



**DRAFT CONCEPT NOTE**  
**Regional Human Development Capacity  
Development Workshop**

**“Addressing Challenges in Human Development:  
Concepts, Measures, Analysis, Reporting and  
Advocacy”**

**Venue:** Bangkok, Thailand, or Colombo, Sri Lanka (to be finalized shortly)

**Tentative workshop dates:** 27-29 September 2005

**Participants:** UNDP CO Staff, Government counterparts and researchers

**1. Context**

In the years since the inception of the first global HDR in 1990, the human development approach has increasingly become the overarching framework for all UNDP activities. Human development involves enlarging people's choices so that they can *develop their full potential and lead productive, creative lives according to their capabilities and interests*. Fundamental to enlarging these choices is the process of building human capabilities, including those relating to a healthy life, access to resources needed for a decent standard of living and the ability to participate in the life of the community.

The human development approach contributes to UNDP's mission *to help people build better lives and finding solutions to global and national developmental challenges through knowledge and experience*. UNDP works towards promoting human development through its five practice areas – democratic governance, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, energy and environment, and HIV/AIDS.

As UNDP's signature advocacy tools, HDRs have contributed to redefining the approach to development. According to Kemal Dervis, the Administrator, HDRs have also helped in “building strong bridges between the donor community and activist civil society.”

Based in the Regional Centre at Colombo (RCC), one of the key objectives of the MDG-HDR Cluster – which is part of the Poverty Practice - is to support capacity strengthening for human development and the preparation of NHDRs. Response to previous capacity development workshops has been encouraging, providing impetus for a yearly workshop on the subject.

## 2. Objectives of the HD Capacity Development Workshop

The Asia Pacific RHDR Initiative (APRI), a regional programme in the MDG-HDR Cluster, plans to hold this HD capacity development workshop for UNDP country offices in the region, Government officials and research institutions. The objectives include:

- Strengthening the understanding of human development: theory, applications and limitations
- Strengthening skills in mapping and measuring human development: indicators and indices, including their strengths and limitations
- Strengthening the capacity to manage NHDRs: preparation, process, advocacy and dissemination, media strategy, follow-up
- Sharing experiences and lessons: best practices and pitfalls to avoid – CO experience.

## 3. Previous HD Capacity Development Workshops

The first regional workshop, organized by APRI, "Potentials and Challenges in Human Development Reporting: Operationalising Regional and National HDRs in Policies and Programmes," was held between 24-26 September 2003 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. Thirty participants attended it from 15 UNDP country offices in Asia and the Pacific - Afghanistan, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, East Timor, Republic of Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Maldives, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Samoa, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Other participants included Government representatives from three countries - Bhutan, Cambodia and Sri Lanka – as well as representatives from research institutions involved in the production of HDRs from Samoa, Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka. A multi-disciplinary team of resource persons from the RBAP, the Human Development Report Office in New York, Sub-Regional Resource Facility (SURF) Kathmandu, UNDP's Oslo Governance Centre, UNDP Colombia, and other experts served as resource persons for the workshop.

The second workshop, "Potential and Challenges in Human Development: Analysis, Process and Reporting," was held between 2-4 May 2004 in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. Thirty-one participants attended this workshop from 12 countries - Cambodia, China, East Timor, Fiji, Indonesia, Iran, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea and Thailand. The participants included staff from Country Offices, national researchers, officials from Planning Ministries, National Statistical Offices and other Government representatives. The resource persons included experts from Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, Human Development Report Office and human development practitioners from other regions.

## 4. Human Development Reports

Human Development Reports have emerged as one of the chief policy analysis and advocacy tools in UNDP's national, regional and global operations. Over the years both National and Regional HDRs have developed niches in their respective domains. While National HDRs reflect specific country contexts, priorities and aspirations, Regional HDRs go beyond national boundaries to highlight multi-country, regional issues and/or issues that are too sensitive to be addressed at the national level. While both types of reports address emerging concerns, national reports have an inherently stronger "ownership" while regional have relatively stronger "independence".

What makes these HDRs distinct from the other documents is that they are a culmination of inclusive, stakeholder-based consultations that help to build consensus among parties with vested interest in the issues. These HDRs thus have a strong advocacy potential. Realising the importance of a participatory and inclusive process, this aspect has been included as one of the basic principles of UNDP Corporate Policy on NHDRs.

Though regional and national HDRs are different in their choice of themes, address different issues and have overlapping stakeholders, the basic principles common to both are:

- Independence of analysis
- Quality of analysis
- Participatory and inclusive preparation
- Flexibility and creativity in presentation
- Sustained follow-up

About 475 national and sub-national HDRs and 24 regional HDRs have been produced across the globe since 1990. However, the challenge of conforming to the above principles still remains. Each HDR is based in a different set-up, addresses different themes and uses different tools for analysis. Some of these HDRs have lived up to these principles and are remembered as a landmark in the field of human development. Others, despite the most sincere efforts, have not been able to match these standards. The challenge is thus to make each HDR unique and effective without compromising the basic principles.

## **5. Third HD Capacity Development Workshop, 27-29 September 2005**

This workshop has been designed for the staff of UNDP Country Offices, national institutions, government representatives and national researchers who are actively involved in the preparation of NHDRs, and often take the lead, with UNDP supporting the process. It will draw upon the experience gained and valuable feedback received from the previous workshops and inputs from participants.

The theme for this workshop is ***“Some Challenges in Human Development: Concepts, Measures, Analysis, Reporting, and Advocacy”***. Specifically, the workshop will address the following areas:

- *HD Concepts*
  - Brief history of the evolution of development thinking
  - Human development – what it is and what it is not
  - The value-added that the HD perspective brings
  - Experience sharing
- *HD Measures*
  - Other measures of development: strength and weaknesses
  - Measures of HD and other associated measures developed by UNDP (e.g. HDI, HPI, GDI, GEM ICTforHD) – strengths and weaknesses
  - Indicators and indexing
  - Data related issues
  - Exercises
  - Experience sharing

- *HD Analysis*
  - Analysing a theme from a human development perspective – contrasting the study of a theme as an issue versus examining it from a human development lens
  - Thematic analysis - HIV/AIDS (and possibly another issue as identified on the spot by participants)
  - Incorporating cross cutting issues - gender
  - Experience sharing
  
- *HDR Process and Reporting (including issues of complementarity versus overlap with MDGRs)*
  - Steps in NHDR preparation including how to decide on a theme
  - Specific “how to do” sessions and exercises for HDRs
  - Sharing perspectives of other stakeholders, such as the Governments and academic institutions
  - Illustrations of successful HD reporting
  - Presentations by UNDP Country Offices on past NHDRs are lessons learned from them
  - Stocktaking of the HDRs experience and the way forward
  - NHDRs and MDGRs – distinction, overlap and complementarity
  - Experience sharing
  
- *Advocacy and Dissemination*
  - Illustrations of successful advocacy work
  - Identifying key partners in the advocacy and dissemination processes
  - Development of a model dissemination plan
  - Brainstorming of creative dissemination plans
  - Developing follow-up strategy for HDRs
  - Experience sharing

## **6. Logistical Information and Contacts**