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**Draft country programme document for the United Arab Emirates
(2013-2017)**

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I. Situation analysis

1. The country programme document (CPD) for the United Arab Emirates is the result of unprecedented dialogue between UNDP and the Government both at the national and emirate levels. This new CPD is aligned with national priorities as outlined in the United Arab Emirates Strategy 2011-2013 and Vision 2021. A national consultation workshop was held in December 2011 with the broad participation of federal and local governments, foundations, non-governmental organizations and academic institutions during which initial endorsement of the CPD was received.
2. With a human development index of 0.846, the United Arab Emirates ranks 30 among 187 countries, according to the *Human Development Report 2011*, and is on track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. The United Arab Emirates has an open market economy with high per capita income. Economic diversification is pursued at a vigorous pace to ensure sustainable growth. It is a key emerging donor. In 2009 the Government provided \$1.16 billion in official development assistance and has ambitions to achieve prominent global standing. The quality of public institutions provides an enabling environment for sustainable economic and social development. Its emphasis on effectiveness, efficiency and transparency underlines its ambition to achieve world-class standards in education, health, sustainable development and prosperity.
3. Enhancing regional development and coordination among the seven emirates continues to be a high priority. Differences in levels of development are traced to economic performance, infrastructure, institutional and human resource capacities, and public services. Although more than 30 per cent of the population resides in the five Northern Emirates, these emirates have accounted for only about 10 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) in recent years, while Abu Dhabi and Dubai account for about 60 and 30 per cent, respectively.
4. A central human development challenge is the low rate of demographic growth among Emirati nationals – a concern for a society that constituted only 11 per cent of the population in 2009 according to estimates from the National Bureau of Statistics. Unemployment among nationals is on the rise, in particular in the Northern Emirates. While unemployment among non-nationals remains low (around 2.8 per cent in 2009), unemployment among nationals reached 14 per cent overall and as high as 28 per cent for Emirati women in 2009. Unemployment rates in the Northern Emirates range as high as 20 per cent at any given time.
5. Human development gains are also at risk as a result of climate change and environmental degradation. The country has one of the highest per capita CO² emissions in the world and has responded by investing heavily in renewable energy and energy efficiency. At the same time the United Arab Emirates is vulnerable to changes in climate that may have already become inevitable, such as sea level rise. Promoting environmental sustainability and developing a green economy are therefore top priorities.
6. The country is committed to enhancing the transparency and accountability of governance institutions and mechanisms. A new 40-member Federal National Council (FNC) convened in late 2011 and a female Deputy Speaker was appointed, the first in United Arab Emirates and in the Arab region. Support to strengthen legislative drafting and women's leadership skills for FNC committees have been identified as areas requiring policy advisory services and technical support. More effective coordination and cooperation are needed between federal entities and local governments. The Government intends to strengthen social cohesion and empower social security beneficiaries and has embarked on a comprehensive review of social security programmes to move from social welfare to social protection and empowerment.
7. Employment figures aside, the country has made significant progress in moving towards women's empowerment. This is most visible in education and health and more recently in political representation. About 60 per cent of all students in institutions of higher learning are women, and 7 out of 40 members of the current FNC are women.

II. Past cooperation and lessons learned

8. The UNDP country programme 2008-2011 focused on seven outcomes in the areas of economic and social development, governance and environment. Since the United Arab Emirates became a net contributor country in the 1990s, UNDP has continued to provide strategic, technical and operational support to various government entities. During 2006-2008, UNDP helped to develop the National Strategy for Women's Development, which laid the foundation for women's advancement in the country. More recently, UNDP played a key role in establishing the Dubai Carbon Centre of Excellence, which in turn is connecting the United Arab Emirates to global carbon markets. UNDP also assisted the National Bureau of Statistics in finalizing the second national MDG report (as it did in 2007) and is now assisting Abu Dhabi in preparing the first-ever Abu Dhabi human development report, marking the emirate's recognition of human development a key development paradigm.

9. In early 2011 UNDP commissioned an evaluation of its work in the United Arab Emirates covering the previous two programming cycles from 2002 to 2011. This assessment of development results (ADR) concluded that while UNDP support to the country was well appreciated by many partners in the past, UNDP impact and performance had fallen off in recent years. This was a result of the lack of continuity and stability in management, the absence of regular and predictable resources for programming, an inability on the part of UNDP to attract and retain national staff owing to the highly competitive market place and the increasing reliance of the Government on consulting firms rather than United Nations technical assistance.

