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REPORT OF THE JOINT FIELD VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARDS OF UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF AND WFP

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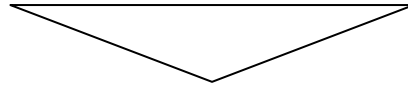
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Should you have any questions regarding matters of dispatch of documentation for the Executive Board, please contact Ms I. Carpitella, Administrative Assistant, Conference Servicing Unit (tel.: 066513-2645).

DRAFT DECISION*



The Board takes note of “Report of the Joint Field Visit to the Republic of the Philippines of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF and WFP” (WFP/EB.A/2011/15) and encourages further action on the recommendations, taking into account considerations raised by the Board during its discussion.

* This is a draft decision. For the final decision adopted by the Board, please refer to the Decisions and Recommendations document issued at the end of the session.



26 April 2011
Original: English

For information

**United Nations Development Programme/
United Nations Population Fund/
United Nations Office for Project Services**
Executive Board
Annual session 2011
6-17 June 2011, New York
Item 12 of the provisional agenda *

United Nations Children's Fund
Executive Board
Annual session 2011
20-23 June 2011
Item 7 of the provisional agenda **

**Report of the joint field visit to the Republic of the Philippines of
the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF and WFP,
26 March-2 April 2011**

* DP/2011/L.2.

** E/ICEF/2011/8.

INTRODUCTION

1. A delegation of 16 members of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)/the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the WFP undertook a joint field visit to the Republic of the Philippines from 26 March to 2 April 2011.¹
2. The purpose and strategic intent of the joint field visit was to enable Executive Board members to witness first-hand the operations and programmes of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP at the country level.
3. More specifically, joint field visits provide valuable insight into the contributions United Nations organizations make and the challenges they face in assisting a country to attain national development goals, in the context of sustainable development and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and other internationally agreed goals. These visits also afford opportunities to gain perspective on United Nations reform, including harmonization and simplification as well as the operation of the resident coordinator system; South–South cooperation; donor cooperation; and partnerships with national government institutions, civil society, the private sector, the World Bank and other multilateral and bilateral agencies.
4. The Philippines was selected for the 2011 joint field visit because of several innovative developments related to conflict prevention and recovery and humanitarian approaches. They include close collaboration between the United Nations country team (UNCT) and national authorities in emergency preparedness and in providing complementary relief and recovery support to vulnerable populations in areas affected by conflict and natural disasters. The United Nations system supports the peacebuilding process by focusing assistance on the poorest people.
5. The delegation extends its sincere thanks to the Government and people of the Philippines for making the visit possible, and particularly for the fruitful and informative discussions. The delegation would also like to express its deep appreciation to the United Nations staff in the Philippines for their dedication and the excellent organization of the field visit, as well as for their valuable input to the discussions.²

BACKGROUND

General Overview

6. The Philippine economy has been described as resilient over the past decade. Despite the global food and fuel price crises, the gross domestic product (GDP) peaked at 7.1 percent in 2007 and continued to grow at 3.8 percent in 2008. The country was seriously affected

¹ The team leader of the delegation was H.E. Mr Brian Bowler (Malawi). For project site visits, the delegation was divided into three groups: one group was led by H.E. Mr Brian Bowler, another by H.E. Mr Jorge Chen Charpentier (Mexico) and the third group by Mr Nojibur Rahman (Bangladesh). The chief rapporteur was Mr Noel Gonzalez (Mexico); other members of the delegation also contributed to the report.

² The joint field visit included two days in the capital for introductory briefings with the Government and UNCT members, as well as meetings with government authorities and other partners, including those in civil society; two days for project site visits; one day to draft the report of the visit; and one day for debriefings in the capital – one each with the UNCT, development partners and government officials – as well as a press conference with the local media.

by global rice price increases in 2007 and 2008, but the global financial crisis did not hit as hard as in other countries: the GDP slowed to 0.9 percent in 2009 but recovered to 7.3 percent in the first quarter of 2010. At the end of 2009, the Philippines graduated to the rank of “lower-middle-income country”, which implies less reliance on aid and stronger capacity to shape its own development.

