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ANNUAL REPORT on EVALUATION **2014**

Independent Evaluation Office

United Nations Development Programme



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Acronyms

ADR	Assessment of Development Results	M&E	Monitoring and evaluation	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals	UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization	UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund	UN-REDD	United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries
GEF	Global Environment Facility	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund	UN-SWAP	United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
GOE	General operating expenses	UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework	UNV	United Nations Volunteers
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP	UNDP	United Nations Development Programme	WFP	World Food Programme
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals	UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group		
MDG-F	MDG Achievement Fund				

Photo Captions and Credits

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Women from the village of Mertoutek preparing a traditional slaughter area of the crop wheat in Algeria. (Credit: Salah Amokrane)

Page 6:

UNDP assistance contributes to the formation of a qualitative workforce by equipping VET schools with modern laboratory equipment for practical classes in Armenia. (Credit: UNDP Armenia)

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Beneficiaries of the GEF/UNDP Small Grant Programme in Uruguay. (Credit: UNDP Uruguay)

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Members of the all women's vegetable farmers coop (Shree Jalpa Jagrati) connected to the Micro-Enterprise Development programme in Nepal. (Credit: Alexandra Pittman, team member of IEO's gender evaluation)

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Agriculture starts over in Zubeir, after mine-cleaning. (Credit: UNDP Iraq)

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UNDP Goodwill Ambassador Nicol David visits the Orang Asli community in Malaysia to learn about their needs and solutions. (Credit: UNDP Malaysia)

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UNCDF's Decentralization and Economic Development Programme (PA3D), supported by UNDP, the Belgian Fund for Food Security and the Government of Benin. (Credit: Cossoba Nanako, UNCDF)

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UNV Field Monitor interacts with coconut farmers and workers who work within UNDP's Direct Employment Generation project in the Philippines. (Credit: Red Circle Films)



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I sincerely believe that the IEO of UNDP is a frontrunner in advancing international evaluation practice.



FOREWORD

The report highlights activities from a seminal year, when a new UNDP Strategic Plan commenced along with a major restructuring of the organization. 2014 was a critical year for the IEO, even beyond carrying out independent

evaluations. The report explores key activities, challenges and actions as well as lessons learned. It offers clear assurance of the rigorous scrutiny given to measuring programme results and ensuring all UN values and ideals are met in practice. I am very pleased to note that a management response accompanies this report, indicating UNDP's strong commitment to being a learning organization committed to transparency and ongoing improvement.

Those of us who serve on UNDP's Executive Board greatly appreciate evaluations as providing a well-analysed, evidence-based understanding of what has worked, and what can be improved. Towards ensuring that the highest standards and best practices continually guide the process of producing evaluations, the Board called for reviewing UNDP's evaluation in 2014. This report discusses some of the key findings, which have set in motion a policy revision in 2015 that should improve the decentralized evaluation system, strengthen mechanisms to follow up recommendations, and deepen collaboration among UNDP, the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and UN Volunteers (UNV).

In a move that I know will prove valuable in my country, Guatemala, and others, the report also describes how the IEO has started to promote stronger national ownership in country-level evaluations. Dynamic, interactive workshops now bring all stakeholders together to consider recommendations and management responses, and define how to carry them forward. New guidance tightens the alignment of country-level evaluations to the UNDP Strategic Plan, facilitating corporate reporting, while wider use of data increases rigour, reduces burdens on national staff and partners, and results in more efficient use of IEO resources.

For the first time in 2014, the UN General Assembly passed a standalone UN resolution on evaluation, declaring the UN International Year of Evaluation, as a way to raise awareness of the critical contributions evaluation makes. I sincerely believe that the IEO of UNDP is a frontrunner in advancing international evaluation practice. This Annual Report on Evaluation 2014 showcases its contribution to promoting effectiveness, accountability and public awareness.

It is my hope that this will also inform strategic decision-making and dialogue on how UNDP can continually strengthen its important contributions to sustainable and inclusive development, especially as the world moves towards the ambitious and universal post-2015 agenda.

Fernando Carrera
Permanent Representative
Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations
President of the UNDP Executive Board



2015 will be a catalyst year once a new evaluation policy is adopted.



PREFACE

The Annual Report on Evaluation 2014 comes at a historic juncture when the UN General Assembly has recognized 2015 as the International Year of Evaluation. Evaluation is appreciating in value and gaining impetus. It holds the power to improve the lives of citizens

by ensuring that principles of transparency, accountability and learning are entrenched through the evaluation systems in organizations that provide development assistance.

The current period in UNDP is transitional as a structural review has resulted in a critical reflection on past performance with a view to improving organizational effectiveness, and ensuring that development results planned and delivered actually align with goals and intentions. Credible and independent evaluation will provide the tool for this reflection, which allows for course correction and the optimal deployment of scarce resources. Evaluation also provides a lens through which to view organizational performance. If done well, this fosters collaboration and engagement on what results should be, what they mean, and how they should be measured and acted upon.

As the current UNDP Strategic Plan began, over 100 country programme documents had been informed by IEO assessments. This positive trend is likely to continue as programme countries themselves enhance their own evaluation capacities, and thus expect more and are able to engage more meaningfully with the evaluation process when development assistance is assessed. It means that UNDP's own evaluation function needs to mirror international good practice by adhering to the right principles. UNDP plays a significant role in supporting the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) secretariat, and thus helps professionalize the function across the United Nations system.

This report outlines how the UNDP evaluation function has and will continue to undergo many iterations and changes. 2015 will be a catalyst year once a new evaluation policy is adopted. The country level is the arena of action, where changes can be made and measured in the most tangible and meaningful manner. The thrust of the new policy is for a significantly improved decentralized evaluation function that moves towards greater professionalization and views knowledge generation, for purposes of learning and accountability, as essential to helping UNDP achieve better results.

The establishment and ownership of a corporate culture that welcomes and responds to critiques as a necessary component of producing development results is a difficult, but essential dimension of organizational maturity. It means not just an investment in the evaluation architecture, but consistent leadership messages that embrace and encourage critical reflection as a means to maximizing organizational effectiveness and impact.

The IEO has recognized that it cannot on its own review a programme of approximately US\$5.7 billion with sufficient methodological rigour. The Evaluation Advisory Panel comprising eminent individuals has proved to be a critical sounding board for IEO and its collaborators, introducing insights and perspectives that bolster the heart of evaluations—the methodological basis. Peer reviews, greater engagement with local institutions and extended consultation processes have resulted in several gains. I look forward to continuing to adapt to new challenges and opportunities that IEO will encounter while ensuring credibility across the entire system.

Indran A. Naidoo

Indran A. Naidoo

Director

Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This report is the accountability document of the Independent Evaluation Office (**IEO**) of the United Nations Development Programme (**UNDP**), presented annually to the Executive Board of UNDP. It summarizes 2014 highlights in the work of the office as well as that of associated evaluation units at the United Nations Capital Development Fund (**UNCDF**) and United Nations Volunteers (**UNV**). All three operate under the UNDP evaluation policy.





1.1 Overall architecture: Who does what?

The evaluation function in UNDP, as per its evaluation policy, has many players. Collectively, they help advance accountability and learning:¹

THE UNDP EXECUTIVE BOARD

The UNDP **Executive Board** is the custodian of the evaluation policy. It approves the policy and considers annual reports on implementation; ensures the independence of the evaluation function; uses and draws on evaluation findings for oversight of corporate policies, strategies and programmes; requires management responses to all evaluations, and reviews and approves those for independent evaluations; and periodically requests the IEO to commission independent reviews of the evaluation policy.

THE IEO

The IEO is an independent unit that each year reports directly to the Executive Board on evaluation functions, compliance, coverage, quality, findings and follow-up. It conducts evaluations at multiple levels, on themes and programmes, at the country, regional and global levels.

THE UNDP ADMINISTRATOR

The UNDP **Administrator** is accountable for corporate results, and safeguards the integrity and independence of the evaluation function. His/her role also includes ensuring that senior management responds to and applies evaluation findings, and that relevant units follow up on recommendations.

UNDP PROGRAMME AND POLICY UNITS

UNDP programme and policy units conduct monitoring, evaluate programme performance and manage findings. The results feed into independent evaluations.

THE EVALUATION UNITS OF UNCDF AND UNV

The evaluation units of UNCDF and UNV conduct evaluations in their organizations, and contribute to the IEO's development of common evaluation quality standards and guidelines.

1.2 IEO's mandate and function

The IEO is guided by the UNDP **evaluation policy** approved in 2011. It conducts systematic assessments of UNDP's contributions to development results by performing independent evaluations, and by setting standards and guidelines on evaluation.



Core values comprise the independence, credibility and utility of evaluations. The office employs various means to ensure the quality of its work, including evaluation policy reviews, guidance from its external **Evaluation Advisory Panel** and **peer reviews** by evaluation offices at other UN organizations.



The IEO has a central role in supporting UNDP as an organization that routinely learns from its own experiences in countries around the world, as well as in drawing in knowledge from other UN agencies and the global evaluation communities. Evaluations provide important evidence for corporate performance monitoring. They also increase accountability to all those with a stake in UNDP helping to deliver development results—the Executive Board, the funders of programmes, and the governments and citizens of countries that UNDP serves through its programmes.

1.3 Purpose: What's in this report?

This annual report reflects on recent lessons from policy and programmatic activities, towards improving results for development. In particular, it:

- Provides detailed insights into evaluation activities at UNDP, UNCDF and UNV in 2014;
- Highlights key achievements, challenges and lessons; and
- Presents future work plans and ways forward.

The report is intended for a wide range of audiences. It is hoped that the report is used not only for information, but as an input to strategic decision-making processes and for

mutual dialogue on strengthening contributions to development efforts. Key audiences comprise:

- **Executive Board members**, who approve and fund evaluation activities;
- **UNDP/UNCDF/UNV staff**, including both programme managers—responsible for formulating, implementing and monitoring projects, and reporting results in various offices throughout the organizations—and senior management; and
- **Global development and evaluation communities**, to widely share information and lessons.

The report was prepared during a significant transition in UNDP's evaluation functions, including a review of the evaluation policy. Discussions were ongoing to revisit and reformulate a number of policy areas, including steps to improve the decentralized evaluation system; strengthen mechanisms to follow up recommendations; and deepen collaboration among UNDP, UNCDF and UNV. Following the IEO's postponement of the quality assessment system while commencing a comprehensive examination of it, this annual report excluded the assessment of decentralized evaluations, except for Global Environment Facility (GEF)-related evaluations, which have different guidelines. Reflecting the current

transition, the report invited UNDP policy and programme units, UNCDF and UNV to discuss planned strategies to enhance quality.

1.4 Structure of the report

THE REPORT
CONSISTS OF

5

CHAPTERS:



Click on the **Chapter Number** and it will take you to that chapter

CHAPTER

1

Introduction

CHAPTER

2

focuses on IEO work in 2014, lessons drawn and the proposed programme for 2015-2016.

CHAPTER

3

presents an overview of compliance in decentralized evaluations in 2014 as well as the latest discussions on how to improve the quality of those carried out by the programme and policy units.

CHAPTERS

&

5

are dedicated to the work of UNCDF and UNV, respectively.



CHAPTER 2

IEO EVALUATIONS

This chapter presents the work of the IEO in 2014. It includes an overview of key activities, budget and human resources, and lessons learned from evaluations and methodological practices. The IEO's approach to moving forward is also outlined.

2.1 Overview of 2014 activities

The IEO's primary function is to conduct independent evaluations at the country, regional, and global levels, as well as on thematic topics of particular importance to the organization. It also promotes development of evaluation capacity at the national level, and provides critical support to the work of the [UNEG](#). This section presents a summary of activities in 2014, which contributes to strengthened organizational accountability and learning.





Evaluations of thematic and country contributions

The IEO's current work plan was developed under the Medium Term [Evaluation Plan 2014-2017](#) approved by the Executive Board. It called for presenting one thematic evaluation to the Executive Board in 2014, on the GEF/UNDP [Small Grants Programme](#), conducted jointly with the GEF evaluation office. However, the evaluation process was delayed. The evaluation has been completed and results will be presented in September 2015.

The IEO also focused its work during 2014 on three thematic evaluations to be presented to the Executive Board in 2015:

- ***Evaluation of the contribution of UNDP Human Development Reports*** (for the board's June session): It covers global and

regional reports; national ones may be evaluated in a second phase. In addition to accountability and learning objectives, the evaluation trains attention on the public policy and pedagogical value of these flagship UNDP knowledge products.

- ***Evaluation of UNDP's role in supporting national achievement of the Millennium Development Goals*** (for the June session): It focuses on UNDP tools and initiatives to support government and civil society efforts to fulfil the goals, including national reports, advocacy (the Millennium Campaign), inclusion in national development and poverty reduction strategies, costing exercises, the [Millennium Development Goals Acceleration Framework](#), localization efforts, etc.

- ***Evaluation of UNDP's contribution to gender equality*** (for the September session). Following the 2006 evaluation of gender mainstreaming in UNDP, this focuses on the organization's overall contribution to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Two independent evaluations emphasizing an impact approach were conducted in 2014:

- ***The impact of UNDP/GEF support to protected areas management*** (for the board's September 2015 session): The evaluation is in progress, jointly managed by the evaluation offices of UNDP and the GEF.
- ***The results, including impact, of UNDP support to mine action*** (for the January 2016 session): The evaluation will focus on the results, including impacts, of assistance to reduce the threat and impact of mines and explosive remnants of war.

Country-level evaluations, known as Assessments of Development Results (ADRs), are designed to pinpoint UNDP contributions to national development progress. The IEO conducted six of these in 2014, covering [Armenia](#), [Malaysia](#), Somalia, the United Republic of Tanzania, [Uruguay](#) and Zimbabwe. Four evaluations (Armenia, Malaysia, Uruguay and Zimbabwe) will be shared with the Executive Board in 2015 when new country programme documents are approved. The remaining two



(Somalia and the United Republic of Tanzania) will go to the board in 2016 along with their new country programmes.

Joint evaluations

Conducting evaluations in partnership with other UN organizations provides a unique opportunity to enhance ownership and quality. The IEO engaged in five joint evaluations in 2014, including:

- The **Poverty-Environment Initiative**, with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);
- The United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD), with UNEP and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO);
- Two joint evaluations with the GEF concerning the GEF Small Grants Programme, and the impact of UNDP/GEF support to protected areas management; and
- **Joint Programmes on Gender Equality** in the United Nations System, with five UN agencies—UN Women, UNDP, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund (MDG-F)—and the governments of Norway and Spain.

Evaluation policy review and revision

The Executive Board has mandated a periodic independent review of UNDP’s 2006 evaluation policy. The first review took place in 2010,² and the Board approved a revised policy in 2011.³

A second review was conducted by an external consulting firm in 2014, and was discussed by the Board in 2014 and early 2015. It requested that findings and recommendations be reflected in a revised evaluation policy, for consideration at its 2015 annual session.

The 2014 review assessed the performance of the UNDP evaluation function since 2011, the extent to which the organization has responded to the requirements of the

evaluation policy, and the status of policy implementation. It set out recommendations that require policy changes or management decisions to improve evaluation. Elements that received particular emphasis included the overall UNDP evaluation function, independent evaluations and decentralized evaluations. Given recurring weaknesses reported in the coverage and quality of decentralized evaluations, the review paid particular attention to this area, exploring reasons for the weaknesses and suggesting an appropriate course of action. Both UNDP **management** and the **IEO** issued responses to the review report. The new evaluation policy will incorporate the latest decisions made by the organization for moving forward.

2014 EVALUATION POLICY REVIEW



→ assessed the performance of the UNDP evaluation function

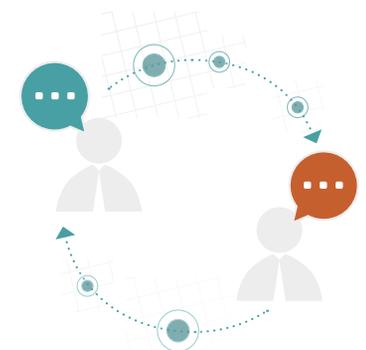
→ SINCE 2011

RECOMMENDS

Policy changes to improve evaluation

UNDP management and the IEO issued **responses to the review report**

FOR MOVING FORWARD





- Reviewed inception and draft final reports of thematic evaluations;
- Provided methodological guidance and participated in key events linked to thematic and country-level evaluations; and
- Offered guidance on staff professionalization and capacity.

