

**From:** Helen Clark [\[mailto:helen.clark@undp.org\]](mailto:helen.clark@undp.org)

**Sent:** 31 July 2013 00:59

**To:** [nbullain@icnl.org](mailto:nbullain@icnl.org); [sparcssns@gmail.com](mailto:sparcssns@gmail.com)

**Cc:** UNDP CSO Advisory Committee; Sigrid Kaag; Fadzai Gwaradzimba; Bharati Sadasivam; Beniam Gebrezghi; Sarah Renner

**Subject:** RE: UNDP Civil Society Advisory Committee Recommendations 2013

Dear Nilda and Sheela,

Thank you for your note and detailed recommendations. Let me first say that I found the discussions at this year's Civil Society Advisory Committee very stimulating. It was a pleasure to meet the new members, and I would like once again to welcome them to the committee. UNDP greatly values the substantive and frank nature of our discussions at the annual meetings, and we look forward to more interaction and updates between meetings as a way of strengthening our overall engagement.

As we discussed at the meeting, finalizing our Strategic Plan 2014-2017 is a top priority for UNDP in the coming months. I have taken note of your comments on the need for clearer articulation of the plan's focus areas and on UNDP's specific contribution to outcomes. Sharpening our focus is indeed a key objective of the new plan. At our Executive Board meeting in June there was broad support and endorsement from Board Members for the proposed vision, areas of work and development outcomes in the draft plan. Reducing the number of development outcomes substantially will help to improve the quality of what we do. What we deliver in any one country will continue to be based on national priorities and needs.

I believe that the proposed outcomes and areas of work should position UNDP to help developing countries transform their development pathways, improve governance, and manage risk, with poverty eradication at the core of our efforts. Overall, the draft Strategic Plan signals a higher level of ambition and a determination to renew the role of UNDP as a central pillar of the multilateral development system. We still have work to do between now and September when we hope the new plan will be approved. I appreciate your continuing and constructive engagement with us on this priority.

Alongside the implementation of its new Strategic Plan, UNDP will continue its efforts to improve its efficiency and effectiveness, streamline its structures, and lift its own capacity. Your suggestion that UNDP partner with committee members in training staff on specific issues related to strengthening civic engagement is welcomed. Following the Committee's recommendation, a specific session will be organized at each meeting of the Advisory Committee to discuss current and future efforts to strengthen civil society engagement at global, regional, and country levels. To inform these discussions and with thanks to recent reporting improvements, UNDP is now able to share more detailed information on the related work of Country Offices. We would also welcome your advice on how such reporting might be further improved.

As discussed at the meeting, UNDP has recently approved a global strategy aimed at lifting human development progress in economies with significant extractive industry sectors. We are now finalizing a global initiative to operationalize this strategy, by stepping up support for countries looking to level the playing field with multinational companies; engage and respond to the concerns of all stakeholders; generate and spend new revenue streams prudently, transparently, and effectively; and devise adequate legal and institutional frameworks. Your insights, particularly in expanding the role of civil

society at local and national levels to ensure the input of local communities into decisions on mining initiatives, have already been useful in helping us to shape this initiative.

UNDP envisions an important role for civil society in all aspects of its work on extractive industries, and would welcome your further engagement in advancing this initiative. UNDP will establish an international experts group to advise on the implementation of the global initiative, and my colleagues will consult you as we take this forward. We will also publish the extractive industries strategy and other relevant materials on our website: [www.undp.org/extractiveindustries](http://www.undp.org/extractiveindustries).

I agree on the need to address the urgent development challenges posed by urbanization as a priority. The new UNDP local governance and local development strategy will address urban governance issues. We are keen to ensure that our approach is multidimensional and cuts across a range of thematic areas and development issues. We are developing a guidance note on inclusive urban governance which will tap the knowledge and experience of stakeholders in responding to urban challenges. The note will help our staff to develop urban policies which are anchored in recognition of the fundamental rights of people to access resources, services, and economic opportunities. I would welcome the Committee's inputs to this note as it is drafted in the coming months.

On engagement with the private sector, UNDP's new due diligence policy is close to final approval. A due diligence tool, to help Country Offices and other units assess potential private sector partners in accordance with the policy, will be pilot tested. Your continuing guidance will help us in our efforts to make this an efficient and transparent process.

We are working on several fronts to expand our engagement with philanthropic organizations. A number of foundations are interested in strategic dialogue with us in the ongoing work of the post-2015 development framework. We are also working with foundations in addressing challenges of climate change and poverty, and of governance in urban areas linked to our local governance work. We are very interested in expanding partnerships with philanthropic organisations in emerging economies, to create multi-stakeholder platforms which will advance innovative development solutions.

The global UNDP Youth Strategy has been developed through broad consultation with youth organizations and UNDP Country Offices, and is now close to getting approval. In the recently endorsed UN System Wide Action Plan on Youth, UNDP has assumed a lead role on entrepreneurship, a co-lead role on political participation, and supporting roles in other priority areas. UNDP will work with other agencies on implementing the plan, and we count on your advice and support.

Finally, on the post-2015 development framework, as you know, four reports to the Secretary-General have now been released from (a) the United Nations Development Group on the global conversation the UN has facilitated, (b) the High Level Panel, (c) the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, and (d) the Global Compact. All reports are supportive of a single, integrated, and universal development agenda which covers all dimensions of sustainable development and takes into consideration governance, peace and security. They also emphasize the need for a limited number of goals and targets to measure progress; renewed global partnerships; and stronger accountability mechanisms.

UNDP's focus is now on how the intergovernmental negotiations gaining momentum in the Open Working Group, and on the structure and focus of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) which will replace the Commission for Sustainable Development. UNDP continues to monitor the ongoing negotiations on the "form and shape" of the HLPF, on which Member States appear to have reached

consensus on enhancing stakeholder engagement. The OWG will hold its next session from 25 to 27 November on the following cluster of issues: sustained and inclusive economic growth; macroeconomic policy questions (including international trade, international financial system and external debt sustainability); infrastructure development; industrialization; and energy. We look forward to your active engagement with and input into these discussions.

My colleagues have begun the process of addressing your specific recommendations, and will update you, as agreed, during the course of the year. Following this initial response to your letter, I look forward to our continued interaction in the coming months. Once again, I thank you for your interest in and commitment to engage with UNDP.

Yours sincerely,

Helen



**Helen Clark**  
Administrator  
United Nations Development Programme  
One United Nations Plaza, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
United States of America

Tel. +1 (212) 906 5791  
Fax. +1 (212) 906 5778  
[helen.clark@undp.org](mailto:helen.clark@undp.org)  
[www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)

*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

Follow me:  

*Please consider the environment before printing this email.*