

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
BRATISLAVA REGIONAL CENTRE
Regional Centre for Public Administration Reform (RCPAR)

TERMS OF REFERENCE: ADVISORY BOARD

Background and justification:

In 2006, the Hellenic Government and UNDP Bratislava Regional Centre (BRC) entered into a partnership to advance public sector reform in the region of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). This joint venture is based on substantive convergence in terms of programmatic objectives and obvious complementarities in terms of operational infrastructure and capacities, i.e., BRC's project development and implementation capacity, as well as UNDP's infrastructure of Country Offices (COs) throughout the region and outreach to local partners. From the UNDP perspective, this partnership has been an attractive and timely opportunity, as it has allowed it to build a more coherent and unified framework for regional programming on Public Administration Reform (PAR), reduce duplication in donor-funded activities, consolidate resources, and bring together regional networks, experts databases and knowledge repositories.

The Project has adopted a phased approach. The first phase was inaugurated in July 2006, and subsequently extended to the end of December 2007. It concentrated on strengthening regional cooperation and information sharing on PAR, and it administered a regional PAR Survey in order to lay the foundations for the second phase, to start in 2008. The second phase focuses on the implementation of a demand-driven five-year programme on PAR, based on the findings of the Survey and other inputs from the Focal Points and the UNDP Community of Practice. In June 2007, it received a pledge for financial support from the Hellenic Government, which following the necessary Parliamentary ratification on 27 February 2008, it has become operational covering the period 2008 to 2013¹.

In late 2006, the Project convened the Inaugural Meeting of Regional Networks of Public Administration Reform Practitioners and Experts, where the new Partnership was officially introduced to relevant stakeholders. This included the existing networks of Focal Points and UNDP's regional Community of Practice on PAR, which were brought together for the first time and invited to engage in joint co-operation in the framework of the new Project. Specifically, the

¹ For a full copy of the Project Document please visit:

http://www.rcpar.org/public/rw/resource/RCPARdocuments/1_20080111_rcpar_prodoc_5-year_final.pdf

Meeting had the following objectives: [a] Introduce the new initiative; [b] Engage in dialogue on recent PAR developments and identify common challenges and concerns; [c] Initiate the process of joining the two regional PAR networks; [d] Prepare the ground for a regional PAR survey (discuss outline, methodology, roles); and [e] Agree on a roadmap for consultations to develop a demand-driven regional five-year PAR programme.

The Meeting succeeded in initiating a dialogue on issues, which were subsequently addressed in the “First Survey of Potential Assistance Needs in the Participating Countries” that was administered in early 2007. Initial proposals for activities of the network were also discussed and the network members made some progress in identifying shared challenges / areas of intervention and proposing co-operative initiatives.

The regional PAR survey was completed at the end of March 2007. The analysis of its findings and the Survey Report², presenting recommendations for the multi-year demand-driven programme on four thematic clusters, were completed in June 2007, and circulated to the networks as a basis for discussion in developing the five-year project.

The joint networks of Focal Points and Communities of Practice have been reinforced through the establishment of an online regional resource centre on PAR and a regional PAR expert roster. The online resource centre will enable the networks to share information and knowledge, generate multi-country PAR initiatives in an interactive way, and solicit the Project's support for their implementation.

Intended project beneficiaries

The primary beneficiaries of the present Project are governments in Eastern Europe and the CIS, who will gain from enhanced regional cooperation, professional networking, mutual learning and information sharing on PAR, as well as from a consolidated regional programming framework to meet their demands for PAR support in the medium term.

Also benefiting from this project will be UNDP's regional Community of Practice (CoP) on PAR and RCPAR's network of Focal Points, as the joining of the two networks is progressing. Their knowledge resources are being consolidated, thus enhancing their capacity to support PAR efforts in countries of Eastern Europe and CIS.