A list of activities conducted by the experts is shown in Annex 1.

The panel convened in October 2014 for a general update on IEO activities, and to share its collective expertise on the IEO's strategic directions and ongoing evaluations. Having the panel has helped the IEO to bring about synergy through consistent practices and to ensure the overall quality of its work. The use of the panel will be revisited after this initial period to differentiate between advisory work and quality assessment, and to also assure full geographical representation.

Bolstering national evaluation capacities

The IEO cooperates with UNDP programme units to assist countries in developing [national evaluation capacities](#), including through a biennial international conference where government officials discuss key concerns and learn from each other based on common experiences.

Progress on ADR reform

The IEO revised its ADR methodology in 2014 in preparation for a new round of assessments in 2015. In recent years, significant changes have included the use of IEO staff to lead the evaluations, augmented with external capacity as needed. This has helped to ensure a standardized approach to evaluation and promoted a team approach. Increasingly the IEO uses locally recruited experts for its evaluations, which has supported the building of evaluation capacity at the country level and enhanced the quality of the reports.

A more detailed discussion on how the IEO is proceeding with the reform is presented later in the report under Section 2.6, "Moving forward: Where are we going?"

Evaluation Advisory Panel guidance and insight

The Evaluation Advisory Panel, established in 2013, is an independent external group of 11 eminent international experts on evaluation and development. It provides critical guidance and intellectual insight into the work of the IEO, helping to advance its strategic impact.

In 2014, panel members advised on a wide array of activities. They:

- Critiqued and made recommendations on the 2013 annual report;
- Reviewed and commented on the draft report from the evaluation policy review;



In 2014, the IEO partnered with UNDP units and conference participants to stimulate action on the [18 commitments](#) developed at the 2013 conference in Brazil. UNDP's [International Policy Centre](#) for Inclusive Growth helped design, promote and administer the exchange of knowledge, and tracked efforts by and results of national governments and partners.



In **THAILAND**, the fourth conference on national evaluation capacities will **CELEBRATE EVALYEAR** and discuss priorities for a global evaluation agenda.

A significant step forward in 2014 was the UNEG's endorsement of 2015 as the International Year of Evaluation, or [EvalYear](#). The UN General Assembly acknowledged EvalYear, and stressed the importance of national evaluation capacity development as well as stronger evaluation functions at the United Nations through resolution [A/69/237](#). A torch signifying countries' commitment to evaluation will be symbolically passed at events around the world in 2015. In October in Thailand, the [fourth conference](#) on national evaluation capacities will celebrate EvalYear and discuss priorities for a global evaluation agenda.

Support to the UNEG

In 2014, the IEO continued to support the work of the UNEG, a voluntary professional association of over 45 UN departments, specialized agencies, funds and programmes, and affiliated organizations. It aims to advance the effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability of UN system contributions to achieving development results.

The IEO has consistently provided significant financial and human resources to the UNEG, and hosts its secretariat. Staff costs in 2014 amounted to approximately \$273,000, comprising a full-time programme specialist, 20 percent of the time of an executive coordinator, and 5 percent of the time of an IT specialist and an operations specialist. Other costs are for office space and utilities. An additional financial contribution of \$70,000 supported the group's activities.

The IEO has focused especially on implementing the [UNEG's Strategy 2014-2019](#). It has four objectives, ensuring that: UN evaluation functions and products meet the group's norms and standards, UN entities and partners use evaluation to increase accountability and programme learning, evaluation informs UN system-wide initiatives and emerging demands, and the group benefits from and contributes to an enhanced global evaluation profession. In consultation with other agencies, IEO helped develop the group's 2014-2015 work plan.

IEO has consistently provided significant **FINANCIAL** and human resources to the **UNEG**, and hosts its secretariat.



The IEO Director currently serves as the UNEG's [vice-chair](#) on strengthening evaluation functions. This work spotlights three areas: professionalization of evaluation in the UN system, peer reviews, and a review of norms and standards. A review and update of the 2008 Evaluation Technical Competency Framework has provided options to enhance professionalization. Peer reviews oriented around assessing the independence, credibility and usefulness of evaluations took place in three agencies in 2014, the World Food Programme ([WFP](#)), the GEF and UN Women. [Norms](#) and [standards](#), first developed in 2005, will be reviewed in 2015.

2.2 Budget and human resources

In 2014, the total regular budget of the IEO was \$7.8 million, a reduction from \$7.97 million the previous year. This reflects reduced core UNDP funds. Expenditures for evaluations and other corporate activities in 2014 totalled \$8.06 million, with \$602,921 from non-core resources.⁴ Throughout the year, the IEO received financial support from various donors for its activities.⁵

The office spent 98 percent of its core funding in 2014, a rate significantly improved from 90 percent the previous year. This resulted from rigorous tracking of projects and periodic budget revisions. But compared to 2013, overall expenditure decreased by 3.5 percent, due to a reduction of 5.3 percent in core funds and adjustments in the timing of some project activities (Figure 1).

Figure 2 shows general operating expenses in 2014, excluding salaries. The IEO spent 84 percent of total general operating expenses of \$3,632,238 on conducting evaluations and activities directly related to them.



Click on **each** to view the information

FIGURE 1. IEO BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE 2014 (compared to 2013)

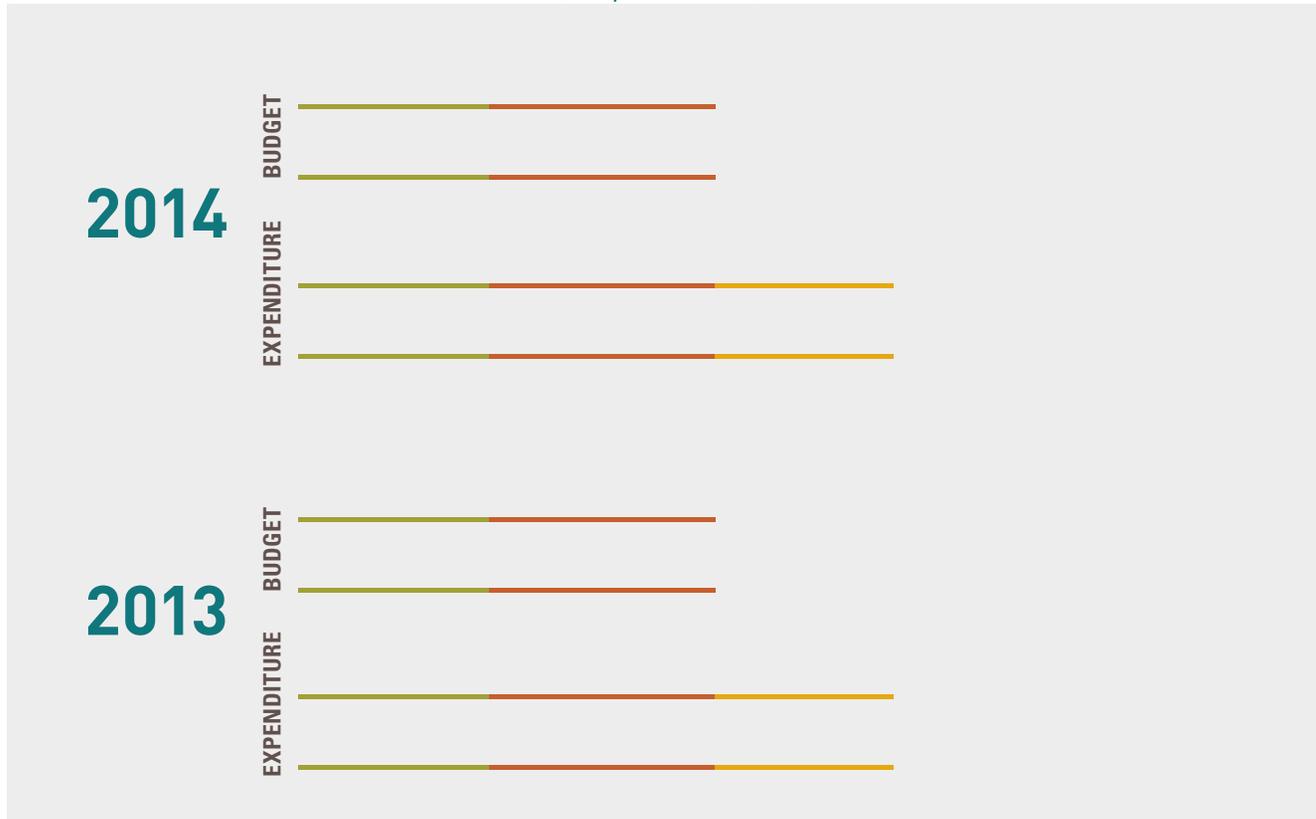


FIGURE 2. EXPLANATION OF GENERAL OPERATING EXPENSES, EXCLUDING SALARIES, 2014





The IEO had 21 staff members as of January 2015, including 15 international professionals and six general service staff. Professional mobility meant not all posts were filled, increasing staff workload and affecting the timeliness of deliverables in some cases. A total of 226 consultants were recruited in 2014 to support work in conducting evaluations and other activities.

The IEO continued to move towards gender parity in 2014. Women made up 60 percent of international professional posts and all of general service staff. Among the consultants recruited, 52 percent were female, similar to the 2013 figure.

A commitment to working with national consultants from countries where evaluations are conducted remained strong. Of seven evaluations completed in 2014, all except one thematic evaluation relied on support from national consultants, providing valuable insights into countries under review and offering critical assessments based on local context. This has helped develop evaluation capacity across the globe, and in many instances provided local experts with their first exposure to independent international evaluations. The use of personnel from universities, research institutions and think tanks has been appreciated, and demonstrated the IEO's commitment to engaging proactively with them on its performance. The approach is challenged, however, by the overall dearth

of capacity in evaluation in the countries where assessments are undertaken, which means much time needs to be invested in orientations.

2.3 Lessons from the evaluations of the MDGs and Human Development Reports

As in the past, valuable lessons were learned through independent evaluations and other work at the IEO. This section discusses key findings and lessons from the two thematic evaluations conducted in 2014, both of which scrutinized UNDP's contributions to human development: the "Evaluation on the role of UNDP in supporting national achievement of the Millennium Development Goals" and the "Evaluation of the contribution of global and regional Human Development Reports to public policy processes."

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are an internationally agreed set of quantifiable and time-bound goals to advance human development. They have significantly shaped UNDP programmes, with achievement of the goals by 2015 dependent on concerted efforts on many fronts. The evaluation sought to examine UNDP's ability to support national capacities to formulate and implement MDG-based policies and programmes. It assessed the efficacy of policy advice, advocacy, awareness-raising and monitoring, and

considered efforts to translate the MDGs into relevant and attainable subnational goals and programmes.

UNDP launched the [first global Human Development Report](#) in 1990 as an independent intellectual exercise that pioneered new thinking. To date, 23 [global reports](#) have been produced. Regional Human Development Reports were introduced in 1994, with a total of 33 reports so far produced from the five UNDP regions. Key objectives of the evaluation included assessing the contribution of:

- Global reports to intellectual and analytical public policy debates;
- Regional reports to policy discourse and advocacy at the regional level, and public policy processes at the national level; and
- Global and regional reports to UNDP engagement in global and regional public discourse and advocacy, and national public policy processes.

Both evaluations, of the MDGs and the Human Development Reports, acknowledged UNDP had put the concept of human development at the forefront of policy dialogue.

The MDG evaluation found that:

- UNDP has designed and rolled out a large set of complementary tools supporting MDG planning, monitoring and implementation. These were of high quality and well



MDG EVALUATION



Link to watch a video of the webinar



timed. Implementation varied, with UNDP country leadership a major factor in performance at the national level.

- **National MDG reports** have been produced worldwide through processes facilitated or led by UNDP. MDG monitoring work and support to statistical capacity development have led to improvements in the quality and use of MDG data. Much remains to be done, however, in light of the more complex and numerous Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) slated for introduction after 2015.
- With UNDP support, most countries have adopted the MDGs in their development plans, as consensual objectives, as planned and monitored targets, or as a quote or reference. Not all MDGs were equally included; gender equality targets beyond those for primary education were applied less often than any other category.
- The MDG Acceleration Framework helped coordinate fragmented efforts and resources

of various national or international actors, at both the national and the subnational levels. Globally, the **UN Chief Executives Board** provided a forum to showcase the application of the framework and to mobilize support from across the **United Nations** and the **World Bank**.

The Human Development Report evaluation found that:

- The global reports have made major contributions to shaping global development debate, particularly through their ability to take the concept of human development to mainstream development policy, and by producing annual messages on human development using different themes.
- When first produced, the global reports promoted a development framework that was distinctive at the time. The old paradigm, based on structural adjustment and the free-market economy, was increasingly discredited. Over the years, the global reports have articulated strong links between development and human well-being. A composite index of economic and social indicators, the **Human Development Index**, has been vital in advancing this shift.
- The Human Development Index has become the trademark of the global reports, and has sustained the interest of policy makers, the media and academics, particularly at the national level. When it

was introduced in 1990, the index provided an alternate measure of the human development dimensions of public policies and global benchmarking. This did not necessarily result in policy debates beyond those already stemming from education and health data, however.

- UNDP's neutrality has helped regional reports address topics considered sensitive by individual countries, issues that cross borders and challenges requiring cooperation among multiple partners.
- The regional reports have responded to the research and analysis needs of countries with inadequate research capacities, but their use has been limited overall.
- The regional reports have informed UNDP regional programmes. Some have enhanced UNDP's intellectual standing in a region, enabling engagement with a wider range of development actors. UNDP country offices have used the reports to identify further avenues of cooperation with governments.



HDR EVALUATION



- The regional reports have had the challenging task of remaining relevant amid increasing regional analysis of key development issues. In many cases, development actors have preferred reports from agencies with subject specialization.

Both evaluations indicated that UNDP needs to continually sharpen its tools to retain and increase its relevance and ability to bring about change. The MDG evaluation concluded that the basic concept of the MDGs as well as strategies and tools for UN support have been largely validated. UNDP has had a positive impact by helping to conceptualize the MDGs and mobilize support to implement them, and by assisting with greater national capacities to collect and generate data. The MDGs helped the UN and UNDP recapture policy space previously lost to structural adjustment and an economic growth-centric view of development.

UNDP has often been unable, however, to translate its support into tangible development programmes and funding streams. Many MDG planning initiatives, whether at the national or local levels, remained unfunded at the time of the evaluation. Where resources were available, national drives to implement the MDGs translated into a significant expansion of social services, proving that aligning national development strategies with the goals can contribute to achievement even in the poorest countries.



The much broader agenda of the SDGs will anchor UNDP's work on governance and resilience in the global development agenda. UNDP could opt to support only those specific SDGs that match its strengths, but the thematic evaluation argues for UNDP to provide guidance and leadership for the entire SDG agenda, as it did for the MDGs. Approaches similar to the MDG Acceleration Framework and MDG national adaptation and localization, as well as greater collaboration with other UN agencies, may be increasingly required to translate a more complex, all-encompassing agenda into concrete priorities.

The Human Development Report evaluation notes that, given the availability of numerous competing publications and databases that

provide development analysis, the global Human Development Reports need to be distinctive to remain relevant. They should keep abreast of emerging development issues and changing demands for knowledge in a crowded information marketplace. Effective dissemination of key messages is key to realizing the full potential of the reports to influence specific thematic areas and more broadly to further the human development approach.

The advantage of the regional Human Development Reports compared to other publications is their human development emphasis. UNDP should revisit their purpose and explore options to strengthen their distinctiveness and contributions, and



take measures to enhance their influence on regional and national policy processes.

As discussion on the [post-2015 development agenda](#), including the SDGs, is well underway, UNDP has much room to revisit its strategies for promoting human development. Key lessons from the two evaluations included:

- UNDP's support—even primarily on the policy level—should be grounded in strategies to translate its interventions into concrete national development actions and programmes.
- To remain relevant on the ground and bring about intended changes, UNDP must clearly define its role and focus on interventions that draw on its strategic and programmatic strengths.