7. The country also performs well in terms of human development. According to the human development index (HDI) of the 2010 *Human Development Report*, the Philippines is classified as a medium HDI country, ranked 105th out of 182 countries. This ranking exceeds its GDP-per-capita rank by 19, which is larger than the differential computed for its neighbours in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). It signifies a relatively strong capacity for leveraging incomes in favour of human development outcomes.
8. The Philippines had 20 years of martial rule followed by a “people power” revolution in 1986. Democratic institutions have been preserved, although imperfectly, by a vibrant and vigilant civil society. The capacities of local governments have also steadily improved since 1991, when key expenditure and revenue-generating powers were devolved to provincial, city and municipal governments.
9. Notwithstanding these gains, the country has not reached its goals in terms of raising per capita incomes and achieving human development outcomes. The latest progress reports on the MDGs for the country and the Asia-Pacific region indicate that targets for reducing extreme hunger and poverty, universal primary education and maternal and neonatal health are unlikely to be met by 2015 unless the rate of progress is substantially increased. Poverty has proven to be entrenched: there were roughly 2 million more income-poor people in 2006 than in 1985, and wide subnational disparities persist in both incomes and human development.
10. The country has pockets of extreme poverty as well as acute hunger. The Philippines is among 36 countries with the world’s highest burden of malnutrition; national nutritional indicators show a stunting rate of 28 percent; and the country accounts for 90 percent of stunted children worldwide. The food security of poor communities has been hurt by the increased rice prices in 2008. The Philippines remains among the world’s largest importers of rice, despite efforts to increase rice production consistent with the new administration’s target of achieving national self-sufficiency in rice production by 2013.
11. The role of rapid population growth in persistent income and human poverty cannot be overstated. The country has close to 100 million people, and its population growth rate is one of the highest in Asia. Rapid population growth has exacerbated poverty and fuelled urban population growth, overseas labour migration and unprecedented environmental degradation. High fertility rates have affected women and children the most, as indicated by their compromised nutrition, health and educational achievements. The country’s biodiversity, considered a global resource, is under severe threat from population pressure, over-exploitation and pollution.
12. Fiscal constraints, food insecurity, governance and armed conflict are also continuing challenges. The Philippines is home to two of the world’s longest-running armed conflicts, the Moro and communist insurgencies. The struggle continues over ownership of and access to ancestral lands by indigenous peoples, who comprise about 15 percent of the population. The protracted cycle of conflict and displacement, particularly in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, has undermined people’s livelihoods and access to basic services.

13. The Philippines is among the most disaster-prone countries in the world, and extreme climatic events and natural disasters are a persistent threat. The country is exposed to recurrent natural disasters such as droughts, earthquakes, floods, landslides, typhoons and volcanic eruptions from approximately 20 active volcanoes. The Philippines is the second-largest archipelagic State in the world (after Indonesia) and is located within the typhoon belt of the Western Pacific and on the north-western fringes of the so-called Pacific Ring of Fire, a zone of frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. With rising weather turbulence and prolonged droughts and flooding likely from climate change, increasing risks affect agricultural production, food security and vector-borne diseases, among others. This will greatly destabilize the country's already fragile socio-economic conditions. The poor, who are concentrated in rural communities and on the coasts of the country's more than 7,000 islands, are especially at risk because of their strong livelihood dependence on natural ecosystems.
14. Benigno Aquino III, the son of former President Corazon Aquino, became president on 30 June 2010. Mr Aquino's emphatic election victory – he won by a record margin, receiving over 5 million votes more than the second-placed candidate, former President Joseph Estrada – should prevent any challenges to his legitimacy.

