



Operational Strategy for RECPnet 2015-2020

Approved 16th October 2015 by Members' Assembly in Davos

CONTENTS

1.	Background to the operational strategy	2
1.1	Context.....	2
1.2	RECPnet structure, management and stakeholders	2
1.3	Operational planning requirements	5
1.4	Operational strategy process and roles	5
1.5	Funding of the network	6
2.	The operational strategy	6
2.1	Vision, mission and objectives	6
2.2	The value proposition for RECPnet members.....	6
	Annex 1 Identified actions for achieving objectives and benefits	8
	Annex 2 Preliminary Identified KPI's for further development	14
	Annex 3 Preliminary identified funding needs and mechanisms.....	15

1. Background to the operational strategy

1.1 Context

The joint UNIDO and UNEP **Resource Efficient and Cleaner Production (RECP) Programme** aims to foster a broader up-take of RECP at the global level. RECPnet is as an important channel for efficient information dissemination and up-scaling of the RECP Programme as well as other UNEP/UNIDO services.

The decision to create RECPnet was taken in 2009 and the network was officially established through the RECP Programme in 2010. The first Members' Assembly took place in 2011. Since then, the network has grown to include 71 members across the globe. RECPnet is a voluntary network. Today, RECPnet is growing as a network, connecting members and offering means for creating common tools and sharing knowledge and expertise. RECPnet also engages in advocacy and acts as a platform for collecting and disseminating information to a wider set of stakeholders. The members, the secretariat and the Executive Committee can look back at six busy years, with many achievements and development of new capacities and knowledge.

The global context in which RECPnet and its members operate is continuously changing. Emerging economies strengthen their positions as global manufacturing hubs. Climate change and the increasing scarcity of resources are immediate concerns¹. Recognised drivers for RECP include globalisation, digital connectivity, accelerated consumption, disparate prosperity, ecological decline, resource scarcity and lack of global governance². Within this context, widespread access to appropriate, effective and quality-assured RECP tools and services is required in order to achieve sustainable growth and decouple economic growth and wellbeing from resource consumption and environmental degradation. There is continuous and urgent need to apply existing, and develop new, RECP methods, tools and services for industries and other organisations. Through their work in this field, RECPnet and its members can effectively contribute to the achievement of United Nations' 17 sustainable development goals³

The global context contributes to changes in the local, regional and global need for RECP services. At the same time, members develop and the network grows. This in turn creates changes in members' needs for support and services from the network.

1.2 RECPnet structure, management and stakeholders

RECPnet is a network of organisations professionally involved in, and committed to, the promotion and implementation of RECP. RECPnet has a governance structure consisting of the Members' Assembly, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat. The structure of the RECPnet is shown from a day-to day management point of view (Figure 1) and organisational decision-making point of view (Figure 2). For more details, see the RECPnet Charter⁴.

¹ <https://www.kpmg.com/Global/en/IssuesAndInsights/ArticlesPublications/Documents/building-business-value.pdf>

² <https://www.kpmg.com/Global/en/IssuesAndInsights/ArticlesPublications/Documents/building-business-value.pdf>

³ See 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; available at http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/70/L.1&Lang=E