KEY LESSONS

from the **MDG & HDR** evaluations



UNDP should:

have strategies to translate its interventions **into concrete** national actions & programmes

Clearly define its role and **focus its interventions** to remain relevant on the ground

2.4 Methodological lessons from joint evaluations

During 2014, the IEO jointly worked on five evaluations with other UN programmes, funds and agencies. Several are ongoing for completion in 2015. They are briefly presented here, together with a rationale for joint evaluations and some recent lessons from these experiences.

The UNEG in late 2013 published the [Resource Pack on Joint Evaluation](#), which suggests that joint evaluations are especially appropriate where:

- The programme, project or other activity has been co-financed and carried out jointly;
- There are systematic questions and concerns about the UN's overarching contribution to national development goals;
- There is a need to address broad policy issues or concerns, and/or the issues addressed are of a sensitive or potentially controversial nature; and
- There is the chance of reducing the evaluation burden on national actors.

The IEO has been a frequent participant in joint evaluations, as it often encounters the situations listed in the Resource Pack. UNDP manages many projects and programmes

jointly, and is usually involved in the early recovery phase of the UN response to major crises, when multiple UN and other international organizations must work cooperatively. The IEO is acutely aware of the burden of repeated and overlapping evaluations by multiple development actors.

The IEO most often coordinates with other agencies to evaluate work on environmental protection and sustainable development, given the cross-cutting nature of these issues and the manner in which global environmental protection is funded. In 2014, the IEO joined counterpart evaluation units of FAO and UNEP to evaluate the UN-REDD programme. The three agencies established an evaluation management group that commissioned an [overall evaluation](#). They also developed guidance for and performed quality assessments of UN-REDD national programme evaluations.

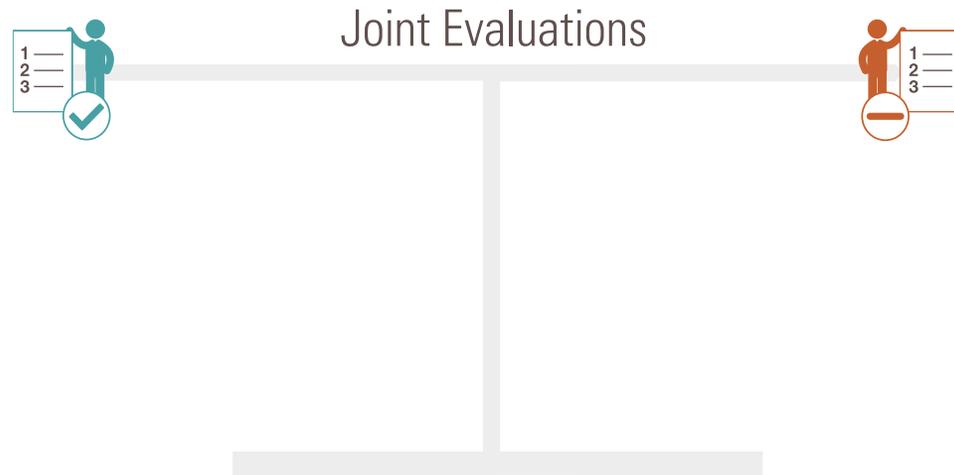
Joint UNDP-GEF evaluations occur frequently. In 2014, the evaluation offices of each organization assessed the Small Grants Programme, which UNDP manages on behalf of the GEF. The programme's principal strategy is to provide small grants—up to \$50,000—to needy communities to support practices and technologies that benefit the global environment. Since it began in 1992, the Small Grants Programme has provided over 18,000 grants to communities in more than 125 countries. The evaluation covered the period from 2008 to 2013, and was managed by an evaluation



steering committee comprising the director, a senior evaluator and two co-evaluation managers from each evaluation office. Another major joint UNDP-GEF evaluation concerns the impact of GEF support to protected areas management. This will wrap up in 2015, and has involved a series of counterfactual analyses of species abundance, forest cover loss and management effectiveness.

As noted in the UNEG guidance, joint evaluations often arise where the subject matter is cross-cutting and important to multiple UN agencies. Such is the case with the [“Joint Evaluation of Joint Programmes on Gender Equality in the United Nations System.”](#) This evaluation, conducted in 2013, was designed to address a gap in evaluative evidence on country-level joint programmes on gender. The evaluation units of five UN agencies came together: UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and the MDG-F, in partnership with the governments of Norway and Spain. One key finding was that joint programmes at the country level have been instrumental in bringing gender issues into national dialogue and improving UN development cooperation. But they have not necessarily increased efficiencies, mainly due to systemic barriers, unclear management arrangements and weak programme design.

Joint evaluations come with many pros and cons. On the positive side, a single evaluation can be provided to multiple funding and



implementing agencies, which can reduce burdens on countries and help communicate cohesive messages on challenges to achieving planned results. Multiple vantage points can be raised in joint evaluations—UNDP’s human development perspective can be coupled with the GEF’s global environmental benefit perspective, for instance, to inform a more nuanced discussion of programme achievements. The evaluation management group for UN-REDD illustrates how joint evaluations can allow UN evaluation units to share workloads.

On the less positive side, joint evaluations generally require considerably longer advance planning, as multiple organizations need to allocate human and financial resources within their planning and budget cycles. These evaluations typically take more time to implement,

as each partner needs to be consulted at each decision point, and each evaluation office approaches the effort with differing processes, methods, content and report formats that have to be reconciled. Because joint evaluations must take into account multiple viewpoints and achieve consensus among all parties, they run the risk of having overly general conclusions and recommendations. In the case of the Small Grants Programme evaluation, the GEF needed evaluative evidence to inform its [Fifth Overall Performance Study of the GEF](#) within a time frame that was too short to carry out the full evaluation. The evaluation was thus divided into two phases. The need to consult and reach agreement on each step of the two phases meant the evaluation took longer than originally anticipated.



Three practical lessons that arise from the IEO experience with joint evaluations in 2014 are:

- Roles, responsibilities and lines of accountability need to be clearly established at the outset. For example, evaluation management is complex if each partner organization contracts different members of the team.
- There is a risk that different perspectives and interests of partner organizations may generate multiple evaluation questions. Given limited resources, it is necessary to balance the number of evaluation questions with the level of data collection and analysis required in order to adequately respond to each question.
- A joint evaluation should respond to the information needs of decision makers of each partner organization. These needs may not be identical and must be clearly identified at the outset of the evaluation.

Learning from joint evaluations and anticipating their difficulties will be increasingly important in the years ahead. The UN has been actively pursuing structural coherence, including better coordination at the country level. As it moves towards closer integration and delivering as one, UN entities will increasingly be expected to evaluate as one.

EVALUATION OFFICES OF UNDP & GEF ASSESSED



STRATEGY

Small grants up to  \$50,000

SINCE 1992 OVER **18,000** grants  MORE THAN **125** COUNTRIES

2.5 Follow-up to recommendations and management responses to independent evaluations

UNDP's evaluation policy requires all evaluations to have a management response prepared by the responsible unit(s). Planning

and taking actions on evaluation recommendations is as important as the conduct of the evaluations, and essential for UNDP as a learning organization. This section highlights the preparation and tracking of management responses, implementation of follow-up activities and ongoing efforts to improve the quality of management responses.

Overview of management response preparation

UNDP's evaluation policy calls on the IEO to maintain a system to track management responses. A UNDP [Executive Office guidance note](#) requires posting all management responses to independent evaluations in the [Evaluation Resource Centre](#). The lead unit charged with overseeing follow-up actions, in coordination with any other involved bureaux/units/offices responsible for implementing the actions, provides quarterly progress updates in the centre's tracking system.

For ADRs, country offices prepare the management response under the oversight and guidance of relevant regional bureaux. The bureaux ensure that responses are prepared for all evaluations and actions taken, and regularly review the status of implementation. The process of preparing and tracking management responses is illustrated in Figure 3.



FIGURE 3. PREPARING AND TRACKING MANAGEMENT RESPONSES

Click on the number
to view the phase

PHASE



Since 2006, the IEO has conducted **104 EVALUATIONS;** 95 percent had a management response.

Data indicate room for improvement

Since 2006, the IEO has conducted 104 evaluations; 95 percent had a management response. Out of 1,748 planned actions included in these, as of January 2015, 55 percent were completed, 1 percent no longer applied, and the rest were at varying levels of implementation. Over one-third of the actions under thematic evaluations—as well as one-fifth of the actions in the overall evaluations—did not have specific deadlines for implementation (Figure 4).

FIGURE 4. MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND KEY ACTION IMPLEMENTATION STATUS FOR EVALUATIONS CONDUCTED BY THE IEO, 2006-2014



2006-2014 (all since first evaluation policy)			Status of implementation of key actions				
Number of reports	Reports with management response	Number of key actions	% completed	% ongoing without a due date	% ongoing with a due date that are not overdue	% ongoing with a due date that are overdue	% no longer applicable

Click on the **Grand Total** to view all amounts

**FIGURE 5. MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND KEY ACTION IMPLEMENTATION STATUS FOR EVALUATIONS CONDUCTED BY THE IEO, 2006-2010**

2006-2010			Status of implementation of key actions				
Number of reports	Reports with management response	Number of key actions	% completed	% ongoing without a due date	% ongoing with a due date that are not overdue	% ongoing with a due date that are overdue	% no longer applicable

Click on the **Grand Total** to view all amounts

Figures 5 and 6 show the breakdown of data during two periods, 2006-2010 and 2011-2014. Less than 60 percent of key actions have been undertaken for evaluations that were completed five or more years ago (2006-2010). In the case of recent evaluations (2011-2014), about a quarter of key actions have passed their due dates for completion. In particular, 67 percent of those related to the [Global Programme Evaluation](#) have already passed their due dates.

Tracking implementation of recommendations is mainly done through analysis of the data in the Evaluation Resource Centre system. Responsible units are not required to provide explanations on pending and obsolete items, and there are no incentives for them to closely follow and update implementation status. At the present moment, the [Development Impact Group](#) in the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support is reviewing the status of implementation of management responses on a semi-annual basis, with the results presented to the UNDP [Executive Board](#). This is part of the management response to the “Annual Report on Evaluation.” There is a need for further strengthening the follow-up system, however, so that data are fully current and validated.

**FIGURE 6. MANAGEMENT RESPONSE AND KEY ACTION IMPLEMENTATION STATUS FOR EVALUATIONS CONDUCTED BY THE IEO, 2011-2014**

2011-2014			Status of implementation of key actions				
Number of reports	Reports with management response	Number of key actions	% completed	% ongoing without a due date	% ongoing with a due date that are not overdue	% ongoing with a due date that are overdue	% no longer applicable

Click on the **Grand Total** to view all amounts

Aiming at higher quality management responses

While it is important to monitor implementation of management response actions, there is a risk of becoming driven by compliance, not by the need to address the issues raised. Beyond monitoring, it is therefore equally important to ensure that management responses are well formulated and appropriate.

For some time, management responses were uploaded in the UNDP Evaluation Resource Centre separately from the evaluation reports. In January 2013, the IEO went one step further and presented two thematic evaluations to the Executive Board that contained full management responses as annexes. This gave users of the reports a more complete picture. They could see the flow from findings to conclusions, recommendations and responses to recommendations. In 2014, an ADR report for the first time included the full management response in an annex, and, in addition, responses to each recommendation in an executive summary. The IEO maintains that this kind of more complete report provides incentives for follow-up action.

This change has been in line with an even more important one involving the stakeholder workshop held towards the end of the ADR process. In the past, the IEO had presented ADR recommendations, but these were followed only with a general



response not usually associated with specific actions. In 2014, the IEO requested country offices undertaking ADRs to prepare a draft management response in advance of the stakeholder workshop. The new model deepened conversations on how to take the recommendations forward as well as on the recommendations themselves.

2.6 Moving forward: Where are we going?

Addressing methodological issues

Since 2002, the IEO has completed over 90 ADRs. The original ADR approach was revisited following the 2005 peer review of the evaluation function in UNDP, and guidance was subsequently revised in 2007 and 2010. Since then, the IEO has conducted an annual period of reflection on the ADRs to identify lessons learned in process and methodology, and make necessary adjustments. In recent years significant changes have taken place, including the use of IEO staff members to lead the evaluations rather than external consultants.

The 2014 revision of the ADR approach aimed at codifying recent process changes and addressing a number of other issues: i) specific concerns expressed by regional bureaux and country offices, and through a 2014 IEO-commissioned study on the ADRs; ii) complex methodology concerns including

those related to limited data in many countries; and iii) aligning the ADRs with the 2014-2017 [UNDP Strategic Plan](#).

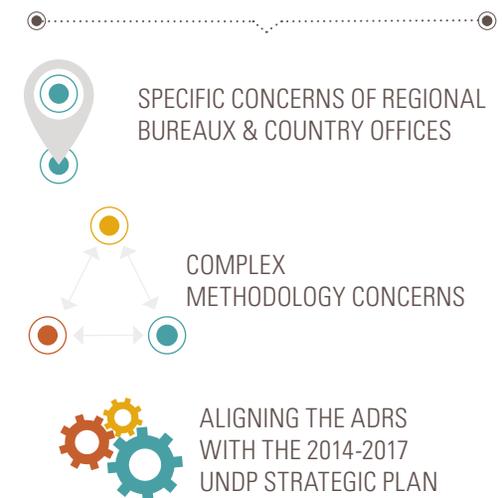
Key elements of reform cover the purpose and use of the ADRs. Learning has been given primacy, particularly for informing new country programme documents. Although ADRs have had this purpose for some time, the IEO recognized the need for optimal timing of the evaluations. Reforms also sought to increase UNDP's accountability to the Executive Board and national stakeholders in programme countries, and to facilitate the collection of lessons across ADRs that can be shared and reported to the Executive Board.

New guidance tightens ADR alignment to the UNDP Strategic Plan, facilitating their use for corporate reporting, and for validating (or not) other corporate reporting tools such as results-oriented annual reports. The IEO also aims to ensure that ADRs assess partnerships with and other relevant contributions by UNCDF and UNV. In regional and global programme evaluations, it seeks to more explicitly identify contributions to national development change.

Other reforms have focused on methodology. The IEO has started to make more use of existing information in data collection and rely less on interviews. This fosters greater rigour, reduces burdens on national staff and partners, and results in more efficient use

of IEO resources. ADR guidance promotes practical and realistic approaches to using theories of change and contribution analysis in assessing UNDP's contributions to development goals. Finally, the Executive Board has indicated interest in how the ADRs assess efficiency, and this criterion has been aligned with the Strategic Plan.⁶ Guidance has been introduced on undertaking an assessment of the likelihood of UNDP contributing in a significant way to the simultaneous eradication of poverty and reduction of inequalities and exclusion.

IN 2014 REVISIONS OF THE ADR APPROACH ADDRESSED:





Click on a field in the wheel to read about the strategy.



IEO'S CIRCLE OF KNOWLEDGE

Evaluations conducted by the IEO aim to deepen understanding of development effectiveness in the development community beyond UNDP. Key findings, conclusions and recommendations are widely shared. In 2014, the IEO packaged lessons and knowledge from completed evaluations in 12 knowledge products.⁷ It deploys several strategies for knowledge dissemination.



Extending the circle of knowledge

In 2015, the IEO plans to lay the foundation for a knowledge-sharing culture by using a people-centred approach versus a technology-centred one. The focus will be on capturing and disseminating tacit staff knowledge and encouraging staff members to learn from each other. This will involve allocating 5 percent of staff time to knowledge management, formalizing knowledge-sharing as a staff responsibility and incorporating it in performance appraisals. Roles and responsibilities for all staff will be outlined to support new knowledge management processes and initiatives, with management encouraged to recognize staff who play key roles as ‘knowledge agents’. This is expected to increase the number of knowledge products such as blogs, lessons learned, summaries and briefs. A ‘knowledge-sharing’ database will be developed for staff to exchange lessons, good practices, successes and innovations, and serve as a repository for key documents and information related to all IEO evaluations.

The IEO is committed to staff development, allowing members to devote up to 5 percent of their time to individual learning. In 2014, it commenced a professional development project to further cultivate professional skills and competencies.

Programme of work 2015-2016

The IEO programme of work for 2015 and 2016 is aligned with the Medium Term Evaluation Plan (2014-2017). In 2015, the following thematic evaluations will be presented to the Executive Board:

- “The role of UNDP in supporting national achievement of the Millennium Development Goals”
- “The contribution of UNDP global and regional Human Development Reports”
- “The impact of UNDP support to protected areas management”
- “Evaluation of the GEF/ UNDP Small Grants Programme”
- “The UNDP contribution to gender equality”

At the Executive Board meeting in September 2015, the IEO will share lessons from conducting joint evaluations as well as two joint evaluations that have recently taken place with the GEF, on the impact of UNDP/GEF support to protected areas management and the GEF/UNDP Small Grants Programme.

