



Annual Report 2008



UN Procurement Capacity Development Centre

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UN PCDC Key Objectives for 2008:

- Provide advisory & programme support services
- Capture, develop & disseminate knowledge
- Support the OECD DAC Joint Venture for Procurement

Introduction

We are proud to share with you this, our first Annual Report, which highlights activities from our first year in operation.

The UN Procurement Capacity Development Centre (UN PCDC) was launched in January 2008 in partnership with Danida and with further support from DFID. Our first year in operation has indeed been both a busy and an exciting one. Working to fulfil our key objectives - highlighted to the left here - we have:

- carried out advisory support and missions to 13 countries, primarily in Africa and Asia.
- held Regional Procurement Capacity Development Workshops for Government representatives from 20 East African and Asian countries.
- launched our website www.unpcdc.org.
- provided support to OECD/DAC Joint Venture for Procurement in meeting its mandate to fulfil the Paris Declaration commitments.

We have many equally interesting and exciting plans for 2009. These plans include in particular developing long-term, 'deep diving' advisory relationships with a few select target countries; developing case stories & enhancing our communications resources to strengthen the visibility of the UN PCDC approach to procurement capacity development; and increasing delivery capacity through partnerships, tools and support packages.

This annual report aims to provide you with a taste of some of the work that we have carried out in 2008. We hope that you find it an interesting read and wish you all the best for 2009!

Warm regards

The UN PCDC Team



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Advisory Support Services

During 2008 we provided advisory support and missions to 13 countries mainly in Africa and Asia and ranging from so-called fragile states to middle income countries.

The scope of advisory support covered:

- stakeholder engagement;
- scoping and designing procurement capacity assessments;
- conducting procurement capacity assessments;
- formulating procurement capacity development responses;
- implementing capacity development responses.

In some cases the point of entry was the national public procurement system, in others it was related to a single procuring entity (e.g. ministry), and yet others it was sector related.

Some of the key lessons we have learned as a result of our advisory work in 2008 are:

- the importance of investing

time up-front in engaging stakeholders;

- that the UNDP procurement capacity development framework is flexible and easily adaptable to different situations and entry points;
- that it is critical to find the appropriate balance between “quick wins” and long-term capacity development initiatives. Normally there is an urgent need to improve procurement outcomes here and now. The challenge is to do that without undermining existing capacity or thwarting sustainable capacity development.

Moving into 2009 the focus of our advisory work will increasingly be on developing long-term, deep engagement advisory relationships with selected target countries, allowing us to gather lessons and evidence of what works. At the same time we will increase our advisory capacity through partnerships, tools and support packages.



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At the invitation of the Minister of Public Works in Liberia, a UN PCDC mission provided support in scoping/designing a procurement capacity assessment of the Ministry, while at the same time identifying potential opportunities for quick wins that could be implemented immediately without waiting for a full capacity assessment. Working with the Ministry staff, the team was able to develop an adaptation of the UNDP procurement capacity assessment framework that specifically addressed the Ministry's needs.



At the same time, the team conducted a “mini-assessment” resulting in a number of recommendations for initiatives with potential high impact that could be implemented quickly and easily without waiting for the complete assessment, which it is hoped will be conducted in 2009.



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Knowledge Dissemination

The UN PCDC website



In September 2009 the [UN PCDC website](http://www.unpcdc.org) was launched – the first of its kind, dedicated to sharing knowledge on improving public procurement in the developing world. The site offers methodologies, toolkits, documents, publications and links within a number of key focus areas, such as, capacity assessments, anti-corruption and procurement practices.

To date we have had 3758 visitors from 159 countries to the website. Furthermore, we are pleased to observe that usage of the website has been growing steadily.

We see the website as still being in its infancy and have many exciting plans to further develop it and make it the kind of site users will continue to return to.

The UN PCDC is much more than a website

In 2009 we plan to make the activities of the UN PCDC more visible to our target audience – increasing awareness of who we are, what we are doing and how our work could be relevant for our partners in the procurement arena.

We also plan to further structure the vast content (over 650 items to date) that is available on the website so that everyone is fully aware of the kind of information and resources that are available to them. This is becoming more and more a necessity as we continue to upload new content to the site.

