an understanding of capacity assets and needs as the basis for formulating a capacity development response. |
| ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (ES) | The protection and sustainable management and use of ecosystems and natural resources, including ensuring equitable access to, and governance of, ecological goods and services. Environmental sustainability is one of the three interlocking components of <i>sustainable development</i> , along with social and economic sustainability, and aims to safeguard the ecological underpinnings of all development. |
| ENVIRONMENTAL MAINSTREAMING | The integration of environmental sustainability into all aspects of development, as called for by MDG Target 7a under MDG7 : “Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources”. Mainstreaming requires that environmental considerations be incorporated into decision-making within all development sectors and across all segments of society. It also involves harmonizing local, national and global environmental sustainability priorities and actions. |
| CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY (CDES) | The process by which individuals, organisations and societies strengthen their ability to address environmental issues, manage natural resources and ensure that environmental sustainability is integrated into development policies, plans, programmes and decisions, i.e., “mainstreaming”. |
| ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE | The structures and processes through which environmental decisions are made and implemented, including political systems, institutional arrangements, and mechanisms to promote adherence to the rule of law, accountability, participation, transparency and responsiveness. |



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| <p>STAKEHOLDER</p> | <p>Anyone who is affected by, interested in, and/or has an influence on a specific issue or decision, in this case, related to environmental sustainability. This includes “internal” stakeholders, i.e., actors within the organisation or community responsible for addressing the issue at hand, and “external” stakeholders, i.e., actors outside the organisation that have a “stake” in the issue because they are affected by, interested in, or able to influence the results.</p> |
| <p>ECOLOGICAL GOODS AND SERVICES</p> | <p>The benefits to all living organisms that arise from the functioning of healthy ecosystems, which provide the basis for human sustenance and well-being. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) divided these services into four categories:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) <i>Provisioning</i>, e.g. food, water, fibre, fuel; 2) <i>Regulating</i>, e.g. climate regulation, water, nutrient cycles, disease; 3) <i>Cultural</i>, e.g. spiritual, aesthetic, recreational, educational; and 4) <i>Supporting</i> (e.g. plant production, soil formation, pollination). <p>This concept is often associated with the idea of “natural capital”, which extends the idea of “capital” to ecosystems, in order to understand their finite nature and the need to ensure they are not depleted or degraded beyond their ability to recover their productivity.</p> |
| <p>ENVIRONMENTAL GOODS AND SERVICES</p> | <p>This term can refer to either</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) the economic sector (formal and informal) that includes procurement and delivery of goods and services derived from ecosystems and/or natural resources, e.g., water, energy; or 2) the economic sector that provides the goods and services used to measure, prevent, limit, minimize or correct environmental damage, e.g., pollution control, clean technologies. This document will use the first meaning. (Some references use this term as synonymous with “ecological goods and services”, above.) |

1.2 The Context for CDES

A series of high-profile global events, organized in response to increasing environmental deterioration and the growth of the environmental movement, has contributed to the continuing rise of environmental sustainability on the global agenda. The UN’s 1972 “Stockholm Conference” was one of the first major international conferences on environmental issues. In the decade that followed it, many of the foundations of global and national environmental governance were laid (Baylis and Smith, 2005). Most countries created national environmental agencies with associated laws and regulations, the UN Environment Programme was born, and the first wave of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)⁵ – focused mainly on wildlife and ocean issues – were passed.

⁵ MEAs include all international agreements, e.g., treaties, conventions, protocols, on environment-related topics.



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The UN's 1992 "Rio Conference" or "Earth Summit" marked another turning point in global efforts to integrate environment and development. The concept of "sustainable development", which had emerged in the 1980s (IUCN, 1980 and WCED, 1987), took centre stage as a new paradigm for development and Agenda 21 set out a global blueprint to achieve it. The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity were adopted, with the Convention to Combat Desertification to follow in 1994.

The subsequent global economic downturn slowed progress on conference recommendations, yet the intervening period eventually saw tremendous growth in the number and range of activities to address environmental sustainability issues. At the global level, there has been a proliferation of MEAs, with associated implementing bodies and programmes.⁶ Developing countries have adopted wide-ranging institutional arrangements to address environmental and natural resource issues, often with international support. The number and diversity of environmental civil society organisations have multiplied, and many international, national and local government, non-government and private sector organisations have brought environmental priorities into their agendas.

The dawn of the 21st century brought renewed global commitments to sustainable development and a more effective role for international cooperation in those efforts. Significant global mobilisation is occurring around the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including [MDG7](#): "Ensure environmental sustainability."⁷ The threat of climate change globally and continuing environmental deterioration locally has also brought unprecedented recognition of the ecological basis for poverty reduction. This has lent greater urgency to the search for practical ways to mainstream environmental sustainability into all aspects of development.

Despite the immense expansion in environmental management systems, serious and often worsening environmental conditions and resource depletion threaten to undermine development gains. Recent assessments show that the pace, scale and scope of progress on environmental sustainability are inadequate, in part because many underlying causes of unsustainable practices remain in place.⁸ Significant improvements in environmental governance are needed to ensure that short-term economic gains in emerging economies do not come at the expense of life support systems. There is growing evidence that capacity development and improved governance can play a pivotal role in achieving sustainable development, as cited in PEP-PEI, 2008:

While many variables influence sustainability nationally, five of the most significant concern capacity and governance. (Yale and Columbia, 2005. Environmental Sustainability Index)⁹

Where nations are managing natural wealth well, 40% of good performance is linked to human capital, while 60% can be attributed to the rule of law. (World Bank, 2005. Where is the Wealth of Nations)

⁶ Kanie (2007) has identified over 500 MEAs, of which about 300 are regional in scope, citing Ecolex project (UNDP, FAO, IUCN) and International Environmental Agreements database. 61 address atmosphere, 155 are on biodiversity, 179 on chemicals, hazardous substances and waste, 46 on land issues and 197 on water issues (Chasek, 2007).

⁷ MDG7, Target 7a: "Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes; reverse loss of environmental resources".

⁸ See, for example, Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Millennium Project reports, World Resources Institute Reports and database <http://earthtrends.wri.org/>

⁹ Of the 71 variables identified in the study as influencing sustainability, the five that correlate most highly with sustainability performance relate to capacity and governance, i.e., civil and political liberties, environmental governance (using World Economic Forum Survey), government effectiveness, political institutions and participation in MEAs).



1.3 UNDP Mandate for CDES

UNDP works in the area of the environment because the poorest countries are precisely those that have suffered most as a result of environmental degradation. The cycle of poverty and environmental degradation has been largely ignored by investors, funds and development banks. Where national and regional capacities are weakest is where UNDP is needed most. This is especially true for access to energy and water and in the area of climate change, which will affect national development into the foreseeable future. (UNDP Executive Board, 2008)

Capacity development for environmental sustainability emerged as a central theme in the Earth Summit's [Agenda 21](#) (1992) and the OECD-DAC¹⁰ issued the first donor guidelines on the topic in 1995. The importance of CDES has been reiterated at the [World Summit on Sustainable Development](#) (2002) and in various MDG and MEA implementation strategies.

More recently, capacity development has emerged as the cornerstone of renewed efforts to increase aid effectiveness and ensure country-driven, locally-defined development. The [Paris Declaration](#) on Aid Effectiveness (2005) underlined the need to enhance capacity, create partnerships and strengthen country development strategies, in part through setting explicit capacity development goals, with donors in a supporting role. This direction was reinforced in the [Accra Agenda for Action](#) (2008), which calls for the use of country systems, including systems for “social and environmental assessment”, as the main vehicles for capacity development to achieve the MDGs, MEAs and other national development goals.

UNDP is committed to playing a key role in supporting capacity development.¹¹ The UN Development Group identifies “environmental sustainability” and “capacity development” as two of its five principles for development effectiveness (along with human rights, gender equality and results-based management). (UNDG, 2009) Capacity development and environmental sustainability are both central to UNDP’s mandate and programming. The UNDP *Strategic Plan 2008-13* states that capacity development is its “core service to programme countries” and positions “environment and sustainable development” as one of four practice areas.

Support for CDES can play a crucial role in meeting these commitments, with reinvigorated approaches and tools that can build on considerable agency experience. UNDP has been a key contributor to the evolving theory and practice of capacity development since the early 1990s and has brought this orientation into its environmental programming, both in its core programmes and in its role as an implementing agency for the Global Environment Facility. Many of the CDES models and tools developed by UNDP, the OECD and other partners from the mid-90s¹² to now have stood the test of time and there is a wealth of practical experience to build on. The maturing of the CDES field in recent years has brought a period of evaluation and reflection, with some emerging themes that are likely to shape UNDP’s future approach to CDES:¹³

- An increased focus in all environmentally-related programming on strengthening endogenous capacity, in line with the Paris Declaration and Accra Accord (Box 2);

¹⁰ OECD-DAC: Organisation for Cooperation and Development - Development Assistance Committee

¹¹ This is articulated in UNDG 2007, UNDG 2009 and UNDP 2008a, 2008b and 2008c).

¹² See Annex 3, References.

¹³ See, for example, GEF Evaluation Office, 2007a and 2007b; OECD Task Team, 2008a, 2008b and 2008c; Pillai, 2008; Sagar, 2000; UNDP, 2004; UNDP, 2005a and 2005b; UNDP, 2006. UNDP/UNEP 2005; UNDP/UNEP PEI, 2008; UNFCCC, 2004; UNDP Evaluation Unit, 2008; UNDP Executive Board, 2008.



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- An increased focus in all environmentally-related programming on strengthening endogenous capacity (Box 2), in line with the Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action;
- A shift from project-based approaches for building environmental capacity to a programmatic model which better suits the broad, long-term approach needed for capacity development;
- Greater interest in cross-thematic approaches to CDES, such as linking it to poverty/livelihoods, food security, gender equality, health, climate change and disaster reduction strategies; and
- A search for ways to streamline global environmental governance, in order to reduce overlap and duplication among MEA-related activities, decrease the administrative burden on convention parties, and reorient global programmes towards national priorities and locally adapted solutions.

BOX 2: IMPORTANCE OF COUNTRY-DRIVEN STRATEGIES FOR CDES

A UNDP review of 158 MDG country reports on progress towards environmental sustainability through MDG implementation and reporting noted that “the extent of tailoring and monitoring MDG7 differs significantly by region and is often linked to varying national priorities and needs”. Its findings point to the importance of country-owned CDES strategies:

... countries with a clear, evidence-based and widely shared vision of how they want to manage their environmental resources make the most progress towards the goal of environmental sustainability. This requires that countries do not mechanically adopt the global targets and indicators, but rather link them to national development policies and priorities, local context, and ecosystem specificities. Countries do best when they *adopt* the principle of environmental sustainability that is the heart of MDG 7 and then *adapt* that principle to the specific ecosystem conditions and policy priorities of their countries. (UNDP, 2006)

Another emerging theme is renewed focus on dovetailing gender equality strategies with CDES efforts. Women play a central role in environmental and natural resource management, for example, in collecting water and firewood and managing waste, and in taking leadership in small-scale agriculture and forest management. UNDP’s Gender Equality Strategy (p. 31-33, p. 61) commits the agency to “capacity development to ensure that gender equality dimensions of environment and energy considerations are fully reflected in national policies, strategies and programmes”.¹⁴ For CDES, this means using UNDP’s well-established gender analysis tools at each stage of the capacity development process in order to promote equal opportunities for women and men in access to and control of environmental resources and full involvement in ES decision-making.

¹⁴ See additional guidance in UNDP, 2009; IUCN, UNDP and CGCA, 2009; and UNDP 2009



Farmers irrigating a field in Bangladesh. Source: UNDP Picture This / Md. Akhlas Uddin

EXAMPLE 2. “HALF THE WORLD”: DEVELOPING WOMEN’S CAPACITY IN ENERGY AND WATER MANAGEMENT

Women have an intricate relationship with natural resources, due to traditional roles that often require them to gather food, collect water and meet household energy needs. However, energy and water-related institutional and technological interventions frequently fail to consider women as primary beneficiaries. UNEP, working with the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), pioneered new approaches to this issue through the project *Capacity Building of Women for Energy and Water Management in the Rural Areas of the Himalayas*, conducted in Bhutan, India and Nepal from 2002-4. Its goals were to develop women’s individual and community abilities to: (1) organize themselves; (2) identify and prioritize water and energy needs; (3) adopt environmentally-friendly technologies that also reduce the time and effort involved in water and energy management; and (4) use the time saved for income generation.

Several best practices for energy and water projects involving women emerged from the experience. These initiatives should aim to reduce time and effort in hard physical labour; minimize hazards and risks to health (e.g., fuelwood smoke); increase productivity; enhance equity in the sharing of work and benefits; and widen options for productive work through freeing up time and energy, while also improving ecosystem health. Proven interventions include replacing manual with mechanical technologies (e.g., water, steam); replacing wood fuel with biogas, solar-power and micro-hydropower energy for cooking, heating and transportation; and reviving indigenous renewable energy and water harvesting technologies.

Source: UNEP, 2002. *Capacity Building for Sustainable Development: an overview of UNEP environmental capacity development initiatives* http://www.sti.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/Pdfs/swap/swap399.pdf



INTRODUCTION

1.4 Characteristics of CDES

Most of the challenges UNDP faces in supporting CDES are similar to those found in capacity development programming in general; however, several specific challenges arise due to the nature of environmental issues and can be addressed by capacity development as follows:

- ***Diversity of global, national and local ecosystems; current ecological conditions; and human-ecosystem interactions:*** Sustainability strategies need to be tailored to specific geographical settings, which vary immensely both among and within countries. What works in one setting may not work elsewhere since countries also have diverse environmental priorities, depending on ecosystem sensitivities, natural resource availability, land use and settlement patterns, and environment-poverty linkages. Capacity assessment can be used to determine specific capacity development needs and appropriate responses that can contribute to improving environmental sustainability in a particular context.
- ***Political nature of environmental decisions:*** Environmental decisions inevitably raise issues of equity and human rights, because state authorities have the power to assign the rights to use state-owned and common property resources. The state also influences the distribution of ecological goods and services and is responsible for the production of public goods, such as clean water, clean air and protected areas. CDES can focus on increasing government accountability, responsiveness and leadership, in order to achieve a more equitable distribution of environmental impacts, costs and benefits. It can also help to address calls for increased private sector accountability, given its role in natural resource extraction and processing, pollution control, energy and climate change issues and delivery of environmental goods and services.
- ***Multi-sectoral and cross-cutting nature of environmental sustainability issues:*** Agenda 21 recognized that environmental capacity is needed at all levels of government; across all development sectors and within all segments of society, including government, civil society and the private sector. However, this broad approach has been only partially implemented at the country level. Many past CDES efforts have focused on the traditional environment “sector”, especially on strengthening institutional arrangements, often at the national government level. The 2000s brought increased recognition that mainstreaming ES will require mainstreaming environmental capacity development as well.
- ***Interdisciplinary nature of environmental sustainability solutions:*** Environmental solutions require information and expertise from diverse disciplines/fields, for example, geography, ecology, economics, hydrology, engineering, planning, forestry, fisheries, health, anthropology, sociology and gender studies. Local and traditional ecological knowledge also has a role to play. CDES can help to improve environmental decision-making by strengthening the technical capacities needed to address sustainability issues and the functional (or “process”) capacities needed for interdisciplinary analysis, integrated planning, creative problem-solving and multi-stakeholder collaboration.



- **Exclusion of ecological goods and services from macro and microeconomics:** Since ecological services have been considered as “free gifts of nature” they have traditionally been excluded from economic decision-making both at the macro level (e.g., GNP, cost-benefit analysis, costs of climate change) and the micro level (e.g., water pricing, cost of pollution). In addition, economic and political planning cycles are relatively short-term in nature, while environmental processes are generally long term. CDES can help to build capacity to use new policy and planning models that recognize the economic valuation of ecological services, use economic instruments to achieve environmental ends and bring a longer-term perspective to planning processes.

EXAMPLE 1. “GETTING RESULTS ON THE GROUND”: COMMUNITY-BASED ADAPTATION PROGRAMME (CBA)

The small communities that are likely to be the most severely affected by climate change are the least equipped to respond and adapt to the impacts. The goal of this UNDP supported GEF financed programme is to demonstrate how to reduce vulnerability to climate change through developing community-level capacity for adaptation. Ten countries are implementing 8-20 community-based projects aimed at enhancing the resiliency of their communities and ecosystems to climate change. The projects will be used as small-scale “project/policy laboratories” to generate knowledge in order to support replication of successful practices and develop effective policies for community adaptive capacity.

For example, the CBA project in *Jamaica*, “Reducing Climate Change-Driven Erosion and Landslide Risks through Sustainable Agriculture for Safer Slopes”, is working with farming communities in Jamaica’s Blue Mountains, where high-value cool-climate crops such as coffee are grown. Climate change is projected to increase the intensity of hurricanes and other storms, while decreasing annual rainfall, vastly increasing the risk of erosion and landslides, and threatening lives, agricultural livelihoods and Kingston’s water supply. The initiative will reinforce sustainable agricultural practices, reforest dangerous slopes and build community competence in climate-resilient natural resource management practices. Authorities from Jamaica’s water, forestry and agriculture sectors are involved, in order to facilitate the uptake of lessons learned and best practices into broader policies and programmes.

<http://www.undp-adaptation.org/project/cba>



2 UNDP APPROACH TO CDES

To support the UNDP Strategic Plan outcome of “strengthened national capacities to mainstream environment and energy concerns into national development plans and implementation,” UNDP identified the need for a consistent agency approach to supporting CDES, building directly on Practice Notes on *Capacity Development (2008a)* and *Capacity Assessment (2008b)*. This section presents an analytical framework and approach to CDES consisting of ten guiding principles; three levels of capacity, each with multiple entry points; seventeen environmental capacities and four core issues. Section 3 outlines a five-step process for CDES and Annex A provides three practical programming tools to carry it out. The approach and tools should be freely adapted to suit the context, including time, resources and opportunities at hand.

2.1 Guiding Principles

UNDP’s overall approach to supporting capacity development is based on ten guiding principles (UNDP, 2008a). The agency’s approach to CDES complements these with Guiding Principles for CDES, as derived from global experience (Box 3).



Fishermen pulling up a catch in a fine masked fishing net on the shores of the Brahmaputra River. Indian Sub-Continent, India, Assam, Tezpur. Source: Getty Images.

¹⁵ The section on “UNDP Approach to Supporting Capacity Development” (UNDP, 2008a, p. 7) and the “Capacity Assessment Framework” (UNDP, 2008b, p. 9) are of particular relevance for CDES.



BOX 3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Capacity development for environmental sustainability should:

1. ***Ultimately lead to substantive and measurable improvements in environmental conditions and the quality of life***, such as improved health; reduced pollution, damage and costs; more sustainable natural resource use; and maintenance and restoration of biodiversity and ecological processes.
2. ***Be nationally owned and driven***, using and strengthening national and local systems, plans and expertise, and integrated into broader sustainability initiatives (e.g., minimize one-off projects).
3. ***Respond directly to the country context***, and both national and local priorities, including priority environmental and natural resource issues, poverty-environment linkages and the needs of ultimate beneficiaries.
4. ***Be asset-based***, unleashing and reinforcing existing and emerging environmental capacities within the country, the region and other Southern countries. It should also “develop capacity for capacity development” by expanding country competence to design and deliver capacity assessment and capacity development.
5. ***Take a cross-sectoral and interdisciplinary approach***, involving environmental, natural resources and economic and social development sectors, consistent with MDG Target 7a under MDG7.
6. ***Promote the involvement of diverse segments of society and ownership of results by key stakeholders***, including multiple levels and agencies of government; the private sector; and civil society, including local communities, women and men/girls and boys; poor, marginalized and/or remote communities; and indigenous peoples (as appropriate to the issue).¹⁶
7. ***Take a comprehensive and systemic approach***, focusing on key linkages between the enabling environment, organisational and individual levels, and ensuring that individual capacity development (e.g., awareness-raising, education and training) is reinforced at other levels.
8. ***Be results-based***, leading to measurable, sustainable capacity outcomes, through the use of systematic, yet flexible approaches that encourage innovation, adaptive management and learning-by-doing.
9. ***Be seen as a gradual***, long-term process resulting from achieving short-term incremental milestones, often in a non-linear fashion. This requires proceeding at a scale and pace that allow the country system to absorb and internalize changes, as well as staying with the process in the face of challenges.
10. ***Strengthen environmental governance***, including improving political and institutional arrangements, and addressing power imbalances and inequities in access to natural resources and environmental decision-making. This includes promoting attitudinal and behavioral changes, human rights, equity, gender equality, accountability and leadership.

¹⁶ “Adaptive collaborative management” (or “adaptive co-management”) has emerged from the field of participatory research and development as a collaborative model for natural resource management that increases stakeholder involvement and ownership. Using this approach for CDES, stakeholders would cooperatively design, plan, observe and learn from implementing a programme or project, using flexible, participatory, responsive management processes and synthesizing diverse knowledge systems. (See Gonsalves et al, 2005.)