The IEO plans to conduct nine [ADRs in 2015](#), covering Albania, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Mauritania, Morocco,

Sao Tome and Principe, and Viet Nam. Country selection criteria comprise the timing of new country programme approval by the Board and regional balance. The reports will be available in 2016. The IEO will also support the Fourth Conference on National Evaluation Capacity.

The revised evaluation policy discussed by the Board in 2015 and resource availability will determine activities for 2016. The IEO will continue with evaluations it has committed to producing within the Medium Term Evaluation Plan. In 2016, it will present the following thematic evaluations to the Executive Board:

- “Results, including impacts, of UNDP support to mine action”
- “UNDP response in the immediate aftermath of crisis”
- “UNDP contribution to anti-corruption and public integrity strategies”.

A large number of
EVALUATIONS of programmes
 aligned with the UNDP Strategic
 Plan will take place in **2016**



At the January 2016 board session, the IEO will also present methodological lessons learned about conducting impact evaluations.

A large number of evaluations of programmes aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan will take place in 2016, as well as an evaluation of the Strategic Plan itself to prepare for the subsequent plan. These evaluations encompass:

- The five regional programmes

- The global framework for policy support 2014-2017
- The UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017
- UNDP's contribution to South-South and triangular cooperation

Two thematic evaluations are planned for presentation to the Board in 2017:

- "UNDP support to disability-inclusive development": The evaluation will address how UNDP is mainstreaming rights and

opportunities for persons with disabilities across its programmes, and results from its support. The IEO will consult with other United Nations agencies and programmes to consider a joint evaluation.

- One additional thematic evaluation will be selected on an institutional effectiveness theme related to section 5 of the UNDP Strategic Plan.

The IEO will conduct six ADRs in 2016 for transmission to the Executive Board in 2017.





CHAPTER 3

DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS

Decentralized evaluations refer to those commissioned by programme units of UNDP, as distinct from those conducted by the IEO. As noted earlier, given the ongoing review of the decentralized evaluation system, the “Annual Report on Evaluation 2014” does not include an assessment of these evaluations, except for GEF-related projects. Quality assessments will recommence in 2015.





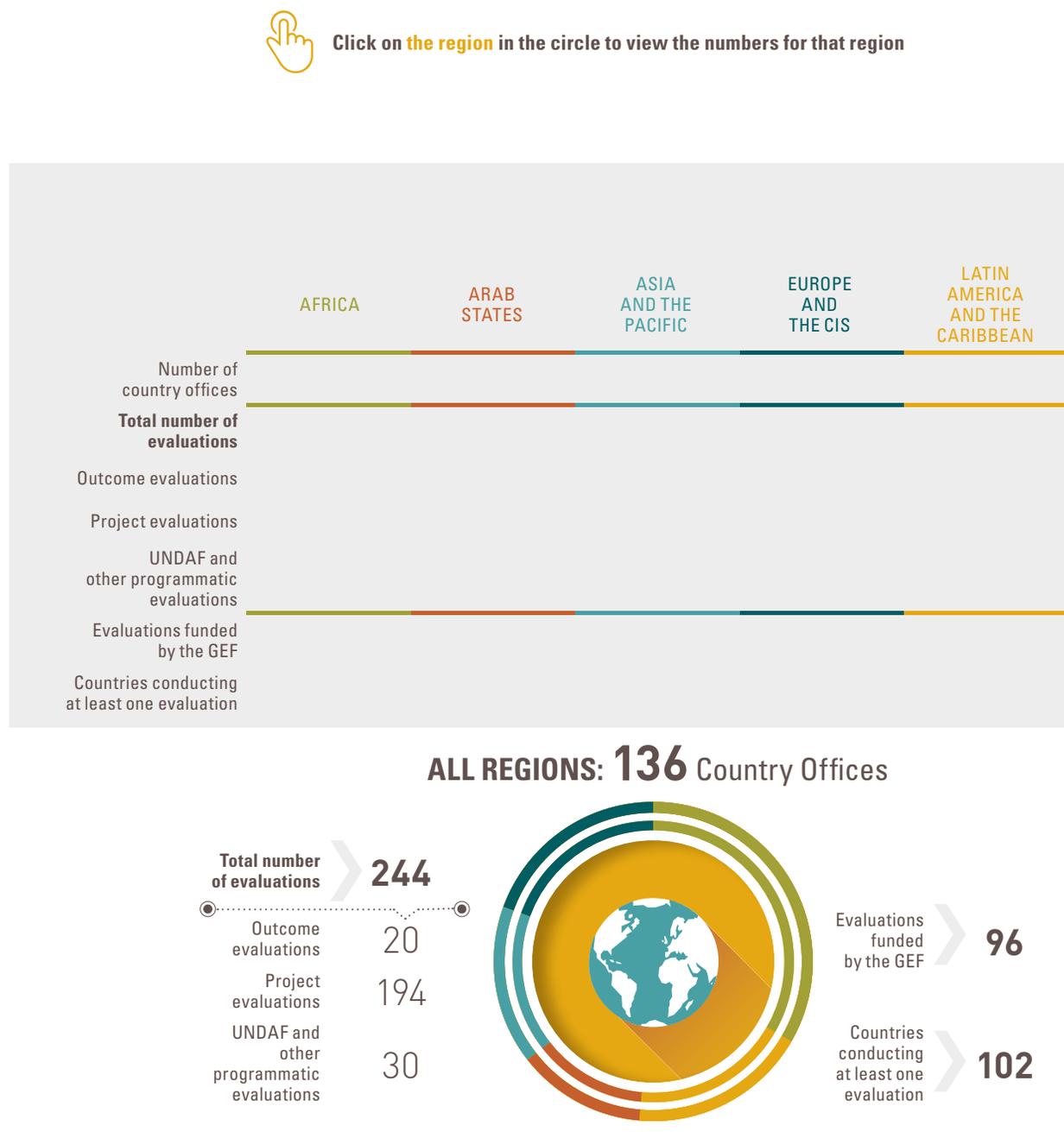
3.1 Overview of activities in 2014

Evaluations commissioned by country offices, and regional and policy bureaux

In 2014, 102 country offices, 75 percent of the total, completed 244 evaluations: 20 outcome evaluations, 194 project evaluations, and 30 United Nations development assistance framework (UNDAF) and other programmatic evaluations (Figure 7). Of these, 96 (39 per cent) were focused on GEF-funded projects. The GEF requires end-of-project evaluations for all large and medium projects carried out by UNDP and other implementing agencies.

The number of decentralized evaluations decreased by 18 percent in 2014 from 298 in 2013. This broke an upward trend since 2011 (Figure 8). All regions showed a decline, with the largest drop in the Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region, which saw a 40 percent fall from 63 evaluations in 2013 to 38 in 2014. This possibly reflects the smaller number of offices reporting in the region, as well as the general reduction in project and outcome evaluations in favour of UNDAF and other evaluations. Latin America and the Caribbean saw a 17 percent drop; Asia and the Pacific, 15 percent; Africa, 9 percent; and the Arab States, 7 percent (Figure 9).

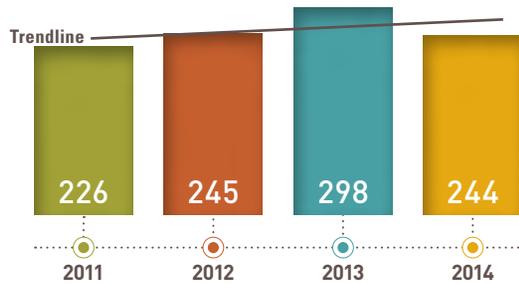
FIGURE 7. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF EVALUATIONS COMMISSIONED BY UNDP COUNTRY OFFICES IN 2014





Click on **each region** to view the number of evaluations

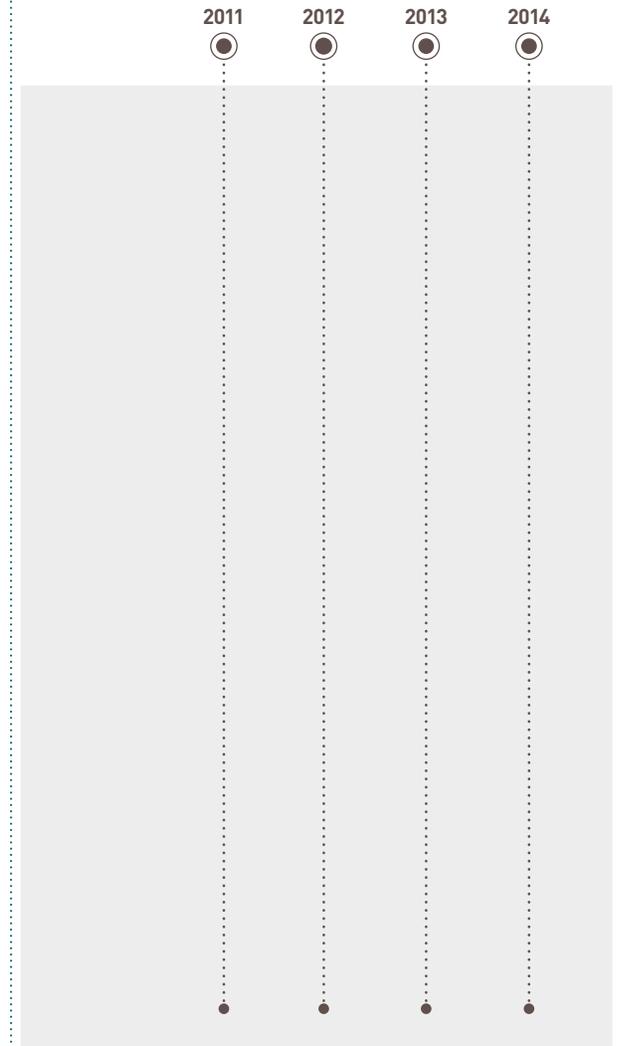
FIGURE 8. NUMBER OF EVALUATIONS COMMISSIONED BY UNDP COUNTRY OFFICES, 2011-2014



Note: Evaluation Resource Centre data as of 31 January 2015.

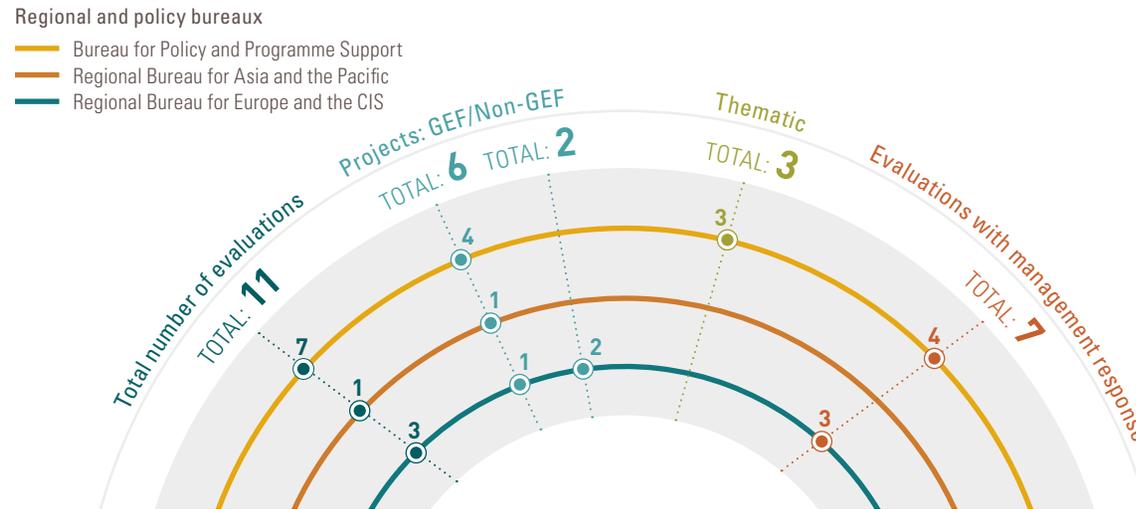
In 2014, UNDP’s regional and policy bureaux conducted 11 evaluations (Figure 10). The Bureau for Policy and Programme Support completed three thematic evaluations and four global UNDP-GEF project evaluations. The remaining four evaluations were carried out by the Regional Bureau for **Europe and the CIS** (three) and the Regional Bureau for **Asia and the Pacific** (one). No evaluations were conducted by the Regional Bureau for **Africa**, the Regional Bureau for the **Arab States**, or the Regional Bureau for **Latin America and the Caribbean**.

FIGURE 9. NUMBER OF EVALUATIONS CONDUCTED ACROSS REGIONS, 2011-2014



Note: Evaluation Resource Centre data as of 31 January 2015.

FIGURE 10. EVALUATIONS COMMISSIONED BY POLICY AND REGIONAL BUREAUX IN 2014



Note: Evaluation Resource Centre data as of 31 January 2015.



Evaluation plan compliance

In accordance with the UNDP evaluation policy, all evaluations included in evaluation plans are mandatory and require a management response. Of the 244 evaluations completed in 2014, 189 (77 percent) had a management response, yielding 1,418 key actions for follow-up (Figure 11). By the end of 2014, 21 percent had been completed, 78 percent were ongoing, and 1 percent were non-applicable. Twenty percent had passed indicated due dates, and 17 percent had no specific deadlines.

Of the **244** evaluations
COMPLETED in 2014,
77% had a management
RESPONSE

FIGURE 11.
MANAGEMENT RESPONSES AND
IMPLEMENTATION STATUS OF KEY ACTIONS,
2014



- Completed
- Ongoing without a due date
- Ongoing with a due date that are not overdue
- Ongoing with a due date that are overdue
- No longer applicable

Note: Evaluation Resource Centre data as of 31 January 2015.



Many actions from past evaluations are still pending. For example, for evaluations completed in 2010, 691 of 1,933 planned actions (36 percent) are still pending, including those that have passed their due dates (Figure 12).

Regional disparities are significant—59 percent of all key actions from evaluations completed between 2010 and 2013 in the Europe and the CIS region have been taken, for example, compared to only 23 percent in the Arab States region for the same period (Figure 13). A few issues need to be stressed when interpreting this data. First, regional bureaux and country offices need to

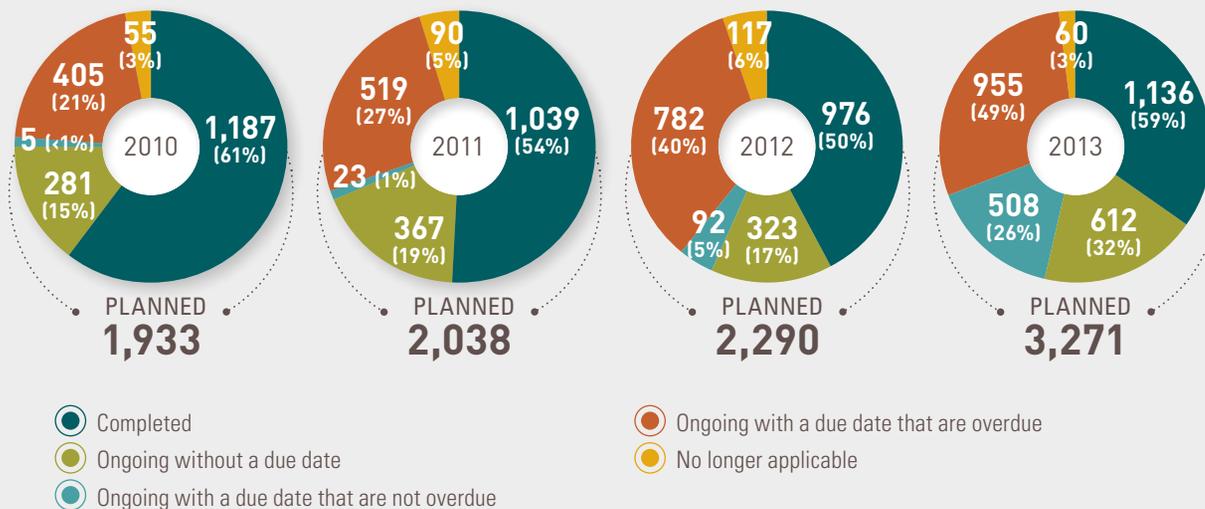
more consistently update their information in the Evaluation Resource Centre tracking system. Second, the system needs improvement. It does not capture varying degrees to which actions have been implemented, reflecting only whether they are complete or ongoing, and lacks a mechanism to validate completeness.