Participatory needs assessments and consultations in developing programmatic initiatives will ensure relevance and proper targeting of activities under this project, and help assess results and impact with the participation of beneficiaries and relevant stakeholders. Wider public

² The Report of the regional PAR Survey, which represents a key input in developing the present project, is available at http://www.rcpar.org/public/rw/resource/RCPARdocuments/3_20070730_cpar_survey_report.pdf

participation in individual activities will be ensured through adequate arrangements, as appropriate.

Partnerships

This project is a partnership between UNDP and the Hellenic Government, based on their joint commitment to advancing public sector reforms in Eastern Europe and the CIS. The Hellenic Government - through the Ministry of Interior, Public Administration and Decentralization - is the primary financier of the Project and it will use its best endeavors to facilitate access to experiences in modernizing the public sector in Greece, which may be relevant for other countries in the region. UNDP/BRC will use its operational capacities, outreach, networks and knowledge to ensure a coherent programming approach and effective implementation at the regional level. For specific activities, implementation will also rely on close partnership with UNDP Country Offices in the region. Substantive consultation and information sharing, in particular regarding the consolidation of regional PAR networks and knowledge resources is also being sought with other international organisations, networks and initiatives operating in the same field³.

Development objectives and approach:

The progress made in establishing functioning public institutions is uneven across Eastern Europe and the CIS. EU accession has been a powerful anchor for comprehensive state reforms in Central Europe, which have resulted in better public services delivered by a more responsive, accountable and transparent public administration. While the prospects for EU membership offered to Western Balkan countries are a strong incentive for upgrading their public sector, these countries still face significant challenges due to weak state structures and systems of public administration. The European Neighbourhood Policy targeted at Western CIS and the Caucasus has so far fallen short of offering a realistic prospect for membership and, partly because of this, has had less of a pull effect for PAR. In Central Asian countries there appears to be limited political momentum for broad-based democratic and state reforms at present, however punctual administrative modernization efforts are pursued with a view to achieving improvements in specific policy areas.

The RCPAR initiative aims at catalyzing citizen-centred public sector modernization in Eastern Europe and the CIS through identifying and supporting the replication of best practices,

³ Consultations have been held with regard to this Project, and information exchanged with a number of relevant regional actors, such as OECD/Sigma and NISPACEe, with a view to sharing insights about the PAR challenges in the region, coordinating activities, identifying potential synergies and avoiding overlaps. Furthermore, the UNDP/RCPAR Project has initiated the implementation of a joint activity with the BSEC Group of Institutional Renewal and Good Governance on administrative simplification for the creation of SMEs.

facilitating regional dialogue and experience sharing, knowledge production and dissemination on PAR.

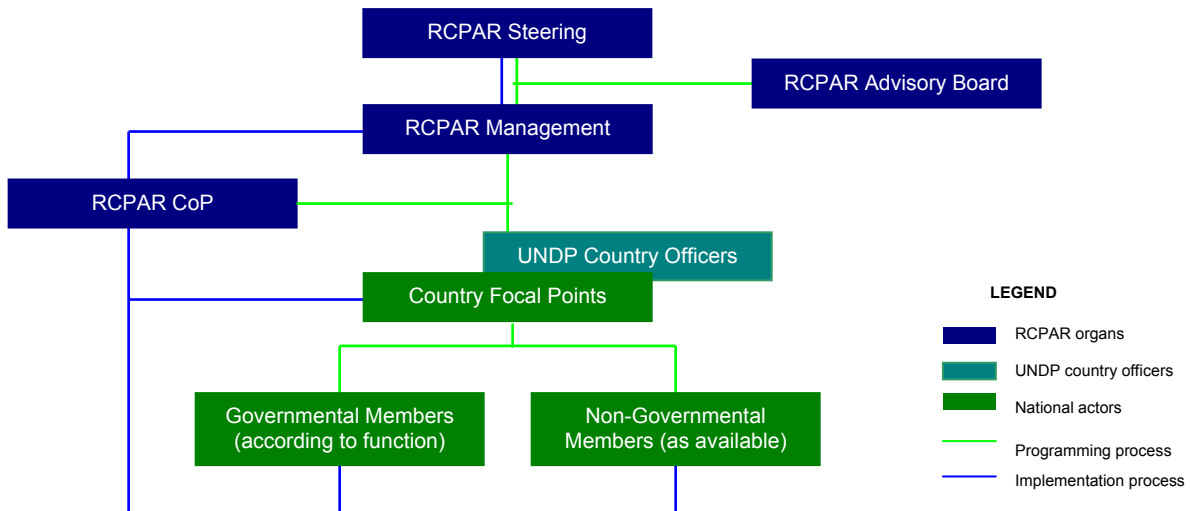
In programmatic terms, the development objectives will be pursued through activities in the following broad areas: policy-making and coordination; financial management; organisation and staffing; and service delivery.