2.2 Levels of Capacity and Entry Points

For a country to achieve its environmental sustainability goals, it needs competent and *motivated individuals* working within *effective organisations*, operating in a *supportive enabling environment*. Thus, UNDP recognizes three interconnected “levels of capacity”, each of which has several entry points for capacity development, as shown in Box 4. A specific CDES intervention may focus on one or two levels and one or more entry points in order to achieve specific capacity outcomes. The aim should be to find several entry points that together would leverage multiple benefits. Annex A, Tool #3 provides checklists of possible capacity development responses, organized according to the three levels of capacity and related entry points.

| BOX 4. LEVELS OF CAPACITY AND ENTRY POINTS FOR CDES | |
|---|--|
| LEVEL | ENTRY POINTS |
| ENABLING ENVIRONMENT:¹⁷ the political, economic policy, social, legal and regulatory systems within which organisations and individuals operate | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Societal framework: cultural norms, social values, traditions and customs • Constitutional framework for environmental sustainability (ES) • Environmental governance: rule of law, accountability, transparency and responsiveness • Political framework • Policy, legal and regulatory frameworks • National/sub-national institutional, management and accountability frameworks • National and sectoral planning frameworks • Inter-agency coordination and collaboration frameworks • Stakeholder engagement and collaboration (multi-agency, multi-sectoral) • Financial flows/budgeting • Knowledge and information systems • Human rights and equity related to ES, including gender equality and access to natural resources and decision-making |

¹⁷ The enabling environment is sometimes referred to as the “systemic level”, (UNDP/GEF, 2005 and UNDG, 2010), while OECD sometimes uses “systemic” to refer to “interactions between the levels” (OECD, 2006).



| | |
|---|--|
| <p>ORGANISATIONS: including government institutions and civil society, community and private sector organisations¹⁸</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisational mandates, structures and functions • Internal management, planning and operational frameworks • Administrative and budgetary systems • Personnel management and human resources development • Stakeholder engagement mechanisms (organisational level) • Information and knowledge management systems • Infrastructure, facilities and equipment • Knowledge and information systems • Infrastructure, facilities and equipment • Organisational culture to support ES • Organisational culture Traditional organisations, both formal and informal: e.g., local, community and indigenous systems for managing environment and natural resources |
| <p>INDIVIDUALS: women and men in their roles working within government and civil society organisations, and acting as citizens and members of families and communities</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness and attitudes: e.g., beliefs, values, motivation and commitment • Knowledge: related to environment and natural resources management; mainstreaming ES and sustainable development (integration of environment, economic, social issues); and information systems/Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)¹⁹ • Skills and behaviours: e.g., specialized scientific and technical skills; interdisciplinary skills, and communication and collaboration skills |

¹⁸ Note: Throughout the document “organisations” should be taken to refer to government agencies, such as ministries, departments, local authorities and state enterprises; civil society organisations, such as NGOs and CBOs; traditional and indigenous community organisations; academic and research organisations; and private sector organisations, e.g., business associations, firms and social enterprises.

¹⁹ “Information and Communications Technologies” (ICT) refers to all technologies for manipulating and communicating information, including computer hardware and software, and devices for storing and communicating voice, sound or images (e.g., telephone, camera, audio-visual).



EXAMPLE 3: “SPANNING” MULTIPLE ENTRY POINTS TO STRENGTHEN PROTECTED AREAS – THE SPAN PROJECT

Namibia's extensive system of 20 state-managed protected areas (PAs) covering 13.8% of the country is the cornerstone of its conservation programmes. Several barriers hinder progress in weaving these into a cohesive network that could be a buffer against biodiversity threats. The UNDP supported GEF financed project “Strengthening the Protected Area Network Project” (SPAN) aims to establish sustainable financing mechanisms for the PA system. Activities include:

Enabling environment level:

- A comprehensive economic analysis that helped the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) secure a 310% increase in annual budget during the last four years for park management and development, including the successful mobilisation of a large amount of additional donor funding for PAs; in particular, a US\$ 67 million poverty alleviation grant from the US Government's Millennium Challenge Account (MCA).
- Support for the 2007 Cabinet approval of the National Policy on Tourism and Wildlife Concessions on State Land, which aims to unleash the economic potential of PAs.
- Long-term and gradual lobbying of the Game Products Trust Fund Board for official earmarking of 25% of park entrance fees to provide additional sustainable financing for park management.
- Development of park business plans for six national parks, enabling the park managers to define costs and identify and execute ways to meet those costs.
- Support to the MET to use events marking 100 years of Namibia's oldest park to promote the role of parks in national development and show political support, e.g., the President called for efforts to “link these parks into one fluid system across the country”.

Organisational and individual levels:

- Four field demonstration projects, aimed at improving biogeographic coverage, increasing community co-management of parks, and establishing crucial wildlife corridors.
- Incentive mechanisms, including a Training Plan for PA management and specialized training on law enforcement, vehicle maintenance and park business planning.
- An innovation grant scheme to fund initiatives proposed by park managers, along with a field staff award.
- Deployment of a PA Tourism and Concession Specialist to support the MET in establishing a Concession Unit to strengthen the capacity to develop and monitor concessions that yield both environmental and economic benefits. The majority of concession rights are granted to communities neighboring the PAs, directly benefiting local people.
- Study by the HIV/AIDS – Environment Working Group (HEWG), with participants from conservation and health agencies, on the links between HIV/AIDS and the environment, using parks as the entry point, and launched an innovative conservation-branded condom (“Conservadom”).

Source: UNDP/GEF, 2008. Biodiversity: Delivering Results



2.3 Environmental Capacities

The principles and practices associated with the field of environmental sustainability have become increasingly sophisticated, requiring a broad range of capacities to implement. Box 5 lists seventeen key “environmental capacities,” divided into two categories (as proposed in UNDP, 2008b). *Functional Capacities* are those that are needed to undertake the core functions involved in designing, implementing and evaluating environmental sustainability initiatives. These can be considered “process” capacities. *Technical Capacities* are those needed to carry out functions and activities related to specific aspects of environmental and natural resource management and environmental mainstreaming.

The list in Box 5 is expanded in Annex A, Tool #2, which shows sub-topics (or “sub-capacities”) for each of the seventeen key capacities. The expanded list is intended to highlight the spectrum of the capacities that a society needs to achieve its environmental sustainability goals. Tool #2 can be used at various steps in capacity development, as suggested in the introduction to the tool. For example, it can be used as a checklist to identify capacity assets and needs and/or to choose priorities for capacity development. A particular initiative will likely focus on one more of the capacities and sub-capacities, depending on its purpose and scope.



A group of young women in India learn how use a solar dish for cooking. Source: UNDP Picture This / Dilip Lokre

²⁰ This list was derived from numerous capacity typologies (See references in Annex B). It should be considered a “working draft” that is open to discussion and adaptation as the Guidance Note is tested in the field and as the field of CDES evolves.



BOX 5. ENVIRONMENTAL CAPACITIES

A. Functional Capacities, including the capacities to ...

1. Assess a situation, define goals, and analyse and choose options
2. Formulate policies, legislation, plans and strategies
3. Budget, manage and implement, including mobilising resources
4. Monitor, evaluate, report and learn
5. Engage stakeholders and undertake multi-sectoral collaboration
6. Generate, manage, use and communicate information and knowledge
7. Design and/or reform environmental institutional arrangements

B. Technical Capacities, including the capacities to ...

8. Protect, manage and sustainably use ecological goods and services
9. Design and manage pollution prevention, abatement, and control programmes
10. Protect, manage and sustainably use natural resources
11. Assess, reduce and manage environment-related risks, including climate change, using the precautionary approach
12. Use legal and regulatory tools for environmental sustainability
13. Use awareness and education tools for environmental sustainability
14. Use economic instruments as tools for environmental sustainability
15. Use voluntary instruments as tools for environmental sustainability
16. Mainstream environmental sustainability across development sectors
17. Implement Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and international cooperation programmes



2.4 Core Issues

Based on experience to date, UNDP has defined four “Core Issues” that seem to have the greatest influence on capacity development (UNDP, 2008a). These are introduced below, as they apply in the field of environmental sustainability, and discussed in more detail in Section 5. These core issues often cut across the three levels of capacity and can be addressed at multiple entry points, depending on the situation at hand.

Institutional Arrangements: A country’s capacity to realize its sustainability goals depends in large part on the institutional arrangements that provide the framework for environmental decision-making. These include the following components, any of which might provide the focus for CDES.

Capacity is not only about skills and procedures; it is also about incentives and governance (OECD, 2006). While environmental decisions are made within institutional frameworks, they result from both written and unwritten rules, norms and spheres of power and influence. Recent capacity development approaches try to identify and explicitly address these factors.

At the enabling environment level:-

- Rules governing economic and social activities;
- Political systems;
- Legal, regulatory and policy frameworks;
- Mechanisms for inter-agency cooperation and stakeholder/public consultation; and
- Social and cultural customs, norms and relationships (only included in some references).

At the organisational level:-

- Organisational structures, mandates, functions and reporting relationships;
- Internal policy, planning and decision-making processes;
- Management, administrative, budgetary and human resource development (HRD) systems;
- Information and communication systems; and
- Infrastructure and equipment (e.g., offices, equipment, labs).

Accountability: In CDES, this can refer to (a) organisational accountability, i.e., the mandates and reporting relationships within or among organisations with environmental responsibilities, and (b) public accountability, i.e., the two-way relationship between public authorities, who are responsible for protecting ecological services, delivering environmental services and acting in the public interest, and the stakeholders who are affected by their actions. (See Case Study #4.)



Environmental Leadership: In CDES, this refers to the ability of government or non-government actors to influence change, motivate action and mobilise stakeholders to address sustainability issues at a community, regional, national or global level. Leadership can come from any segment of society and may include politicians, civil servants, NGOs, community leaders, business people, academics and individual citizens. It can be provided formally, for example, through political action or policy reform, and informally, through advocacy and community mobilisation. CDES efforts may include measures to identify and support natural leaders and champions, who may be both individuals and organisations. (See Case Study #3.)

Knowledge and Information: CDES efforts may focus on strengthening the capacities needed to ensure that ES initiatives have a sound scientific and technical basis, are adapted to local ecological and social conditions, and incorporate local and traditional ecological knowledge (LEK and TEK). They may also aim to improve the use of environmental information in decision-making or develop environmental awareness, knowledge and skills needed by key decision-makers and stakeholders to address specific ES topics. (See Case Study #2.)

BOX 6. NATIONAL CAPACITY SELF-ASSESSMENTS

As an implementing agency for the GEF, UNDP has supported numerous National Capacity Self-assessments (NCSAs), in which countries analyze their capacity to contribute to global environmental management, with a focus on the Rio Conventions. NCSAs assess capacity needs and propose actions to address them (Steps 1 to 3 of the five-step CDES process; see next section for more details on the process), but funding to develop capacity must then be secured through additional sources (Steps 4 to 5).

Focused capacity assessments of this type are useful for policy dialogue and stakeholder mobilisation. They also provide a basis for designing future capacity development interventions. For example, the GEF also supports capacity building projects (“CB-2” funding) that focus on developing priority capacities identified during the NCSA.



3 FIVE-STEP PROCESS FOR CDES

This section provides suggestions for applying UNDP’s recommended five-step capacity development process in the field of environmental sustainability:²¹

1. Engage stakeholders in capacity development;
2. Assess capacity assets and needs;
3. Formulate the capacity development response;
4. Implement the capacity development response; and
5. Evaluate capacity development results.

Annex A provides three Programming and Planning Tools that are based on the five steps and the analytical framework presented in Section 2.

It may be useful to think of the five steps as five elements of CDES, since they are not all necessarily carried out as part of a single initiative. This is illustrated by the case of National Capacity Self Assessments (NCSAs), outlined in Box 6, which focus on steps 1-3. In addition, although stakeholder engagement is identified as step 1, it should continue during all the steps.

There are three main models for UNDP support to CDES:

1. ***Self-standing CDES intervention***, targeting specific environmental sustainability capacities, e.g., NCSAs and Capacity-Building projects (CB-2). (See Case Study #1.)
2. ***Integrated into a broader environmental or natural resource initiative***: e.g., many environment and energy programmes/projects include capacity development components. (See Case Studies #2 and #4.)
3. ***Integrated into a capacity development initiative in another practice area or thematic programme***, e.g., poverty reduction, governance, disaster response. (See Case Study #3.)

Experience has shown that skilful integration of capacity development outcomes into broader environmental sustainability programming increases the likelihood that endogenous capacities are mobilised and new capacities are sustained. This approach also takes advantage of opportunities for value-added since capacity development can help to sustain other programme/project results. Whichever option is chosen, every effort should be made to “build capacity for capacity development” throughout the five steps, in order to strengthen national systems and processes for CDES. This implies a collaborative, “learning by doing” approach in which partners and beneficiaries develop specific technical capacities, while also strengthening the organisational frameworks and processes needed to assess and develop new capacities over time.

²¹ The UNDP approach is detailed in UNDP 2008a and 2008b and summarized in UNDP 2008a, Figure 2, p. 9.



FIVE-STEP PROCESS

Step 1: Engage stakeholders in capacity development

Step 1 involves identifying all of the stakeholders who should be involved during the capacity development process, as well as when and how they should be involved. Box 7 lists stakeholders that could participate in one or more steps of CDES, through assessing capacity assets, needs and priorities; designing appropriate responses; implementing and monitoring activities; and/or evaluating results.

The importance of direct involvement by beneficiaries and stakeholders to the success of development programmes is well established (UNDG, 2010). Stakeholder involvement is especially important for CDES due to the multi-sectoral, multi-disciplinary, collaborative nature of environmental decision-making. Early and continued involvement will help to ensure that the process is equitable and accountable, and that priority needs are addressed. The use of self-assessment, participatory methods and adaptive collaborative approaches can foster greater ownership by beneficiaries and increases the likelihood that capacities developed will be sustained.

There can be three distinct but overlapping types of stakeholder engagement in CDES, each of which has a different focus and draws on a different set of techniques:

1. **Awareness-raising:** aims to inform and educate stakeholders about a CDES initiative. **Sample techniques:** printed materials, website, presentation, media and community events.
2. **Consultation:** aims to collect stakeholder comments and opinions on capacity assets and needs and solutions at each stage of the process. **Sample techniques:** workshop, interview, focus group, surveys, site visit, community mapping, transect, story-telling.
3. **Involvement:** aims to have stakeholders collaborate and/or share responsibility for all or part of the CDES initiative. **Sample techniques:** self-assessment, participatory research, working groups, advisory groups, village committees, partnerships, networks.

A specific initiative will use one or more of these approaches, depending on the topic at hand, stakeholder interests and needs, and available resources. Best practices suggest using a range of engagement techniques that will reach diverse target groups. Special attention is needed to ensure that the process is designed to include women and men/girls and boys, as well as disadvantaged and marginalized groups, such as those in poor, remote and indigenous communities. For example, formal settings such as workshops and meetings can discourage participation by these groups. Instead, informal, participatory, community-based methods that engage people where they live work can be especially effective for CDES.

Getting the support of senior decision-makers as key stakeholders early in the process and at key points throughout has also been shown to contribute to the success of CDES. This is due in part to the political nature of environmental decision-making, and the often weak positioning of environmental agencies and issues on government agendas. High-level support also helps to ensure that resources are made available to sustain capacity results over time (See Case Study #3). It is also helpful to identify and empower natural leaders and “champions”, both organisations and individuals, who will promote on-going commitment by participants to programme outcomes.²²

²² See additional suggestions for engaging stakeholders and decision-makers in UNDP, 2005. [NCSA Resource Kit](#).



BOX 7: STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS FOR CDES

A particular CDES initiative may involve any of the following stakeholders, depending on which ones have a role and/or interest in the capacity issues being addressed.

Government agencies: national, sub-national and local level

- Environment and natural resource agencies, e.g., environmental protection, water, agriculture, forests, fisheries, energy and mining
- Planning, development and finance agencies
- Sectoral agencies, e.g., industry, public works, health, education
- State enterprises

Civil society: local, national and/or international level

- Environmental NGOs (ENGOs): e.g., groups focused on pollution, biodiversity, law, protected areas and/or or environmental education
- NGOs and Community Based Organisations (CBOs), e.g., community development, education and health groups; village or district organisations; farmers, women's, labour, youth and seniors' organisations; service clubs; professional and trade associations, labour unions
- Community leaders and opinion-makers, e.g., local politicians, educators, activists, writers, religious leaders, media personalities and business leaders (also, increasingly, entertainers)
- Media: print and electronic media (TV, radio, Internet), including official/state, popular and academic journals, magazines, broadcasts and websites
- Universities, colleges, polytechnics, policy and research institutes; and individual academics, scientists and researchers
- Individual citizens

Private sector: local, national and/or international level

- Large/small businesses, consultants, investors, business associations

International development and cooperation actors:

- Bilateral and multilateral donor organisations
- UN agencies
- Global/regional coordinating bodies



EXAMPLE 4. GUYANA: BENEFICIARIES TAKE THE LEAD IN DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING PROJECTS

UNDP Guyana supported a five-year project focused on developing capacity for natural resources and environmental management, with a focus on biodiversity management and pollution control. Beneficiaries and stakeholders included indigenous Amerindian communities, state agencies and the private sector. The following keys to project success were identified:

1. The project document provided a broad framework, with great flexibility to respond to emerging priorities.
2. To ensure that limited resources were focused on key issues, stakeholder focus groups identified their vision for Guyana and how the project could contribute.
3. A Steering Committee approved projects on a competitive basis. The implementing agency issued calls for proposals from beneficiary groups for projects the latter felt would build capacity in their agency and/or community. Once these were evaluated, based on written and verbal presentation, the lead organisation for each approved project became responsible for implementation, including identifying the needed inputs, e.g., technical personnel, workshops and materials.
4. All project activities used a beneficiary-led model, e.g., the consultant working with the environment agency to prepare a strategic plan was required to train and mentor staff as part of the process; each organisation presented its project results and next steps to the Steering Committee; and a participatory model for monitoring and evaluation was used.
5. Adequate time was a critical factor in ensuring full beneficiary participation.
6. The implementing agency was not a direct beneficiary and so was able to facilitate dialogue and encourage coordination among various actors.

Source: Patsy Ross, Energy and Environment Division, UNDP Guyana

Step 2: Assess capacity assets and needs

This step aims to identify the focus for capacity development efforts. The UNDP Practice Note on [Capacity Assessment](#) (2008b) provides detailed guidance for this step. As applied to CDES, capacity assessment includes the following elements:

- Identification of priority ES issues to be addressed through capacity development;
- Identification of priority capacities and sub-capacities to be assessed; (See Annex A: Tool #2);
- Identification of cross-cutting topics under UNDP's four core issues that may require particular attention;
- For each priority capacity, identification of (a) capacity assets, i.e., strengths to build on, and (b) capacity needs, i.e., gaps, weaknesses and challenges, at the three levels of capacity and across the core issues;
- For each priority capacity, analysis of desired and current levels of capacity;



- Summary of findings, including recommended entry points, sectors, segments of society and organisations to be addressed in the capacity development response.

The capacity assessment can be comprehensive and formal, using standard analytical techniques, such as desk studies, interviews, surveys, workshops, field visits, participatory techniques, or it can be rapid and focused, based primarily on previous work. UNDP and its partners can draw on a large body of recent information on current and desired levels of environmental capacity, including:

- Guidance and reports developed with GEF support, e.g., the [NCSA Resource Kit](#) (Global Support Programme, 2005) provides a guide to environmental capacity assessment, while the UNDP website (<http://www.undp.org/mainstreaming/ncsa.shtml>) houses completed NCSA reports and actions plans for over 120 countries. Many other GEF-supported projects and enabling activities²³ include capacity development information, as do programmes related to other MEAs;²⁴
- Capacity assessments embedded in country environmental studies and Strategic Environmental Assessments; and
- Capacity information in programme and project documents and evaluations for previous environment-related projects in the country.

Experience has shown the value of prioritizing “early and often” during the CDES process. Capacity assessment can lead to a long “wish list” of needs due to the chronic scarcity of resources to address environmental challenges. Prioritization techniques should be used to identify key limiting factors that would, if addressed, leverage significant improvements in capacity to address the most pressing ES issues, as identified in national and local strategies and plans.²⁵ Section 5 discusses several “Core Issues” that are commonly explored during capacity assessment.



Two volunteers from different communities sharing a moment of joy after planting together a mangrove seedling as part of a community-based adaptation project. Source: Jenny Iao Jorgensen/UNDP

²³ “Enabling activities” support implementation of, and reporting on MEAs, including capacity assessments, reports to convention bodies, and action plans and strategies on convention topics, such as climate change and biodiversity.

²⁴ Although NCSAs and other MEA CDES activities focus on “global environmental management”, many of the resulting reports include broad overviews of environmental capacity needs and proposed actions to address them. Many of them also resulted from country-led, participatory processes (to varying degrees).

²⁵ Prioritization can be done using standard techniques such as SWOT analysis, gap analysis, multi-criteria analysis, interviews, surveys, workshops, focus groups and GTZ’s Goal Oriented Project Planning (ZOPP) technique.



EXAMPLE 5. “A GOOD FIT”: TAILORING CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TO NATIONAL PRIORITIES

The Vietnam-Canada Environment Project (1996-2007, VCEP), supported by the Canadian International Development Agency, is widely cited as a model for best practices in CDES. Its goal was to develop the capacity of the National Environmental Agency for industrial pollution management (IPM) in four areas: pollution prevention and control, environmental monitoring, EIA review and awareness-raising. Strengths were identified as:

1. **Focus on priority issues:** The project focused on “brown issues” and provincial capacity (vs. national), in keeping with Government of Vietnam (GoV) priorities for industrialization and decentralization.
2. **Focus on appropriate provinces:** The project focused on three priority economic development zones identified by the GoV, and lessons learned were captured and transferred to other similar provinces.
3. **Comprehensive, participatory approach:** The “VCEP model” was based on transfer of science-based technical approaches (“technical capacities”), and transparent, results-oriented management systems (“functional capacities”), based on a systematic capacity assessment. It used learning-by-doing, collaborative work planning and transparent budgeting to promote strong partner ownership of results.
4. **Multi-stakeholder collaboration:** Partnerships among provincial authorities and between provinces and other departments, industry and civil society organisations were essential to improve IPM.
5. **Project duration:** The 10-year duration allowed for the relationship-building, patience, experimentation and innovation that led to locally appropriate solutions and more sustainable results.
6. **Strategic use of technical assistance:** External inputs helped to build technical and managerial capacity, which enhanced the legal and regulatory framework and encouraged other donors to support IPM.
7. **Flexibility:** An iterative project design allowed the project to realign over time, in response to changing factors, such as new National Strategy on Environmental Protection and government restructuring.