III. Proposed programme

10. The objective of UNDP country programme 2013-2017 is to support the country's strategic goal of becoming 'among the best countries in the world in 2021'. Relevant national priorities include achieving a cohesive society, sustainable environment, competitive knowledge economy, and strong global standing. To that end, the new country programme will focus on the four programmes detailed below and include the crosscutting priorities of capacity development for institutions and individuals; global partnerships for sharing knowledge and technical expertise; private-public partnerships for accelerated regional development; and gender equality and women's empowerment.

Fostering regional integration and development

11. UNDP will support the United Arab Emirates in promoting inclusive and equitable growth and will place special emphasis on the sustainable employment of Emirati nationals, especially women and youth in the workforce.

12. *Regional economic development.* UNDP will support economic development in the Northern Emirates promoting their comparative advantages and encouraging new investments in infrastructure, productive capacity and human capital. In response to requests from federal agencies and the governments of the emirates, UNDP will support institutional strengthening and capacity development for local economic development agencies, the formulation of integrated regional and local economic development strategies, and efforts that contribute to raising the profile of the Northern Emirates.

13. *Sustainable employment.* UNDP will work with the Government to expand job opportunities for both men and women and ensure greater alignment of new skills with the demands of the economy, including the emerging 'knowledge economy'. UNDP will support new employment through the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), value-chain development and entrepreneurship training. This will include measures to strengthen the connection between education and sustainable employment. Finally, UNDP will support the formulation of labour market assessments, disaggregated by gender, at national and emirate levels, and capacity building for key labour market institutions to further support labour market restructuring in light of the country's goals.

14. In each of the above areas, UNDP will support the government commitment to increasing female participation in the economy, including special measures to promote employment for women with family responsibilities. In view of women's high educational attainment levels, women-specific leadership training will be initiated.

15. UNDP will pay special attention to supporting public-private partnerships and corporate social responsibility that address the 'triple bottom line' of economic, social and environmental sustainability. UNDP will provide support to strengthening social policies and social security programmes in line with the government goal of strengthening social cohesion and empowering social security beneficiaries.

Mainstreaming environmental sustainability

16. The dual threats of climate change and environmental degradation challenge the United Arab Emirates to continue exercising leadership in developing a 'green' economy: to pioneer green investments, innovate solutions, harness untapped potential, craft new technologies and move the nation towards environmental sustainability. UNDP will support the Government's pioneering role in mainstreaming environmental sustainability across all development sectors for sustainable and green human development.

17. *Low-emission, climate resilient development.* Face with a changing climate, the United Arab Emirates will need both to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the changes currently underway. UNDP can assist in doing this by supporting the development and implementation of low-emission, climate-resilient development strategies at the national and emirate levels. Such strategies will help transform the economy by directing public and private investment towards green, climate-friendly economic development. In terms of mitigation measures, this will include an emphasis on energy efficiency, energy conservation and renewable energies. In terms of adaptation measures, this will include support for sectoral planning that takes into account climate change.

18. *Sustainable natural resource management.* The country's natural resource base has been threatened in recent years as a result of rapid economic development and population growth. UNDP can help to ensure that the natural goods and services provided by water ecosystems, groundwater and land are enhanced through measures that increase the sustainable management of water resources and the preservation of ecosystems and biological resources. Such measures will include support to policy development, legislation, institutional strengthening, and environmental assessment, monitoring and reporting. These will be benchmarked against the best international standards and practices.

19. *Green growth and development.* In both areas above, the United Arab Emirates has an opportunity to become a leader in green economic growth and development. This can include creating green jobs; promoting eco-tourism in selected parts of the country; improving solid and hazardous waste management; and promoting cleaner production, waste reduction and recycling. In all of these, UNDP will help to ensure that the gender dimensions of natural resource use are taken into account.

Supporting institutional development and good governance

20. Good governance and the performance of public institutions are critical for advancing human development and for sustaining the competitive advantage of nations. Through partnership with the highest levels of government such as the Ministry of Presidential Affairs, Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and local governments, UNDP will focus on improving the responsiveness of governance institutions and on modernization of public administration at national and local levels, aimed at enhancing accountability, transparency and efficiency of public institutions and the civil service.