The Advisory Board

1. Terms of Reference

The Advisory Board shall provide strategic recommendations and substantive support and guidance on the programmatic framework, general direction and programme impact, in order to enhance the RCPAR's effectiveness.

The position of the Advisory Board, vis-à-vis the management structure of the Project is outlined in the following diagram:



Specifically, the Advisory Board shall:

- 1.1 Provide advice, guidance and expert opinion on the framework, impact and general direction of the Project;
- 1.2 Review strategy papers for the four thematic areas (and other, related areas/sub-areas of relevance to the Project) so as to be in a position to provide regular input and advice;

- 1.3 Assist in the review and selection of multi-country project proposals for funding; suggest improvements to proposals where appropriate;
- 1.4 Contribute to the planned annual survey of PAR as appropriate and otherwise advice on PAR priorities in the region;
- 1.5 Promote and encourage the development of new partnerships and/or new partnership strategies vis-à-vis relevant organizations, on local, regional and international level;
- 1.6 Offer feedback and support to the RCPAR's fundraising and resource mobilization strategies, policies and programmes;
- 1.7 Review and provide input to RCPAR publications as per request by the RCPAR management;
- 1.8 Perform any other functions as may be considered necessary or proper for the attainment of the aims of the Centre as set out in the Project Document and programme strategies.

2. Rules of Procedure

- 2.1 The Board shall be composed of up to fifteen members, preferably chosen with wide thematic and geographic representation. The members of the Board will be selected by the UNDP RCPAR Steering Committee. The RCPAR Management shall have one representative in an ex-officio capacity without voting rights.
- 2.2 The Board will meet at least once annually, normally twice per year, at a convenient venue and time, decided at least three months in advance of a meeting. Business will be conducted by correspondence between meetings.
- 2.3 The Board shall elect one of its members to act as its Chairperson. The normal term of the Chairperson shall be one year.
- 2.4 The Board should normally take decisions by consensus. Should a vote be necessary then a simple majority of those present and voting is required. In the case of a tied vote the Chairman shall have a casting vote.
- 2.5 The Board shall designate three to five of its members to form the Executive Committee, which shall have the power to act on behalf of the Board between Board meetings on matters delegated to it by the Board. All actions of the Executive Committee shall be reported to the full Board. The Executive Committee shall be convened by its Chairperson according to need. The Executive Committee can convene through means of teleconferencing, conference calls or other ways deemed practical by the Chairman and the members⁴.
- 2.6 The Steering Committee and the RCPAR Management may nominate additional observers to the Board. Observers may participate in correspondence and attend meetings but may not vote.

⁴ It is estimated that the Executive Committee may need to meet as often as bi-monthly, in particular during periods of high level of activity in the Centre.

- 2.7 The term of office of a full member is five years, after which he/she may be re-appointed or replaced by the Steering Committee. Members are expected to attend every meeting of the Board. Where a member fails to attend two consecutive meetings, the Chairman should raise the matter with the member with a view to rectifying the situation.
- 2.8 The Board may establish Working Groups to carry out specific tasks, such as reviews of specific thematic strategy papers etc.
- 2.9 The Chairman shall provide an annual report on the Board's activities to the Steering Committee.
- 2.10 The Board may adopt additional rules of procedure as deemed necessary.
- 2.11 These TOR should be reviewed by the Board as required. Amendments recommended by Board are to be submitted to the Steering Committee for approval.