⁴ Available at <http://recpnet.org/uploads/files/Charter%20RECPnet.pdf>

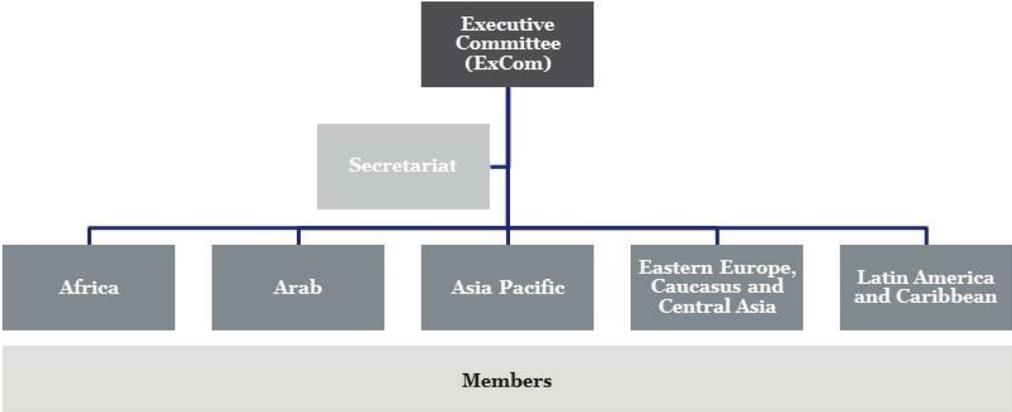


Figure 1: RECPnet from a management point of view

The **Executive Committee (ExCom)** is the *de facto* management team of the RECPnet (see Figure 1). This body guides and administers the RECPnet in practice. The ExCom can constitute technical committees, regional/Sectoral chapters and their functions, and is the body that develops and implements the RECPnet programme, approves memberships and makes decisions on the procedures and policy. The ExCom also elects a Treasurer who oversees the financial management of RECPnet.

The **secretariat** is the administrative supporting organ for RECPnet, which run the day-to-day activities of RECPnet. Currently this function is performed by UNIDO and UNEP.

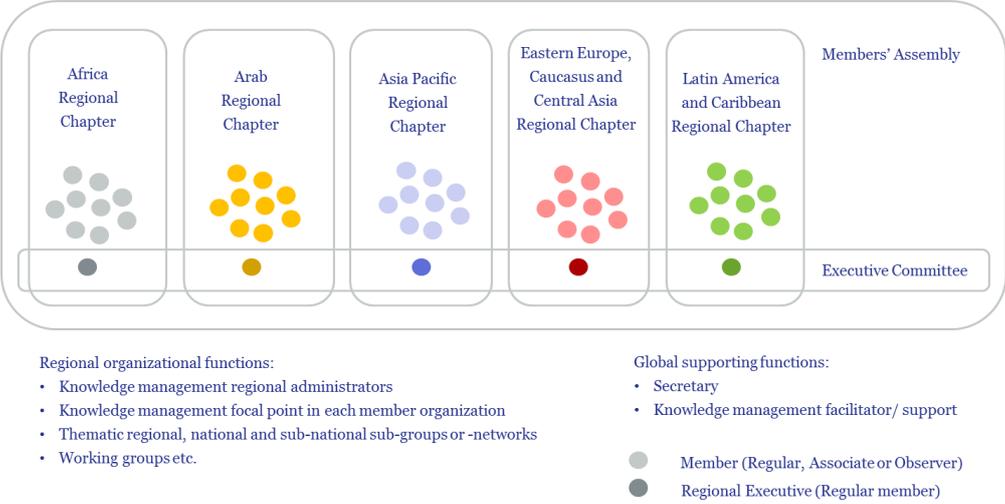


Figure 2: RECPnet from an organisational point of view

The **Regional Chapters** strengthen collaboration and networking in the regions and prepare and implement regional plans.

The **members** of RECPnet are organisations or initiatives that deliver as a core activity RECP services for public good and private interest in developing and/or transition economies and commit to cooperate beyond an exclusive profit motive in the spirit of international collaboration, knowledge management and professional excellence. The Member’s Assembly is the highest authority in RECPnet (see Figure 2).

In addition to these internal stakeholders, The RECPnet has other external stakeholders (e.g. donors, patrons, companies, other organisations) each has different expectations from RECPnet, based on which type of impact and added value they seek (See Figure 3).