21. UNDP will provide support and technical expertise for policy coherence and the implementation of a whole-of-government approach in support of the country's guiding principle of effective coordination and cooperation among federal and local governments.

Assistance will be provided to support strategic policy-making and to build legislative capacities working with the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and the Federal National Council.

22. UNDP will support governments in the Northern Emirates by helping to build public institutions and capacities, enhance efficiency and accountability, strengthen public management systems, improve public service delivery and access through e-government services, and implement information and communications technology strategies for sustainable development.

23. UNDP will continue to support the country in building capacities for gender-sensitive human development research and MDG tracking. UNDP will promote the public sector knowledge economy through the production of high quality knowledge products across a broad spectrum of development and governance themes.

24. Finally, UNDP will support the country's competitiveness agenda and work closely with the Emirates Competitiveness Council to enhance competitiveness, integrity and excellence of public institutions and performance. Furthermore, it will work closely with the Ministry of Labour and other organizations such as Tanmiya and Tatweer to develop and implement integrated human resource development strategies to build national capacities for policy-making, results-based management, and monitoring and evaluation.

Enhancing national capacities and leadership for international cooperation

25. In highly developed countries such as the United Arab Emirates, UNDP provides policy advisory services to governments and acts in turn as a conduit channelling their experience and expertise to the rest of the world. In the United Arab Emirates, UNDP will align its policy advisory services with the country's strategic goal of sustaining a 'strong global standing' and its ambition to become a world leader in human development. To that effect, UNDP will focus on the following.

26. *International standards.* The United Arab Emirates has ratified a number of United Nations conventions and international agreements. As it becomes a more prominent actor on the international scene, committed to international standards and principles, UNDP will provide policy advice and technical expertise to support the country's efforts in developing effective measures to respond to the requirements, recommendations and reporting obligations of such treaties.

27. *Development assistance.* To strengthen the country's stature among new emerging donors and leaders in international development assistance, UNDP will provide policy advice and technical expertise in strengthening its aid programme, support the articulation of a new development assistance architecture, and assist in channelling official development assistance to globally agreed development goals in line with agreements made at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held in Busan in 2011.

28. *South-South cooperation.* Knowledge management tools and South-South cooperation programmes can be designed to enhance the country's international position. UNDP will work closely with the Federal National Council and the Ministry of Justice in sharing knowledge and expertise as well as developing models for enhancing access to information, policy research and analysis, and legal expertise.

IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation

29. It is proposed that the Ministry of Economy and UNDP establish a joint planning and review mechanism to approve annual work plans and monitor results based on the country programme results and resources framework. Other United Nations organizations, non-governmental organizations, foundations and private sector representatives may be asked to participate in these meetings. This forum will help to clearly distinguish between the role of UNDP in national development – as a broker of international knowledge and best practices and as a channel to the United Nations – versus the role of consulting firms. UNDP will also continue exploring ways and means to attract and retain qualified national staff through collaboration with universities, secondments from government, etc.

30. The country programme will be managed under national execution with UNDP as a key implementing partner. Evaluations will be conducted during the programme cycle to assess the impact of UNDP policy interventions for transformative change and delivery of results in a timely and effective manner. Such evaluations will include gender responsive indicators. Similarly, the resource mobilization estimate of \$15 million for this country programme will be reviewed with the Government to assess the financial feasibility and cost effectiveness of achieving results and to discuss options for new funding instruments. UNDP proposes establishing a regular funding base for this country programme in consultation with all national stakeholders that will enter into partnership with UNDP to deliver the country programme 2013-2017 and its expected results.