A third phase over 2008-12, the “Vietnam Provincial Environmental Governance Project” is designed to develop capacity through integrated activities to strengthen IPM at the organisational and enabling environment levels.

Source: Freeman, J., 2006. *Vietnam-Canada Environment Project, Phase II, End of Project Review: Final Report*



Step 3: Formulate the capacity development response

This step involves using the results of the capacity assessment to design a capacity development response, which could be a programme, project or several activities integrated into other programming. It is often more effective and efficient to combine Steps 2 and 3 of the CDES process, by identifying capacity assets and needs at the same time as possible capacity development responses.

A key task during Step 3 is to determine criteria for choosing the capacity development response, such as priority needs, assets that can be mobilised, feasibility, cost, resources, time frame, political support, stakeholder views, emerging opportunities and possible synergies with other initiatives. This information may be available in the capacity assessment report or may require additional research. These criteria will help in tailoring the most appropriate and timely response for a given country setting.

An effective capacity development initiative does not need to be large-scale, expensive or time-consuming; rather, it should be strategically focused on bottlenecks that are impeding progress on specific environmental sustainability challenges. Annex A, Tools #1, #2 and #3 provide indicative lists of possible capacity development outcomes, outputs and activities, organized according to the three levels of capacity and entry points within each. The most effective programming will usually include interventions at multiple entry levels that are designed to be mutually reinforcing.

Several “lessons learned” have emerged from evaluations of CDES efforts to date.²⁶ Evidence suggests that capacity development has frequently been treated as an “add-on” to technical assistance/support, with little attention to how it can be used to enhance and sustain overall project results. Also, it is often delivered using a technical assistance model rather than a country-led capacity development model. Activities are often supply-driven; poorly designed and monitored; based on external issues and targets; and implemented with insufficient attention to sustainability.

In addition, there has also been an over-reliance on training, especially “one-off” workshops and study tours, with little attention to how training will strengthen organisational capacity, including internal training systems. Often, training results are not sustained due to weak needs assessment; over-use of outside experts; poor adaptation of “imported” materials to local settings; lack of reinforcement for new knowledge and skills; and mobility of participants. Even projects that try to focus on organisational capacity have often been found to be overly ambitious, with a speed and scope that exceeds the partner’s ability to develop and sustain expanded capacities.

Best practices indicate that “long-term learning-by-doing approaches that favour the development of partnerships and networks and that integrate capacity building into wider sustainable development efforts have more chances of success” (UNFCCC, 2004). They also suggest that success is more likely when responses are country-led, strategically focused on key issues, rigorously designed and realistically scaled.

Capacity for what? Capacity development can only be defined in relation to a specific goal – it does not exist for its own sake. Project documents should therefore clearly establish what the goals are and how the capacity development activities relate to them. (GEF Evaluation Office, 2006)

²⁶ e.g., Poverty-Environment Partnership PPT 20-06-2007; Le Groupe-conseil baastel, 2000; Nordic Consulting Group, 2008. UNEP, 2005. GEF Evaluation Unit, 2008a and 2008b.



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UNDP recommends that capacity development focus on building organisational capacities and creating a supportive enabling environment to help sustain capacity gains. In this approach, individual capacity development becomes an indirect but complementary result. If training is incorporated into the capacity response, it should be institutionalised through strengthening human resource development and training systems and/or incorporated into community development processes. In addition, “one-off” training should be replaced with Training of Trainer (ToT), peer learning, networking and knowledge-sharing models for learning. Annex A, Tool #3 provides suggestions for ensuring that education and training better serve broader capacity development goals.

EXAMPLE 6. BOTTOM-UP POLICY DEVELOPMENT, USING THE “CASCADE SYSTEM” OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

A best practice that emerged from UNDP’s Capacity 21 programme was the “cascade system” of capacity development, which involved discouraging one-off training in favour of integrated approaches that would have a multiplier effect, for example, training of trainers, targeted education and awareness resources and peer learning and “local-local dialogues”. Together, these methods often positively influenced national and regional policies and strategies.

For example, in *Burkina Faso*, local trainers were trained on desertification issues and then helped to develop content and process capacities of their communities, resulting in nearly 50,000 people being involved in defining the country strategy to combat desertification. In addition, a nationwide network of steering committees was established at the national, regional, provincial, departmental and village levels to share information on integrated natural resource management. The network empowered local communities and connected them to expertise and institutions that could help them tackle everyday problems, while also advising on long-term, holistic sustainability strategies.

UNDP/GEF, 2008. Biodiversity: Delivering Results

Step 4: Implement the capacity development response

This step involves implementing capacity development activities in an adaptive, iterative fashion, allowing for “mid-course corrections”, based on feedback from monitoring systems, and in keeping with the guiding principles outlined in Section 2.

Reviews of past CDES initiatives have noted that programming often involves a flow of resources from North to South, while local, regional and Southern capacity remains underutilized. For more sustainable results, and in keeping with the Accra Agenda for Action, implementation strategies should use national systems whenever possible. Supporting local organisations and expertise as partners in CDES downplays the role of external inputs, lower costs, helps ensure that activities suit the local context, and builds “capacity to develop capacity”. Most countries can mobilise the following assets domestically and within their regions:



1. **Expertise needed to develop “technical capacities for ES” (See Annex B, Tool #2):** Information, expertise and facilities related to ES topics are often available within government extension services; academic institutions; scientific, policy and research institutes; NGOs and CBOs; the business community and local consultants. Communities can provide complementary local and traditional ecological knowledge.
2. **Expertise in organisational/institutional development:** Competence in public administration, organisational analysis, change management, community mobilisation, human resources development and training can be found within academic institutions, public sector training centres, and private management and training institutes, e.g., business colleges. Communities can also provide knowledge and skills on effective community development and mobilisation.
3. **Expertise needed to develop “functional capacities for ES” (See Annex B, Tool #2):** The above organisations can also help build capacities for leadership, administration, management, strategic planning, financial planning and project management.

The conclusions of a recent comprehensive OECD review of capacity development highlighted the potential contribution of small-scale interventions in a time when large, macro approaches such as SWAPs and direct budgetary support are favoured (Baser and Morgan, 2008). It noted that small-scale efforts can:

- address the common “implementation gap” between complex institutional arrangements and operational results through building capacity slowly, especially where absorptive capacity is weak and demand is uncertain;
- target “pockets of country commitment” and build on “the principle of emergence by trying to ignite self-organisation at the micro level”;
- stimulate interest, engagement and demand for longer-term capacity development;
- allow participants to “learn and adapt their way to greater effectiveness, without making a ‘big bet’ on a complex programme with uncertain outcomes”; and
- provide innovation, speed, multiple solutions and the flexibility to adapt to uncertain or risky situations.

The authors also suggested that is “critical” to combine small-scale and more comprehensive programmes for long-term success. This observation underlines the value of piloting CDES innovations, followed by scaling up, based on the results of monitoring and evaluation.



EXAMPLE 7. “SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL”: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE GEF SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME (SGP)

Since 1992, the GEF [SGP](#), managed by UNDP on behalf of a GEF partnership, has been supporting NGOs and CBOs to address issues related to climate change, biodiversity, international waters, persistent organic pollutants and land degradation, while generating sustainable livelihoods. The 2008 portfolio included over 5,000 community-based projects. Each GEF SGP Country Programme Strategy unites projects around a strategic goal and, increasingly, a specific region and/or theme, e.g., rural renewable energy. The SGP is rooted in the belief that global environmental problems can best be addressed when there are direct community benefits and ownership and local people are involved. Capacity development is key to this approach.

For example, rural communities in the Awutu-Effutu-Senya District of Ghana were depleting traditionally protected natural resources (Sacred Groves) through felling trees for timber, lumber, fuelwood and charcoal, and through unsustainable farming practices and bush fires. This led to loss of vegetation cover and biodiversity, which has in turn altered climatic regimes and water levels. The results were decreased food crop production and increased poverty and rural-urban migration. The GEF SGP aimed to help reverse this trend by promoting biodiversity-based small business and sustainable livelihoods, and developing the capacity of community groups to mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable land management into community development. Activities include replanting of degraded areas with indigenous species; establishing fire belts, community woodlots and tree nurseries; promoting agroforestry techniques; training women in improved woodstove production and utilization; establishing microcredit; and educating the community, including improving their project management capacity.

Source: GEF Small Grants Programme (2010)

Step 5: Evaluate capacity development results

Capacity development is inherently more challenging to evaluate than more technical interventions but standard results based management and capacity measurement tools can be used strategically. As noted under Step 3, many CDES interventions suffer from weaknesses in design, monitoring and follow-up. To be more effective, CDES needs to “go back to the basics” of results-based management through:

- defining substantive CDES goals and outcomes in relation to priority environmental issues;
- devising participatory monitoring systems that facilitate adaptive, collaborative approaches to CDES and incorporate performance indicators that are “SMART” (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound); and
- clearly distinguishing between CDES activities (e.g., policy analysis, workshops); outputs (e.g., a revised policy, ES leadership training); and outcomes, expressed as measurable results (e.g., higher compliance rates; increased women’s participation in agroforestry).



For capturing the results of investment in capacity development, UNDP’s capacity measurement framework addresses three levels: impact (change in people’s well-being); outcome (change in institutional performance, stability and adaptability); and output (institutional product produced or service provided). Sample indicators can be found in the *Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in Global Environment Facility Projects*.

Adaptive Management

The practice of *adaptive management* and consideration for the dynamic nature of capacity building considerably increase the likelihood of an initiative achieving its intended results. The approach, originally conceived in the 1980s to deal with environmental uncertainty and now widely used in environmental management encourages flexibility to account for and adapt to changing circumstances within which a project is situated. (UN-FCCC, 2004) (See also Footnote 16, which describes “adaptive collaborative management”, a model which combines adaptive management and participatory approaches to natural resource management.)

EXAMPLE 8. “BUT IS IT WORKING?” A SAMPLE FRAMEWORK FOR MONITORING CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

GEF/UNDP/UNEP have developed *Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in GEF Projects* (GEF, 2010). The approach involves establishing a baseline through rapid, participatory capacity assessment and then benchmarking progress at intervals, as part of regular programme/project monitoring. A scorecard or rating system provides indicators for each of the five GEF-defined “core capacities”, with four possible ratings (0,1,2,3) for each indicator, based on defined criteria, as follows:

1. Capacities for engagement;
2. Capacities to generate, access and use information and knowledge;
3. Capacities for strategy, policy and legislation development;
4. Capacities for management and implementation; and
5. Capacities to monitor and evaluate.

The approach is being piloted by UNDP-GEF in Central and Eastern Europe, for example, in the CB-2 project “Integrating Global Environmental Issues into Bulgaria’s Regional Development Process”.

Source: GEF/UNDP/UNEP, February 2010. Monitoring Capacity Development in GEF operations: A framework to monitor capacity development initiatives



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4.1 UNDP Strengths in CDES

UNDP has a renewed role and solid experience to offer as a development agency entrusted to deliver on capacity development for environmental sustainability. The time is right to incorporate what has been learned about capacity development for environmental sustainability into an updated, systematic framework and tools that can be tailored to various country contexts and programming modes. Increased emphasis on country-led development and the use of national systems will require fresh approaches to CDES that can close the “implementation gap” and mobilise endogenous capacity across all sectors of society. UNDP’s greatest strengths to fulfil its role in supporting these efforts include:

1. ***Decentralized, country-driven and operational approach***, which makes it well placed to work with partners in integrating CDES across UNDP’s practice areas at the country level;
2. ***Growing technical capacity in environment and energy***, including the Environment and Energy Community of Practice and Knowledge Networks;
3. ***An integrated approach to environment and development programming*** that lends itself well to the interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral orientation of CDES;
4. ***A solid track record in linking global and local environmental priorities*** through its work to enhance country capacity to implement the MDGs, Rio Conventions and other MEAs and through support to developing National Development Plans and Poverty Reduction Strategies;
5. ***Extensive experience in supporting CDES at the country level***, as part of core UNDP programming and in its role as an Implementing Agency for the GEF. Many UNDP-supported projects with GEF financing encompass capacity development, either as a stated goal or an outcome. UNDP country offices have also supported many GEF enabling activities, such as NCSAs, NBSAPs , Country Action Plans and reports to conventions, most of which have identified capacity needs and possible responses, while also building analytical capacity; and
6. ***A pivotal role in working with the GEF and its partners to develop guidance and methods and support*** for capacity assessment, development and monitoring in projects with GEF financing.



EXAMPLE 9. UNDP-UNEP POVERTY-ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE: A COUNTRY-LED PROGRAMMATIC APPROACH

The PEI delivers financial and technical support for sustained capacity development to governments and other actors who take on the challenge of mainstreaming poverty-environment linkages into national development processes. For example, the PEI assists planning agencies to consider poverty-environment linkages, including climate change, in formulating economic and development policies, and helps environment agencies to engage with these policy processes more effectively. The PEI also supports civil society to engage in planning processes, making sure the voice of the poor is heard.

Based on experience to date, successful poverty-environment mainstreaming requires a programmatic approach — adapted to national circumstances. This framework has three phases and there are typically a cluster of tasks needed for each phase — for which a range of analytic tools can be used:

- **Preparatory Phase: Finding the Entry Points and Making the Case** - Activities include conducting assessments of the country's governmental, institutional, and political context as well as assessments that increase understanding of the nature of poverty-environment links. Raising awareness, building partnerships, assessing the institutional and capacity needs and setting up working mechanisms are also essential activities of the preparatory phase.
- **Phase 1: Mainstreaming Poverty-Environment Linkages into Policy Processes**: This step targets a specific policy process—such as a national development plan or sector strategy — identified as an entry point as part of the preparatory phase. Elements include developing new and targeted analytical studies to provide country-specific evidence about the nature of poverty-environment linkages in the country. Armed with such evidence, practitioners are better able to identify priorities and craft the arguments necessary to have an impact on the targeted policy process. Once poverty-environment links have been integrated in the policy document, mainstreaming efforts continue with the development and initial costing of policy measures. Activities to strengthen institutions and capacities occur throughout this phase.
- **Phase 2: Meeting the Implementation Challenge**: The final, most sustained phase focuses on making poverty-environment mainstreaming operational through engagement in budgeting, implementation, and monitoring processes. In order to strengthen institutions and capacities in the long term, it is critical to establish poverty-environment mainstreaming as normal practice in government and administrative procedures, systems, and tools at all levels.

SOURCE: <http://www.unpei.org>

4.2 UNDP Programming for CDES

Moving away from a project focus towards a programmatic approach.

Attempts to build environmental capacity with one-off projects that draw on various funding windows and agencies face considerable challenges in ensuring sustainable results. As noted earlier, the long-term, incremental nature of capacity development makes it difficult to design, support, monitor and evaluate using a traditional project-based model. This is particularly true in post-crisis countries and least developed countries, where capacity challenges are the greatest. (See Case Study #4.)

There is increasing recognition that a programmatic approach based on long-term investment is likely to be a



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more successful model for supporting CDES. For UNDP, this means making CDES part of its strategic approach to mainstreaming environmental sustainability across agency programming. This includes integration into country analysis (including the Common Country Assessment) and UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs), Country Programmes, Country Programme Action Plans and related documents. It also means using results-based management to link CDES results at the project level to longer-term capacity development outcomes at country, programme and agency levels. At the operational level, it may be useful to consider environmental capacity development as a cross-cutting theme, similar to gender equality, that can be translated into useful value-added interventions within various practice areas and thematic programmes. Box 8 shows how environmental (impact) assessment, a key tool for promoting environmental sustainability, is also expanding from being a project-based approach to being applied at the programmatic and strategic level.

BOX 8. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT: MOVING FROM A PROJECT TO A PROGRAMME PERSPECTIVE

Environmental assessment includes a suite of practical analytical tools that can generate information for more environmentally sustainable development.²⁷ Environmental impact assessment (EIA) is used to address the environmental impacts of proposed projects and is well established in most countries, although often weakly implemented. During the 1990s, it became clear that project-based EIA had limited application at broader geographic scales and at the policy and programme planning level. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) emerged as a tool to be used for these broader applications and is increasingly been adopted by developing countries.

The importance of strengthening environmental assessment capacity is mentioned in the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action, and credible local expertise is often available within government, the private sector and academia in UNDP partner countries. SEA holds great potential as a practical tool for environmental mainstreaming (OECD/DAC, 2006). UNDP can support partners in building capacity for environmental assessment (EA) through:

- partnership building and donor cooperation (e.g. through the OECD DAC SEA Task Team);
- develop internal capacities to apply and support EA;
- advocacy and awareness of EA value and approach;
- document and share case evidence of practice applied in UNDP and support to COs;
- network of EA practitioners within UNDP;
- strengthening existing and emerging national systems for EIA and SEA;
- providing access to EA knowledge and expertise;
- facilitating the use of SEA as a tool to integrate environment into MDG-based national development plans and budgeting and poverty reduction strategies;
- building technical capacity within government, civil society and the private sector to participate in SEA and EIA, through designing, managing, conducting or reviewing SEA and EIA reports, and following up on recommendations through environmental management plans and other implementation tools.

The processes associated with conducting an EIA or SEA can themselves be vehicles for developing environmental capacity, since participants improve their ability to collect, analyze and use environmental sustainability information for development planning and monitoring.

See additional SEA resources at the OECD-DAC Strategic Environmental Assessment Task Team website.

<http://www.seataskteam.net/index.php>

²⁷ See UNDG, 2009, Annex A3.



Programming Options

The following are options for UNDP support to CDES, which could be incorporated into country or regional level programming by UNDP country offices, UN Country Teams, partner countries and other development partners:

Advisory and technical support to programme/project design, implementation and monitoring:

- Inclusion of CDES as a cross-cutting theme in Common Country Assessments (CCAs), UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) and UNDP Country Programmes.
- Integration of CDES in design, monitoring and evaluation of other programmes/projects within UNDP's core environment and energy programmes.
- Project implementation and quality assurance, including increasing the sustainability of programme/project results.
- Technical backstopping and capacity support on CDES for executing agencies.

Policy dialogue, advocacy and awareness-raising on CDES

- Policy dialogue with programme countries to identify environmental capacity priorities.
- UNDP input on reform of country governmental institutions, including environment agencies and coordinating mechanisms.
- Advocacy to include CDES in development strategies, e.g., NDPs, PRSs, sectoral strategies.
- Integration of CDES into "Needs Assessments" done for MDG-Based Development Strategies.
- Country support to monitoring and reporting on progress towards MDGs, including MDG7.
- Integration of CDES into research and knowledge products, e.g., country and regional reports, policy briefs, applied policy research papers and lessons learned (for MDGs, NDPs and MEAs).

Information-sharing and collaboration among stakeholders

- Support for stakeholder policy dialogues, e.g., GEF Country Dialogues.
- Promotion of donor coordination on CDES efforts at regional and country levels.
- Public awareness-raising on environmental sustainability topics, e.g., Environment Day, World Water Day, Day of Action on Climate Change, World Health Day.

Knowledge management for environmental sustainability

- Development of CDES guidance, methods and tools (e.g., UNDP, 2010. Guidance Note on CDES; GEF/UNDP/UNEP, 2010. *Monitoring Guidelines of Capacity Development in GEF Projects*).
- Including CDES in Knowledge Management Frameworks and Regional Communities of Practice.
- UNDP/UN staff capacity development on CDES, including training and coaching.



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- Research and documentation of case studies and best practices on reinforcing the positive role of women in environmental sustainability.

Integration of CDES across other UNDP Practice Areas

- Link environmental sustainability, poverty reduction and achievement of the MDGs, addressing the poverty-environment nexus.
- Support mainstreaming climate change mitigation and adaptation into poverty reduction and economic development strategies, e.g., health, agriculture, transportation and energy.
- Integrate of environmental themes into programming for Quality Education (i.e., education that is relevant to issues like ES and climate change), to build capacities of children and youth as change agents.
- Strengthen governance systems for environmental and natural resources (e.g., land, water)
- Strengthen capacity to address land tenure, ownership and access to natural resources
- Integrate various approaches related to environmental risk management, including environmental assessment, climate change risk management, natural disaster prevention and recovery, conflict analyses, etc.
- Link Education for Sustainable Development with Disaster Risk Reduction Education (DRRE) within other programming that is linking environmental sustainability, disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation.



National UNV volunteer Teófilo Quispe (left) is a Technical Assistant and potato producer in Bolivia. Teófilo trains members of the Corque municipality, such as the indigenous community leader shown here, in ways of improving production and income. Source:: Nicolas Josserand, 2010.



Global Partnerships and Joint Programmes on ES

- The OECD Task Team on Governance and Capacity Building for Natural Resource and Environmental Management (2008b) notes that partnerships will be increasingly important in supporting national commitments to environmental sustainability and MEAs. UNDP can partner on CDES programming as part of numerous cross-cutting programmes and partnerships with other UN agencies, other multi/bilateral and NGO donors and national-level organisations within partner countries. The UN Commission on Sustainable Development maintains a database of over 300 partnerships, many of which were established after WSSD in 2002. (http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/dsd_aofw_par/par_index.shtml)

EXAMPLE 10: HARNESSING THE POWER OF VOLUNTEERISM FOR CDES

The UNDP-administered United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme promotes national and international volunteerism for peace and development, working directly with UNDP Country Offices to respond to requests for technical assistance. As almost 80% of UNV volunteers are from the South, they can help ensure the sustainability of CDES efforts and play a role in South-South collaboration. UNV's Programme Strategy defines three focus areas for support in the areas of environment and CDES (but also covers other ES topics):

1. Community-based natural resource management and sustainable use of biodiversity;
2. Community-based adaptation (CBA) to climate change; and
3. Addressing food security concerns through sustainable livelihoods.