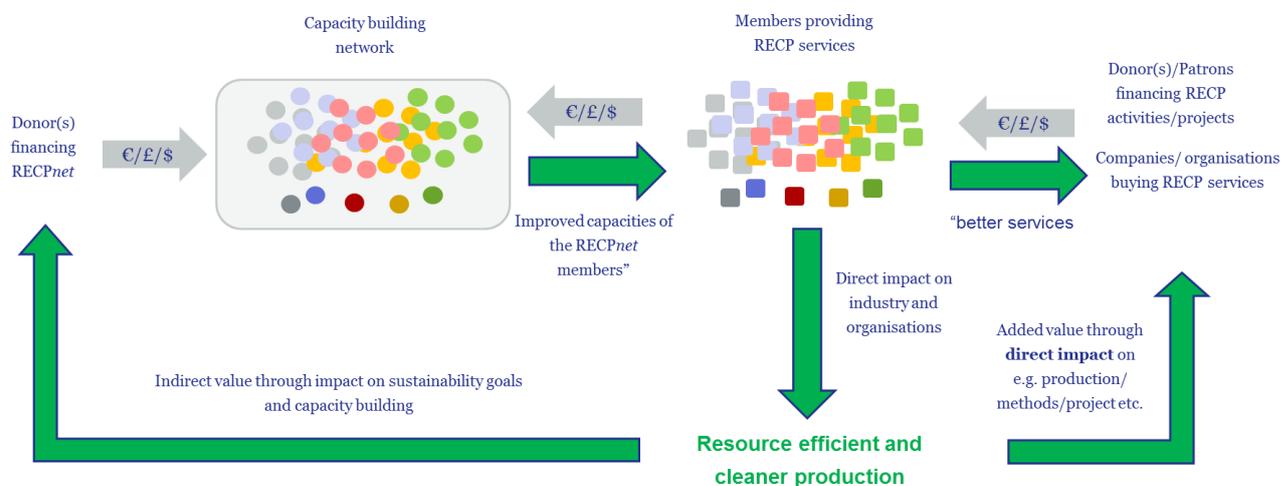


Figure 3: RECPnet creating value and impact for stakeholders

Donors and clients gain added value through enhanced resource efficiency and cleaner production and capacity development for future RECP work. Other stakeholders gain added value through working with [a member of] a trusted, strong and dynamic network to obtain measurable impact and good quality information. The different stakeholders and their interest areas in the network as a source of added value is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Brief summary of RECPnet stakeholders and their expectancies

<i>Stakeholder</i>	<i>Stakeholder expectancy from RECPnet or its members</i>
Members of the network	Increasing their knowledge, capability and access to business opportunities
Patron agencies (UNEP – UNIDO)⁵	RECPnet being an important channel for efficient information dissemination and upscaling of the RECP Programme and other related initiatives of the two organisations.
Donors	Partners for upscaling RECP related initiative and to ensure enhanced efficiency and synergies for RECP work within the donors interest areas
International, national and regional governments/ authorities	Input and expertise into policy and regulations and programmes addressing needs and challenges of industries, particularly SMEs, as well as environmental and resource related issues
Industry	Source of trusted expertise, advice and services
Industrial associations and business councils	Extensive knowledge of and reliable partner to reach out to actors along the entire value chain, including SMEs.
Other networks /international NGOs	Potential synergy and partnerships

⁵ Patron agencies support the secretariat of RECPnet with the resources provided to it through the RECP programme Besides this role, both UNIDO and UNEP support projects and initiatives, where the implementer may be a member of the network. The relationship of the patron agencies with RECPnet is described in more detail in the RECP programme documents. Available at for ex. <http://www.unep.fr/scp/cp/pdf/RECP%20Programme%20Flyer%20April%202010.pdf>

1.3 Operational planning requirements

Although the past six years have been productive, a critical review of achievements⁶ indicates a need for further enhancement and strengthening of the network and the support it provides its members. Whilst UNIDO and UNEP as patron agencies are committed to RECPnet, the need for an operational strategy also stems from the desire to further enable and support RECPnet to grow and prosper sustainably, whilst moving towards lesser dependency on the patron agencies. The RECPnet Charter defines the overall aims, objectives and types of activities that members and the patron agencies have agreed on. Inspired by the Charter, and drawing on the identified need to strengthen the network, a strategic yet concrete, practical operational plan is put forward. The aim is to enable, empower, and support RECPnet, to sustainably, and long term:

- provide practical support to its members
- support, through its members, the implementation of public policies on RECP
- become a stronger network through more engagement by members in the network
- become a trusted partner to outside stakeholders
- provide business opportunities to members

1.4 Operational strategy process and roles

The process adopted for the strategy is based on the well-known PDCA-model⁷ (see Figure 4), which is particularly useful for implementing change in a controlled manner, aiming for continuous improvement.