PROGRESS IN THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

15. To capture the country's progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, progress reports were published in 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2010. The 2010 report was published with the support of UNDP and presented to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2010. Unlike the previous three progress reports, the fourth reflected the impacts of climate change and other external factors, such as the global financial crisis and the rise in fuel and food prices. In addition, 10 provincial Millennium Development Goals progress reports have been completed. At least one province has created its own Millennium Development Goals office to monitor progress. Given the uneven progress across the country, this is a big milestone towards local monitoring of the Goals.
16. According to the 2010 report, the Philippines are not likely to meet Goal 1 (eradicate extreme poverty and hunger), Goal 2 (achieve universal primary education), Goal 5 (improve maternal health) and Goal 6 (combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases). Results for the indicators of Goal 7 (ensure environmental sustainability) are mixed, and climate change adaptation and mitigation remain a challenge, as does natural disaster management.
17. After the 2010 United Nations High-Level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals, the Government of the Philippines organized its own Millennium Development Goals Congress. Line agencies presented "breakthrough plans" for poverty and hunger reduction, health (maternal and child health and communicable diseases), education, gender equality, environmental sustainability and financing for achievement of the Goals. The Congress sought to refine these breakthrough plans, and a consolidated Millennium Development Goals Plan will be prepared for endorsement by the President.
18. According to the Asian Development Bank, the Philippines is the only country in Southeast Asia where the absolute number of poor people has increased since 1990. Income distribution across regions remains largely unequal. A significant proportion of the population has remained poor over the past two decades. Poverty incidence was declining consistently, falling from 45.3 percent in 1991 to 30 percent in 2003, but it increased in

2006 to 32.9 percent. Recently released 2009 data, using a newly refined methodology, show the poverty incidence rising by a slight 0.1 percent point, but due to the high population growth rate (2.04 percent in the 2007 census), the numbers of poor increased by about 185,000 families and 970,000 individuals.

19. Another factor possibly contributing to the increase in poverty is the lack of gainful employment opportunities, especially among people from vulnerable groups. The global financial crisis as well as the rise in food and fuel prices – exacerbated by natural disasters, such as the devastating typhoons Ondoy and Pepeng, which hit the country during the last quarter of 2009 – have further increased poverty.
20. Primary education is still a major challenge. Coverage of early childhood care and development is limited to only one third of children. Primary school-dropout rates are high, mostly among boys, in the first two years. This is mainly attributed to poverty, low school-readiness and inadequate school resources. Around 20 million Filipinos and over half of public schools remain without access to sanitation. Disparities and inequities are particularly deep in low-income, rural areas and conflict-affected and disaster-prone regions, mainly in the south.
21. In terms of climate change, the Philippines is one of the world's most vulnerable countries, and agriculture is considered the most climate-sensitive sector. Climate change threatens to hamper attainment of the Millennium Development Goals because of the country's limited capacity to plan and implement projects to mitigate climate risk. On a positive note, there have been some notable achievements in recent years, including an increase in the number of protected wildlife species and a significant drop in annual consumption of ozone-depleting substances.
22. Halting the spread of HIV/AIDS is another major challenge. Young people constituted half of all reported sexually transmitted infections and a third of new HIV cases in 2010. The number of HIV cases reported has increased rapidly since 2007. Contributing factors are relatively low coverage of prevention measures, increased risky behaviour and misconceptions about HIV transmission. The country needs to build capacities to identify the sources of new HIV infections and evaluate prevention coverage and impact. Resources need to be mobilized and communities engaged in controlling the epidemic.
23. The steep rise in the absolute number of poor people in recent years poses a challenge to the Government. Responding to it requires convergence of all the anti-poverty interventions and provision of adequate safety nets for poor households. Chronically poor households need help to recover more quickly from economic shocks. Time-bound emergency employment programmes focused on building infrastructure are needed, along with skills-training programmes and other support to augment incomes in times of crisis.