Examples of possible roles for UNV in CDES include:

- Help develop practical volunteer-based conservation and management CD activities;
- enhance the capacity of community volunteers for participatory environmental assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring;
- build capacity for mediation and conflict prevention when resource scarcity is causing divisions within and among communities;
- increase community awareness and knowledge about climate change and mobilise community adaptation responses, including undertaking vulnerability reduction assessments;
- provide technical support and knowledge transfer to improve capacities for land management, and for diversifying livelihoods in order to enhance resilience; and
- improve community access to information and resources by supporting stakeholder collaboration.

UNDP Country Offices and other organisations can connect with online volunteers at www.onlinevolunteering.org

Source: Marco Van der Ree, UN Volunteers, UNDP



5 LESSONS LEARNED: A CLOSER LOOK AT THE CORE ISSUES

This section reviews four issues that seem to have the greatest influence on capacity development for ES and general strategies to address them, based on past CDES experience.²⁸ They are organized under UNDP's four "core issues". Annex A, Tool #3 lists more detailed possible responses to each issue.

5.1 Institutional Arrangements

Since institutional arrangements are the cornerstone of good environmental governance, they have often been the focus of international programmes to improve environmental sustainability. In the 1970s and 80s, virtually all developing countries created environmental and natural resource management agencies, and the accompanying policy, legal and regulatory frameworks. While this was a positive step, the relatively rapid development of environmental institutional frameworks over the last 15-25 years led to several issues that can be addressed by CDES:

- Many laws, regulations, policies and plans were introduced in a piecemeal fashion, sometimes due to requirements and/or incentives from donors. This has often resulted in fragmented institutional arrangements, overlapping mandates and approval processes, regulatory gaps, weak authority and enforcement, and inefficiencies in administration.
- Despite their broad responsibilities, environmental agencies and their budgets are often relatively small, compared to other agencies. They are often treated as relatively "junior" ministries, with minimal influence on national policies. Resource management agencies (e.g., forestry, agriculture), while better established, often take a narrow sectoral focus, with little attention to environmental sustainability and weak cooperation with environmental authorities.
- Many countries continue to experience an "implementation gap", as capacity to act lags behind the creation of policy, regulatory, planning and management tools, such as environmental impact assessment; fisheries and forestry regulations; and protected areas strategies, which have often been "imported" without adaptation to the local context.
- Programmes have often focused on building national institutions, with relatively little attention to developing local capacity for environmental sustainability. Yet it is at the community level where environmental services are delivered; direct dependence on natural resources is highest; environmental impacts are experienced most directly; and local and traditional ecological knowledge is most available.
- ES programmes have tended to target environmental and natural resource agencies and programmes, to the exclusion of the planning, economic and social agencies and strategies that generally drive the national development agenda.

²⁸ See, for example, OECD/DAC Task Team, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c; and Pillai, Poonam, 2008.



The significant increase in developing country participation in MEAs, coupled with a growth in domestic environmental awareness and NGO activity in many countries, has brought increased resources to address environmental sustainability issues. Yet MEA-related programming has sometimes skewed national environmental programmes towards globally-defined issues that are not always harmonized with national priorities. In some cases, resources may even be diverted away from local issues towards strategies, action plans and reports that are poorly integrated with national processes, are weakly implemented due to lack of country ownership, lack sustainable funding and/or duplicate similar initiatives. This may be accompanied by a lack of coordination, and at times even competition, among environmental agencies, and reluctance to share information, as these agencies seek to secure resources and consolidate their roles in an insecure climate.

UNDP can support CDES initiatives that address these institutional issues in the following ways:

- ***Rationalize and strengthen institutional arrangements:*** The framework and tools in this guide can be used to systematically identify and respond to institutional capacity issues. Many of the possible capacity development responses listed in Annex A address these issues.
- ***Develop capacity for mainstreaming:*** In addition to strengthening the capacities of environmental and natural resource agencies CDES supports the integration of ES into development sectors and also enhances collaborative frameworks across these sectors (e.g. through strengthening capacities of Ministries of Finance and Planning).
- ***Take advantage of decentralization trends:*** The global trend towards decentralization, underway in about 80% of developing countries (OECD, 2006), provides timely opportunities to build the environmental capacity of decentralized government offices, local authorities and community groups, as part of efforts to enhance local governance and promote community engagement in development and poverty reduction. As noted earlier, small, local-scale CDES initiatives are seen as playing a pivotal role in CDES²⁹.
- ***Create synergies between MEA-related capacity development and national development priorities:*** Ensure that the resources and expertise made available for MEA-related ES initiatives are linked to and reinforce national environment and development goals and plans, and use national systems for delivery wherever possible, consistent with the Accra Agenda for Action.

²⁹ Additional information in UNDP's "Local Capacity Strategy: Enabling Action for Environment and Sustainable Development", September 2010.



EXAMPLE 11. “CHANGE FOR THE BETTER”: HARNESSING THE CARBON MARKET FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Under the [Clean Development Mechanism](#) (CDM), governments and companies in industrialized countries can finance GHG emission reduction projects and technologies in developing countries as part of meeting their country obligations under the Kyoto Protocol. This provides new energy financing opportunities for developing countries. Globally, the CDM has been a success, but regional uptake is mixed, e.g. as of October 2010, 75% of projects were in four countries (China, India, Brazil, South Korea), while Sub-Saharan Africa had only 3%. The Nairobi Framework is a cooperative accord among eight international agencies that is helping countries, especially in Africa, to participate in the CDM (UNDP, UNEP, UNFCCC, UNCTAD, UNECA, UNITAR, World Bank, AfDB).

Under the framework, UNDP is supporting a programme to enhance the enabling environment for CDM participation in six Southern/Eastern Africa countries. The goal is to create an operational CDM framework in which public institutions can interact with the private sector to jointly develop carbon projects that are aligned with government priorities. It is based on a model of learning-by-doing and replication, which incorporates the following elements:

- multiple actors: e.g., government, consultants, trade bodies, academics and project developers;
- collaborative preparation of scoping studies and project inception and design documents;
- supportive workshops, tutorials, technical support and awareness-raising;
- UNDP in-country presence, ensuring continuity of stakeholder support; and
- shared South-South learning, combined with tailored capacity building services for each country.

UNDP also has a corporate framework – MDG Carbon – (www.mdgcarbonfacility.org) – for supporting carbon finance. MDG Carbon is an innovative means of harnessing the global carbon market to generate sustainable development benefits for developing countries. UNDP supports countries to develop the capacity to formulate mitigation projects that meet Kyoto Protocol standards and deliver environmental, economic and human development benefits. UNDP provides technical and project-management assistance to CDM and JI project developers (Joint Implementation; JI is another flexible mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol), while ensuring that the emission reduction credits generated by the projects are purchased at an attractive price. By lowering technical barriers to undertaking CDM/JI projects and enhancing financial incentives to undertake these projects, MDG Carbon stimulates with a new flow of financing for investment and development.



5.2 Accountability

As noted in Section 2.4, capacity issues can arise in relation to (a) organisational accountability (internally and with other organisations) and (b) public accountability, the two-way relationship between public authorities and the stakeholders who are affected by their actions. Capacity assessments commonly identify weaknesses in accountability and reporting relationships within or among organisations with ES responsibilities. This can contribute to the institutional problems described in Section 5.1. UNDP can support country efforts to clarify the relative roles and responsibilities of public authorities and strengthen organisational management, accountability and reporting systems.

Weak public accountability can contribute to an inequitable distribution of environmental costs and benefits, uneven access to natural resources, and exclusion of key stakeholders from ES decision-making. UNDP can support efforts to increase government accountability, transparency and responsiveness through promoting substantive stakeholder involvement on ES decision-making, which can be a strong tool to promote public accountability. Civil society participation is increasing in many countries due to the growth of democratic governance (at times due to external requirements). Yet many government agencies are still reluctant to engage external stakeholder and, when they do, may be more comfortable with awareness-raising and consultation than with direct collaboration. In response, NGOs and CBOs may take an adversarial stance which, while promoting accountability to some degree, can hinder the multi-stakeholder cooperation needed for ES solutions. Competition for access to natural resources in poor rural communities and competition for jobs and resources in post-conflict situations can also impede cooperation. (See Case Study #4.)

Despite these challenges, many countries continue to identify capacity for stakeholder engagement; multi-stakeholder collaboration and community-based resource management as priority areas for capacity development.³⁰ Recent OECD research on environmental capacity development proposed that “stakeholder interaction”, “networks of organizations”, and/or “partnerships and networks” become a fourth level of environmental capacity (OECD/DAC Task Team, 2008a, 2008b and 2008c).³¹ UNDP can play a catalytic role in developing country capacity to implement participatory and collaborative approaches to ES solutions.

UNDP can also support efforts to improve accountability through programming to broaden access to environmental information. [Agenda 21](#) called on governments and donor agencies to ensure “... access by the public to relevant information, facilitating the reception of public views and allowing for effective participation” (UN, 1992). More recently, over 40 countries, including several in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia, have ratified the “*Aarhus Convention on Access to information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters*” (UNECE, 2002). The convention links government accountability, environmental rights and human rights, and identifies key capacities related to environmental information and stakeholder engagement. The Right to Information: [Practical Guidance Note](#) (UNDP, 2004) provides additional guidance on this topic.

³⁰ For example, virtually all NCSAs mentioned these topics. (GSP, 2006. GSP, forthcoming, 2010)

³¹ In this Guidance Note, these collaborations and networks are considered part of the “enabling environment”.



LESSONS LEARNED

UNDP can also support efforts to enhance private sector accountability through helping countries to improve traditional “stick” approaches that are based on legal and regulatory tools such as laws, regulations and enforcement processes. These can be complemented by “carrot” approaches, such as the promotion of incentives for sustainable business and investment and the use of voluntary instruments, such as industry standards, codes of conduct, Environmental Management Systems and other corporate social responsibility tools. There may also be a role for awareness and education instruments, such as training on ES-related topics for industry and improved extension services within natural resource sectors.

EXAMPLE 12. “BANKING ON BIODIVERSITY”: MOBILISING PRIVATE SECTOR LEADERSHIP IN ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

MesoAmerica is considered a global biodiversity “hotspot” (i.e., significant diversity) but is under threat from habitat loss and degradation due to unsustainable land/water uses. The majority of the region’s economy consists of small, micro or medium-sized enterprises (SMMEs), many of which are rurally based, depend heavily on natural resources and have serious environmental impacts. They include cocoa and coffee farming, intensive cattle ranching, timber extraction, marine aquaculture, shrimp farming, high input horticulture, sugarcane production, slash and burn agriculture and tourism.

The goal of the UNDP-GEF project “Central American Markets for Biodiversity” ([CAMBio](#), 2007-14) is to support the mainstreaming of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use within SMME development and financing in five Central American countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua). This includes catalyzing changes in the banks’ SMMEs lending practices to improve financing for biodiversity-friendly businesses, and building SMME capacity to pursue these opportunities by improving access to credit, knowledge of market opportunities and small business management skills.

A team of biodiversity, SMME, policy and finance experts is working with the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI) and its network of regional financial institutions. The project has established conditions, pre-requisites, financial instruments, and biodiversity criteria to channel loans for biodiversity-friendly SMME investments. A pipeline for such potential investments now exists for the 5 participating countries and a total of approximately US\$ 2.5 million credits have been disbursed across various productive sectors. Additionally, a total of 21 financial institutions at the regional level have been trained on the use and recording of biodiversity-friendly initiatives’ eligibility and follow-up. Policy task forces are operational in all 5 countries and have begun the process of identifying barriers and defining reform proposals which will include incentives.



5.3 Environmental Leadership

As noted earlier, environmental capacity goes beyond institutional arrangements to include other aspects of governance. These include political culture; social customs and norms; patterns of power and influence; equity, human rights and gender equality; and the attitudes, values, interests and motivation of key actors, such as politicians, civil servants, media, community and business leaders, and individual citizens. Although some of these less tangible factors may appear to be outside the influence of development programmes, they are often identified as capacity constraints. Examples include political, managerial and community leadership; recruitment, promotion and compensation systems; availability of public and private funding and human capital; and opportunities for nepotism, corruption and illegal behaviour. UNDP can support CDES efforts to address these issues by promoting measures to encourage political, managerial and community leadership and motivation. This includes assistance in developing positive incentive systems, complemented by mechanisms to improve government accountability, corporate social responsibility and community mobilisation (as discussed in Section 5.2).

Among their key recommendations for improving support to capacity development, Baser and Morgan (2008) listed “finding, inducing, igniting and unleashing endogenous human energy and commitment” and “emphasizing the importance of effective leadership to help groups work together”. In addition, a global evaluation of UNDP’s Capacity 21 programme highlighted “the critical role of national/local champions”, defined as respected, committed, influential individuals ... who actively support and promote the cause of sustainable development” (Binger et al, 2002). Annex A, Tool #3 includes possible entry points and activities to promote environmental leadership at organisational and individual levels and to create a supportive enabling environment for this leadership.



Farmers and community pillars Houssain (centre) and Mahfoud (right) discuss climate change and its effect on their oasis at Iguiouaz, Morocco, with Ali (left), a respected elder. Houssain and Mahmoud volunteer with the UNV-supported Community-based Adaptation project, contributing their time, tools and land towards water-sharing systems and tree-planting initiatives, and sharing their knowledge with local youth. Source: UNV/ Baptiste de Ville d'Avray, 2009.



EXAMPLE 13. PRO-POOR PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS FOR WATER SERVICE DELIVERY

Despite economic growth in the Philippines, poverty is still a challenge, with large numbers of people lacking access to basic environmental services. Twenty percent of the population does not have adequate access to safe drinking water and of those, only 40% enjoy piped connections. The Maynilad Water Services Inc. (MWSI) is one of the two main water utilities with concession obligations to provide water to Metro Manila, including 7,000 poor households in two Barangays that are typical of others in Metro Manila. Due to a land dispute, MWSI was unable to provide household water supply connections and water was being delivered by trucks at a rate 15 times more costly for residents than for others with direct piped connections.

UNDP's Public-Private Partnerships for Service Delivery (PPPSD) programme and the UNDP Country Office supported a collaborative project involving MWSI, Streams of Knowledge (a global coalition of water and sanitation resource centers) and the Barangay authorities. It aimed to test and refine a Pro-Poor PPP model of tripartite partnership for water service delivery (water utility + small-scale service provider + local community) before expanding it to other poor communities. Fresh water is now piped in, improving water quality, reducing residential water costs and providing jobs for community members who manage the piped water supply scheme.

Responding to national priorities, the project also addressed barriers to partnerships by improving the enabling environment for formal engagement of small-scale water service providers in providing water services in urban poor areas. A series of stakeholder roundtables culminated in the first National Conference on Small-Scale Water Service Providers, co-organized with the national water sector regulator. The service providers are organized into the National Water and Sanitation Association, to collaborate on common issues and offer training on PPPs, regulation, financing and technology. Draft regulatory guidelines were prepared in consultation with over 30 key national and international stakeholders and await government adoption. The project contributed to broader national goals, such as MDG targets on water and sanitation, by providing a practical model that can be replicated in other areas of the city and other municipalities, and a coherent institutional framework for further water sector reforms.

Source: UNDP (undated), The Philippines: Piloting a Pro-Poor PPP in Water Service Delivery for the Poor

5.4 Knowledge and Information

Developing countries often identify a range of capacity needs related to information and communication technologies. Rapid innovation in these areas is opening up unprecedented opportunities for countries to access scientific and technical information and a vast array of ES-related planning and management approaches, tools and training. These technologies can also facilitate South-South and global sharing of information, lessons learned and best practices. UNDP can support efforts to incorporate these tools into broader CDES efforts. (See Case Study #2.)

Experience has shown that donors often support the development of sophisticated computer systems and applications, and training for IT specialists, as part of technical assistance to environmental and natural resources agencies. Yet these IT departments frequently remain isolated from planning and operational



functions. UNDP can support CDES efforts that promote the implementation of practical, user-focused “information management systems” that facilitate the use of ICT in ES decision-making. As noted earlier, capacity needs in the areas of environmental awareness, education and training also fall under this core issue. These topics are discussed in Section 3 and addressed further in Annex A, Tool #3.

EXAMPLE 14. “KNOWLEDGE IS POWER”: THE ADAPTATION LEARNING MECHANISM (ALM)

The Adaptation Learning Mechanism (ALM) is a global knowledge-sharing platform on climate change adaptation. Implemented by UNDP and GEF-SPA financed, the ALM supports efforts to integrate adaptation in development planning by accelerating the process of learning through experience. Working in partnership with UN agencies and the World Bank, the ALM draws upon experiences on the ground and features tools and practical guidance to meet stakeholders’ needs. Through the ALM, individuals and groups can share learning on good practices, lessons learned, innovative approaches and knowledge needs.

The ALM is composed of several components:

- **Resources Database** – With a database of 1,000+ adaptation resources, the ALM allows users to locate adaptation information by Location, Theme (food security, water, health, natural resources, etc.), Funding Source, Organisation and Type.
- **175 Country Adaptation Profiles** – Access to country-specific scientific information on how individual countries are addressing climate change adaptation. The Profiles include national assessments, ongoing initiatives, programme documents and options for users to submit materials.
- **400+ Adaptation Project Profiles** – Examples of current initiatives, presented in a simple, structured format. Project profiles are searchable through the ALM resource library and link to related country adaptation profiles. A one-page template allow any interested party to submit information on their own adaptation projects.
- **80+ Case Studies (including 20+ ALM Case Studies)** – Adaptation experiences of learning value, such as success factors and overcoming barriers, challenges and failures. Lessons submitted by users shown in a flexible but structured format, searchable through the ALM resource library.
- **50+ Guidance and Tools** – Includes a compendium of tools and guidance on a topics related to adaptation.
- **News, Events, and additional Adaptation Resources.**

www.adaptationlearning.net



6 CONCLUSIONS

The ‘distortions’ inherent in development processes – be they economic, social, political or environmental – affect the capacity development cycle in unique and often unpredictable ways. Nonetheless, the effort continues to transform the capacity development art into science, by harvesting valuable lessons from a growing body of experience around the world. In this constantly evolving process, mistakes are as useful to learning as success, and the particulars of both must be scrutinized carefully to determine what can be replicated, what can’t and why.

Experience to date has revealed many inherent challenges of donor-supported capacity development. The expansion of capacity is essentially an endogenous process and many common capacity constraints are systemic issues that will require long-term, incremental reform and change. The form and pace of this change will depend on the nature of the enabling environment, organisations and individuals in each society. While CDES models and methods are becoming increasingly sophisticated, what is important at the country level are demonstrable “on the ground” results that contribute to environmentally sustainable development. For those supporting CDES, this requires the use of adaptive, collaborative and responsive approaches to discover what will work in a particular setting to leverage real and fundamental changes in capacity. In a comprehensive OECD review of capacity development (Baser and Morgan 2008) notes that using a capacity development approach encourages international partners to think about “the ‘how’ issues”, especially implementation challenges at the operational level, as well as how to ensure resilience and sustainability while adapting to rapid change:

It encourages us to accept the idea that strategies do not implement themselves, no matter how brilliantly conceived. They need to be underpinned by the ability to make them operational.

Best practices suggest that development practitioners need to have a realistic view of their role and be both flexible and tactical, taking advantage of emerging opportunities, such as public sector reforms, a new agency head, new promotion systems, innovative funding mechanisms and emerging political, community and business leadership. A point raised in OECD’s 1995 “Capacity Development for Environment” framework is still relevant today:

The concepts of capacity and capacity development are so all-encompassing that practitioners have often found it difficult to make operational sense of them. It is important ... to begin by asking the question “capacity for what?” and focus on the specific capacities needed to accomplish clearly defined goals. The “best fit” approach to capacity development then calls for a systematic effort to think through what might work in the particular circumstances.

As we have seen, applying the UNDP capacity development approach is as much an art as science. When it comes to applying the fundamental principles, not only does one size not fit all but no two situations are identical.

The background of the page features a large, light green watermark of the United Nations emblem, which consists of a world map surrounded by olive branches.

ANNEXES:

ANNEX A: PRACTICAL TOOLS

ANNEX B: SELECTED CDES REFERENCES

ANNEX C: CASE STUDIES



ANNEX A. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY: PRACTICAL TOOLS

This annex provides three practical tools that UNDP country offices, their country partners and other development partners can use when undertaking capacity development for environmental sustainability (CDES):

- **Tool #1: Planning and Programming Tool** is an analytical template that provides a starting point for planning and implementing a CDES initiative. It lists key questions to ask and options to consider at each of the five steps in CDES, incorporating all of the elements in UNDP's CDES framework – the three levels of capacity, seventeen capacities and four core issues – as well as other suggestions from this Practitioner's Guide.
- **Tool #2: Checklist of Environmental Capacities**, can be used to structure a capacity assessment and/or as a checklist during Step 2, Assess Capacity Assets and Needs and in Step 3, Formulate the Capacity Development Response.
- **Tool #3: Possible Capacity Development Responses** consists of three lists, each of which provides a "menu of options" for possible outcomes, outputs and activities that could be considered during Step 3, Formulating the Capacity Development Response.

The Guidance Note and tools do not identify the techniques that can be used to generate information for the CDES process, since they are the same as are used in other types of programming. They include literature reviews/desk studies, interviews, surveys, workshops, stakeholder analysis, stakeholder consultation, participatory methods, self-assessments, field visits and inventories (e.g., to assess current lab facilities or computer hardware/software). More in-depth information can be generated through the use of well-established techniques, such as policy dialogue, organisational analysis, policy analysis, political economy approaches, "drivers of change" studies, horizon analysis and situation analysis.

The guide and tools do not specify the various programme/ project structures and processes that might be used to structure and run a CDES process. Again, these are generally the same as for any programme or project, e.g., programme/project implementation plan, implementation committee, steering committee, technical committee, sub-committees, advisory groups, working groups, stakeholder engagement, community participation, awareness-raising, training and media outreach.