Since 2011, country programme evaluation compliance has been measured at the end of the programme period, based on the completion of all planned evaluations. The rate of full compliance has been steadily increasing over the years (Figure 14). Of 16

country programmes concluded in 2014, 11 were fully compliant, 4 were partially compliant and 1 was not compliant (Figure 15). The programmes had a total of 224 planned evaluations. Of 194 that were completed, 170 (88 percent) had a management response as required by the evaluation policy. All evaluations completed in the Asia and the Pacific and Europe and the CIS regions had a management response.

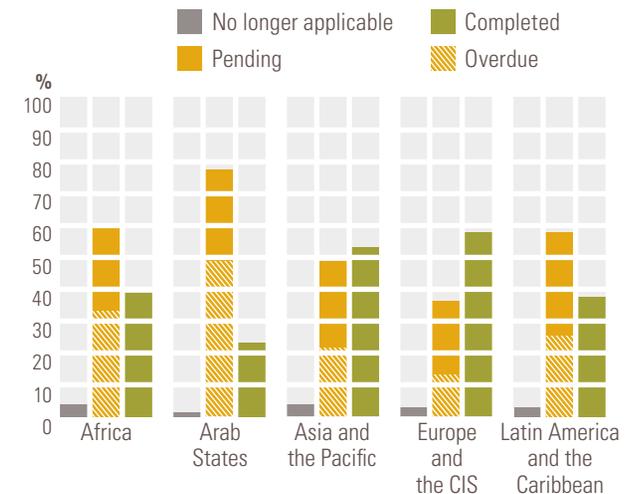
Evaluation compliance among country programmes concluded in 2014 by region is in Annex 2, Table A1.

FIGURE 12. STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF KEY ACTIONS BY YEAR, 2010-2013



Note: Evaluation Resource Centre data as of 31 January 2015.

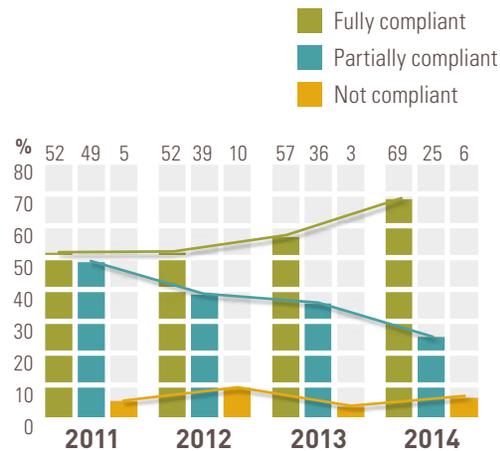
FIGURE 13. STATUS OF KEY ACTION COMPLETION BY REGION, 2010-2013



Note: Evaluation Resource Centre data as of 31 January 2015.



FIGURE 14. EVALUATION COMPLIANCE AMONG COMPLETED COUNTRY PROGRAMMES, 2011-2014



Note: Figures based on Evaluation Resource Centre data as of 31 January 2015 and data from past annual reports on evaluation (2011, 2012 and 2013).

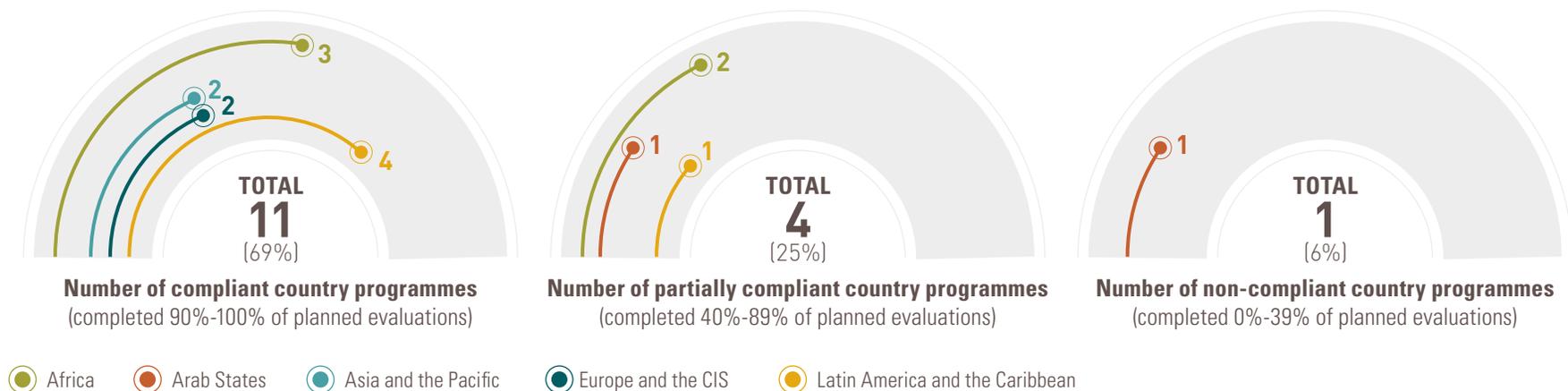
60% of UNDP country offices reported having at least 1 M&E SPECIALIST, which is an increase from 45% in 2013

3.2 Human resources and the cost of evaluations

Country office and bureau evaluation capacities

In 2014, 82 out of 136 UNDP country offices (60 percent) reported having at least one monitoring and evaluation (M&E) specialist, an increase from 45 percent in 2013. Portions rose in all five regions. In particular, all country offices in the Arab States region had at least one specialist. All regions, except Europe and the CIS, indicated that 50 percent or more of their country offices had dedicated M&E staff (Figure 16).

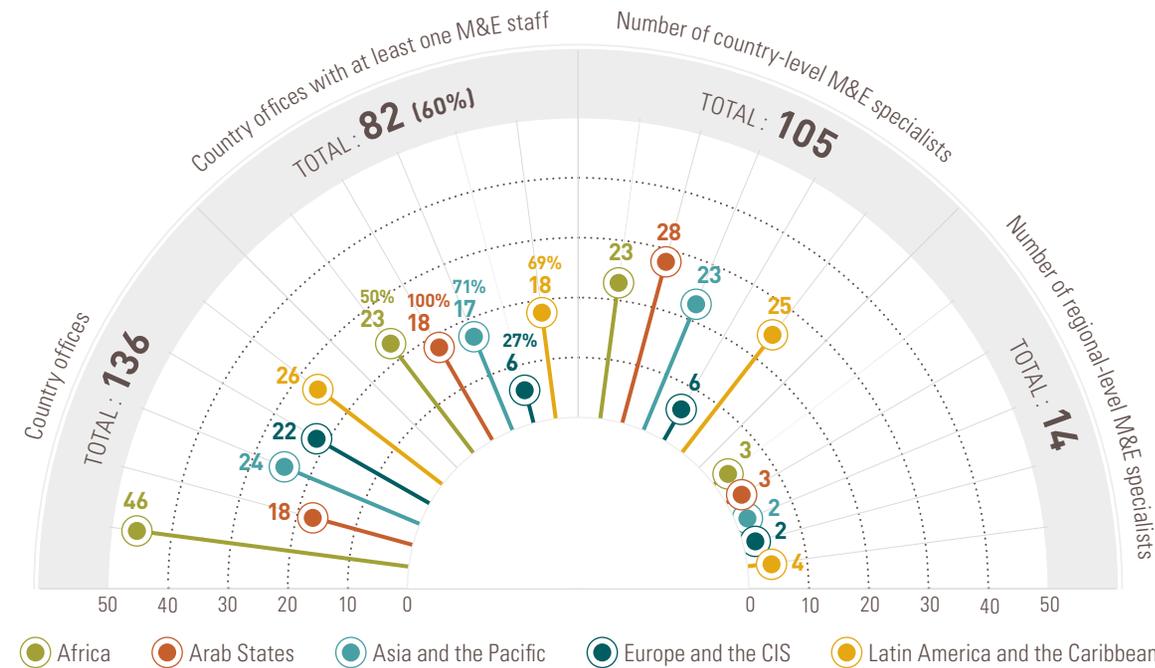
FIGURE 15. EVALUATION COMPLIANCE AMONG 16 COMPLETED COUNTRY PROGRAMMES IN 2014



Note: Evaluation Resource Centre data as of 31 January 2015.



FIGURE 16. DECENTRALIZED M&E CAPACITY, 2014

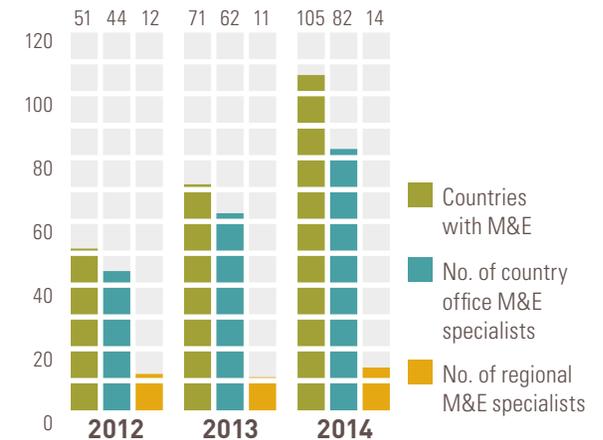


Note: Data provided by UNDP regional bureaux as of 31 January 2015.

Since 2012, the number of country offices with at least one M&E specialist and the number of M&E specialists in country offices have both increased (Figure 17; and Annex 2, Table A2). A challenge, however, is that data reported by the regional bureaux do not make clear distinctions between monitoring and evaluation capacities, so separate levels of these in country offices and regions have not yet been captured.

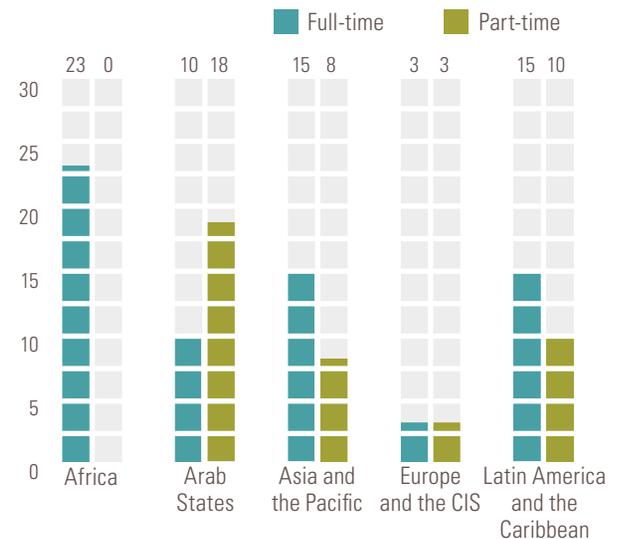
The 2014 independent review of the UNDP evaluation policy provided some estimates based on self-completion surveys and interviews.¹⁰ Forty-three of 228 contacted UNDP M&E staff responded. Those who indicated they work full-time on M&E said they spend approximately a third of their time on evaluation. Those working on M&E part-time reported that approximately 10 percent of their time is spent on evaluation. Just 12 percent of respondents indicated they had received specialized training on evaluation.

FIGURE 17. M&E CAPACITY AT COUNTRY AND REGIONAL LEVELS, 2012-2014



Note: Data provided by UNDP regional bureaux for the 2012, 2013 and 2014 annual reports on evaluation.

FIGURE 18. M&E CAPACITY AT COUNTRY LEVEL BY REGION, 2014



Note: Data provided by UNDP regional bureaux.



3.3 Lessons

This section presents two sets of lessons learned in decentralized evaluations: from a meta-evaluation on gender equality and from quality assessments of GEF projects conducted in 2014.

3.3.1 Lessons on evaluating gender equality under the UN-SWAP

To learn lessons about incorporating gender equality and women's empowerment in evaluation, the IEO commissioned a meta-evaluation of 30 evaluations conducted in 2014. It covered four ADRs by the IEO and 26 decentralized evaluations performed at country, regional and headquarters levels. The analysis used criteria from the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and

the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP).¹² Based on its classification, the sub-score for the ADRs was 11 out of the maximum 12, indicating requirements were exceeded; the subscore for the decentralized evaluations was 5.12, showing they approached requirements. The overall composite score was 5.9 (approached requirements).¹³

In the meta-evaluation, the highest scores generally implied:

- A gender perspective in the contextual analysis, which could be broad for an ADR, thematic or output evaluation, or fairly narrow for a specific project intervention, but always needed to be relevant to the problems at stake;
- Data collection and analysis were consistently disaggregated by gender;

- Interventions had expected gender results and indicators;
- Evaluators included women and/or people aware of gender theory; and
- In general, although not necessarily, evaluations were well resourced and provided time to fully incorporate gender in the methodology.

The evaluations that received lower ratings:

- Tended not to include gender very specifically in the terms of reference, the analysis or questions and methodology;
- Were more likely to be carried out by individual men, or men-only teams;
- Interpreted gender, if addressed at all, as involving participation or benefits for women, regardless of whether or not there were costs for women, or alternatively, much greater benefits for men;
- Demonstrated little understanding of gender dynamics or empowerment—a word used rather loosely and without evidence;
- Covered gender, if addressed, in a small section on its own, with limited reference elsewhere; and
- Were often evaluations of short duration and/or limited funds.

To learn about **INCORPORATING GENDER EQUALITY and WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT**



IEO COMMISSIONED META-EVALUATION OF **30** EVALUATIONS

COVERED **4** ADRS AND **26** DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS

✓ **SUBSCORE FOR THE ADRS: 11**
(REQUIREMENTS WERE EXCEEDED)

✓ **SUBSCORE FOR DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS: 5.12**
(APPROACHED REQUIREMENTS)

✓ **OVERALL COMPOSITE: 5.9**
(APPROACHED REQUIREMENTS)



The meta-evaluation noted that a number of evaluations are still essentially gender blind. An evaluation of a community forest management programme,¹⁴ for example, detailed timber and non-timber forestry uses, labour intensity, and programme risks and benefits, but provided no disaggregation of findings below the community level, despite the strong likelihood of gender differences. Without knowing women's and men's distinct roles, it was impossible to assess whether women's reported 20 to 50 percent participation rate indicated a positive or negative change.

Under UNDP's wide-ranging programme to improve decentralized evaluations drawing on the 2014 review of the evaluation policy, the IEO will pay close attention to gender dimensions in the 2015 ADRs.

3.3.2 Quality assessment of GEF projects

As part of its efforts to foster a culture of evaluation in UNDP, the IEO in 2011 developed the "Quality Assessment System for Decentralized Evaluation Reports." It covers six parameters: terms of reference; evaluation subject, context and purpose; evaluation framework; findings; conclusions; and recommendations and lessons. Each element of an evaluation report is reviewed and rated on a six-point scale ranging from highly satisfactory (a score of six) to highly unsatisfactory

(a score of one). An overall weighted score is calculated for each report. In 2012, an online tool was created to facilitate the assessment.

In 2014, the IEO assessed the quality of the terminal evaluations of 56 GEF-financed projects. Fifty percent were rated satisfactory or better, 41 percent moderately satisfactory and 9 percent moderately unsatisfactory. In terms of report completeness, 32 reports (57 percent) were rated satisfactory, and another 17 (30 percent) were rated moderately satisfactory. Only 13 percent fell in the moderately unsatisfactory to highly unsatisfactory range.

Figure 21 compares results for the 2012, 2013 and 2014 GEF reports. The trends are positive, with each year showing a decrease in the number in the unsatisfactory range. Ninety-one percent of evaluations assessed in 2014 were judged moderately satisfactory or higher, compared to 75 percent in 2012 and 2013.

Notwithstanding these positive trends, a detailed study of GEF quality assessments reveals room for additional progress. As shown in Figure 23, ratings on the quality of project monitoring and evaluation, and on the implementing and executing agencies indicate that some improvements are needed in the way evaluators assess M&E frameworks, as well as the contributions of agencies executing projects.