This further development will be a step-by-step process and our intention is to keep our users informed of developments via the website itself and our regular newsletters.

Workshops

Another of the key objectives for UN PCDC in this the first year of operation has been to promote procurement capacity development and to engage national public procurement authorities in further developing procurement capacity development approaches. To this end UN PCDC has organised workshops in Copenhagen and Manila during 2008.



Participants from Manila Workshop

The workshops brought together high-level public procurement officials from more than 20 countries from East-Africa [Copenhagen] and the Asia-Pacific region [Manila] to discuss procurement capacity development both at a theoretical/methodological level as well as at a practical level with participants sharing their experiences in improving their own public procurement systems.

In February 2009, UN PCDC is organising a workshop in Johannesburg for Anglophone Africa and will continue to facilitate networking, south-south collaboration and sharing procurement capacity development experiences.



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Below is some of the feedback received from UN PCDC workshop participants:

"It is always an honor (and a pleasure) to be given the opportunity to participate and learn from our colleagues from other countries."

"Over the three day discussion, I have learned so much from the resource persons as well as from the experience of other countries; their challenges, strengths and weakness in developing human capacity in procurement profession."

Other highlights

An important part of capturing, developing and disseminating knowledge is networking and sharing with others. As a part of UNDP's [Capacity Development Group](#) (CDG), UN PCDC applies the capacity development approaches, tools and values of UNDP to the public procurement environment. To this end we regularly interact with colleagues and teams working in other related areas. For example, we participated in UNDP Community of Practice meetings on Public-Private Partnerships for Service Delivery (PPP-SD) and Aid Effectiveness (AE).

In June, the entire team participated in the Capacity Development Group's Global Retreat, which included a two-day seminar for UNDP colleagues from the global, regional and country levels to discuss what it takes for UNDP to deliver on the shared capacity development agenda. The meeting helped to further shape and deepen the UNDP approach to supporting capacity development and reaffirmed UNDP's commitment to taking this approach forward.



Capacity Development Group

In December we participated in CDG's Global Capacity Assessment Meeting where we had the opportunity to interact with other colleagues working with Capacity Assessment for other application areas.



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The biannual International Public Procurement Conference (IPPC) provides an excellent opportunity to network and learn from the experience of other practitioners and also academics working in public procurement. UN PCDC participated in the 2008 conference, which was held in Amsterdam in August. At the conference Kirsten Ejlskov Jensen presented the paper "[Procurement Capacity Assessment: from theory to practice](#)", co-authored with Marie Louise Refsgaard. The paper describes experiences of adapting the UNDP Capacity Assessment Methodology for public procurement in a specific case and analyses lessons learned. The next IPPC will take place in 2010 in South Korea.



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Support to OECD-DAC Joint Venture for Procurement

UN PCDC is the focal point for the UN system in OECD-DAC Joint Venture (JV) for Procurement, which is responsible for following up on the procurement commitments of the Paris Declaration, related which includes support to National Procurement Capacity Development.



UN PCDC is a member of the JV's Working Group which develops and oversees the implementation of the JV's work program, prepares for JV meetings and provides ongoing advice to the Co-Chairs.

One key activity for the JV in 2008 was coordinating the collection of data relating to Paris Declaration Indicator 2b for the 2008 Monitoring Survey which is based on the JV Procurement Assessment Methodology. UNPCDC provided support by disseminating information and guidance to in-country donor focal points about this exercise.

In May 2008, the JV held a meeting in Arusha Tanzania which was attended by more than 170 representatives of partner countries as well as bilateral and multilateral development partners. During the meeting UN PCDC lead a session on "Recent experiences in Procurement Capacity Development". Moreover, UNPCDC provided support to the JV by administering funds to support the participation of partner country representatives, including coordination of their travel and per diems.

Early in 2008 the JV for Procurement published a case study describing the experiences of the Government of Malawi in undertaking a capacity assessment of the national public procurement system using the UNDP approach combined with the JV Assessment Methodology. This process supported to a smooth transition from capacity assessment findings to capacity development responses. The case study describes the process undertaken by the Office of Public Procurement in Malawi as well as some of the challenges and lessons learned. To read the case study click [here](#).



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