Figure 4: RECPnet strategy process and roles

The strategy period is five years, and this strategy has been approved in the Members Assembly. Based on the operational strategy process and roles, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat, together with the Regional Chapters, and with input from Members, will furthermore develop and coordinate the global and regional two-year strategic operational work plans on how to achieve the vision and mission. These plans will, based on identified benefits to members, put forward the

⁶ e.g. as undertaken in the RECP Programme midterm evaluation

⁷ Plan-Do-Check-Act model, see for example: <http://asq.org/learn-about-quality/project-planning-tools/overview/pdca-cycle.html> ; <https://balancedscorecard.org/Resources/Articles-White-Papers/The-Deming-Cycle> and many more

activities, actions, KPI's, budgets, responsibilities, roles and timeline in relation to each objective. The basis for the operational work plan 2015-2017 is in Annex 1.

1.5 Funding of the network

The treasurer of the Executive Committee is responsible for the budget and financial matters of the network. The membership fees are a small source of income to RECPnet in comparison with the support received through donors. The contours of a sustainable and ultimately more self-financing model for RECPnet can help to insulate the network from potential donor funding volatilities and empower the network through increasing members' ownership and influence on the budget.

The current funding system that has covered the majority of the networks costs, which has been provided via the RECP Programme, ends in its current format in 2017. If similar funding is not available in the future, a fundamental requirement will be to develop, jointly agree on, and execute viable business plans for financing the network and its activities post 2017. Initial thoughts on funding have been gathered in Annex 3.

2. The operational strategy

2.1 Vision, mission and objectives

The following operational vision is adopted for RECPnet: **"The RECPnet is a globally recognised and valued network of RECP service providers that contributes to sustained, broad and evolving application of RECP in industry and other organisations"**

To achieve the vision, the mission of RECPnet is to: **"Enable members to provide effective and efficient RECP services across the globe; achieve measurable impacts; and advocate RECP benefits to its key stakeholders and society."**

In order to support the practical work towards the vision, the following operational objectives are set and RECPnet shall:

1. Foster professional and institutional excellence of member organisations to provide effective and efficient RECP services with measurable impacts
2. Create business opportunities for the members
3. Strengthen and promote the RECPnet brand and advocate RECP to the wider stakeholder community

2.2 The value proposition for RECPnet members

In order to define, communicate, and ultimately evaluate, the benefit from RECPnet, recognised needs of members and stakeholders groups (see Table 1) were used to identify practical, concrete ways, through which RECPnet can provide added value to its members. By systematically working towards the vision through the mission and meeting the objectives, RECPnet members will gain value (see Table 2).

Table 2: Objectives, actions and relating member benefits

1. Foster professional and institutional excellence of member organisations to provide effective and efficient RECP services with measurable impacts	
Activity	Benefits to members
Sharing knowledge for professional and institutional excellence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to the KMS as a jointly recognised forum for publicising verified results, which provides a reliable source of best RECP concepts, methods, policies, practices and technologies and experts; • Access to a peer forum for discussing and sharing experiences relevant for its members • Building capacities through the ability to exchange knowledge on tools and policies. • Access to targeted regional and global training programs and state of the art tools. • Affordable access to international events for sharing knowledge and lessons learned • Visibility for member having a lead in a particular area of knowledge and providing training to other members.
Working together for more impact, efficiency and effectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to cooperate with peers and thereby gain access to projects and initiatives at a regional and global level, sharing and benefiting from each other's expertise
2. Create business opportunities for the members	
Activity	Benefits to members
Business development (RECPnet organisational development)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to facilitated business opportunities flow that support sustainable growth of members and the network itself • Access to systematic and coordinated practical support (secretariat) • Access to other networks for the development and implementation of joint projects and funding possibilities
3. Strengthen and promote the RECPnet brand and advocate RECP to the wider stakeholder community	
Activity	Benefits to members
Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of member's reputation through joint promotion of the "RECPnet member"- brand • Access to common public relation materials • Access to quality criteria
Lobby and advocate for RECP at the policy level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased demand for RECP and increased funding opportunities at national, regional and international level
General promotion of RECP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collectively the network can achieve more than individual members to increase demand for RECP and increase business and funding opportunities • Access to material and case studies that can be used [within projects and processes] to raise awareness and promote the benefits of RECP to the public and private sectors