FIGURE 21. QUALITY ASSESSMENT SCORES FOR GEF-FINANCED PROJECTS, 2012-2014

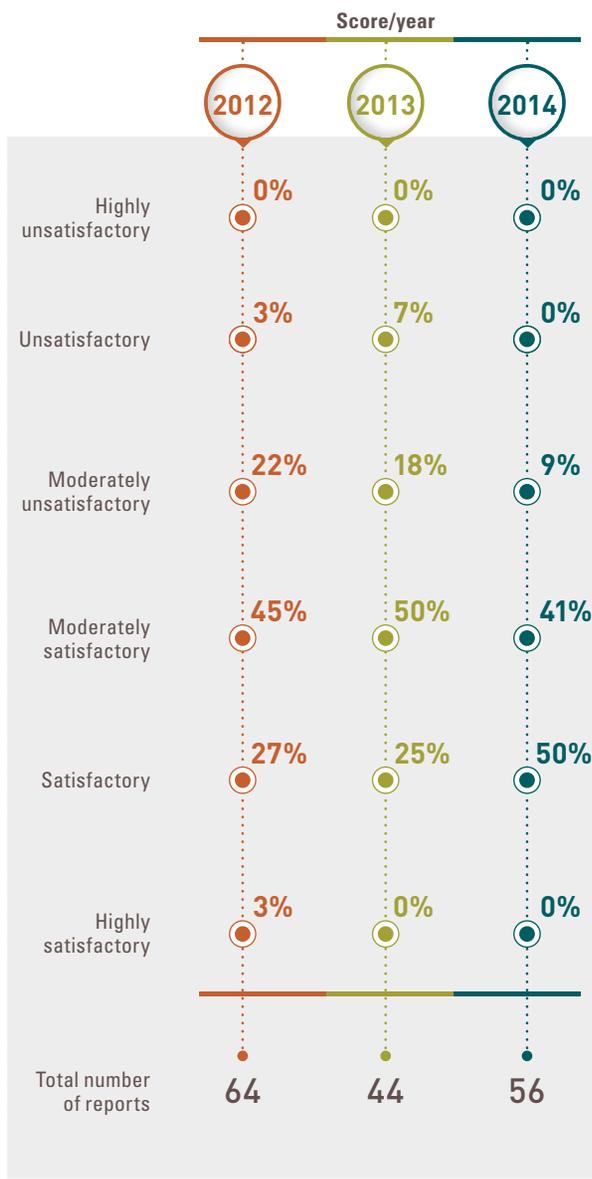
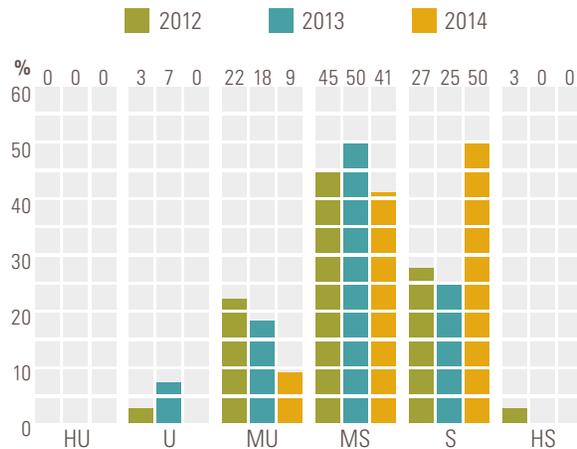




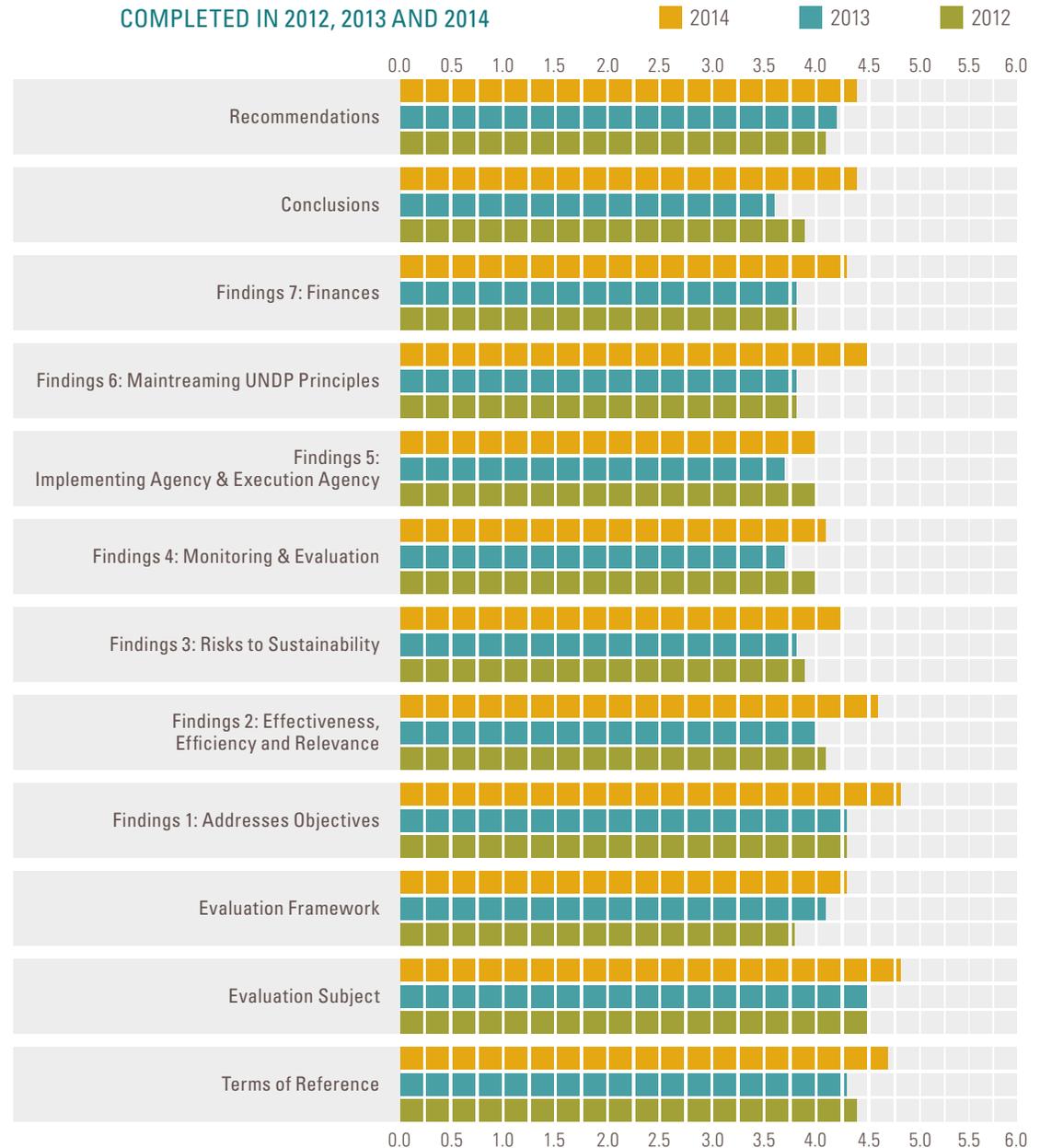
FIGURE 22. QUALITY ASSESSMENT SCORES FOR GEF TERMINAL EVALUATIONS COMPLETED IN 2012, 2013 AND 2014



HU = highly unsatisfactory, U = unsatisfactory, MU = moderately unsatisfactory, MS = moderately satisfactory, S = satisfactory, HS = highly satisfactory

The GEF evaluations still often lack a fully articulated evaluation framework, with an average score of 4.3 out of 6 for 2014 evaluations. In principle, an evaluation report should describe in detail the selected methodological approaches, methods and analysis; the rationale for their selection; and how, within the constraints of time and money, the approaches and methods employed yielded data that helped answer evaluation questions and achieve its purposes.

FIGURE 23. QUALITY ASSESSMENT SCORES BY PARAMETER FOR GEF TERMINAL EVALUATIONS COMPLETED IN 2012, 2013 AND 2014





3.4 Achievements, challenges and strategies in UNDP policy and programme units

This section presents key achievements and challenges in 2014 as reported by UNDP policy and programme units. Their ongoing and future strategies for improving the quality of decentralized evaluations are discussed, together with potential implications.

Bureau for Policy and Programme Support

The Bureau for Policy and Programme Support is responsible for designing and maintaining the UNDP monitoring policy, including relevant tools and practices. In 2014, UNDP established specific baselines, indicators and targets to measure progress towards results in its global Strategic Plan. This has encouraged each UNDP unit, including the country offices, and regional and policy bureaux, to prioritize a targeted approach to effective monitoring of programmes and the use of resources.

The Bureau for Policy and Programme Support has made continuous efforts to strengthen results-based management concepts and practices, including the new Project Quality Assurance System—a tool to improve planning, design and M&E. It will enhance the measurability of results in combination with a new UNDP monitoring policy and system.

The Bureau's evaluation activities in 2014 involved finalizing three thematic evaluations commissioned by the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and four GEF-funded project evaluations.¹⁵ The Bureau plans to formulate an action-oriented strategy to professionalize decentralized evaluation in UNDP, focusing on:

- Strengthening norms and guidelines for evidence-based, results-oriented strategic planning, programme implementation and decision-making, so as to enhance the basis for evaluation;
- Supporting capacity development in monitoring, reporting and evaluation that produces relevant and accurate evidence on organizational effectiveness, results and impacts;
- Supporting the use of evaluations in achieving better organizational effectiveness, results and impacts through higher quality and impartial decentralized evaluations; and
- Enhancing policies, processes, capacities and systems to better capture, collect, share, and use evaluation knowledge, and support organizational learning.

The UNDP structural change process has just been completed, and relevant resources and expertise put in place. In 2015, the newly

established Development Impact Group of the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support will ensure that evaluation findings are used to improve programme performance. It will extract lessons from evaluation reports, validate these and systematize their use across the organization. These efforts will be supported by continuous monitoring of the overall compliance of UNDP programmes with results-based management principles. The Project Quality Assurance System will become the primary corporate tool to uphold standards, incentivize and guide management action to improve quality and performance, and deliver on Strategic Plan commitments.

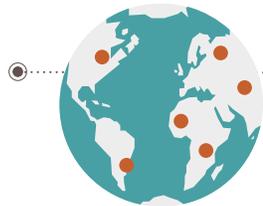
Regional Bureaux

Each of the five regional bureaux summarized its key achievements and challenges as well as their strategy for improving evaluation, presented in the next sections. The overall findings from 2014 included:

- Across several regional bureaux, there have been notable efforts to increase human resources dedicated to M&E, both at headquarters and in regional centres.
- While these efforts are encouraging, the lack of country office staff capacity in evaluation was commonly raised, requiring UNDP's further attention to strengthening capabilities, as distinct from those required for monitoring.



In **2014** UNDP established **SPECIFIC BASELINES, INDICATORS** and **TARGETS**



to **MEASURE PROGRESS TOWARDS RESULTS** in its **GLOBAL STRATEGIC PLAN**

This has **ENCOURAGED** each UNDP unit, including the country offices, and regional and policy bureaux, to **PRIORITIZE** a **TARGETED APPROACH** to **EFFECTIVE MONITORING** of programmes and the **USE OF RESOURCES**



- Since national partners implement many UNDP programmes/projects, attention should be given to bolstering their evaluation knowledge and skills, and their overall commitment to results-based approaches.
- In addition to evaluation capacity issues, some key difficulties faced by many country offices include: a small pool of good evaluators; limited availability of quality data at the national level; inadequate funds for certain evaluations, e.g., outcome or thematic, given donors' preference for project evaluations; and evaluation fatigue among

national partners linked to UNDP and UNDAF-related evaluations.

- A number of concrete actions and innovative approaches have been planned or are already underway at various regional bureaux to improve evaluation quality in countries, including those related to securing quality evaluators, increasing the engagement of regional centres to help strengthen results-based management, and gathering citizens' stories and narratives to gauge UNDP's development contributions.

- To implement envisaged strategies to improve evaluations, several areas warrant consideration, including appropriate resources (staffing and budget) in country offices and regional hubs, and increased communication between country offices and regional bureaux for appropriate reporting.

The regional bureaux shared some exemplary evaluations conducted in 2014 which are available at the end of this chapter. Common elements included thorough evaluation plans and processes, rigorous and innovative methodologies, high levels of utility through recommendations leading to positive changes in the country and/or in programmes and projects, and alignment with UNDP priorities and strategies.

3.4.1 Regional Bureau for Africa



Key achievements and challenges

In 2014, a number of country offices helped develop national M&E capacity (e.g., the [Democratic Republic of Congo](#) and [Kenya](#)). As part of internal evaluation efforts, [Ethiopia](#) undertook a 'bottleneck analysis' of programme governance, which included M&E components of UNDP programme implementation. Challenges in implementing evaluations encompassed limited incentives for gov-



ernment counterparts to focus on results and evidence, and constrained capacities to conduct quality assurance. In [Zambia](#), as a self-starter ‘[Delivering as one](#)’ country, reconciling UNDP outcome and UNDAF evaluations was reported as a challenge in terms of securing government buy-in, due to the overlapping scope of the two, and evaluation fatigue among executing agencies, implementing partners, beneficiaries and others.

Country offices generally raised the following as key challenges: lack of their own evaluation capacity, weak evaluation capacity among national counterparts, absent/weak statistical information, lack of qualified evaluators, and limited budget and resources. The M&E culture needs strengthening, including through more involvement of M&E staff in project design.

Some evaluations produced positive outcomes or used a robust evaluation methodology. For example, an evaluation in Ethiopia of “[The Multi-donor Support for the Democratic Institutions Programme](#)” promoted policy dialogue among donors, the Government and UNDP on a difficult subject—governance and development. UNDP played the role of neutral facilitator. In Zambia, a mid-term evaluation of the “[Programme for Promotion of Rights of Women and Children](#)” included a value-for-money framework.



Strategy for improving evaluation quality and implications

The Regional Bureau’s approaches to improving country office evaluations include:

- Create an enabling environment for high-quality evaluations and needed support;
- Promote ownership through processes such as stakeholder workshops, and encourage steering committee meetings;
- Facilitate the recruitment of qualified evaluators by creating a roster;
- Participate in the recruitment process;
- Conduct quality assurance for terms of reference, inception reports and draft evaluation reports; and
- Encourage country offices to have inception reports for all evaluations.

Improving the quality of evaluations increasingly relies on the Regional Service Centre in [Addis Ababa](#) and the Regional Bureau in New York working closely together to provide oversight and support needed by country offices, including additional financial and human resources. Due to the recent structural review, the recruitment of staff for new positions is underway at the Regional Ser-

vice Centre. Until all positions are filled, providing effective support will be a challenge, even as increasing financial constraints in country offices are likely to curtail their M&E capacity.

3.4.2 Regional Bureau for the Arab States



Key achievements and challenges

As part of the roll-out of corporate tools to implement the UNDP Strategic Plan, the Regional Bureau for the Arab States convened workshops for all 18 country offices on programme alignment. These trainings emphasized using results-based management and evidence during the entire programme/project cycle, tracking the progress of outputs and outcomes, and learning what worked and did not work through mid-term reviews and evaluations. The use of evidence and data has been stressed through the Integrated Results and Resources Framework exercise and the 2014 results-oriented annual reports. Posts for M&E specialists were established at the Amman regional hub, which works closely with the Bureau in New York to comply with corporate reporting requirements.

Despite good progress, challenges remained in country offices, including insufficient funds for conducting baseline studies; low availability of data at govern-



ment counterparts; limited understanding of results-based management resulting in poorly designed results frameworks; and a constrained pool of qualified evaluators for outcome and thematic evaluations. As national counterparts and donors tend to prefer project evaluations, it is often difficult to fund thematic and outcome evaluations, which are frequently perceived as UNDP reports.

One successful evaluation in 2014 occurred in Jordan, the “[Final evaluation of project, Enhancing institutional capacities to reduce disaster risk and integrate climate change in Jordan](#).” UNDP’s work in disaster risk reduction had focused primarily on subnational support. The evaluation prompted a shift to broader policy support, including the preparation of a national disaster risk management strategy.