CDES TOOL #1: PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING TOOL

TOOL # 1. CDES PLANNING AND PROGRAMMING TOOL

STEP 1. ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS ON CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

POSSIBLE OUTPUT: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

NOTE: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IS LISTED HERE AS A “STEP” BUT IN PRACTICE, STAKEHOLDERS SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN ALL FIVE STEPS. STEP 1 INVOLVES IDENTIFYING WHICH STAKEHOLDERS SHOULD BE INVOLVED AND HOW BEST TO INVOLVE THEM, WHICH CAN BE DONE BY CONDUCTING A STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS.

| Questions to Ask | Possible Tasks |
|---|--|
| WHAT WILL BE THE SCOPE AND SCALE OF THE PROCESS? | <i>Define the scope and scale of the CDES initiative, including main topics, key actors and participants, time frame, work plan and budget. Tool #2, Checklist of Environmental Capacities, can be used to help with “scoping” the main topics to be addressed.</i> |
| WHO WILL TAKE THE LEAD ON THE CDES PROCESS? | <i>Determine the structure, roles and responsibilities of the team that will manage the CDES process. This could include any of the parties listed below.</i> |
| WHICH STAKEHOLDERS SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN THE CDES PROCESS? | <p><i>Determine the key actors as well as additional stakeholders that should be involved. See Practitioner’s Guide: Box 7 for a list of various types of stakeholders that could participate in CDES. Sample categories include the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government agencies: national, sub-national, local and state companies • Environmental NGOs (ENGOs) and other NGOs • Community-based Organisations (CBOs) • Other community and village organisations • Universities, colleges, polytechnics and research institutes • Private sector organisations • International multi and bilateral donors, ENGOs and NGOs • Suppliers of capacity development services |
| WHEN SHOULD STAKEHOLDERS BE INVOLVED? | <i>Decide which stakeholders should be involved at each of Steps 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5.</i> |



ANNEX A

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| <p>HOW SHOULD STAKEHOLDERS BE INVOLVED IN THE CDES PROCESS?</p> | <p><i>Identify the most appropriate techniques for stakeholder engagement at each step, and for each type of stakeholder, considering, for example, the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness-raising techniques: mail, e-mail, printed materials, website, presentations, media, community events • Consultation techniques: workshops, interviews, focus groups, surveys, site visits, participatory techniques (mapping, transects, story-telling) • Involvement techniques: steering committees, working groups, advisory groups, partnerships, village committees, community-based natural resource management, adaptive collaborative management |
| <p>WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF THE ABOVE STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS?</p> | <p><i>Prepare the Stakeholder Engagement Strategy, as a stand-alone document or as part of the programme or project document.</i></p> |

STEP 2. ASSESS CAPACITY ASSETS AND NEEDS
POSSIBLE OUTPUT: CAPACITY ASSESSMENT REPORT OR COMPONENT OF PROGRAMME/PROJECT PROPOSAL

| <p>Questions to Ask</p> | <p>Possible Tasks</p> |
|---|--|
| <p>WHAT TRIGGERED THE CDES PROCESS AND WHAT WILL CONTINUE TO DRIVE IT?</p> | <p><i>Identify the triggers or reasons to undertake CDES. Examples to consider include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political decision, e.g., of a Minister of local authority • Policy commitment, e.g., community-based natural resource management • Government reform, e.g., decentralization, agency reorganisation • Commitment to or report for an MEA, MDG or other international initiative • Public awareness and concern, e.g., complaints about drinking water <p><i>Examples of factors that will drive the CDES process might include any of the above, plus:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-level commitment from decision-makers • Leadership from individuals or organisations • Community mobilisation <p><i>Identify how the above drivers will be supported and reinforced throughout the process.</i></p> |



| | |
|---|--|
| <p>WHAT ARE THE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED THROUGH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT?</p> | <p><i>Consult country plans and studies related to environmental, natural resource management, mainstreaming and sustainable development issues.</i></p> <p><i>Examples of ES issues to be addressed through CDES might include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues in a specific sector, e.g., industrial pollution, health issue • Issues in a specific location, e.g., urban slum, watershed • Depleted or degraded natural resource base, e.g., soil, forest, fishery • Natural disaster or identified natural hazard, e.g., flooding, earthquake • Need for climate change adaptation, e.g., coastal zone, arid lands • Need to mainstream ES into a specific sector, e.g., mining, or a specific segment of society, e.g., poor rural women making charcoal |
| <p>WILL THE FOCUS FOR CDES BE ON THE ENVIRONMENT “SECTOR”, A NATURAL RESOURCE “SECTOR”, MAINSTREAMING OR MORE THAN ONE OF THE ABOVE?</p> | <p><i>Options include (identify specific topics for each):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthened environment sector or sub-sectors, e.g., air, water, waste, wildlife • Integration of ES into one or more natural resource management sectors, e.g., agriculture, forest management, fisheries, aquaculture • Mainstreaming ES into national development policy and planning • Mainstreaming ES into specific sectors, e.g., finance, health, mining, industry, tourism |
| <p>WHICH ARE THE PRIORITY CAPACITIES THAT NEED TO BE DEVELOPED TO ADDRESS THE ES ISSUE(S) IDENTIFIED ABOVE?</p> | <p><i>Use Tool #2, which lists seventeen Environmental Capacities and sub-capacities, as a checklist to identify priority capacity to be developed, including:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Functional Capacities B. Technical Capacities <p><i>Note: This list can also be adapted for in interviews, workshops, meetings, etc. to have key actors and stakeholders rate the relative importance of these capacities, and/or current and desired levels of capacity.</i></p> |



ANNEX A

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| <p>FOR EACH PRIORITY CAPACITY, WHAT ARE CURRENT ASSETS AND NEEDS AT THE THREE LEVELS OF CAPACITY?</p> | <p><i>For each of the priority capacities chosen, identify assets, i.e., strengths to build on, and needs, i.e., gaps, weaknesses, challenges at each level of capacity:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling Environment level • Organisational level • Individual level <p><i>For a more detailed assessment, conduct the same analysis for each entry point that has been identified as relevant, using the list of entry points in Section 2.2, Box 4.</i></p> |
| <p>FOR EACH CAPACITY, WHAT ARE THE DESIRED AND CURRENT LEVELS OF CAPACITY?</p> | <p><i>For each of the priority capacities chosen, identify desired and current levels of capacity, using these sources:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past capacity assessments or related research on capacity assets and needs • New research, if needed, e.g., needs assessment surveys, interviews, self-assessments, workshops |
| <p>WHAT ARE THE CAPACITY ASSETS AND NEEDS RELATED TO UNDP'S FOUR "CORE ISSUES", IF ANY?</p> | <p><i>List capacity assets to build on and needs to be addressed, under each of these core issues:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional arrangements • Accountability • Leadership • Knowledge |
| <p>WHICH SECTORS, SEGMENTS OF SOCIETY AND ORGANISATIONS SHOULD BE THE FOCUS FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT? WHO WILL BE THE BENEFICIARIES (MAY BE THE SAME OR DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)?</p> | <p><i>Specify priority sectors, segments of society and organisations where capacity needs to be developed and the main target groups within each. The list of stakeholders in Section 3.1, Box 7 of the Practitioner's Guide can be used as a starting point, since key stakeholders may also be the key target groups and/or beneficiaries of capacity development. For each priority sector, segment of society and organisation, specify who will be involved. Examples might include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politicians, government managers and staff • Professional, technical, administrative or support staff • Women's groups, farmers groups, labour groups • Members of NGOs and CBOs, individual citizens |
| <p>WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF THE ASSESSMENT?</p> | <p><i>Prepare the Capacity Assessment Report, which summarized the information gathered during the activities above.</i></p> |



STEP 3. FORMULATE THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT RESPONSE

POSSIBLE OUTPUTS: CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME OR PROJECT DOCUMENT OR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT COMPONENTS WITHIN ANOTHER PROGRAMME OR PROJECT

NOTE: A PARTICULAR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT "RESPONSE" WILL INCLUDE MULTIPLE APPROACHES AND ACTIVITIES.

| Questions to Ask | Possible Tasks |
|---|---|
| <p>WILL THE CAPACITY RESPONSE BE STAND-ALONE OR INTEGRATED INTO ANOTHER PROGRAMME/PROJECT?</p> | <p><i>Choose one of the following (or a combination):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted programme or project to develop specific environmental sustainability capacities • Integrated into a broader environment or sustainable development programme/project (e.g., technical assistance, technology transfer) • Integrated into a cross-sectoral/cross-practice area programme/project (e.g., poverty reduction, disaster risk reduction, integrated local development, MDG reporting, governance, gender equality) or thematic programme (e.g., Poverty-Environment Initiative, Climate Change Adaptation) |
| <p>WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT RESPONSE?</p> | <p><i>Use a standard UNDP results-based management (RBM) format to summarize the capacity development initiative, showing how the capacity development activities will respond to the priority capacity needs and core issues identified during the capacity assessment. Specify the following RBM elements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected Impacts and Outcomes |
| <p>WHICH OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES WILL BE USED TO ACHIEVE EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND IMPACTS?</p> | <p><i>List proposed outcomes, outputs and activities at each level of capacity, using the three lists in Tool #3 as a starting point for identifying possible responses. (Note: The capacity assessment may also have identified possible responses to capacity needs).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling Environment: • Organisational level: • Individual level: (should be well integrated with the other two levels) <p><i>Specify the following RBM elements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expected Outputs, Activities and Inputs <p><i>Identify what will be done to ensure that the above outputs and activities are mutually reinforcing to achieve the desired capacity outcomes.</i></p> |



STEP 4. IMPLEMENT THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT RESPONSE

POSSIBLE OUTPUTS: VARIOUS CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES; AND MONITORING REPORTS

| Questions to Ask | Possible Tasks |
|---|---|
| HOW WILL THE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE BE IMPLEMENTED? | <p><i>Define the following programme/project management elements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project/programme management structure, processes and schedule • Key milestones and deliverables • Administrative, management and financial systems, e.g., budgets, staffing, contracting and work plans • Exit strategy |
| HOW WILL RESULTS BE MONITORED AND USED? | <p><i>Devise a performance management system, including these elements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators, baseline, targets and dates, sources of verification and assumptions • Responsibilities for monitoring: who will take the lead and which other stakeholders will be involved, when and how they will be involved • When and how monitoring results will be used to improve the initiative |
| WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE THE INITIATIVE? | <p><i>Conduct monitoring, report results and use this information to adapt and refine the initiative during implementation</i></p> |

STEP 5. EVALUATE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

OUTPUT: EVALUATION REPORT

| Questions to Ask | Possible Tasks |
|---|---|
| HOW WILL THE INITIATIVE BE EVALUATED? | <p><i>Devise an evaluation strategy. Possible elements include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation criteria, e.g., relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impacts, sustainability and replicability • Evaluation techniques, e.g., desk studies, surveys, interviews, participatory evaluation, workshop, media analysis • Schedule and responsibilities: define who will conduct and participate in evaluations and who will review reports |
| WHAT WERE THE RESULTS OF THE INITIATIVE? | <p><i>Conduct the evaluation and communicate results to others who can learn from the experience, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent to which expected results were achieved • Unintended results, both positive and negative • Lessons learned for other CDES initiatives |



CDES Tool #2: List of Environmental Capacities

The following list of capacities for environmental sustainability (“environmental capacities”) is divided into two categories A. Functional and B. Technical (see Practitioner’s Guide, Section 2.3). The list provides a starting point that can be adapted to specific settings by eliminating capacities/sub-capacities that aren’t relevant and adding other capacities/sub-capacities that might be pertinent. The list can be used in various ways during the five-step CDES process, for example:

- **As a scoping tool during Step 1: Engage stakeholders:** Analysts, in consultation with stakeholders, may choose the overall scope or focus of the capacity assessment by identifying a sub-set of environmental capacities that will be the subject of analysis.
- **As an analytical framework for Step 2: Assess Capacity.** The list can be used to structure the capacity assessment, for example, it could be adapted as a Table of Contents for the report by removing the columns on the right.
- **As a checklist during Steps 2: Assess Capacity and/or Step 3: Formulate the Capacity Development Response:** The list can be used as checklist (with columns as shown or adapted), in which respondents rate current levels of capacity and/or desired levels of capacity.

If this list is used as a checklist, as described above, a rating system such as the following could be used (or adapted):

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|----------|------------|---------|---|
| Sample rating system: | H – High | M = Medium | L = Low | N/A – Not Applicable (or Not Important) |
|-----------------------|----------|------------|---------|---|

| A. FUNCTIONAL CAPACITIES CAPACITIES NEEDED TO UNDERTAKE THE CORE FUNCTIONS INVOLVED IN DESIGNING, IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES. | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|-----|
| | H | M | L | N/A |
| 1. CAPACITY TO ASSESS A SITUATION, DEFINE GOALS, AND ANALYSE AND CHOOSE OPTIONS FOR ES | | | | |
| a. Identify priority environmental and natural resource issues to be addressed, along with key social and economic linkages | | | | |
| b. Gather and analyse relevant environmental, social and economic information | | | | |
| c. Define a vision, goals and objectives to address priority environmental issues | | | | |
| d. Identify, analyse and choose preferred options for achieving goals and objectives (e.g., new or reformed institutions, policies, legislation, plans, strategies or programmes, human resources development and training) | | | | |



ANNEX A

| | H | M | L | N/A |
|--|---|---|---|-----|
| 2. CAPACITY TO FORMULATE POLICIES, LEGISLATION, PLANS AND STRATEGIES FOR ES | | | | |
| a. Engage in policy dialogue to make the case for action on environmental sustainability | | | | |
| b. Conduct policy analysis, and legal and regulatory review to identify needed reforms | | | | |
| c. Develop/revise sectoral and cross-sectoral policies, laws, regulations, plans and strategies | | | | |
| d. Design economic, voluntary and awareness/education instruments to complement policy and legal instruments | | | | |
| e. Set priorities through strategic planning, linked to results-based management | | | | |
| 3. CAPACITY TO BUDGET, MANAGE AND IMPLEMENT, INCLUDING MOBILIZING RESOURCES FOR ES | | | | |
| a. Design and manage programmes, projects and operational activities (e.g., permitting, environmental monitoring, extension, research, advocacy) | | | | |
| b. Design and implement administrative and management procedures | | | | |
| c. Prepare budgets and manage finances | | | | |
| d. Implement human resources development (HRD) programmes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying organisational structures, job descriptions and compensation scales; Personnel hiring, retention, deployment, supervision and management; and Professional development, training, leadership, motivation and incentives. | | | | |
| e. Procure and maintain infrastructure and material resources (e.g., offices, labs, scientific equipment, computers, vehicles) | | | | |
| 4. CAPACITY TO MONITOR, EVALUATE, REPORT AND LEARN FROM ES INITIATIVES | | | | |
| a. Express environmental sustainability goals and objectives for plans, programmes and projects in terms of expected outcomes (at various scales, from donor programmes to local projects) | | | | |



| | H | M | L | N/A |
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| b. Use results-based management to identify outcomes, outputs and activities for the above, and performance measurement to monitor progress, based on specific targets, baselines, time frames and indicators | | | | |
| c. Evaluate results of plans, programmes and projects, including levels of achievement, strengths, weaknesses and lessons learned | | | | |
| d. Report monitoring and evaluation results to key actors and stakeholders | | | | |
| e. Use monitoring and evaluation results for adaptive management and refinement of programmes and projects | | | | |
| 5. CAPACITY TO ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTICIPATE IN MULTI-SECTORAL COLLABORATION ON ES | | | | |
| a. Define the objectives and scope of stakeholder engagement, including who should be involved, and when and how they will be involved | | | | |
| b. Design and use appropriate stakeholder engagement techniques, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness-raising: e.g., brochure, poster, awareness campaign • Consultation: e.g., interview, survey, village meeting, workshop, advisory group • Involvement/collaboration, e.g., partnership, working group, community participation techniques (CBNRM, PRA, CAM)³² | | | | |
| c. Ensure that stakeholders have access to environmental information | | | | |
| d. Facilitate dialogue, mediate among diverse interests and manage conflicts | | | | |
| e. Analyze stakeholder views and integrate them into decision-making | | | | |
| f. Mobilise government, civil society and the private sector to promote ES | | | | |
| g. Ensure that stakeholder processes are inclusive of women and men/ girls and boys; poor, marginalized and/or remote communities; and indigenous peoples | | | | |

³² Community Based Natural Resources Management, Participatory Rural Appraisal, Collaborative Adaptive Management/Co-management



| | H | M | L | N/A |
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| 6. CAPACITY TO GENERATE, MANAGE, USE AND COMMUNICATE ES INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE | | | | |
| a. Procure information and communication technologies (ICT) ³³ to support environmental and natural resource management and cross-sectoral environmental integration | | | | |
| b. Conduct research, field studies, inventory and monitoring to support decision-making | | | | |
| c. Design and maintain environmental information systems and databases (both non-spatial and spatial, e.g., GIS and remote sensing) | | | | |
| d. Use local ecological knowledge (LEK) and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) in decision-making | | | | |
| e. Promote knowledge management ³⁴ and information-sharing within and among organisations | | | | |
| f. Facilitate development and transfer of environmentally sound, country-appropriate technologies and methods for ES | | | | |
| 7. CAPACITY TO DESIGN AND/OR REFORM INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR ES | | | | |
| a. Establish mandates, powers and responsibilities for environmental and natural resource management at appropriate levels of government (national, state/provincial and local) | | | | |
| b. Define or redefine the relative roles and responsibilities of environmental and natural resource authorities within public sector decision-making frameworks | | | | |
| c. Design or reform organisational structures and functions, accountability and reporting relationships, and/or management, administrative and budgetary systems | | | | |
| d. Design or reform policy, legal, legislative, and/or regulatory frameworks | | | | |

³³ Information and Communications Technologies (ICT) is an umbrella term referring to technologies for manipulating and communicating information, including computer hardware and software, and devices for storing and communicating voice, sound or images (e.g., phone, camera, video, audio-visual).

³⁴ *Knowledge Management (KM)* includes various practices used in an organisation to identify, create, distribute and enable adoption of knowledge gained through experience and learning. KM typically focuses on organisational objectives such as improved performance, innovation, sharing lessons learned and continuous improvement.



| | H | M | L | N/A |
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| e. Secure funding for ES programmes from various sources, including: direct budget support; royalty, lease, license and user fees (i.e., resource pricing); private enterprise; social enterprise; non-profit investment; and innovations such as carbon finance, debt-for-nature swaps and revolving funds | | | | |
| f. Promote communication and coordination within organisations, and inter-agency collaboration among environmental, natural resource and other sectors (e.g., inter-ministerial committees, technical committees, referral systems, list serves) | | | | |
| B. TECHNICAL CAPACITIES CAPACITIES NEEDED TO CARRY OUT ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, AND TO MAINSTREAM ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ACROSS SECTORS. | | | | |
| 8. CAPACITY TO PROTECT, MANAGE AND SUSTAINABLY USE ECOLOGICAL GOODS AND SERVICES | | | | |
| a. Deliver sustainable energy, water and sanitation services, especially to the poor | | | | |
| b. Design and implement water management policies, laws and programmes, e.g., water supply, water quality, water conservation and watershed management | | | | |
| c. Design and implement air management policies, laws and programmes, e.g., to address ground-level air pollution, airshed management, urban air quality, GHG emissions | | | | |
| d. Design and implement policies, laws and programmes for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including ecosystems, species and genetic resources, e.g., parks and protected areas; ecotourism; sustainable fisheries; biosafety programmes, seed banks | | | | |
| e. Design and use environmental monitoring tools, e.g., environmental indicators, State-of-Environment (SOE) reporting | | | | |
| 9. CAPACITY TO DESIGN AND MANAGE POLLUTION PREVENTION, ABATEMENT, AND CONTROL PROGRAMMES | | | | |
| a. Design and manage programmes to manage solid and liquid waste and air emissions, including waste reduction, reuse, recycling and environmentally sound disposal | | | | |



ANNEX A

| | H | M | L | N/A |
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| b. Design and use clean production and industrial ecology approaches ³⁵ , such as life cycle assessment, eco-efficiency and green/eco-design | | | | |
| c. Design, use and/or oversee environmental restoration processes and methods, e.g., soil remediation, habitat restoration and mine site reclamation | | | | |
| d. Implement resource conservation programmes, including energy and water conservation, energy efficiency, clean/renewable energy development | | | | |
| 10. CAPACITY TO PROTECT, MANAGE AND SUSTAINABLY USE NATURAL RESOURCES³⁶ | | | | |
| a. Integrate environmental sustainability into agriculture (e.g., Integrated Pest Management, soil and water conservation, genetic diversity) | | | | |
| b. Integrate environmental sustainability into forest management (i.e., sustainable forestry) | | | | |
| c. Integrate environmental sustainability into fisheries and wildlife management (e.g., sustainable fisheries) | | | | |
| d. Integrate environmental sustainability into exploitation of non-renewable resources, such as oil and gas and mineral resources (i.e., promote sustainable use) | | | | |

³⁵ Shifting industrial processes from linear/open loop systems, in which resource and capital investments move through a system to become waste, to closed loop systems where wastes become inputs for new processes.