FEATURES OF THE PHILIPPINES DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2011–2016

24. The new Philippines Development Plan (PDP) is anchored in an inclusive growth framework providing equal access to development opportunities and formulating effective social safety networks, to achieve the following:
 - a) Transparent and accountable governance;
 - b) Empowerment of the poor and vulnerable;
 - c) Economic growth through public infrastructure development, strategic public-private partnerships and an improved policy environment for better governance;
 - d) Sustainable development for reform in terms of peace, justice, security and protection of natural resources.

25. Achieving the Millennium Development Goals is one of the major targets of the PDP, which was developed, with United Nations assistance, using a human-rights approach, and was recently approved by the President and his Cabinet. It also incorporates mainstreaming of climate change concerns in national, subnational and sectoral plans, programmes and projects. Within the PDP framework, the Government will continue efforts to resolve conflicts in parts of Mindanao and other regions.

THE UNITED NATIONS PRESENCE IN THE PHILIPPINES

26. The new United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for 2012–2018 is being developed under the leadership of the Government and in close consultation with civil society and development partners. A synthesis paper (in place of a common country assessment) provided the basis for discussions with the United Nations and other stakeholders on the status of the Millennium Development Goals, national priorities and key challenges to be addressed. Instead of a formal UNDAF evaluation, the UNCT decided to undertake a lessons-learned exercise. The UNCT, including national regulatory authorities, supported the UNDAF roll-out process through a cost-sharing arrangement.
27. The “Delivering as One” approach of the United Nations is well received by the new Government, reflecting its own desire for cross-sectoral convergence. Building on the innovative experiences of the “Delivering as One” pilots, the UNCT complemented its UNDAF roll-out process with discussions on how United Nations organizations could coordinate their assistance more effectively in line with national priorities. A consultation with the Cabinet of the newly elected Administration highlighted the compatibility of United Nations efforts with the ongoing convergence initiative of the Government. Cognizant of the benefits of coordination among United Nations agencies, the Government recommended the development of a common action plan to replace the country programme action plans or equivalent documents.³ Discussions are ongoing with the National Economic and Development Authority and the Department of Foreign Affairs on how this action plan or its equivalent should unfold in the country context and how to involve all relevant partners. The Government recommended a seven-year cycle, from 2012 to 2018, to bring the UNDAF into alignment with the government planning cycle, with the understanding that a monitoring mechanism would be in place to allow for any necessary adjustments to the UNDAF.

³ National Economic and Development Authority, in a letter dated 18 November 2010.

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK

28. The United Nations system in the Philippines is currently finalizing a new UNDAF for 2012–2018 in close collaboration with the Government. Efforts have been made to align the UNDAF with the PDP under a “Delivering as One” framework.
29. The United Nations intends to contribute to the achievement of national goals by focusing on developing the capacities required by the PDP and its corresponding sectoral, subsectoral, thematic and geographic programmes and strategies. The UNCT will also endeavour to support the Government to fulfil its commitments with respect to the Millennium Development Goals and the Millennium Declaration, as well as key international conventions, human rights instruments and plans of action resulting from international conferences.⁴
30. In supporting national priorities, the United Nations will work in close collaboration with development and donor partners and stakeholders. In particular, the UNCT will leverage its strengths in the following ways: (a) advocate for the poor and vulnerable, working to ensure human rights, achieve the Millennium Development Goals and fulfil global norms and standards; (b) serve as an honest broker supporting intersectoral consensus and partnerships on sensitive issues and for humanitarian responses; (c) be an innovator and repository of global best practices and technical knowledge on complex development issues; and (d) support duty-bearers and claimholders in their capacity-building initiatives, including efforts to strengthen systems and generate data.
31. Learning from previous UNDAF cycles, the United Nations will also promote national ownership of development initiatives by supporting and aligning them with national strategies, programmes and institutions. In particular, mechanisms will be explored to maximize programme coherence and effectiveness and minimize transaction costs. This will include joint determination of geographical areas of convergence and the use of a common results matrix to monitor agency accountabilities.
32. United Nations cooperation embodied in the UNDAF will therefore emphasize equity, institutions, localization and geographic convergence, under the theme: “Supporting inclusive, sustainable and resilient development”.⁵ It seeks to achieve its objectives in three focus areas:
- a) Reducing inequity in access to quality benefits, social services and economic opportunities for improved sustainable, productive and decent livelihoods;⁶