Strategy for improving evaluation quality and implications

The Regional Bureau will continue to emphasize the use of evidence during the entire programme and project cycle through the alignment methodology and other quality assurance tools. A newly established Results-Based Management Team in Amman will play a critical role in strengthening evaluation capacities, the design of results frameworks and ongoing

monitoring. It will provide day-to-day support and long-term capacity building, including through knowledge-sharing and trainings. The team will work closely with desk officers and the regional programme team to ensure hands-on support to the design of evaluations, and make available a roster of vetted consultants.

The Bureau expects that country office understanding and use of the corporate planning system and the new results-oriented annual report format will continue to increase in coming years, which will further strengthen the use of data and evidence in planning, monitoring and reporting on projects and programmes. More attention will be given to increasing understanding among partners of the importance of well-designed, results-based management systems and evaluations to ensure that these activities are sufficiently funded, perceived as being strategic tools, guide project/programme implementation, and identify lessons learned to inform future efforts.

3.4.3 Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific



Key achievements and challenges

In 2014, country offices continued to use M&E to improve programme design and address gaps at the project and output

levels. A series of programme/project evaluations informed initial project design and subsequent monitoring phases, and the formulation of country programme documents to be approved in 2015 ([Cambodia](#), [China](#), [Indonesia](#) and [Malaysia](#)). The [Bangkok Regional Hub](#) provided results-based management and M&E training.

One successful evaluation was the [Mid-Term Review of the Country Programme Action Plan 2011-2015](#) in Cambodia, which was jointly commissioned by the Royal Government of Cambodia and the UNDP country office. The review was significant since it represented a joint effort with the Government, and demonstrated national ownership and accountability. It was grounded in a well-thought through evaluation plan and process, using a theory of change for analysis. Results have provided strategic directions for country programming, and have helped define UNDP’s roles within the UN system in Cambodia and a fast-changing national context. The country programme is being repositioned towards policy-led initiatives, and measures are underway to boost the effectiveness and efficiency of programme operation and management.

A high volume of evaluations in the penultimate years of country programmes posed logistical and management chal-



lenges in several country offices. The experience has shown that ADRs and similar complex evaluations require sufficient lead-in time and careful advanced planning. Dedicated M&E capacity and programme officers experienced in managing evaluations facilitated the process.

Challenges in the region also included:

- Long-term commitment and support required to improve the quality of M&E work, particularly in countries with limited national M&E capacities and weak evidence-based planning systems (e.g., [Lao People's Democratic Republic](#), [Maldives](#));
 - Weak programme/project design, including through the use of indicators that are not SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound), a lack of baselines and unrealistic targets;
 - Issues with quality assurance and management (e.g., consultants with varying skills); and
 - Quality affected by a lack of systematic monitoring and data collection.
- Continued knowledge-sharing and exchanges of good practices among country offices. For example, in 2014, the [Sri Lanka](#) office initiated an informal M&E working group, a six-member team of M&E colleagues and programme staff with an interest in M&E. Its objective is to strengthen results-based monitoring and evaluation systems at both the project and programme levels. 'M&E champions' within the office have helped to overcome capacity constraints. The Cambodia office has adopted mentoring and in-house, on-the-job training.
 - Taking advantage of the corporate Strategic Plan alignment, with a focus on improved programme and project quality design, data collection and generation of evidence.
 - Providing technical support to improve quality and use of evaluations. The Bureau will explore ways to assure the quality of decentralized evaluations, including through advisory services to review terms of reference, and inception and draft evaluation reports based on requests from country offices; exchanges of good practices, tools and knowledge; and training.
- Continued focus on the quality of country programme documents and programme/project design, requiring close collaboration and coordination between the Bureau and country office M&E staff, and regional policy and programme support advisers and programme staff in country offices;
 - Systematic and hands-on involvement in planning, design and quality assurance of evaluations;
 - Taking advantage of innovative ideas/technologies to help country offices overcome some constraints on M&E (such as access issues, security, sensitivity, etc.); and
 - Closer and earlier collaboration with communications advisers at the regional and country office levels to improve results reporting (e.g., samples of draft evaluation reports reviewed by the regional communications adviser).



Strategy for improving evaluation quality and implications

Moving forward, the Regional Bureau will implement a three-pronged strategy to improve quality:

The Bureau's strategy has several implications:

3.4.4 Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States



Key achievements and challenges

2014 was a transitional year for the Bureau due to restructuring and the relocation of its regional hub to Istanbul. A full-time



results-based management and M&E specialist post was created in New York, and a Coordination, Quality Assurance and Results-Based Management Team established in Istanbul.¹⁶ These moves were particularly critical as only five of 18 country offices and four project offices in the region—[Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), [Kyrgyzstan](#), [Serbia](#), [Tajikistan](#) and [Uzbekistan](#)—have dedicated M&E capacity, and only two on a full-time basis. The Istanbul team initiated the renewal of two vetted rosters of experts on country programme/UNDAF M&E to ensure that offices have quick and easy access to expertise. This helps to address existing challenges, such as a lack of time to recruit experts, and limited availability of required expertise for evaluations. Eleven countries concluded their country programme cycles in 2014, providing an opportunity to conduct a comprehensive review of country capacity, including M&E functions, as the discussion on programme alignment to the UNDP Strategic Plan began.

An evaluation of a GEF-supported project in Turkey, the “[Terminal Evaluation of Strengthening Protected Area Network of Turkey: Catalysing Sustainability of Marine and Coastal Protected Areas](#),” was conducted based on GEF’s rigorous requirements. It used specific tools and scorecards, such as on management

effectiveness, financial sustainability and capacity assessments. The utility of the evaluation is high, as results are expected to influence the government, local cooperatives and NGOs in ensuring management effectiveness and sustainability in marine protected areas.

Critical challenges remain, including a lack of quality and reliable data and evidence in countries, and limited statistical capacities. Data often involve sensitivities that require carefully engaging national counterparts and regular capacity building. Other issues entail high costs and the lack of dedicated M&E capacity in country offices, which results in functions implemented by focal points. Increasing demand for data and evidence from both national counterparts and donors requires significant efforts.



Strategy for improving evaluation quality and implications

In 2014, the Regional Bureau launched preparation of a roadmap for strengthening results-based management and M&E with support from the Regional Service Centre and M&E focal points in each country office. Many offices have played important roles as pilot countries for testing and implementing new corporate initiatives, such as project quality assur-

ance, and the Integrated Results and Resources Framework baseline and target-setting exercise. In 2015, the roadmap will become the Bureau’s results-based management strategy, reflecting both UNDP corporate initiatives (such as programme alignment) and regional measures targeting the specific needs of country offices. Highlights include the need to enhance results-based management capacity on the ground, improve the use and quality of evaluations, strengthen the evidence base, and explore and scale up innovative M&E methods.

The Bureau experimented with a number of new methods to generate evidence and data in 2013-2014. These included:

- Use of micro-narratives to collect thousands of stories from citizens in an effort to gauge the impact of development initiatives and feed the pipeline of new programmes. Examples cover work on youth unemployment (Kyrgyzstan), people with disabilities ([Belarus](#)), and human rights and access to justice ([Georgia](#)). In 2015, the regional hub will provide assistance to country office teams to turn the analysis into new interventions.
- Use of foresight methodologies for better planning (UNDAF development



in [Armenia](#) and the [former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia](#)) and programme work (FYR Macedonia on disaster risk reduction and local development), and subsequent evaluation.

- Analysis of the best global M&E efforts in government innovation labs (e.g., [Mindlab](#) from the Government of Denmark). In 2015, the regional hub will support at least one country office to test the Mindlab methodology in one of its programmes.
- Use of big data as a complementary method of data collection. The hub submitted a proposal for funding to the Innovation Facility, together with [UN Global Pulse](#) (a UN resource on big data) and UNV (specifically targeting online volunteers for remote data collection and analysis).

Implementation of the results-based management strategy requires leadership commitment, and adjustments in budgets and staff terms of reference. As country offices have piloted different innovative methods for M&E, active communication of results and collaboration is required. The Bureau also needs to increase M&E capacities, yet financing is problematic, since human resource requirements in country offices are calculated based on

programme size. The current lack of dedicated staff for M&E means national programme officers end up sharing this responsibility on top of their regular duties.

3.4.5 Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean



Key achievements and challenges

The M&E function was not subject to financial cuts in 2014, with the region retaining 17 full-time and 22 part-time M&E staff. Country offices have continued to improve their capacity to use evaluation findings for reporting and feeding lessons into programme design (e.g., the results-oriented annual report exercise). Staff were briefed on the Strategic Plan alignment process, and more than 50 programme, operations and M&E staff participated in workshops to deepen knowledge of operational and programme design parameters, including related to data and sources of evidence, and M&E functions.

A team composed of one full-time evaluation specialist, UN Volunteers and consultants provided advisory and technical support to 26 country offices to strengthen the quality and use of evaluations, and develop results-based management capacities.¹⁷ The regional hub in [Panama](#)

facilitated knowledge-sharing through an M&E Officers Network, addressed technical questions regarding the evaluation function and practices, and circulated knowledge from other UN agencies and regional partners. It supported the design and management of three UNDAF evaluations ([Colombia](#), [Panama](#) and [Uruguay](#)). UNDP was involved in the design and quality assurance of joint evaluations on common UN standards and guidelines, which generated important inputs for new UNDAFs.

One good practice was Panama's final evaluation of the UNDAF 2012-2015, conducted in collaboration with other agencies. The evaluation was significant not only because UNDP helped manage the process to support the Resident Coordinator's Office, but also because it provided a critical lesson that UNDP needs to align its actions with other UN agencies to contribute to the country's development.

Key challenges included the heavy workload for country office staff; lack of clarity in roles between programme units and M&E officers; limited capacity for M&E in country offices and among national partners; lack of information and statistical data (quantitative and qualitative) among national partners, complicating programme alignment exercises under the



Strategic Plan; a limited 'culture of evidence' in country offices and among national partners; the allocation of appropriate financial resources for evaluations; and limited knowledge among country office staff of how to design and conduct outcome evaluations.



Strategy for improving evaluation quality and implications

The Regional Bureau increased its capacity by creating regional monitoring and results-based management specialist posts in the regional hub, and a results-based management specialist post in New York. The objective is to boost guidance and support to country offices, and ensure their compliance with corporate standards. Strategic priorities include:

- Country office alignment to the UNDP Strategic Plan, which will contribute to stronger evaluation capacity and quality, through the renewed focus on the use of theories of change, portfolio management, data and monitoring, and evaluations;
- Using the recently established Country and Regional Programme Support Team in the regional hub to strengthen

the results-based management culture and the evaluation function; and

- Regional monitoring of evaluation plan compliance and the provision of technical assistance for the management and quality assurance of decentralized evaluations.¹⁸

Implementation will have several implications. The Bureau needs to establish clear business processes and a division of functions (e.g., oversight) between the regional hub and headquarters; prioritize the Strategic Plan alignment process among country offices through technical support and consideration for resources required; focus its support on country offices that will start the UNDAF and prepare draft country programme documents in 2015; and promote use and dissemination of evaluation results.

3.5 Moving forward: the IEO's discussion on decentralized evaluations

The IEO concurs with the key finding of the 2014 review of the UNDP evaluation policy that there are weaknesses in the system of decentralized evaluation. These problems are

not unique to UNDP or new to the organization, as noted in the previous policy review.

Decentralized evaluations should be designed for learning, and should help improve UNDP performance, especially at the country level. They must be impartial and credible, and hold UNDP accountable to the Executive Board, and to governments and people in countries where UNDP operates. Addressing actual and potential challenges to impartiality is extremely important, as biased evaluations do not lead to appropriate lessons being learned.

Accordingly, the IEO appreciates that the policy review draws attention to the issue of impartiality, notwithstanding its opinion that the review may have overstated the extent to which a lack of impartiality is a widespread problem for decentralized evaluations at UNDP.

Under the present evaluation policy, the IEO has a limited role to play supporting decentralized evaluations, which are commissioned by policy and programme units, with rigour and independence expected through the use of independent consultants and organizations. The policy review sets out an option to strengthen decentralized evaluation through the IEO's direct involvement. The office is not in favour of that course, and would rather see a strengthening of the current system.



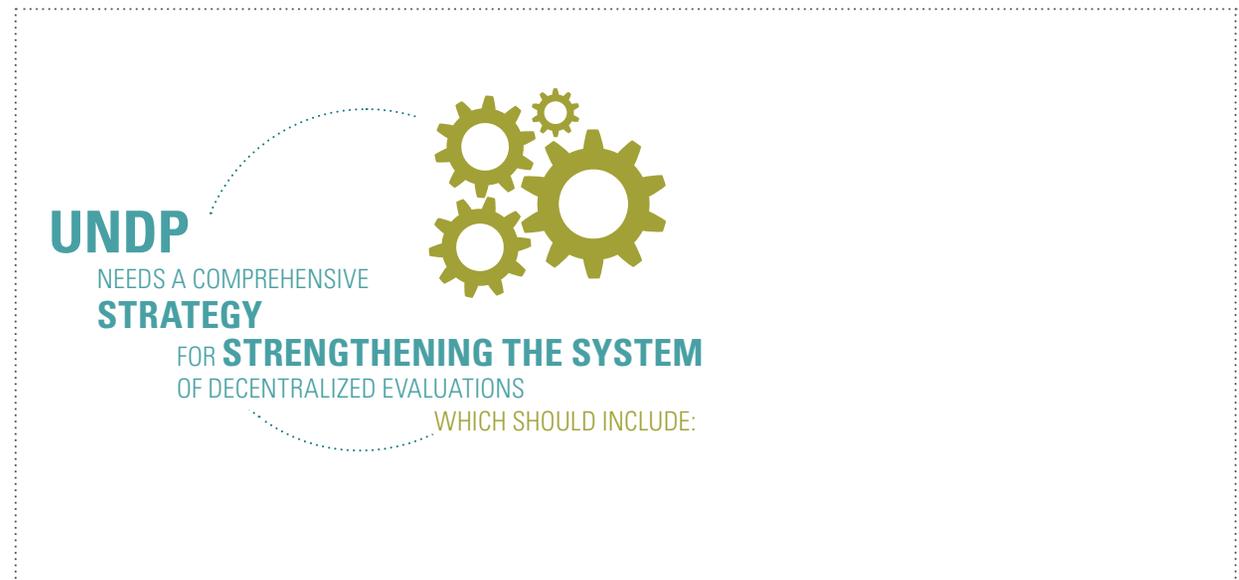
Having decentralized evaluations conducted by a professional cadre of UNDP staff evaluators would require a major increase in staff levels or, conversely, an unacceptable reduction in the number of evaluations conducted each year. A central challenge therefore relates to how best to enhance the consultant-led model for decentralized evaluation, and successfully address impartiality and quality issues that arise from it. Since the office does not believe that the options offered by the policy review fully consider this challenge, it proposes a number of additional features for an effective architecture of decentralized evaluation at UNDP.

First and foremost, UNDP needs a comprehensive strategy for strengthening the system of decentralized evaluations. The IEO considers this to be critically important, as decentralized evaluations are building blocks for the independent evaluations the office conducts at country, regional and global levels. The UNDP decentralized evaluation strategy should include specific staffing levels and a detailed budget within a costed programme of work, as well as annual milestones and performance indicators.

Reform of the decentralized evaluation system will require significant effort and the strong commitment of UNDP senior management to address clearly identified problems in

a holistic and strategic manner. While some actions can be taken quickly, with immediate gains, greater professionalization will take time, and UNDP will need to act in a more coherent fashion. Work on the revised system should, to the extent possible, start immediately, with the expectation that adequate capacities will be in place by the start of the next corporate strategic plan, in 2018.

The appropriate role of the IEO in decentralized evaluation is to provide oversight. The office should not play a major role in capacity development or provide direct support to decentralized evaluation, but should establish standards and guidance, and assess the quality of decentralized evaluations.





EXAMPLES OF EXEMPLARY EVALUATIONS AS REPORTED BY UNDP'S FIVE REGIONAL BUREAUX





CHAPTER 4

EVALUATIONS AT THE UNCDF

UNCDF expenditure on evaluation in 2014 was approximately \$580,000, drawn from core and non-core resources, including staffing costs of one evaluation specialist and one evaluation officer. During 2014, UNCDF completed one final evaluation assessing the performance of a support programme to decentralization, deconcentration and local economic development in Benin and began **three others**:





- “Final evaluation of the YouthStart programme supporting the development of youth financial services in eight African countries;”
- “Mid-term evaluation of the expansion phase of the MicroLead programme supporting the introduction of savings-led models in the least developed countries;” and
- “Thematic evaluation of the performance of the UNCDF Local Development Fund mechanism in the least-developed countries of Africa and Asia since 2005.”