Annex. Results and resources framework for the United Arab Emirates, 2013-2017

NATIONAL PRIORITY: Advancing cohesive society (Guiding principle: effective coordination and cooperation among federal and local governments)					
COUNTRY PROGRAMME OUTCOME 1: Enabled environment for inclusive and equitable growth Related Strategic Plan focus areas: Poverty reduction and MDG achievement					
GOVERNMENT PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS	OTHER PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS	UNDP CONTRIBUTION	INDICATOR(S), BASELINES AND TARGET(S) FOR UNDP CONTRIBUTIONS	INDICATIVE COUNTRY PROGRAMME OUTPUTS	INDICATIVE RESOURCES
Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Labour will produce regional development, economic diversification and sustainable employment plans. Emirate-level departments of economic development will design local economic development plans and SME initiatives. National Bureau of Statistics will collect data and produce national MDG and other reports. Ministry of Social Affairs will introduce improved social security programmes.	Chambers of commerce, various agencies and councils and Tanmia will publish information on the labour market and employment trends. Women's organizations will identify and promote increased opportunities for women in the economy. The private sector will promote corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Foundations and funds will support the development of SMEs and the emerging knowledge economy. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) will support employment in the green economy.	UNDP will support capacity development for local economic agencies to formulate economic plans in the Northern Emirates; provide advisory services on development of SMEs and the knowledge economy; assist in conducting labour market assessments and help to develop capacities for key labour market institutions; support women's organization in the public and private sectors; provide technical support for CSR development; and help to strengthen social security programmes.	<p>Indicator: Share of the national economy and unemployment rates in the Northern Emirates. Baseline: The Northern Emirates account for about 10 per cent of GDP and unemployment is high (up to 20 per cent in places). Target: Increased share of the Northern Emirates in the national economy and reduced unemployment.</p> <p>Indicator: Employment rates for women and youth. Baseline: Limited opportunities for women in the private sector and high unemployment among youth (up to 24 per cent). Target: Increased employment opportunities for Emiratis, especially for youth and women and in the private sector.</p> <p>Indicator: Portion of population getting social assistance. Baseline: Strong support for social security in the country, but some gaps and uneven application across emirates. High levels of social assistance in Northern Emirates. Target: Updated national strategy on social security, including empowerment programmes, and reduced reliance on social assistance.</p>	<p>Output 1: Improved capacities to promote economic development in the Northern Emirates. Output 2: Policies for SME development and sustainable employment especially for nationals in the knowledge economy. Output 3: Policies and initiatives to promote employment opportunities for women. Output 4: Private sector partnerships and CSR initiatives. Output 5: Enhanced capacities to implement social protection programmes.</p>	<p>Regular: None</p> <p>Other: \$4 million</p>
NATIONAL PRIORITY: Green economy and sustainable development (Guiding principle: nurturing a culture of excellence)					
COUNTRY PROGRAMME OUTCOME 2: Strengthened policy formulation and implementation capacity for greening human development. Related strategic plan focus areas: Environment and sustainable development					
Ministries of Energy and Environment and Water will produce national policies and strategies to promote efficient use of resources and protect the environment. Ministry of Foreign Affairs will help align country with international standards. Emirate-level environment authorities will	The private sector (including parastatal utilities) will support efforts to improve efficiency in energy and resource use. Environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (e.g., the Yayed Prize and Emirates Environment Group) will promote public awareness and action. Funds and	UNDP will help to develop the capacities of federal and local governments, NGOs and the private sector in policy formulation, strategic planning and adoption of international standards for greening human development. UNDP will provide policy advisory	<p>Indicators: Use of energy efficient practices; per capita greenhouse gas emissions and ecologic footprint. Baseline: Very high ecological 'footprint' and high greenhouse gas emissions per capita (39 t CO₂-e). Target: Increased adoption of energy efficient incentives and practices; reduced rate of growth of greenhouse gas emissions; and a lowered ecologic footprint overall.</p> <p>Indicators: Degree to which environmental quality and</p>	<p>Output 1: Strengthened capacities of government entities, NGOs and the private sector to manage natural resources and the environment and to incorporate climate change responses into national and local strategies and policies. Output 2: Enhanced</p>	<p>Regular: None</p> <p>Other: \$5 million</p>