⁴ Key conventions, human rights instruments and plans of action include the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment; Convention on the Rights of the Child; International Convention on the Protection of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families; International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the Declaration of the High-Level Conference on World Food Security; International Conference on Population and Development; Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; International Labour Organization conventions (on child labour, migration and indigenous peoples); and the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS.

⁵ Cross-cutting principles underlying the UNDAF include human rights, gender equality, culture and development, environmental sustainability, and capacity development. Cross-cutting strategies use science and technology, communication for development, and voluntary participation in development.

⁶ Focus area one has two outcome areas: (1) universal access to quality social services, with focus on the Millennium Development Goals; and (2) decent and productive employment for sustained, inclusive greener growth.

- b) Protecting rights and promoting participation and empowerment of the poor and vulnerable;⁷
 - c) Strengthening national and local resilience to climate change, threats, shocks and disasters.⁸
33. In line with the UNDAF, it is expected that UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF will submit their new country programme documents to their respective June 2011 Executive Boards; WFP plans to submit the programme document for approval by its Executive Board in February 2012.

KEY FINDINGS

Continued need for United Nations Support of the Country's Development Efforts

34. On several occasions during the field visit, the Government and other development partners highlighted the fact that national averages on development indicators, particularly the GDP, mask large disparities within the country and do not reflect the country's complex development situation. Government officials met by the delegation indicated that development efforts require sustained support from the international community, and particularly from the United Nations system. It is concerning that more people live under the poverty line now than when the Philippines was classified as a low-income-status country. Inequality was consistently mentioned as a very serious structural problem.

United Nations Collaboration, Coordination and Coherence

35. Good cooperation and convergence was noted among United Nations agencies.⁹ There is a strong sense of the "United Nations family" in the country, which sets a good precedent and needs to be further strengthened. The "Sofitel Covenant", which contains a vision and code of conduct for the UNCT, constitutes an important step in promoting coherence. It might be interesting to explore how to replicate this good practice in other programme countries. Nevertheless, the delegation discerned areas where the UNCT can further enhance and improve coordination.

Ownership

36. All local actors (government officials, beneficiary communities, non-governmental organizations) that the team met expressed satisfaction with and supported the work of the United Nations agencies. Ownership of the programmes implemented and supported by the United Nations seems to be strong among the population. The work of the United Nations agencies, more concentrated among especially vulnerable populations, appears to complement that of national and local authorities.

⁷ Linked to focus area two is outcome area 3: democratic governance.

⁸ Linked to focus area three is outcome area 4: resilience to natural and man-made disasters.

⁹ The following agencies are present in the Philippines: UNDP; UNFPA; UNICEF; WFP; the World Health Organization; International Labour Organization; Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; International Organization for Migration; Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; International Maritime Organization; United Nations Industrial Development Organization; International Fund for Agricultural Development; International Civil Aviation Organization; UN-Habitat; and UN-Women.

37. The UNCT has also been active in promoting participation by civil society in its processes and development agenda. The mechanisms include institutionalization of the United Nations Civil Society Advisory Committee and the United Nations Civil Society Assembly, representing different sectors across the country. UNCT efforts in this regard were also recognized by civil society representatives.
38. During the field visits, the delegation observed the commitment of communities to collaboration and partnerships established with United Nations agencies. The representatives of national and local governments and communities consistently expressed gratitude for the assistance provided by the United Nations and suggested further areas of collaboration.