ANNEX 1 IDENTIFIED ACTIONS FOR ACHIEVING OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS

Sharing of knowledge, measuring impact and assuring quality have been identified as the key areas that need development during the next global two-year operational strategy work plan. The currently identified actions will be worked up into detailed work plans for the global *RECPnet*, and for the Regional Chapters. As well as containing actions for members, it will also serve as a guideline for developing overall organisational work plans at Member level.

1. Foster professional and institutional excellence of member organisations to provide effective and efficient RECP services with measurable impacts		
Activity	Benefits to members	Identified actions
Sharing knowledge for professional and institutional excellence	Access to the KMS as a jointly recognised forum for publicising verified results, which provides a reliable source of best RECP concepts, methods, policies, practices and technologies and experts	<p>Action 1.1: Continuous development of the KMS with specific focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enabling a culture of communication and information sharing between members • Providing and defining appropriate and flexible channels and media to share success and lessons learned from practical application of RECP concepts within <i>RECPnet</i> and externally • Development towards a structured, operationally relevant platform and channels for publication of relevant data on the performance of the network member, chapters and stakeholders • Developing criteria for the quality of material within the KMS <p>Action 1.2: Training and awareness raising through e.g. webinars for new members and for new technical features to promote access to verified and jointly developed tools, training modules and common material that supports discussions with clients and donors</p>
	Access to a peer forum for discussing and sharing experiences relevant for its members	<p>Action 1.3: Promote the use of KMS as a peer forum.</p> <p>Action 1.4: Identify and promote the use of chosen social media platforms to communicate among chapter members on regional basis. Platform examples include LinkedIn, WhatsApp, Instagram, webinar facilities, Skype groups, Facebook groups etc.</p>

1. Foster professional and institutional excellence of member organisations to provide effective and efficient RECP services with measurable impacts		
Activity	Benefits to members	Identified actions
Sharing knowledge for professional and institutional excellence	Building capacities through the ability to exchange knowledge on tools and policies.	<p>Action 1.5: Improve the current expert database to contain more information on technical profiles, skills, experience and qualifications</p> <p>Action 1.6: Encourage and train people to use the expert database for finding experts from other Members</p> <p>Action 1.7 Support exchange of people and inter-coaching on projects</p>
	Access to targeted regional and global training programs and state of the art tools.	<p>Action 1.8: Map and describe the type of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training that can cost effectively be provided by each member to other members • Training needs members have <p>Action 1.9: Explore how training, offered and needed, can be funded in the future.</p>
	Affordable access to international events for sharing knowledge and lessons learned	<p>Action 1.10: Raise and allocate funding on a transparent basis for participation in high level events and the global dissemination of the gained knowledge</p> <p>Action 1.11: Develop an event log, with possibility to add comments/ slides/ material for members only</p>
	Visibility for member having a lead in a particular area of knowledge and providing training to other members	<p>Action 1.12: Develop mechanism for centres to take lead in particular topics (within regions) and how to communicate this to other members</p>
Working together for more impact, efficiency and effectivity	Potential to cooperate with peers gaining thus access to projects and initiatives at a regional and global level, sharing and benefiting from each other's expertise	<p>Action 1.13: Develop mechanisms for reaching out to each other for specific expert support (market place)</p> <p>Action 1.14: Systematically identify, within each region and each member, the skills that can be complemented through the network, in order to qualify for e.g. bidding on larger, multinational projects etc.</p>