assess environmental quality and monitor progress. Departments of economic development will promote green initiatives. Municipalities will implement waste reduction and recycling.	foundations (e.g., the Khalifa Fund) will support greening human development through SMEs. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, UNIDO, United Nations Environment Programme, International Renewable Energy Association, Masdar ¹ and others will provide support, tools and lessons learned on international standards and best practices.	services to support low-emission, climate-resilient development; promote the sustainable management of water resources, biodiversity and marine ecosystems; and encourage green growth.	targets are monitored and environmental policies, standards, laws and regulations are enforced. Baseline: Environment quality is not monitored uniformly across the country and laws are not uniformly enforced. Target: Improved monitoring of environmental quality and enforcement of environmental laws across the country, especially related to air quality, groundwater, fisheries, mangroves, etc.	policies and strategies for energy efficiency and the sustainable use of natural resources and other environmental resources.	
NATIONAL PRIORITY: Effective and responsive public administration (Guiding principle: enhancing transparency and accountable governance through Emirate entities)					
COUNTRY PROGRAMME OUTCOME 3: Enhanced responsiveness and accountability of governance institutions. Related strategic plan focus areas: Governance					
Ministry of Cabinet Affairs will produce policies for responsive and accountable public institutions. National ministries and local governments will promote more effective coordination. Government entities at all levels will further mainstream ICT applications into their work. The Northern Emirates will produce plans for improved service delivery.	National Bureau of Statistics and universities will support data collection and analysis. Emirates Competitive Council, Tanmiya and Civil Service Bureau will support modernization of the public administration. UN-HABITAT, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, World Health Organization and UN Women will support development of the Northern Emirates.	UNDP will provide technical support to enhance the efficiency and use of evidence-based tools in the public sector; support the Federal National Council in legislative drafting; support government entities in the use of ICT tools; provide policy advice to improve service delivery in the Northern Emirates; help to build capacities for human development research and MDG tracking.	Indicator: Timeliness, efficiency and geographical coverage of public service delivery. Baseline: The efficient and effective management of services in the Northern Emirates is not well developed. Target: Improved timeliness, efficiency and geographic spread of public service delivery in the Northern Emirates as measured by client surveys. Indicator: Use of ICT in government entities at the national and local level (i.e., e-governance). Baseline: Limited mainstreaming of ICT tools in planning and management. Target: Increased use of ICT applications in government.	Output 1: Increased capacities of ministries, government institutions and local governments to develop strategies, deliver services and use ICT in efficient, transparent and accountable manner. Output 2: Increased capacities for policy coherence and a whole-of-government approach towards effective coordination among federal and local governments.	Regular: None Other: \$4 million
NATIONAL PRIORITY: Strong global standing (Guiding principle: investment in human resources and leadership capacities)					
COUNTRY PROGRAMME OUTCOME 4: Strong global standing of the United Arab Emirates Related strategic plan focus areas: Governance					
Ministry of Foreign Affairs will submit reports to international treaty bodies. Ministry of Justice and Federal National Council will identify best practices and examples for foreign aid and South-South cooperation. Ministry of	Funds, foundations and charities will support South-South cooperation. UNDP regional centres and country offices will provide best practices and success stories. Organizations such as the Khalifa Fund, Red Crescent, foundations and	UNDP will support the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in reporting to international treaties; facilitate access to global networks and specialized offices to support South-South exchanges; and support	Indicator: Reporting to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the Human Rights Council. Baseline: United Arab Emirates ratified UNCAC in 2006. The Universal Periodic Review (UPR) is due in 2013. Target: Timely and high quality reports are prepared and submitted to the UNCAC and UPR.	Output 1: Enhanced capacities of government to respond to the requirements of international treaties on anti-corruption and human rights. Output 2: Enhanced South-South cooperation.	Regular: None Other: \$2 million

¹ Abu Dhabi commercial enterprise for renewable energy and sustainable technologies industry.

Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Economy will adopt nationally owned standards on aid effectiveness. Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid will monitor aid delivery.	charities, and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research will participate in supporting improved aid effectiveness and South-South cooperation. The Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime will assist in reporting. The Resident Coordinator will facilitate knowledge exchange within the United Nations system.	capacity development to mainstream principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness into national policies and practices.	<p>Indicator: Number of best practices shared from the United Arab Emirates through UNDP knowledge networks.</p> <p>Baseline: Limited exchanges and study tours between the United Arab Emirates and other UNDP offices.</p> <p>Target: Increased number of best practices from the United Arab Emirates disseminated through UNDP to other countries.</p> <p>Indicator: Use of the principles of aid effectiveness are mainstreamed into the country's foreign aid.</p> <p>Baseline: United Arab Emirates is not a state party to the Paris Declaration.</p> <p>Target: Foreign development assistance is aligned with aid effectiveness principles with clear standards and operating procedures.</p>	Output 3: Increased knowledge and awareness of government on international standards on aid effectiveness assistance	
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