³⁶ Capacity #16 includes a vast array of specialized capacities and topics. There is extensive global experience to use when undertaking CDES in these areas. Sample websites include:

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy: Environment and Agriculture website <http://www.iatp.org/enviroag/>

Food and Agriculture Organisation: Capacity Building Portal, e.g., fisheries, forests, agriculture and rural development

UNDP: Environmental Sustainability and Energy webpages: <http://www.undp.org/energyandenvironment/>

UNEP: Oil and Gas and the Environment website: <http://www.unep.fr/scp/oil/>



| | H | M | L | N/A |
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| 11. ASSESS, REDUCE AND MANAGE ENVIRONMENT-RELATED RISKS, INCLUDING CLIMATE CHANGE, USING THE PRECAUTIONARY APPROACH³⁷ | | | | |
| a. Integrate climate change considerations into development through (i) mitigation, including efforts to move to low-emissions development, and (ii) adaptation, including efforts to increase resilience (See UNDG, 2010, p. iv.) | | | | |
| b. Assess and manage natural hazards and develop disaster risk reduction programmes and disaster preparedness and response strategies | | | | |
| c. Implement oil spill prevention and response strategies | | | | |
| d. Implement environmental health and occupational health and safety programmes | | | | |
| e. Implement hazardous materials management and toxicology programmes | | | | |
| 12. CAPACITY TO USE LEGAL AND REGULATORY TOOLS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY | | | | |
| a. Develop or revise laws and regulations to achieve environmental sustainability (for environmental, natural resource, development and planning sectors) | | | | |
| b. Develop and implement approval, permitting and licensing systems to implement laws and regulations, along with compliance and enforcement systems (e.g., inspections, prosecution, fines, appeals) | | | | |
| c. Develop and implement standards, objectives and guidelines that refine laws and regulations (e.g., drinking water standards, pollution control objectives, hazardous waste guidelines, building codes) | | | | |
| d. Establish and protect environmentally-related rights, including access to information, land/resource tenure, participation rights, human rights | | | | |

³⁷ Principle 15, Rio Declaration, 1992: "In order to protect the environment, the precautionary approach shall be widely applied by States according to their capabilities. Where there are threats of serious or irreversible damage, lack of full scientific certainty shall be not used as a reason for postponing cost-effective measures to prevent environmental degradation."



ANNEX A

| | H | M | L | N/A |
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| 13. CAPACITY TO USE AWARENESS AND EDUCATION TOOLS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY | | | | |
| a. Deliver or support environmental communications programmes to provide access to environmental information, e.g., public information centres and media outreach | | | | |
| b. Deliver or support environmental awareness and social marketing programmes to promote behavioural change or increase involvement in ES decision-making | | | | |
| c. Deliver or support or environmental education ³⁸ at primary, secondary schools and post-secondary institutions (university, college, polytechnic) | | | | |
| d. Deliver or support ES-related training, education and professional development, including continuing education targeted to various specific audiences | | | | |
| 14. CAPACITY TO USE ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS AS TOOLS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY | | | | |
| a. Use natural resource accounting methods to quantify the benefits of ecological goods and services and the costs of environmental deterioration, resource depletion and climate change in national accounts (e.g., GNP) and economic and sectoral planning. | | | | |
| b. Use economic (i.e., market-based) instruments to achieve environmental goals, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taxes and incentives (e.g., tax concessions, subsidies, matching funds); • Resource pricing (e.g., water and energy pricing); and • Creating markets through emissions trading (e.g., cap-and-trade, carbon offsets). | | | | |
| c. Promote extended producer responsibility for manufactured goods and services, e.g., life cycle responsibility, handling of hazardous chemicals, waste exchanges | | | | |

³⁸ Including "Education for Sustainable Development" (ESD)



| | H | M | L | N/A |
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| 15. CAPACITY TO USE VOLUNTARY INSTRUMENTS AS TOOLS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY | | | | |
| a. Use and promote normative guidelines, standards and codes of conduct for corporate responsibility ³⁹ , e.g., UN Global Compact, OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises | | | | |
| b. Use and promote environmental management systems, e.g., ISO 14001 Environmental Management Standard (EMS) ⁴⁰ | | | | |
| c. Use and promote process guidelines for sustainability reporting, auditing and assurance, e.g., Global Reporting Initiative, AA1000 Assurance Standard | | | | |
| d. Promote the use of environmentally sound products and services through green procurement and use of eco-certification and eco-labeling, e.g., LEED, Green Globe | | | | |
| 16. CAPACITY TO MAINSTREAM ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY ACROSS DEVELOPMENT SECTORS | | | | |
| a. Develop mechanisms for inter-agency and multi-sectoral collaboration on integrating environmental sustainability into national and sectoral policies, legislation, plans and strategies, including National Development Plans and Poverty Reduction Strategies | | | | |
| b. Use Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and similar analytical tools (Regulatory Impact Assessment, Cost-benefit Analysis ⁴¹) to integrate environmental sustainability into policies, plans and programmes | | | | |
| c. Use Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures and methods to integrate environmental sustainability into development projects | | | | |
| d. Use integrated environmental management tools, e.g., Integrated Ecosystem Management, Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Integrated Water Resource Management, Integrated Pest Management, Agroforestry | | | | |

³⁹ Corporate social responsibility tools provide global reference points for improving the social and environmental performance of business and other organisations. Although voluntary, some are emerging as de facto industry standards that provide the legitimacy, consistency and comparability required by business and its stakeholders.

⁴⁰ An organisation can prepare an EMS to improve environmental performance by taking environmental considerations into account in decision-making and risk management. It also helps it to meet legislative, regulatory and policy requirements and demonstrate due diligence. An EMS is commonly based on the International Organisation for Standardization 14000 series of environmental standards, esp. ISO 14001.

⁴¹ See OECD, 2006. *Cost-Benefit Analysis and The Environment: Recent Developments*



| | H | M | L | N/A |
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| e. Use cross-thematic approaches to environmental sustainability, e.g., Sustainable Livelihoods, Sustainable Communities, gender and human rights-based approaches | | | | |
| 17. CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS (MEAs) AND INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION PROGRAMMES | | | | |
| a. Negotiate MEAs and related agreements and harmonize national environmental priorities and programmes with MEA commitments | | | | |
| b. Incorporate MDG7 and MEA commitments into national policies, legislation, plans and programmes | | | | |
| c. Implement MEA-related programmes, e.g., plans, projects and enabling activities | | | | |
| d. Access environment-related funding mechanisms, such as the Global Environment Facility, carbon finances and climate change adaptation funds (e.g., Clean Development Mechanism, Carbon Fund for Europe) | | | | |
| e. Implement international environmental cooperation programmes and projects with multi and bilateral organisations, regional organisations and international NGOs (e.g., IUCN) | | | | |

CDES Tool #3: Possible Capacity Development Responses

Tool #3 consists of three indicative lists of sample capacity development responses, categorized by levels of capacity, and by entry points within each level: i.e, Tool #3a: Enabling Environment, Tool #3b: Organisational Level, and Tool #3c: Individual Level. These lists are expressed as draft capacity development outcomes, outputs and activities, which could be adapted and incorporated into specific interventions at the country level.

Since UNDP suggests greater focus on the first two levels, Tool 3c lists outcomes only, based on the principle that individual capacity building should be integrated into broader interventions. Tool 3c also lists strategies to ensure that environmental awareness, education and training programmes (which work primarily at the individual level) are used more effectively as to build capacity at the other levels. As noted in the Guidance Note, various capacity development responses will overlap in practice and should be designed to be mutually reinforcing.

UNDP’s four “core issues” cut across the levels of capacity and can be addressed at multiple entry points. In tools 3a and 3b below, capacity development responses that might be useful in addressing core issues related to Accountability, Leadership, and Knowledge and Information are indicated with (A), (L) and/or (K), as appropriate. Since most of the responses listed relate in some way to Institutional Arrangements, these are not highlighted separately.



TOOL 3A. STRENGTHENING THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

- Changed cultural norms, social values, traditions and customs in relation to ES
- Improved environmental governance, including increased rule of law, accountability, transparency and responsiveness
- Strengthened constitutional framework for ES
- Increased political commitment to ES
- Improved policy, legal and regulatory frameworks
- Strengthened national and sub-national institutional, management and accountability frameworks
- Environmental sustainability addressed in national development policies and plans
- Environmental sustainability addressed in sectoral development policies and plans
- Improved inter-agency coordination and collaboration frameworks
- Enhanced stakeholder engagement mechanisms (multi-agency, multi-sector)
- Improved communication and collaboration among segments of society
- Increased financial flows/budgets for ES activities
- Improved knowledge and information systems
- Mechanisms to address human rights and equity issues related to ES, including gender equality and access to natural resources

POSSIBLE OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

Societal framework, norms, values, traditions and customs

- Environmental awareness and education campaigns directed at key target groups, including “education for sustainable development” (ESD), e.g., public awareness campaigns, social marketing, schools and universities, media forums, community mobilisation (A) (K)
- Promotion of volunteerism as an entry point to expanding ownership and civic engagement in ES (L) (K)
- Programmes to promote involvement by high profile members of society in ES issues, e.g., community and business leaders, local politicians, media personalities and entertainers (A) (L)

Environmental governance: rule of law, accountability, transparency and responsiveness

- Improved government accountability and reporting mechanisms, e.g., annual reports, websites, access to politicians, media briefings (A)
- Expanded results-based management and performance measurement systems in the public sector (A)
- Improved public access to environmental information, e.g., freedom of information policies and procedures, websites, information centres (A) (K)
- Outreach to increase media access to information, and media engagement in ES issues (K)
- Establishment of independent review mechanisms, e.g., environment (or sustainable development) commissioner, commission, auditor, advocate, ombudsperson or quality assurance provider (with an independent office or a part of the Auditor-General Department) (A)

Constitutional framework

- Constitutional reform to incorporate environmental rights and principles into the constitution, parliamentary or other high-level documents (especially in new, post-conflict or transition states) (A)
- Incorporation of environmental rights and principles into a Charter of Rights or human rights code (A)



Political framework

- Clear government policy and direction on ES topics (A) (L)
- Policy dialogue among decision-makers, e.g., parliamentary, senate or congress environmental or sustainable development committees (L)
- Incentives for political leadership and performance on ES issues, such as
 - international benchmarking (L)
 - National, regional or global peer exchanges and networking (L) (K)
 - Leadership awareness-raising or training for politicians and senior decision-makers (L)
 - International, national and regional awards and citations
- Increased public profile: e.g., media events, media packages, attendance at business or community events (lunches, openings, closings, workshops)

Policy framework

- Policy analysis: analysis of environment, natural resources management, and/or mainstreaming policies
- Policy reform: new or revised policies, with accompanying procedural manuals, guidelines and training
- Policy reform to support the use of economic and voluntary instruments for ES to complement regulatory tools (as listed in Tool #2)

Legal and regulatory framework

- Improved adherence to the rule of law, e.g., legal reform, better enforcement and compliance, increased access to courts/legal remedy (A)
- Legal and regulatory review (A)
- New or revised laws, regulations, standards or guidelines, e.g., pollution, land use, fisheries
- New or revised enforcement, compliance and inspection processes
- New or revised laws and regulations on land tenure and access to natural resources
- Legal and regulatory reform to support the use of economic and voluntary instruments to complement regulatory instruments for ES

National and sub-national institutional, management and accountability frameworks for ES

- Cross-sectoral institutional analysis
- Clarification of relative mandates, roles, responsibilities and relationships among environmental, natural resource and sectoral authorities (A)
- Decentralisation of environmental powers and strengthening of local government capacity for ES (A)

National planning frameworks

- Integration of ES into national decision-making, e.g., Cabinet and ministerial committees and reviews (A)
- Revisions to administrative procedures and manuals to incorporate ES (A) (K)
- Use of Natural Resource Accounting: economic valuation of ecological services/natural resources in development planning and decision-making (K)
- Strategic combined use of regulatory, economic (i.e., market-based) and voluntary measures to promote ES (See Tool #2)



Sectoral planning frameworks

- Integration of ES into sectoral development plans and strategies
- Implementation of existing sustainable development strategies and environmental plans (which often “sit on the shelf”, due to lack of funding), e.g., secure political support, find financing, mobilise actors
- Strengthening the use of EIA and SEA, including implementation and follow-up to reports (K)
- Building ES capacity in the private sector (business and industry, e.g., promoting corporate social, responsibility through round tables, business leaders’ forums, awareness and training (L) (K)

Inter-agency coordination and collaboration frameworks

- Creation or reform of inter-agency committees and working groups on ES topics, at ministerial, senior manager, (i.e., deputy or vice minister or principal secretary, director) or technical levels (L) (A)
- Referral or screening systems (to circulate development proposals to relevant agencies for comment)
- Joint programmes for ES

Stakeholder engagement and collaboration mechanisms (multi-agency, multi-sector)

- Stakeholder engagement policies, procedures and mechanisms for three levels of engagement: awareness-raising, consultation and involvement (see Guidance Note, Section 3, Step 1) (A)
- Multi-stakeholder collaboration mechanisms, e.g., advisory bodies, round tables, partnerships (A)
- Incentives for private sector involvement in environmentally sustainable practices (K)
- Incentives for community involvement in environmentally sustainable practices (K)
- Public-private-community partnerships on ES topics, e.g., water supply

Financial flows

- Predictable and stable budget allocations for ES, e.g., multi-year programming/budgeting (A)
- Increased budgets for environment agencies and ES activities in other sectors
- Research and policy analysis to make the economic case for ES (K)
- Diversification of sources of financing for ES agencies and programmes (K)

Knowledge and information systems

- Enhanced use of Information and Communication Technologies in ES decision-making, e.g., GIS (K)
- Shared information systems and databases among agencies and/or information-sharing protocols among government agencies and between the public and private sectors (K)
- National and international networks to share information, knowledge and training materials (K)
- Research on application of economic instruments in specific settings (K)

Human rights and equity issues related to ES, including gender equality and access to natural resources

- Community-based approaches to natural resource and environmental management (L) (K)
- Community-led sustainable development models, e.g. Local Agenda 21 (L) (K)
- Empowerment of women in environmental and natural resource management and decision-making, e.g., ensuring equitable participation, building technical and managerial capacity (L) (K)
- Revival of traditional and community environmental and natural resources management systems (L) (K)



TOOL 3B. STRENGTHENING ORGANISATIONS

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT FOR ORGANISATIONS

- Defined organisational mandates, structures and functions for ES
- Strengthened management, planning and operational frameworks
- Strengthened administrative and budgetary systems
- Strengthened personnel management and human resources development
- Enhanced communication and engagement with external stakeholders
- Strengthened information and knowledge management systems
- Improved procurement and maintenance of infrastructure, facilities and equipment to support ES efforts
- Improved organisational culture to support ES

POSSIBLE OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

Organisational mandates, structures and functions

- Institutional analysis/organisational review: internal or independent (A)
- Institutional restructuring, i.e., reorganizing structures and functions (A)
- New or revised organisational policies to define accountability and reporting relationships (A)
- New or revised procedures to implement the above (A)

Management, planning and operational frameworks

- Strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation systems (A)
- Results-based management and performance measurement systems (A)
- Internal communication and collaboration mechanisms: committees, working groups, referral systems, information-sharing and networking (A)
- Improved technical and field support for ES functions
- Improved programme and project management systems/skills at organisation, division and unit levels
- Leadership and management training (L)

Administrative and budgetary systems

- Enhanced administrative procedures and performance standards, e.g., manuals, guidelines (A)
- Improved systems for long-term and annual work planning at organisation, division and unit levels (A)
- Increased capacity for budgeting and resource mobilisation
- Diversification of funding sources for ES

Personnel management and human resources development (HRD)

Includes improved systems and capacities to fulfill two functions:

a. Personnel recruitment and management, including:

- Definition of organisational structures, job classifications/descriptions and compensation scales
- Establishment of HRD policies and procedures, including hiring, promotion, retention and deployment
- Enhanced supervision and management procedures, e.g., career development strategies, job performance reviews, work plans and self-assessments of task completion
- Measures to improve participation, ownership, motivation, incentives and morale



b. Professional development and training, including systems and skills to:-

- Undertake capacity assessments and capacity development plans and programmes (“capacity to develop capacity”)
- Conduct training/learning needs assessments (individual and organisational), and prepare training/learning plans, programmes and evaluations
- Deliver (or procure) training/learning services and materials
- Organize informal training/learning programmes, e.g., peer learning, networking
- Ensure that donor-supported training strengthens long-term organisational capacity

Communication and engagement with stakeholders

- Stakeholder engagement policies, procedures and mechanisms for three levels of engagement: awareness-raising, consultation and involvement/collaboration (see Practitioner’s Guide, Section 3, Step 1) (A)

Infrastructure, facilities and equipment

- Improved materials management and maintenance
- Enhanced use of material resources, e.g., buildings, labs, equipment, to support to ES
- Technical and managerial capacity development for women and their organisations in poor, natural resource-dependent communities
- Improved consensus and conflict resolution procedures and skills

Information and knowledge systems

- Greater use of scientific and technical information to support evidence-based ES decision-making, e.g., research, technical standards and guidelines (K)
- Increase use of Information and Communication Technologies in ES decision-making (K)
- Guidelines and programmes to develop and transfer environmentally appropriate technology (K)
- Knowledge Management (KM) Systems within and among organisations and sectors (KM includes various practices used by an organisation to identify, create, distribute and enable adoption of knowledge gained through experience. KM typically focuses on organisational objectives such as improved performance, innovation, sharing lessons learned and continuous improvement.) (K)
- Networks on specific ES topics and social networking (See Case Study #3. Cap-Net and “Green Drinks”, a global network for young environmental professionals.) (K)
- Pilot/demonstration activities designed to promote wider replication and peer learning (K)

Organisational culture to support ES

- Leadership on ES topics from the minister (or deputy/vice minister or principal secretary) or other senior managers in government agencies (L)
- Incentives for organisational, departmental or individual performance, e.g., awards, citations, opportunities to meet senior politicians, social events (luncheon, dinner, community event)
- Leadership from the board or an executive officer within a private sector organisation, NGO or CBO (L)
- Support for ES “champions” and change teams within an organisation, e.g., agency, community, business and religious leaders (might include various incentives listed throughout this tool) (L)



TOOL #3C. STRENGTHENING INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY

UNDP CAN SUPPORT EFFORTS TO IMPROVE INDIVIDUAL CAPABILITIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY, WORKING WITHIN ORGANISATIONS AND AS PART OF THE LARGER SOCIETY

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES FOR INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

- Increased awareness, including changed attitudes, beliefs, values, motivation and commitment.
- Expanded knowledge and understanding of priority topic areas.
- Improved skills and changed behaviours, including technical, scientific, planning, research, information management/ICT, interdisciplinary, communication and collaboration skills and actions.

Activities to develop individual capacity should always be part of capacity development responses at the enabling environment and organisational levels (see text). For example, training programmes should be institutionalized whenever possible, avoiding “one-off” training sessions.

STRATEGIES TO INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

Donors have been moving away from environmental awareness, education and training programmes. Yet partner countries continue to identify capacity needs in these areas, especially in support of environmental mainstreaming. Best practices suggest these programmes can play a useful role if they are:

- Explicitly designed to complement and support legal, regulatory, policy, economic and voluntary instruments to promote environmental sustainability (See Tool #2, List of Environmental Capacities);
- Based on systematic analysis of the reasons for societal, organisational and individual action/inaction on specific issues, and the likely motivations and incentives for behavioral change;
- Directed to key development sectors and organisations such as finance, planning, industry, health and education, whose actions are essential to environmental mainstreaming, while also strengthening the profile and capacity of environmental agencies and their relationships with those sectors;
- Focused on environment-development-poverty linkages, an approach which may attract more political and senior management support and community engagement than one focused on “environment”
- Targeted to “change agents” in government, civil society, community and business organisations who can leverage changes in the enabling environment for environmental sustainability;
- Based on measurable goals and outcomes, expressed in terms of expected organisational and behavioral change, which can then determine relevant target groups, messages and outreach methods, supported by monitoring and evaluation frameworks; and/or
- Focused on helping participants make linkages between global issues, for example, MEA-related topics and national and local issues, including their own roles, responsibilities and realities.



STRATEGIES TO INCREASE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING

As noted in this Practitioner's Guide, there has been an over-reliance on training as a capacity development tool, with frequent weaknesses in training design and lack of integration into broader programmes. Yet well-designed training, strategically integrated into broader capacity development programmes, will no doubt continue to play a role. The following lists best practices in training that have emerged from CDES experience to date.

1. Design training to respond to priority needs, and measure results

- Design training activities based on systematic needs assessment that analyses needs at the level of the individual, the organisation and the enabling environment and shows how training will contribute.
- Involve target groups in design, delivery and monitoring/evaluation of training.
- Measure training outcomes using RBM and performance measurement tools, carefully distinguishing between outputs, i.e., training events, participants and outcomes, i.e., expanded ability to perform.

2. Use training as a tool to strengthen capacity within the enabling environment and organisations

- Use training to “add value” to capacity interventions at other levels, for example, if new policies are being developed (enabling environment), provide training in policy analysis and development.
- Combine training with development of new operational systems and/or analytical tools, e.g., EIA and SEA; permitting, enforcement and compliance systems; climate change adaptation processes.

3. Adapt training to local settings and environmental sustainability issues

- Revise all “imported” or generic training materials to suit local circumstance, and include local case studies and field visits wherever possible.
- Promote in-country and in-region training and South-South exchanges and twinning programmes.
- Design pre and post training/learning activities to allow participants to adapt and apply any overseas training programmes (long or short term) to local situations.
- Deliver in local languages and dialects and/or translate materials, as needed.

4. Draw on and strengthen local, regional and Southern expertise

- Use local organisations, expertise, facilities and resources as much as possible (e.g., universities, research centres, public administration and training institutes, NGOs).
- Strengthen the capacity of local organisations to design and deliver CDES. (See Case Study #3.)
- Support creation or upgrading of in-country environment-related tertiary education programmes.
- Use Centers of Excellence and networks in the South as regional hubs for CDES. (See Case Study #3.)

5. Make training methods and activities more effective

- Whenever possible, use train-the-trainer models, along with locally-adapted content and methods.
- Ensure that new knowledge and skills are applied and reinforced, in part through promoting the organisational changes needed to put them to use.
- Enhance technically focused training by including interdisciplinary and collaborative skills, such as integrated sustainable development approaches, teamwork and consensus building.
- Use longer-term training programmes which are usually more effective than one-off training sessions.