2. Create business opportunities for the members		
Activity type	Benefits to members	Identified actions
Business development (RECPnet organisational development)	Access to facilitated business opportunities flow that support sustainable growth of members and the network itself	<p>Action 2.1: Develop a mechanism for identifying, considering, obtaining and directing funding towards the network in a transparent and inclusive manner.</p> <p>Action 2.2: Map RECP related networks and other networks that RECPnet members are engaged with, aware of, or competing against. Based on the results, the Executive Committee will decide on potential needs for establishing closer ties with other networks in order to avoid overlaps and duplication of effort.</p> <p>Action 2.3: Review the operative management of the RECPnet, and rework activities, responsibilities and decision criteria for budgets, actions and activities to be more transparent and effective.</p>
	Access to systematic and coordinated practical support (Secretariat)	<p>Action 2.4: Strengthen the institutional structure of the RECPnet through defining a clear operational management structure and KPIs</p> <p>Action 2.5: Name the administrative supporter within Secretariat to provide a specific, known contact point, with whom members can communicate directly on e.g. practical matters in a convenient way.</p> <p>Action 2.6: Develop procedures for an effective support from Secretariat regarding business development, including rules for project opportunities allocation, key performance indicators regarding funds execution, quality variables</p> <p>Action 2.7: Investigate the potential for structural change to e.g. legal entity through short desktop research of similar existing registered networks: advantages, drawbacks, procedures for registering, exploring the best form (e.g. association or other).</p>
	Access to other networks for the development and implementation of joint projects and funding possibilities	<p>Action 2.8: Identify potential networks that would add value to RECPnet and negotiate agreements with them</p> <p>Action 2.9: Participation in, and cooperation with, other networks and programmes in order to open opportunities for additional funding sources and a broader donor/funder basis</p> <p>Action 2.10: Enable joint proposals and implementation of large/international projects through supporting establishment of project based consortia of Members</p>

3. Strengthen and promote the RECPnet brand and advocate RECP to the wider stakeholder community		
Activity	Benefits to members	Identified actions
Branding	Strengthening of member’s reputation through joint promotion of the “RECPnet member”- brand	<p>Action 3.1: Describe the practical and concrete added value that the RECPnet provides to its members and other stakeholders in comparison to other existing networks (marketing material)</p> <p>Action 3.2: Develop the RECPnet brand to be more easily communicated to stakeholders, including e.g. customer promises, service guarantees, and include more information on global reach.</p> <p>Action 3.3: Develop common communication material for promotion of the network.</p>
	Access to common public relation materials	<p>Action 3.4: Make an inventory of the existing PR material for members (including members’ material) and review whether additional material is needed.</p> <p>Action 3.5: If necessary, based on the results from the previous action, produce additional PR material.</p> <p>Action 3.6: Promote the use of the standard format for case documentation</p>
	Access to quality criteria	<p>Action 3.7: Create quality criteria and minimum requirements for RECPnet members</p> <p>Action 3.8: Develop clear and transparent procedures for consequences of not complying with the minimum requirements.</p> <p>Action 3.9: Develop means of self- and peer evaluation to ensure compliance with minimum requirements of quality criteria and progress.</p> <p>Action 3.10: Each member shall implement by integrating the criteria in their own systems</p>

3. Strengthen and promote the RECPnet brand and advocate RECP to the wider stakeholder community		
Activity	Benefits to members	Identified actions
Lobby and advocate for RECP at the policy level	Increased demand for RECP and increased funding opportunities at the national, regional and international level	<p>Action 3.11: Decide and systematically prioritise on the participation and involvement in identified relevant groups of decision-making</p> <p>Action 3.12: Members shall undertake stakeholder mapping at the national level (based on a common template, which will be developed by the Secretariat)</p> <p>Action 3.13: Identify opportunities for mainstreaming RECP in policy and legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members shall review existing policy and legislative frameworks, identify the opportunities for mainstreaming RECP, and make policy recommendations at the national level. • The regional/sub-regional Chapters shall similarly, at the regional level, act to catalyse regional policies through working with regional bodies and national governments • The Secretariat shall review existing policy and legislative frameworks, identify the opportunities for mainstreaming RECP, and make policy recommendations at the supra-national level. <p>Action 3.14: Create and participate in RECP lobby groups and partnerships</p> <p>Action 3.15: Exchange information and benchmarking among the members for peer learning regarding advocacy</p> <p>Action 3.16: Members shall utilise and obtain leverage from UNEP-UNIDO connections with regional political networks and organizations</p> <p>Action 3.17: Members shall work to be recognised by national governments as part of the RECPnet (even if not linked to the government agency)</p> <p>Action 3.18: Develop position papers and build business and policy cases for RECP services and involvement of RECPnet</p> <p>Action 3.19: Rotate the RECPnet meeting between different member countries, and invite the governments to the meetings</p>