Maternal and Child Health

39. The maternal mortality ratio remains high, at 162 deaths per 100,000 live births, and has remained unchanged for the last five years. However, national leadership is strongly supportive of responsible parenthood based on informed choice, providing encouragement to civil society and development partners. Malnutrition is still a serious problem, especially in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao, where rates of severe to acute malnutrition can be as high as 10 percent.
40. The communities visited expressed appreciation for the United Nations system's approach to its work with children, especially in immunization, nutrition and education. The UNCT's work in support of maternal and neonatal health was found to be quite extensive. In addition to equipping facilities to meet national accreditation standards, the United Nations is working to increase skilled attendance at birth, enrolment in health insurance, midwife training and counselling and provision of commodities for reproductive health and prenatal and antenatal care for mothers.

Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

41. Overall, the country has a good record concerning gender equality and empowerment of women based on international measures and indices. The Philippines is ranked 59th out of 108 countries on the Gender Equality Measures and 9th out of 134 countries on the Global Gender Gap Index. Nevertheless, further efforts are urgently needed to end gender-based discrimination at work and in ensuring women's meaningful participation in political processes.
42. Despite progressive legislation and active women's agency, gaps remain in implementation of laws against domestic violence and rape.¹⁰
43. The Government signed into law the Philippines Magna Carta of Women in 2009 to promote the rights of the country's women, especially the poor. A proposed national policy, currently being intensely debated, is the Responsible Parenthood, Reproductive Health and Population Development Act of 2011, which seeks to provide access to reproductive health, including family planning services, to all Filipinos. It is strongly opposed by Catholic Church leaders.
44. The UNCT has worked with local religious authorities to open dialogue and promote awareness of gender issues. These efforts should be further pursued, supported and replicated.

¹⁰ Republic Act 9262; Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004 and Republic Act 8353, Anti-Rape Law of 1997.

Food Security and Livelihood Enhancement

45. The United Nations agencies are successfully applying a range of innovative approaches to enhance food security and support the livelihoods of previously internally displaced communities. Activities include food for work (or training) and emergency school feeding in areas where internally displaced persons have returned. Expansion of these programmes should include the promotion of local-purchase initiatives at community level with support from the local private sector, as these initiatives could help to strengthen local economies.

Humanitarian Work in Areas of Conflict

46. After extensive consultations, the United Nations has developed and launched a Humanitarian Action Plan (HAP) for 2011, focusing on early recovery needs in conflict-affected areas of Mindanao. Combined with natural disasters, the conflict has resulted in cycles of displacement with severe humanitarian consequences – most recently in August 2008, when approximately 700,000 people were displaced due to armed conflict. The remaining people internally displaced by this conflict and those who have returned recently to their places of origin or resettled elsewhere form the majority of the humanitarian caseload being addressed by the current HAP. Chronic poverty in remote communities in the provinces targeted by the HAP exacerbates the effects of conflict
47. The United Nations is perceived by the different political actors as having a positive role; it is considered fully neutral, and thus its efforts are supported.
48. The Mindanao region presents a particular set of challenges, mainly deriving from the political conflict and due to cultural sensitivities. The work of the United Nations agencies should continue to fully address the country's vulnerabilities.
49. The resurgence of conflict potentially threatens consolidation and broadening of development advances, and it could lead to reversals in human development indicators. Women and children in conflict and humanitarian situations face growing vulnerability. The security risk in conflict zones also poses risks to United Nations staff.

South-South Cooperation

50. The Philippines has made important contributions to South-South cooperation over the years. Such partnerships have involved countries from the ASEAN region and across South Asia and East Asia.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

51. The delegation identified a high level of development capacity in the Government of the Philippines. Its objectives seem clear; particularly the preparation of the PDP has led to a new impetus for action.
52. Despite its recent attainment of lower-middle-income country status, the Philippines continues to face important challenges, particularly in fostering equitable, inclusive and sustained economic growth. The support of the United Nations system remains central in advancing the country's development agenda.
53. The delegation has been made aware of specific challenges and vulnerabilities, such as the possibility of a resurgence of conflict, natural disasters, climate change, high levels of malnutrition, high child and maternal mortality rates, sustained population growth and the potential return of massive numbers of overseas workers due to economic instability in destination countries.