6. Diversify training and learning techniques

- Make formal classroom-style training as applied as possible, by using engaging participatory learning techniques, such as case studies, small group work, role-plays, debates, field trips and guest speakers. Passive presentations (e.g., PowerPoint, lectures) are useful but should be minimized.
- Encourage innovative informal training/learning methods, such as knowledge networks, staff exchanges, mentoring, on-the-job learning, peer learning, hands-on training, ICT-based training, demonstration projects, field trips, and interactive workshops that mix training with work tasks.
- Use web-based methods for training, especially with technologically able participants. These include:
 - self-guided computer-based training: e-learning;
 - webcast: central trainer demonstrates skill over Internet and participants watch from desktop – may be combined with teleconference, e.g., Webex, LiveMeeting, GoToMeeting (on-line);
 - information exchange portal: for sharing documents; and
 - knowledge networks, on-line discussion groups/forums and social networking technologies.



Source: GEF Small Grants Programme, COMPACT, Kenya



ANNEX B: CASE STUDIES

Case Study #1: National Capacity Self-Assessment, GEF (Example: Seychelles)

A. National Capacity Self-assessments (NCSAs)

Capacity development (CD) is an integral part of all Global Environment Facility programmes, for which UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank are the main implementing agencies. The goal is to strengthen national capacities for global environmental management, with a focus on the so-called “Rio Conventions” (UNFCCC, CCD, CBD), as well as synergies with other MEAs. *The GEF Strategic Approach to Enhance Capacity Building* (2002) set the direction for GEF support to CD. It included funding to programme countries to prepare a National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA), which is a country-driven, locally adapted, consultative process that aims to:

- Review global environment issues that require priority attention;
- Determine how capacity development could strengthen management of these issues; and
- Prepare a national action plan for capacity development for global environmental management.

Countries are then encouraged to find diverse pathways to implement these action plans through national and donor-supported initiatives. During the five year period between 2005 and 2010, 146 countries undertook an NCSA, with UNDP supporting about 75% and UNEP the remaining 25%). The Global Support Programme ran from 2005-2010 as a learning mechanism for NCSAs and CD components within GEF projects. It provided technical assistance, monitored and evaluated progress and disseminated lessons learned (NCSA Results and Lessons Learned for Global Environmental Sustainability, 2010). Teleconferencing was used to provide “tele-guidance” to country teams. The GEF Evaluation Unit is conducting a formal evaluation of CD activities in all GEF programmes (2007-9).

B. Country Example: Seychelles (2004-5)

The goal of the Seychelles NCSA was “to determine the priority needs, and establish a plan of action, for developing Seychelles’ capacity to meet its commitments to global environmental management, as a signatory of Global Environmental Conventions.” It had four phases:

1. Establishment of project management and implementation mechanisms;
2. Strategic overview of national obligations under the Conventions;
3. In-depth analysis of capacities and needs at systemic, institutional and individual levels; and
4. Development of an Action Plan to address priority capacity needs.

The Seychelles NCSA Project Team identified three additional goals that shaped their approach to the work. These are listed below, along with the specific features of the project that addressed each goal.

1. *Bring the conventions home”, by showing the relevance of global environmental issues to Seychelles through a well-researched analysis and action plan to guide national and donor activities.*



- The principle of “national ownership” was taken seriously. Team members were drawn from government, NGOs and the private sector. GEF guidance was adapted to the local setting, primarily by collapsing some steps for speed and efficiency, as befits a Small Island Development State (SIDS) with limited resources, e.g., when researching capacity strengths and needs, the team also identified possible CD actions, which were then refined through consultation.
 - As is common in SIDS, there were many national environmental initiatives underway, driven in part by MEA obligations. From the “stocktaking” phase through to the Action Plan, the team aimed link to these activities, in order to make efficient use of resources and seek out synergies.
 - A targeted public communications strategy included a website; media events; national press releases and brochures summarizing findings. This resulted in extensive media coverage.
 - Diligent planning ensured that multi-stakeholder workshops attracted the key actors. Sessions were highly interactive, with extensive use of small group work and prioritization and consensus-building exercises. These events were covered by both print and electronic media (TV).
 - Local and international consultants stayed in the background at public workshops, so that the NCSA team could be seen to be clearly leading the process. For example, all team members took turns presenting sections of the draft capacity assessment and action plan to stakeholders, and also led all small group discussions. Consultants helped primarily with methodology and writing.
2. *Go beyond the conventions to link global with national issues, through building on local assets and past technical work; using the NCSA to trigger action on past capacity development proposals; and focusing on the ultimate goals of environmental protection.*
- The capacity assessment identified capacity assets, by using a matrix of “Strengths, Constraints, Capacity Needs and Possible Actions” for 10 priority strategic issues as main analytical tool.
 - The NCSA process was used to promote implementation of the on-going Environment Management Plan Seychelles (EMPS 2000-2010). The multi-stakeholder Steering Committee (SC) that manages the EMPS was chosen to oversee the NCSA, and high-level support came from the Principal Secretary of the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources, who also chairs the SC. Many of the actions in the Action Plan build on and refine actions proposed in the EMPS, but not yet implemented.
 - Seychelles had been only marginally involved in the CCD, as it was perceived to address only desertification. However, agriculture and land use experts invited to join the NCSA team learned about the “sustainable land management” (SLM) elements of the convention and the relevance of the climate change to agriculture and land use (e.g., sea level rise in an island nation). They decided to establish a CCD Committee, which then prepared Seychelles’ 1st National Report to the CCD. Seychelles now has a GEF Medium-size project on Sustainable Land Management.
3. *Use the NCSA to develop national capacity in environmental management and capacity development, by promoting societal interest and “ownership” of the NCSA and capacity development.*



- The NCSA team included capacity specialists. A senior manager from the Ministry of Public Administration (also a human resources development specialist) was asked to contribute her local expertise and help integrate the NCSA process into national public sector and HRD planning. Her knowledge complemented that of the international consultant, who is also a CD specialist.
- The entire team learned about CD terminology, concepts and techniques, as well as technical aspects of global issues, during structured working/training sessions, which combined informal mentoring and peer learning with direct “on-the-job” application to the tasks at hand.
- The need to plan stakeholder engagement provided the opportunity for working/training sessions on how to design, implement and evaluate stakeholder processes. Members of several ministries who were not directly involved in the NCSA but often consult stakeholders, were invited to join in.

Follow-up to Seychelles NCSA. NCSA reports were used to help design follow-up GEF projects, including two Full-size UNDP-GEF Biodiversity projects (“Mainstreaming” and “Biosecurity”) and two Medium-size CD projects (SLM, CB2). NCSA reports are available in succinct, user-friendly formats.

C. Lessons learned from NCSAs of relevance to environmental capacity development

Although NCSAs focus on global issues, given that NCSAs are completed or underway in over 150 countries, the lessons from this experience likely apply broadly to environmental capacity assessment.

1. *Interconnected capacities are needed for a functional environmental management system* Five generic capacities were identified as part of an effective environmental management (1) stakeholder engagement; (2) information and knowledge; (3) planning and policy development; (4) organisation and implementation; and (5) monitoring and evaluation. It appears that a reasonable mix of these five capacities is needed to effectively address environmental issues. Action plans usually proposed combinations of actions to strengthen the overall system. It is assumed that isolated interventions that address only one facet would fail if other parts of the system remain weak.
2. *“Capacity for What?” is a key question. CD requires substantive environmental objectives.* Some early NCSA’s focused on MEA obligations per se rather than on strengthening global environmental management. Best practices favour a focus on specific priority environmental goals:

Capacity development actions ... should always be aimed at a substantive objective, in order to know what the capacity is needed for and thus ensure that the action can be designed and implemented so as to be effective. Capacity development as a “stand-alone” action outside the context of a substantive programme or project is aimed only at building capacity for its own sake, rather than to address a need.

This can be done by ensuring that capacity assessment builds on previous analyses done for various national environmental programmes, projects and reports (GEF and non-GEF). GEF Enabling Activities are a rich source of information. 2006 data showed that the GEF had supported over 1100 national MEA Enabling



Activities to that point, and that most countries could build their NCSAs on at least 6 different Enabling Activities. This work often addresses relevant issues even if the word “capacity” isn’t used.

3. CD can help to integrate environment planning into mainstream development efforts.

Many NCSAs focused on improving the linkages between environmental management and national development planning, poverty reduction strategies, sustainable development and MDG strategies. Capacity assessment can help to make the connections between capacity, environment and development, showing how CD actions can contribute to broader development objectives.

4. CD can address environmental implications of devolution and other national reforms.

Capacity assessment provides an opportunity to diagnose new CD needs arising from decentralization trends. Several NCSAs suggested actions to strengthen environmental capacities of regional, provincial or local government institutions and/or to promote community engagement and natural resource co-management. This points to a broader lesson about integrating CD with national development trends. Because CD aims to influence the enabling environment “it must work with the prevailing tide, rather than trying to ‘carry out the project’ in isolation or regardless of the prevailing circumstances.”

5. A country-driven capacity development strategy should be at core of all projects.

The challenge for future capacity development support under the GEF is to progressively transform regular projects away from being interventions to ... demonstrate technical solutions towards being catalytic partnerships in developing the capacities of country stakeholders. National and local stakeholders need to define the issues, build their knowledge into the design of the capacity development strategy and be responsible for the implementation of the strategy ... knowledge, skills, instruments and mechanisms [should be developed] within the target organisations and system, rather than bypassing or substituting them with external agents.

D. Lessons Learned From NCSAs Regarding the Capacity Assessment Process

1. Capacity development should be systematically organized around a clear purpose.

Capacity development should be carefully planned and organized around a purpose that is understood and agreed by country stakeholders. The process and outcomes need to be part of the institutional system of governance and management. [NCSAs] were strengthened by participants having agreed on a clear strategic purpose and a work programme that included substantial efforts in stakeholder consultation, desk studies, expert review, complex analysis and priority setting.

2. The scope of stakeholder participation should be tailored to the situation. It should be extensive enough to secure key inputs and support for action planning, while not straining resources. Wherever possible, use the results of previous consultative processes. The lead agency be able to credibly facilitate stakeholder engagement and report back on how their contribution was used.



3. *Plan from the outset how you will manage capacity assessment information:* Choose information gathering and analytical tools to deal with capacity information early in the process, including techniques for prioritisation and resolution of conflicting views. Clearly communicating results is also crucial. The most effective action plans included: a strategic framework with a hierarchy of nested outcomes, objectives and actions (LFA rather than a “wish list”); detailed actionable proposals; linkages with other initiatives; formal political endorsement; and a succinct, usable report, with an executive summary.
4. *Build capacity during the capacity assessment process:* The capacity assessment should be designed in a way that increases participant awareness, knowledge and skills. For example, many NCSAs reported that the process strengthened information-sharing; improved inter-agency and multi-stakeholder collaboration; educated key target groups, such as politicians, community leaders and the media, about the issues; and increased technical, analytical and project management competencies.

References:

Hunnan, P. and U. Piest, 2006. *National Capacity Self-Assessment: Global Progress, Synthesis Report and Emerging Lessons*. Global Support Programme (GSP), UNDP/UNEP/GEF
GSP Capacity Development News, No. 2, 3 and 5, 2005-2006
(All quotes from Hunnan and Piest, 2006. *Emerging Lessons*)



Grand Anse, south coast, island of Praslin, Seychelles, Indian Ocean, Africa. Source: Getty Images.



Case Study #2: Cap-Net: Capacity Building in water to support the MDGs

A. Overview

UNDP plays a key operational role in assisting countries to build cross-sectoral capacities and put into place effective policies and institutions to manage and develop water resources in a sustainable way. Through the global strategic project Cap-Net (International Network for Capacity Building in Integrated Water Resources Management or IWRM), executed in collaboration with international partners such as Global Water Partnership (GWP), UNESCO and WMO, UNDP takes a lead role in coordinating and supporting capacity building for IWRM, transboundary waters, and gender mainstreaming in water resources management.

Cap-Net was established in 2002 to support capacity building to support a new agenda for sustainable management of water resources. The focus on capacity building institutions and individuals and the adoption of core principles of local ownership, a partnership approach and demand responsiveness resulted in a strong global network of capacity builders. Partner networks at local and regional level provided a framework for cooperation and synergy to address persistent capacity constraints.

Cap-Net was designed to complement GWP activities on advocacy and IWRM planning. Specifically, it was established to address the significant capacity needs emerging from widespread global adoption of integrated water resources management (IWRM) as a strategy for sustainable water resource management.

Water sector reform has resulted in restructured water laws and institutions in many countries, and a related need to develop the capacity of institutions and individuals to take on new roles and approaches.

Cap-Net is structured as an international partnership among 20 autonomous international, thematic, regional and national networks that are committed to

Vision for Cap-Net: Capacity to achieve the Millennium Development Goals on Water is in place, efficiently and effectively supported by actions of local capacity builders cooperating in networks and sharing their tools, experience and skills internationally.

capacity building in the water sector. Networks vary in size, scope, membership, structure and resource base. Most have no independent funding, and commit their own time and resources. Since its inception, the Cap-Net strategy has been based on three guiding principles:

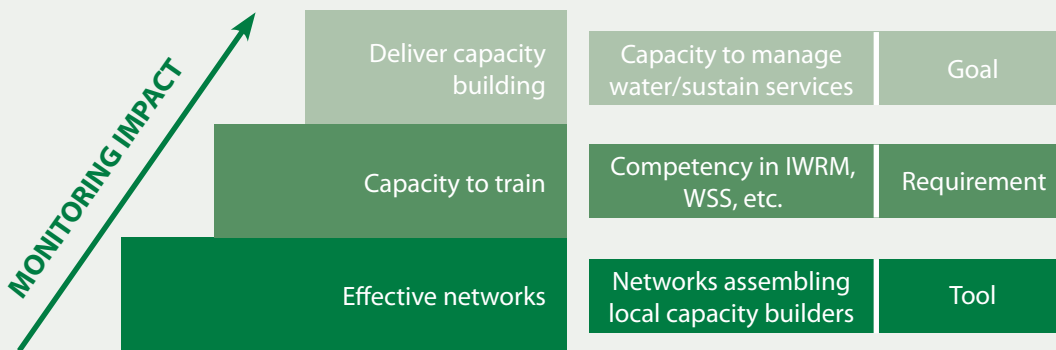
- **Local Ownership:** To the extent possible, capacity building must be delivered from local resource centres to ensure social and environmental relevance, and sustainability.
- **Partnership among capacity builders:** Collaboration improves access to knowledge and skills, assembles the mix of disciplines necessary for IWRM, helps to overcome resource constraints, and contributes to increased efficiency.
- **Demand for capacity building:** The relevance and impact of capacity building services increases when capacity builders are called upon to respond to demands from water managers. Meeting the MDG challenge requires scaling up capacity building and improving linkages between implementers and capacity builders to ensure that these needs are met.



Cap-Net activities are designed to meet three programme objectives (see Figure 1):

- **Capacity-building on the ground:** To build the capacity of institutions and individuals to manage, develop and use water resources sustainably (IWRM and WSS).
- **Networks:** To improve synergy and coherence of capacity building initiatives by assembling partnerships and strengthening networks to act as focal points for knowledge, multidisciplinary skills and competence in water management.
- **Knowledge management:** Systems to ensure access to the best international and local knowledge, measure the effectiveness of capacity building services, and establish indicators and monitoring systems.

Figure 1. Cap-Net approach to capacity development for Integrated Water Resource Management



Cap-Net networks and members support development of water policies and legislation (enabling environment), institutional reform and human resources development related to water management. Activities include: providing information, training and education on topics such as IWRM and water supply and sanitation (WSS); South-South collaboration on capacity building; and sharing local materials and expertise with the global knowledge base. Evaluations show that the programme has had success in improving coordination and efficiency of capacity-building efforts; scaling up capacity-building actions; bringing local experience to international attention; and disseminating IWRM principles and best practices. Current priorities include:

- Helping river basin organisations, being widely established under water sector reforms, to become effective managers of water resources and implementers of IWRM principles;
- Assisting water users, especially water supply and sanitation utilities, to manage water more efficiently and sustainably;
- Addressing the relationship between climate change and water resources management, including flood and drought management.
- Groundwater management and the integration with surface water management; and
- Economic and Financial Instruments for IWRM implementation.



In response to a desire for more effective monitoring of programme results, Cap-Net has also developed a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Strategy (2008) that aims to improve learning at the global programme level as well as assisting partner networks monitor their own activities. It includes provision of practical tools to monitor expected outcomes for each of the three programme building blocks, as follows:

- Outcomes of capacity building activities: sample course evaluation forms
- Outcomes of network development:
- Network Progress Reports/ Activity Reports: monitoring forms used to describe network outputs/actions and interpret the potential impact and value of the network;
- Self-assessment report for each network;
- Peer reviews of networks; and
- Knowledge management outcomes: related to the availability and use of information and training materials; follow up of case studies, training materials and other knowledge development activities is done to provide a qualitative interpretation of impacts.

B. Country Network Example: Argentina

Arg Cap-Net: the Argentine Water Education, Training and Capacity Building Network for IWRM was established in 2002 with 12 founding institutional members. It is a non-profit organisation made up of national, provincial and local institutions engaged in planning, use and conservation of water; dissemination of information; and the training of human resources for IWRM. The network relies on local and international agencies to sponsor its activities, along with membership dues, voluntary contributions and income from activities undertaken by members for the network.

Arg Cap-Net's mission is to enhance the capacity of individuals, agencies and Argentine society in general to implement IWRM, with a focus on:

- Contributing to education and training on IWRM topics in all fields and at all levels;
- Promoting IWRM as a means to encourage community awareness and participation;
- Exchanging and dissemination of knowledge, skills and experiences in IWRM;
- Strengthen linkages among network members and with promoting strategic alliances with other water-resources networks;
- Promoting IWRM research; and
- Promoting achievement of the MDGs in Argentina.

Activities have included: collaboration among members to develop training and Train-the-trainer programmes on IWRM topics for water sector professionals, promoting inclusion of IWRM concepts in formal education curricula, supporting a cooperative IWRM-related Masters Program, and actions to raise public awareness of IWRM (e.g., website). There is a growing demand for Arg Cap-Net courses.



Work plans have been influenced by the results of a Demand Study (done in 2003), designed to identify the interests and requirements of water sector professionals in the country. For example, the 2007/2008 work plan focused on government, civil society (users, professionals, teachers, etc.) and production-related sectors. It aimed to raise citizen awareness in order to trigger demands on the political powers for more effective IWRM. The work plan also addressed capacity building at institutional and individual levels for IWRM, drinking water and sanitation, and water conservation and protection. The network has started using the monitoring and learning tools developed by Cap-Net to evaluate its programmes and courses. This example shows how peer learning can help to develop a network that can effectively deliver capacity development services within a country.

C. Lessons learned from Cap-Net of relevance to environmental capacity development

Cap-Net implements a country-driven, locally adapted strategy which:

- Recognises the value and contribution of networks of professional capacity builders and their institutions;
- Builds on their strengths and skills, recognising the depth and importance of local knowledge;
- Allows full expression of local needs and priorities, supplemented with targeted and appropriate external support and current, internationally accepted knowledge; and
- Supports efficient cooperation of these networks in a Global Network to contribute to the MDGs.

Cap-Net demonstrates the value of emerging approaches to capacity, such as:

- Using emerging models of networking and knowledge-sharing to strengthen capacity;
- Using a global knowledge base and information on common/best practices to support locally adapted and delivered capacity solutions;
- Operating through local knowledge centres and employing Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to strengthen capacity;
- Building on Southern strengths and fostering South-South linkages;
- Using networks to link local skills together and scale up actions of networks and their members in order to build a critical mass of capacity on a specific topic;
- Producing impacts on the ground, based on local ownership and delivery of capacity building services that address country specific situations, needs, and constraints; and
- Developing the ability of capacity builders to assess demand for their services and respond with appropriate products and services, thus fostering long term “capacity to develop capacity”.



ANNEX B

Other operational lessons learned include:

- Capacity assessment, including inventories of local capacity building institutions and analysis of new opportunities, can be used to improve capacity building services.
- Inclusion of capacity building components within IWRM/Water Efficiency Plans and in thematically oriented water management projects strengthens these initiatives.
- Providing information and training materials on CD-ROMs and in various languages provides a useful and flexible resource for countries/regions in which Internet access may be limited.

References: <http://www.cap-net.org/>

Cap-Net: Capacity Building in Water to Support Achievement of the MDGs. *Programme Strategy 2006-2010*; Cap-Net 2008. International Network for Capacity Building In Sustainable Water Management, 2008. *Monitoring, Evaluation And Learning Plan*; Opadeyi, J. 2008. *Arg-Net: Internal Assessment Report*



Case Study #3: UNDP-UNEP Poverty-Environment Initiative (Example: Rwanda)

A. Overview

The Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) is a UNDP-UNEP partnership that aims to contribute to poverty reduction and improved well-being of poor and vulnerable groups through mainstreaming environment into national development processes. It provides a good example of capacity development for mainstreaming, working at both enabling environment and organisational levels. It also illustrates the use of economic instruments, such as natural resource accounting, to make the case for environmental sustainability. Programme objectives at the country level include:

- Including environmental sustainability as a central objective in national development strategies, such as PRSPs and MDG implementation plans;
- Increasing national budget allocations towards the environment; and
- Developing the long-term capacity of the government to integrate environmental concerns into design and implementation of development plans.

The programme is based on these principles:

- Environmental investment that benefits the poor delivers strong returns in terms of sustained poverty reduction and growth.
- A strong focus on policy, governance and capacity development increases the resources available for environmental management.
- Provision of key knowledge helps to ensure that environmental investments benefit the poor.
- Innovative market-based approaches can encourage pro-poor investments.

The PEI has developed a three-step approach to environmental mainstreaming, based on experience, as shown in Box 1. Strengthening institutions and capacities is a specific component of the framework and is also part of the other three components, when implemented at the country level.