3. Strengthen and promote the RECPnet brand and advocate RECP to the wider stakeholder community		
Activity	Benefits to members	Identified actions
General Promotion of RECP	Collectively the network can achieve more than individual members to increase demand for RECP and increase business and funding opportunities	<p>Action 3.20: Undertake mapping of existing and potential stakeholders and identify their needs and tailor promotional activities to these</p> <p>Action 3.21 Develop enhanced quality criteria for the network in order to win confidence from government institutions and the business/industrial sector to entrust NCPCs with related assignments and thus, more financial windows.</p> <p>Action 3.22: Develop communication and visibility strategy/plan (including activities for branding)</p> <p>Action 3.23: Develop and document and disseminate general public orientated information/communication material about member success stories</p> <p>Action 3.24: Organise events and conferences for RECP awareness raising at national, regional and international level</p> <p>Action 3.25 Cultivate the media</p> <p>Action 3.26: Maintain and use KMS as a promotional platform</p> <p>Action 3.27: Benchmark against other networks</p> <p>Action 3.28: Learn from other networks experience and network with them</p>
	Access to material and case studies that can be used [within projects and processes] to raise awareness and promote the benefits of RECP to the public and private sectors	Action 3.29: Maintain and use KMS as a promotional platform and actively add awareness raising material to KMS

ANNEX 2 PRELIMINARILY IDENTIFIED KPI'S FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

Suggested areas to include indicators for

1. Membership:
 - Members and types of members
 - Membership retention and recruiting
 - Membership satisfaction
 - Institutional arrangements of members
 - Contribution of members to the RECP*net*
2. RECP excellence:
 - Training and new skills/knowledge obtained
 - Institutional excellence and key success factors
 - Leadership and talent retention
 - New tools and methods developed by members
 - Best practice and lessons learned sharing
 - Projects undertaken, potentials for repeating projects
 - Clients worked with
 - Awards and academic success (papers etc.)
 - Funding channel to members
 - Financial sustainability of members and network
3. Stakeholder awareness:
 - Advocacy activities
 - Impact of these
4. Quality
 - Quality assurance criteria application
 - Quality achievement vs. criteria / improvement in quality
 - Audit results
 - Evaluation results
5. Impact of project work
 - Client satisfaction
 - E.g. reductions achieved by clients in e.g. water, CO2 etc.

ANNEX 3 PRELIMINARILY IDENTIFIED FUNDING NEEDS AND MECHANISMS

When considering funding, include consideration of allocation and sourcing funding for:

1. Funding of the RECPnet as an entity at the global level
2. Funding of running the network in the regional chapters
3. Funding of operational management and KMS carried out by the secretariat
4. Funding of specific events, particularly biennial member assembly and associated global networking conference and regional chapter meetings and activities
5. Funding of tools and other support to members through projects such as development and operation of quality assurance system
6. Funding of peer audits and reviews

The mix of financial channels and means that can be considered include at least the following:

- Arranging of commercially viable events with participation fees and/or sponsorships from donors and clients and the public sector
- Also regional as well as global sources of funding should be considered. Strengthening the use of internal expertise and cross-use of other members' experts may provide added funds to each member.
- Potential gains and savings that associations with other networks/conferences/events/professional associations could bring
- Utilisation of free communication channels over the internet as part of the communication culture fostered by the KMS
- Membership fees and their escalation/decrease according to members turnover
- Preferred supplier status gains with UNIDO/UNEP
- Fund applications and donor ship from private and public sector
- Licences for tools recognised as " RECPnet only"
- Specific fund raising for marketing and lobbying activities to promote RECPnet
- Service fee from common RECP Net projects

The budget should be based on consideration of a mix of financial sources and transparently allocate funds on a priority basis