54. The United Nations system should continue making all efforts to support the country's development objectives, as contained in the Philippines Development Plan. The United Nations appears to have a particular advantage in supporting the delivery of services in challenging areas, including in communities of indigenous people, and in capacity-building among provincial and local authorities in areas where conditions have improved.
55. Taking those elements into consideration, it appears that the United Nations system plays an essential role in the country, and promoting coordination among agencies under the resident coordinator system should continue to be a priority. Coordination among agencies seems good at both national and field levels. However, there remains a strong sense of identity with individual agencies, particularly in the field. Further efforts are encouraged to establish a "Delivering as One" framework, as requested by the Government. It would be useful to explore mirroring the new convergence approach of the Cabinet ministries.
56. It is important to avoid making coordination an overly cumbersome process that would distract staff from delivering support on the ground. Coordination should maximize the efficient use of resources, particularly at the local level, avoiding competition among agencies.
57. Mechanisms are needed to ensure continuing collaboration within the United Nations system and among other development partners. The Philippines Development Forum represents a potential mechanism, though further collaboration and exchange would be welcome.
58. There are noticeably competing efforts between immediate emergency/humanitarian interventions and the promotion of development with a medium-to-long-term vision. The most vulnerable populations continue to need swift support. At the same time, communities need to acquire the capacity to sustain themselves by increasing their productive capacities. Partnerships with relevant local actors – government agencies, the private sector and civil society organizations – would be helpful. Enhancing the capacities of relevant United Nations agencies to support flexible and appropriate disaster preparedness and risk reduction efforts is also needed.
59. Regarding environmental sustainability, the United Nations could assist with revisiting the enforcement and implementation of environmental laws and a multi-party audit on environmental statistics.
60. The team has taken note of the important efforts in policymaking, focused on promotion of reproductive health rights, empowerment of women and gender equality. It also took note of important challenges remaining in that regard, which provide opportunities for United Nations agencies to offer further support. UN-Women, given its new mandate, might be able to complement existing initiatives.
61. In view of the country's vibrant private sector and in consultation with the Government, the UNCT may consider opportunities for public-private partnerships to involve the private sector in addressing issues, particularly those related to rehabilitation and employment of expatriate workers returning from countries affected by conflict. The United Nations Global Compact with the private sector could be of use.
62. In view of the country's strong commitment, the UNCT could also support South-South cooperation frameworks with other Asian countries and further share the experiences of the Philippines beyond Asia. One issue needing further attention is how to direct the flows of remittances towards investment for development.

63. The Resident Coordinator and the UNCT should work with the Government and other development partners to establish and promote modalities for capacity-building and medium-term and long-term strategies for the United Nations' work to support development efforts in the Philippines.

ANNEX I**Summary of the Work Programme****Sunday, 27 March – Manila**

- Meeting with the United Nations Country Team
- Meeting with Humanitarian Country Team and partners

Monday, 28 March – Manila

- Meetings with various Government agencies
- Meeting with the United Nations-Civil Society Advisory Committee

Tuesday, 29 March – Thursday, 31 March

- Field visit to Bicol (Group 1)
- Field visit to Sarangani (Group 2)
- Field visit to Cotabato (Group 3)

Friday, 1 April – Manila

- Debriefing with the United Nations country team, development partners, the Government and the media



LIST OF PARTICIPANTS				
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ACRONYMS USED IN THE DOCUMENT

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
GDP	gross domestic product
HAP	Humanitarian Action Plan
HDI	human development index
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
PDP	Philippines Development Plan
UNCT	United Nations country team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services