BOX 1. PEI: ENVIRONMENTAL MAINSTREAMING IS TARGETED AT GOVERNMENT PROCESSES FOR PLANNING, BUDGETING, AND SECTOR AND LOCAL LEVEL IMPLEMENTATION

| Preparatory Phase: Finding the entry points and making the case | Phase 1: Integrating environment into national development processes | Phase 2: Meeting the Implementation challenge |
|--|--|---|
| Preliminary assessments Understanding the governmental, political and institutional context | Developing country-specific evidence Integrated Ecosystem Assessment & Economic Analysis | Integrating poverty-environment in the monitoring system Indicators and data collection |
| Preliminary assessments Understanding poverty-environment linkages | Influencing policy processes National (PRSP/MDG), sector and sub-national levels | Budgeting and financing for poverty-environment Budget processes & finance options |
| Raising awareness and building partnerships National consensus and commitment | Developing and costing policy measures | Supporting policy measures National, sectoral and sub-national levels |
| Strengthening institutions and capacities Needs assessment & working mechanisms | Strengthening institutions and capacities Learning by doing | Strengthening institutions and capacities Mainstreaming as usual practice |
| → Engaging stakeholders and coordinating with the development community → Government, non-government and development actors | | |

B. Country Example: Rwanda

The context for environment mainstreaming in Rwanda

The vast majority of the rural and urban poor in Rwanda are critically affected by environmental conditions and access to environmental assets. Widespread environmental degradation is undermining access by the poor to land and other natural resources on which they depend for their livelihoods, and is also leading to worsening environmental conditions in urban areas. The result is a steady decline in economic opportunities and well-being among poor and vulnerable groups throughout Rwanda.



In 2003, UNDP and the Government of Rwanda (GoR) began to focus on assessing the linkages between environmental conditions and poverty, initially through a pilot project on Poverty and Environment Mapping (PEM). As a follow up in February 2005, a national workshop was held on “Integrating Environment Issues and Rio MEAs into Poverty Reduction Policy and Planning”. At the workshop, the Government of Rwanda committed to developing a strategy to ensure that environment was mainstreamed into national development strategies and sectoral plans. The annual PRS progress report showed that the PRSP I had not adequately incorporated environmental issues related to human well-being and the impact of the energy sector on the environment. Now, embarking on the formulation phase of its second PRSP the GoR, in partnership with PEI launched the Rwanda PEI programme. The Rwanda PEI was proposed to be implemented in two phases over a 4-year period. Phase I (December 2005 to June 2007) focused on mainstreaming environment into the formulation of the PRSP II, The Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS). Phase II was to run from June 2007 till December 2009 and was to focus on longer-term capacity development to more fully integrate environment into poverty reduction policy, planning and investment at national and decentralized levels in the context of EDPRS implementation. The EDPRS has a 5-year horizon and reflects the national priorities that are required to attain Rwanda’s Vision 2020. The EDPRS is being operationalized through sector strategies and decentralized plans.

The PEI in Rwanda is a joint GoR, UNDP Rwanda and UNDP-UNEP PEI programme, with support from the Governments of Belgium, Norway and Ireland. Six ministries are involved, with the Ministry of Environment and Lands, through Rwanda Environment Management Authority, and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning the lead agencies.

Environment is one of five focus areas for the Rwanda UNDAF, reflecting national development priorities, as set out in the EDPRS and Vision 2020. Rwanda is also one of the eight pilot “One UN” countries.

Main activities of PEI-Rwanda

- Building capacity at national and district level for government officials in understanding and analysing links between poverty and environment and integrating environmental sustainability objectives into development planning. Moreover, increased awareness and more effective participation of stakeholders in environmental policy and planning processes.
- Support to six key sectors in the integration of poverty-environment in sector strategies and implementation plans, based on the EDPRS.
- Support district level planning in environment mainstreaming, including training in collection of environmental data and development of indicators aligned with the MDG 1+ 7.
- Capacity development and technical support to Ministry of Finance to improve environmental mainstreaming in budgets across sectors, developing financial instruments, conducting mainstreaming of environment in public expenditure reviews and environmental fiscal reform.



Main achievements to date:

- Development of a knowledge base on poverty- environment linkages in Rwanda through e.g. an economic analysis of costs of environmental degradation, identification of poverty-environment-energy linkages, and a pilot integrated ecosystem assessment.
- Environment is mainstreamed in the EDPRS. The evidence and advocacy provided by PEI were instrumental in this accomplishment. Most sectors have taken on board environmental recommendations and planned actions and reflect environment and poverty in Sector Strategic Plans and priorities.
- Increased public awareness about poverty-environment linkages through productions for TV, radio, newspapers and print media, as well as training of journalists.
- Strategic collaboration with the Ministry of Finance to support environment as a cross-cutting issue in budget calls and improved budgeting for sustainability across sector ministries.
- A Public Environmental Expenditure Review and training manual has been produced presented and disseminated and will represent an important baseline for improving the efficiency and effectiveness for public environmental spending in Rwanda. Moreover, a report on Environmental Fiscal Reform has been published with the aim of improving Rwanda's fiscal instruments for environmental management.
- Improved skills among government personnel and local government officials on the use of tools for environmental mainstreaming (i.e. indicator development), on environmental data management and on poverty and environment linkages.

Lessons learned

- Gathering country specific economic evidence of the costs of environmental degradation and the benefits of investing more in environmental sustainability is vital.
- Involving key stakeholders ensures ownership and improves implementation.
- Substantive on-going engagement in country development planning processes is also vital
- Longer-term support helps to sustain results; PEI-Rwanda's continuing engagement in the EDPRS allows it to monitor progress and respond to emerging sectoral needs.
- Tools such as mainstreaming guidelines, sector specific environmental checklists and P-E indicators provide concrete guidance on integration for relevant sectors and ministries.

Rwanda's success stories

1. *The PEI supported a "champion" of poverty-environment mainstreaming within government* The Rwanda Minister for the Environment at the time strongly believed that environmental degradation was negatively affecting her country's economy. To support her leadership, the PEI worked with the Minister to raise awareness of the issues at high levels of



government. The Rwandan Environmental Management Authority (REMA) began awareness-raising, training and technical support to promote integration of environment into the EDPRS and sectoral planning, focusing on the Ministry of Economic Development and Finance. To secure high-level political backing for these efforts, the Minister presented evidence to the President and Cabinet and gained their commitment to environmental investment to reduce poverty and promote sustainable livelihoods.

From President Kagame's speech during the African Ministerial Conference on Climate Change:

"The environment is our life-blood; indeed the real surprise is not that ministries of finance are now talking to ministries of the environment - but that it has actually taken this long (...) Even when we look beyond agriculture, tourism, mineral wealth and fisheries, our economies depend critically on good environmental stewardship. Countries that depend on hydro-electric energy, geothermal electricity or even methane gas - as we propose to do here in Rwanda - must put appropriate water management policies in place as Africa is one of the world's driest continents."
President Kagame, the African Ministerial Conference on Financing for Development, Kigali 2009.

2. *The Rwanda PEI made the case for integrating the environment into the EDPRS and consequently sector plans.* Working with several ministries, the Rwanda PEI team commissioned an economic study to assess the contribution of environment to livelihoods, poverty reduction and national growth. It found that environmental degradation was linked to increased poverty, declining livelihood opportunities, escalating provincial health budgets, and soil erosion, with a cost to the country of about \$60m per year (2% of GDP). REMA, through the PEI Team, used this information to lobby for inclusion of environment as a cross-cutting theme in the EDPRS. Using the findings and a strategy of "continuous interaction", they developed checklists and guidelines for mainstreaming environment into the EDPRS and 12 key sectors. The team provided guidance and training on environment integration for facilitators of each sectoral working group. One training participant noted:

"This is exactly the kind of information we desperately need! [It] is essential in order to understand not only the relationship between economic development and environment, but for individual sectors to understand how an unsustainable environment can have a negative influence on their own targets."

The PEI Team became known as "Mr. and Ms. Environment" and was often asked to help design budget interventions for various ministries. These efforts increased awareness across sectors of the value of environment to national development, especially in the Ministry of Finance and Planning, and highlighted issues of underfunding for environment. With the PEI Team helping to identify funding gaps, the government increased its environmental budget by 40% in 2007/08.



Moreover, partially as a result of PEI efforts, the Rwandan PRSP included an objective to substantively reduce soil erosion and now this objective is being operationalised through the agriculture sector plan and associated budget – with increased budget allocations from Government and donors. In practical terms this means that small holder farmers will be able to grow more food and increase incomes.

3. The media proved to be an effective vehicle to put the environment in the spotlight

The PEI helped government to launch radio and TV features highlighting the role of environmental issues in national development. Policy-makers, including Cabinet Ministers, called the TV station to commend them for this work. The Minister for Trade, Commerce, Industry, Tourism and Cooperatives spoke on TV and worked with the Director of REMA to find ways to integrate environment into Ministry programming. Environment now has an increased profile for as a key driver for growth in the private sector.

4. PEI Rwanda contributing to the restoration of the Rugezi-Bulera-Ruhondo wetland

Rwanda was in October 2010 given the prestigious Green Globe Award in recognition of its efforts to restore the Rugezi-Bulera-Ruhondo wetland. PEI Rwanda was part of these efforts from the beginning and provided the initial economic analysis showing the costs of degradation of the wetland. The study showed that the degradation of the Rugezi Wetlands during the last three decades had resulted in falling water levels, reduced inflows into hydro-electricity reservoirs and consequently an energy crisis. By 2004 the water levels in Bulera and Ruhondo hydropower plants, usually supplied by Rugezi, had fallen by 50% of the average level between 1957 and 1970. The result of the fall in water levels led to an escalation of Electrogaz tariff from RWF 48 to 120 and in order to address the energy problem the government purchased diesel generators. It is indicated by EUI (2006) that it cost the country an extra US \$65,000 a day to make up the generation shortfall, including due to the cost of generators and their fuel. Also serious was the impact of wetland degradation on the livelihoods of the communities in and around Rugezi. However, with the intervention of the Rwanda Environment Management Authority, the damage to the wetland has been reversed and is now characterized by lush vegetation and rich fauna. Not only has the biodiversity been recovered, so has the economic infrastructure that had previously ceased to operate. Today the hydropower plants supported by the Rugezi marshland are operating at nearly full capacity, reducing by half the use of diesel generation.



C. Lessons learned from the PEI of relevance to environmental capacity development

1. *Get to know the government machinery:* Start by mapping national and sectoral policy, planning and decision-making processes, institutions and individuals, e.g., roles of environment agencies; composition of national development steering committees; linkages between development, environment and sectoral planning; and possible entry points for mainstreaming.
2. *Ensure buy-in from the Ministry of Finance and Planning, and relevant sectoral ministries:* The Planning/Finance Ministry should be an equal or prime focal ministry, through buy-in from Ministry managers, and/or ministerial level agreements, and sufficient domestic resources for mainstreaming.
3. *Be realistic in assessing the level of country commitment:* Analyse the level of commitment to the process at organisational and individual levels. Where possible, align individual incentives with broader goals of mainstreaming, e.g., through performance related contracts.
4. *Tackle capacity gaps over a realistic time period to ensure long-term results:* Supporting country-led capacity development for environmental mainstreaming takes time and resources, because it is new, seeks to change government priorities, and involves multiple agencies. Prepare for transaction costs; this approach involves considerable staff time as well as support for supportive technical studies.
5. *Provide concrete country-specific evidence:* Information on the links among environment, poverty reduction and pro-poor growth helps to convince skeptical policy-makers, economists and planners to invest in environment sustainability. This should be presented, using evidence-based advocacy tools (economic analysis, IEAs), and in a language familiar to planners and policymakers.
6. *Look beyond plans and strategies to implementation:* Build the basis for long-term capacity development. Promote fiscal reform mechanisms to ensure a long-term sustainable financial base for environmental agencies and investments. Define how mainstreaming can be included in development targets and indicators. Address budgetary mechanisms and engage with planning/finance ministries to secure resources. Engage the private sector and communities to amplify results.

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Case Study #4. Developing Environmental Capacity in Conflict and Post-Conflict Countries: UNEP in Afghanistan

1. Overview

After nearly 4 decades of various forms of conflict, Afghanistan remains one of the poorest countries in the world, sitting near the bottom of UNDP's Human Development Index. The period of conflict until the initial fall of the Taliban in 2001 saw total disintegration of institutions and technical and management capacity. As expected in a poverty-stricken, underdeveloped, arid country, the magnitude of environmental damage due to conflict was extreme. In 2002, UNEP worked with the Government of Afghanistan (GoA) on a post-conflict environmental assessment. The report painted a picture of a country on the brink of irreversible environmental destruction and warned of a future without water, forest, pastures, land and clean air. The report contained 163 recommendations.

UNDP has been working with GoA and other funders European Commission, Government of Finland and Global Environment Facility (GEF) since 2003 to provide follow-up. The initial focus was on building environmental, institutional and technical capacity, under five pillars: (1) institutions and coordination; (2) law and policy; (3) environmental assessment; (4) information and education; and (5) community based natural resource management (CBNRM).

Key results from the first two phases (2003-2007) include:

- a functioning National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) in Kabul;
- operational-level environmental coordination forums for government agencies,
- environmental inputs to the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) (like Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers);
- enacted Environment Law and regulations, including Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations, policy and trained staff;
- a State of Environment report for Afghanistan;
- joint National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment (NCSA) and National Adaptation Programme of Action for Climate Change (NAPA);
- applications for GEF enabling activity funding;
- trained environmental journalists; and
- piloting of five CBNRM projects in two provinces.



The third phase (2008–2011) is focusing on:

- environmental coordination and institutional development of central and sub-national level offices of NEPA and the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL);
- improved EIA and pollution control capacity: policies, rules, regulations, hands-on training;
- preparation and legal processing of national law and policies and assistance with multilateral environment agencies (MEAs);
- environmental education and awareness-raising policies and action plans;
- consolidation of lessons of CBNRM pilot projects for use in upscaling to 30 sites;
- improved management capacity within communities, with support from trained MAIL personnel and input from lessons learned into policy-making; and
- a “home grown” demonstration landscape-scale protected area within an integrated management framework, including protection of biodiversity, land use and sustainable community livelihoods.

2. Implementation Challenges

- Political instability is an obstacle to effective capacity development, as it is difficult to effectively train staff without consistent institutions and staffing.
- Nepotism in government appointments means that inexperienced and under-qualified people are often appointed to key positions and absorptive capacity to technical training is limited.
- There are divisions among provincial populations due to assertions of “provincial rights” for jobs.
- Diverse international partners are pursuing their own goals and a lack of national capacity in coordinating and managing such institutions leads to redundant activities and conflicts of interest.
- The language differences are a challenge, with added costs in terms of time and money.
- The deteriorating security situation has led to high staff turnover (mainly international), restricted staff mobility at the centre and in the field, and temporary relocation of international staff.



3. Lessons learned

Project delivery in general

1. **All institutions with environmental management mandates should receive training and capacity building**, as environment is a cross-cutting issue.
2. **To reach a broader set of agencies, capacity building must maintain neutrality.** Having a separate office instead of situating within one beneficiary institution helps to avoid interagency competition.
3. **Flexibility in project delivery must be maintained to be responsive to demand**-driven needs for training and technical assistance, as well as field conditions and contextual realities.
4. **Mentoring approach to capacity building preferred.** Deviating from the top-down approach, UNEP adopts a “learning-by-doing” approach for NEPA and MAIL staff and empowers them to propose and implement Afghan solutions.
5. **Overall broad training package required for effective capacity building.** In addition to technical training, UNEP supports general training such as English, computing, and project development.
6. **The current operational environment inhibits effective capacity building within a short time frame.** Uncertain security conditions, a poorly paid and unmotivated public sector, poor working facilities and significant levels of nepotism and corruption hinder the success of capacity building.
7. **In-country, long-term experts are the preferred model.** UNEP’s model allows experts to build the networks, relationships and contextual knowledge needed for effective capacity building.

Environmental institutions and coordination

1. **Comparatively low level of capacity of NEPA vis-à-vis other national institutions.** NEPA is not very clear on its mandate and responsibilities despite targeted training.
2. **Lack of institutional stability creates a challenging project implementation environment.** Internal institutional restructuring should be avoided to promote project stability.
3. **Capacity building programmes need to be implemented independent of overall Government reform programmes.** Future work plans should be designed to be able to adapt to delays or changes in the institutional environment to facilitate continuous program engagement.
4. **Counterpart training encourages institutional stability.** NEPA staff that participated in the UNEP counterpart training programme all obtained positions within NEPA on the basis of merit.
5. **Government national development strategy processes are so complex and time-demanding that Afghan government institutions are excluded.** The process often alienates Afghan agencies, resulting in initiatives being spearheaded by donor organisations and discourages Afghan ownership. This may be unavoidable until that Government redesigns and simplifies the process.



Environmental law and policy

1. ***International best practice needs to be adapted to the local context.*** Framework models from similar neighbouring countries can be the basis for adapting best practices principles locally.
2. ***Technical assistance and support is required in relation to the entire legislative process.*** Assistance beyond drafting laws will help avoid potential delays that would reduce the effective and timely implementation of new laws.
3. ***The engagement of short-term consultants to draft legislation is not the preferred model.*** Often, legislation drafted by external experts is overly complex and not suited to the context, given capacity and resource constraints.
4. ***Excellent networks and professional relationships*** with relevant Afghan officials in the legislative chain are imperative to ensure a smooth legislative process and avoid delays.
5. ***Afghan ownership of the legislative product is vital.*** Most of Afghanistan's post-conflict laws have been drafted by international organisations and are viewed with distrust by many Afghans.
6. ***Public consultation is necessary in the development of all law and policy.*** For natural resource policies, government, NGOs and local communities should all be consulted.
7. ***Capacity assistance should be provided to assist in the implementation of legislation, after it is promulgated.*** This will help to avoid passing laws that are not enforced.
8. ***Targeted technical assistance will be required beyond the life-cycle of UNEP's in-country presence in Afghanistan.*** Supply-driven approaches are necessary and required both during the life-cycle of projects and beyond. This should include training on new policies and regulations.
9. ***The implementation of secular laws in a country in which rule of law is not yet entrenched is a challenge.*** The lack of rule of law creates challenges for regulatory framework development.
10. ***The implementation of MEAs should be undertaken in close cooperation with the GEF.*** As a least-developed conflict country, funding and technical support from GEF is very valuable.
11. ***Capacity of Government to implement MEAs effectively is very limited.*** Accession to new MEAs should be delayed until the minimum reporting requirements for MEAs are first fulfilled.
12. ***National data collection is key to development of policy.*** The development of environmental monitoring, information and policy requires consistent national environmental data collection.

Environmental impact assessment (EIA) component

1. ***Shadowing of technical experts working on donor-funded EIA is useful:*** This counterparts provided real-life examples for NEPA staff and encouraged proponents to involve them in EIA, pending implementation of a full EIA system in the country.
2. ***Mainstreaming environment into national planning processes as a post-conflict intervention requires further development.*** Considerable challenges remain in adapting these tools.



3. **Political perceptions of EIA require credible high-level support from NEPA and line ministries.** Undertaking EIAs and establishing EIA focal points in line ministries is perceived as a political issue and met with resistance.

Environmental information and education

1. **Environmental education is most effective when integrated with other programming.**
2. **Partnering with local institutions is effective.** Contracting local partners for environmental education and outreach has proven sustainable in terms of cost and capacity development.
3. **Working through an approved strategy and action plan is preferred.** It is most effective to design an environmental awareness action plan with national and international partners.
4. **Collaboration with counterparts for supporting environmental education is necessary.** UNEP can play a consulting role to assure collaboration among counterparts.
5. **Demand for environmental information is increasing from the GoA and the public.** This creates an opportunity for NEPA to provide targeted information about their mandate and activities.



Caption: Young herders in Yakawlang Valley, Bamyan Province Afghanistan. Source: George Bouma, 2005.



Community-based natural resource management

1. **Secure access to land and water are required for successful CBNRM.** Conflict over rights to access natural resources needs to be resolved before initiating CRNRM activities.
2. **Communities need effective local-level decision-making capability, including a trusted local body seen to represent community interests.** CBNRM should be linked to government and NGO social mobilisation efforts to re-establish local-national linkages.
3. **Understanding of the local context for pilot communities is key,** including local history, socio-cultural and political and ecological context and natural resource conflicts at project sites.
4. **CBNRM can play a role as a post-conflict reconstruction tool.** CBNRM projects can restore trust in leadership and act as catalysts for cultural and community cohesion.
5. **Partnerships with implementing agencies and local institutions are critical.** CBNRM can avoid the need for a separate field office and team to facilitate rapid start-up, minimum infrastructure and maximum impact for local communities through creative partnership-building.
6. **Longer-term investments in CBNRM is needed.** While short-term consultancies may be appealing, CBNRM requires a longer-term commitment of staff and finances to be effective.

Protected areas (PA) management

1. **Need for appropriate park planning in post-conflict settings.** This should combine scientific gap analysis and resource assessment with a realistic assessment of conservation planning challenges and on-the-ground field logistics. Community management processes can help.
2. **Conservation across landscapes.** The Afghan PA system is an example of conserving nature and natural resources corridors and landscapes, at scales where natural processes can function, in cooperation with landowners and communities, as opposed to “postage stamp conservation”.
3. **Protected areas can be seen as sites showcasing natural resource management.** Conservation goals that focus on sustainable management of resources, and the role of community custodians (and not just protection of rare and endangered species) will engage local communities.
4. **Cultural resources are often undervalued in protected area planning in developing countries.** Valuing and promoting the use of cultural resources can strengthen local engagement.
5. **Conservation and environmental education.** Promoting environmental education and awareness will encourage citizens’ ownership of and sense of responsibility for natural areas.

Source: Belinda Bowling, Afghanistan Programme Manager, UNEP Afghanistan



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United Nations Development Programme

Bureau for Development Policy

One United Nations Plaza

New York, NY, 10017 USA

Tel: +1 212 906 6846

For more information: www.undp.org/

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