In total, UNCDF has commissioned 24 external evaluations since 2010. In addition to the four external evaluations in 2014, the Evaluation Unit continued supporting UNCDF programme staff to integrate evaluation approaches into programme design and oversight by: i) leading a process to introduce a new evaluability tool to support programme design, ii) participating in an external Working Group convened by the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP) on measuring market development in inclusive finance, and iii) providing methodological support to self-evaluation initiatives by programme staff when requested.



BENIN: FINDINGS INFORM DONOR STRATEGIES AND NEW PROGRAMMES

In Benin, a UNCDF project sought to strengthen the capacities of local governments to plan and manage local investments to improve local economic development and food security. A final evaluation was designed according to UNCDF’s standard theory-of-change approach, and involved questions covering the criteria of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, likely impact and sustainability. Particular attention was placed on assessing changes in the organizational capacity of local governments at the end of 10 years of UNCDF support as well as the immediate impact of agricultural investments.

The evaluation team applied a mixed methods approach, comprising a document review, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and case studies. The process included an in-depth look at the functioning of the warehouse receipt instrument, where farmers were able to access credit from local financial service providers against the collateral of agricultural produce stored in warehouses financed by the project.

The results of the evaluation were broadly positive, with the project praised for having supported concrete improvements in local government planning and management systems as well as the launch of resource mobilization strategies. The majority of investments funded—targeting activities such as agricultural processing, small-scale village farms, provision of agricultural inputs to vulnerable families as well as the warehouses—were judged to be functioning well with direct benefits to some 3,200 people and indirect results expected in the improved functioning of agricultural value chains.

The evaluators made several recommendations around better planning of such investments through more thorough cost-benefit analysis and feasibility studies, and more effectively linking the planning process to economic analysis of local agri-food systems. While agreeing that interventions focused on strengthening local economies can be a very relevant way to address food insecurity, the evaluators pointed out that these are not always the best interventions to address the needs of the most vulnerable.

The evaluation proved very timely, coming at the 10-year point of cooperation between UNCDF in Benin and the Belgian Government, which funded the project. The Belgian Government and Parliament have used the evaluation in deciding how to orient their support to food security in Africa going forward. The results are also feeding into a new UNCDF global food security programme.



Findings of an **EVALUATION**
of a **Local Development Fund**
project in **LIBERIA** helped spur the
introduction of a **new monitoring**
system across the Local Development
Finance Practice Area.

During 2014, UNCDF continued to make use of UNDP's Evaluation Resource Centre, ensuring that all completed evaluations had accompanying management responses and following up on actions committed to in previous evaluations. For example, in its response to a final evaluation of the "Gender Equitable Local Development Programme" in 2013, UNCDF acknowledged the need to make use of a broader range of local finance instruments in the design of its successor joint programme with UN Women and UNDP to support women's local economic empowerment.

Similarly, the findings of an evaluation of a Local Development Fund project in Liberia helped spur the introduction of a new monitoring system across the Local Development Finance Practice Area. The system features a new set of performance indicators to capture the results of an expanding range of public and private finance instruments. More importantly, the evaluation confirmed the rationale for introducing a systemic approach to financing local investment projects for the private sector.

Throughout the year, UNCDF participated in the review of the UNDP evaluation policy and was encouraged by the conclusion that UNCDF evaluations are 'credible', 'offer impartial analysis' and are 'of appropriate quality'. The four evaluations sampled scored either satisfactory or highly satisfactory—the two highest levels on the six-point scale. UNCDF also appreciated the reviewers' conclusion that evaluation is being actively used in the organization. Evaluations are incorporated into the [UNCDF Strategic Framework 2014-2017](#), and the evaluation function was judged—through innovations such as evaluability assessment and theory-of-change approaches to programme design—to be integral to UNCDF's strategic planning and management system.

In an effort to strengthen its evaluation function, and in anticipation of a revised evaluation policy in 2015, UNCDF intends to revise the roles and responsibilities of its senior managers for evaluation, to rework

mandatory criteria for evaluation to ensure a more representative sample of the organization's work, and to seek guidance from the IEO's Evaluation Advisory Panel on how evaluation practice should evolve in an organization with the size and mandate of UNCDF. In support of these initiatives, UNCDF plans in 2015 to draw up an evaluation strategy that will further operationalize its commitments to evaluation quality and coverage, as set out in the Strategic Framework.

The combination of a revised evaluation policy, a new evaluation strategy as well as improved mechanisms for quality control of UNCDF evaluations should ensure that the evaluation function in UNCDF continues to provide high-quality evaluative evidence to UNCDF senior management in full respect of UN evaluation norms and standards, while being better anchored in UNDP's formal system of oversight to its Executive Board through the IEO.



UNCDF INTENDS TO REVISE THE **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES** OF ITS
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EVALUATION
ADVISORY PANEL



HOW EVALUATION
PRACTICE SHOULD EVOLVE
IN AN ORGANIZATION



CHAPTER 5

EVALUATIONS AT THE UNV

The roll-out of UNV's Strategic Framework 2014-2017 presents the organization with a critical opportunity to clearly demonstrate the contribution of volunteerism to the achievement of more effective peace and development results. UNV recognizes that improved performance requires results-based management underpinning all aspects of its work, which entails systemic planning, and monitoring and evaluation of the results of volunteers and volunteerism-related programming, policy and advocacy.





This is especially important given that most UNV programmes are delivered in partnership with other agencies. The previous practice of evaluating only the small proportion of resources (from the Special Voluntary Fund) directly administered by UNV was too limited and not fully reflective of the full spectrum of activities and impacts.

The 2014 review of the UNDP evaluation policy presented an opportunity to explore ways to strengthen links between UNV evaluations and new strategic thinking. Accordingly, UNV took the interim step of creating a new Results Management Support Section, which includes evaluation.

Discussions with the IEO and UNDP examined possibilities for more effective engagement over the longer term. UNV is exploring partnerships with UNDP and other agencies to best evaluate the contributions of volunteers and volunteerism to development programmes, with a distinct focus on thematic and partner evaluations, as well as on improving the quality of decentralized evaluations. Such collaboration should enable UNV to further strengthen its evaluation function by leveraging technical capacity and jointly agreed evaluation plans, in line with the recommendations of the UNDP evaluation policy review.

During this transition period, the 2014 UNV budget for evaluation was \$582,000, a 42 per cent increase over 2013. It was drawn from

core and non-core resources, including the Special Voluntary Fund. The budget covered personnel costs (two evaluation specialists) for part of the year, as well as key evaluation activities. Resources for future capacity will be decided based on the approved UNDP evaluation policy.

UNV's new [Strategic Framework](#) has integrated evaluation into all new programming in five priority areas: peacebuilding, youth, community resilience for environment and disaster risk reduction, basic social services,

and volunteer infrastructure. Reflecting UNV's commitment to strengthening its evaluation function, 5 per cent of programme budgets is allocated for M&E activities.

In 2014, UNV completed one corporate thematic evaluation and [five](#) decentralized evaluations. The first summarized contributions to national and regional volunteer infrastructure, a fundamental area of UNV's mandate, in 19 countries from 2004 to 2012. Findings and recommendations will guide the new global programme on volunteer infrastructure beginning in 2015.



The thematic evaluation noted the strong contributions of UNV programming, affirming its relevance to local, national and regional priorities. It found that UNV was able to meet specific national needs, and that its activities are valued by national stakeholders. Three highly appreciated qualities are UNV's neutrality, legitimacy and convening power as a UN organization, since they facilitate high-level commitments between disparate stakeholders and access to wider UN resources. To ensure greater sustainability, the evaluation recommended that UNV develop clear strategies and integrate outputs on capacity development into all volunteer infrastructure projects, articulating a logical chain of activities and results maximizing the transfer of knowledge, skills and processes to national bodies. The evaluation emphasized the need for greater consistency in capturing, storing and retaining M&E data, and allowing access to this information across all levels of the organization.

The five decentralized evaluations covered the UNV national volunteer corps and medical doctors projects in Lesotho, the "UNV Programme for Human Resource Development in Asia for Peacebuilding," the UNV-UNDP joint project on the National Centre for Promotion of Volunteerism–National Volunteer Infrastructure in Mali, the UNV project to support the implementation of a national volunteer programme in Cape Verde, and the joint UNV-UNDP project on social innovation

and volunteerism in Uzbekistan. The nature and scope of the evaluations varied greatly, reflecting the diverse nature of the projects. All evaluations adhered to key UNEG principles—relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. There was a clear emphasis on identifying lessons and best practices as well as recommendations for the future, reflecting UNV's commitment to augment organizational learning from evaluations.

More systematic
DISCUSSIONS between
 UNV and UN partners could foster
 the routine integration of
VOLUNTEERISM into
 planned evaluations.

The evaluations indicated that UNV has contributed to enhanced efficiency and effectiveness, but a common challenge is the need to ensure sustainability and national ownership of project outcomes. Some key recommendations to inform improved results-based management included:

- Broaden the mandate and reach of national volunteer infrastructure schemes by specifically targeting youth of working

age, addressing as well the issue of unemployment;

- Consider UNV medical doctors as a key capacity-building resource, pairing them with local medical staff to effectively address human resource gaps in the health sector;
- Improve project effectiveness through enhanced communication, collaboration and integration of key stakeholders throughout the project cycle;
- Improve sustainability through the integration of private sector partnerships as part of corporate social responsibility or corporate volunteering; and
- Undertake targeted advocacy efforts to include volunteering in government development programming and policies in order to increase national ownership.

Towards decentralized evaluations of the highest quality, UNV will need to focus on improving planning to conduct and use them. More systematic discussions between UNV and UN partners could foster the routine integration of volunteerism into planned evaluations. UNV is also monitoring the preparation and implementation of management responses through the Evaluation Resource Centre. To strengthen its own corporate oversight, it plans to incorporate such monitoring within its corporate performance monitoring system.



ANNEX 1

KEY ACTIVITIES OF THE EVALUATION ADVISORY PANEL IN 2014

Member	Evaluations	Other Activities
Michael Bamberger	Evaluation of UNDP's Contribution to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2008-2013)	Methodological guidance, review of Annual Report on Evaluation and occasional papers
Rachid Benmokhtar Benabdellah	Evaluation of the Contribution of the Global and Regional Human Development Reports to Public Policy Processes, ADR Somalia	Methodological guidance
Sue Funnell		ADR reform, methodological guidance (theory of change), review of Annual Report on Evaluation and occasional papers
Jayati Ghosh	Evaluation of the Role of UNDP in Supporting National Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, Evaluation of UNDP's Contribution to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2008-2013)	Review of Annual Report on Evaluation, development perspectives
Zenda Ofir	ADR Kenya, ADR United Republic of Tanzania	Strategic direction, review of Annual Report on Evaluation, evaluation policy review
Ray Rist	Impact of UNDP Support to Mine Action	Strategic direction, methodological guidance, evaluation policy review, IEO staff capacity and human resources profile
Thomas Schwandt	ADR Armenia	Methodological guidance, review of Annual Report on Evaluation, evaluation policy review
Elliot Stern	Evaluation of the Contribution of the Global and Regional Human Development Reports to Public Policy Processes	ADR reform, evaluation policy review
Miguel Szekely	Evaluation of the Role of UNDP in Supporting National Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, ADR Uruguay	Review of Annual Report on Evaluation
Daniel Weiner	Impact of UNDP/GEF Support to Protected Areas Management, ADR Zimbabwe	Review of Annual Report on Evaluation and occasional papers
Chen Zhaoying	ADR Malaysia	ADR reform, review of Annual Report on Evaluation



ANNEX 2

DECENTRALIZED EVALUATION DATA

TABLE A1. EVALUATION COMPLIANCE AMONG COUNTRY PROGRAMMES CONCLUDED IN 2014

Region	Programme unit	Evaluation plan period	Number of evaluations planned	Number of evaluations completed	Percentage of evaluations completed	Evaluation reports with a management response	Percentage of completed evaluations with a management response
Arab States	Kuwait	2009-2014	5	1	20%	1	100%
	Tunisia	2011-2014	16	9	56%	5	56%
Africa	Angola	2009-2013	14	13	93%	13	100%
	Comoros	2008-2014	9	9	100%	0	0%
	Madagascar	2008-2014	21	18	85%	9	50%
	Mali	2008-2014	27	19	74%	18	95%
	Sierra Leone	2013-2014	7	6	86%	6	100%
Asia and the Pacific	Afghanistan	2010-2014	23	21	91%	21	100%
	East Timor	2009-2014	13	13	100%	13	100%
Europe and the CIS	Bosnia and Herzegovina	2010-2014	18	17	94%	17	100%
	Croatia	2007-2013	8	8	100%	8	100%
Latin American and the Caribbean	Ecuador	2010-2014	16	15	94%	14	93%
	Paraguay	2007-2014	16	14	88%	14	100%
	Venezuela	2009-2013	5	5	100%	5	100%
	Chile	2011-2014	11	11	100%	11	100%
	Guatemala	2010-2014	15	15	100%	15	100%
Total			224	194	87%	170	88%

Note: Evaluation Resource Centre data as of 31 January 2015.

**TABLE A2. M&E CAPACITY AT COUNTRY AND REGIONAL LEVELS, 2012-2014**

	UNDP global			Africa			Arab States			Asia and the Pacific			Europe and the CIS			Latin America and the Caribbean		
	2014	2013	2012	2014	2013	2012	2014	2013	2012	2014	2013	2012	2014	2013	2012	2014	2013	2012
Country offices	136	137	140	46	46	47	18	18	18	24	24	24	22	23	25	26	26	26
Countries with a M&E specialist	60%	45%	23%	50%	57%	23%	100%	50%	6%	71%	38%	17%	27%	17%	12%	69%	54%	35%
Country office M&E specialists	105	71	51	23	26	13	28	9	7	23	14	11	6	4	5	25	18	15
Regional M&E specialists	14	11	12	3	2	3	3	1	1	2	3	3	2	4	4	4	1	1

Note: Data from UNDP regional bureaux as of 31 January 2015, and from the 2012 and 2013 Annual Reports on Evaluation.



ENDNOTES

- 1 The evaluation policy of UNDP, DP/2011/3, 15 November 2010.
- 2 Executive Board Document DP/2010/20.
- 3 Executive Board Decision 2011/3 in document DP/2012/2.
- 4 Expenditures do not include rent for the IEO's office, as this is handled by UNDP's Bureau of Management, Office of Finance and Administration, Administrative Service Division.
- 5 For example, support from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation for conducting select evaluations, and from Brazil, Finland and the United Kingdom for activities related to national evaluation capacity.
- 6 "Assessment of Development Results Guide", 14 April 2015 draft, IEO, UNDP.
- 7 They include: five country-level evaluations, National Evaluation Capacity Proceedings, the "Annual Report on Evaluation," four papers and articles, and a book on evaluating environmental programmes. They were complemented with condensed and accessible executive summaries, quarterly newsletters, and after-action reviews (back-to-office reports) for peer-to-peer exchange and organizational sharing.
- 8 IEO was represented at the African Evaluation Association (AfrEA), International Program for Development Evaluation Training (IPDET), European Evaluation Society, Japan Evaluation Society, UN Evaluation Development Group for Asia and the Pacific (UNEDAP), UKAID (UK Department for International Development or DFID), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie), Evaluation Cooperation Group (ECG), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), UN Women, EvalPartners and UNEG.
- 9 For example, key lessons from the ADR in Tanzania were shared with WFP, which was planning a similar country-level evaluation.
- 10 "Review of the UNDP Evaluation Policy," final report, 3 October 2014.
- 11 Of 202 project evaluations, 102 were GEF evaluations, accounting for 34 percent (\$2,348,742) of the total cost.
- 12 "UN-SWAP Evaluation Performance Indicator Technical Note," UNEG Guidance Note, reviewed August 2014.
- 13 Classification: 0-3 points = Missing requirements; 4-7 points = Approaches requirements; 8-10 points = Meets requirements; 11-12 points = Exceeds requirements.
- 14 Mid-term review of "Strengthening Sustainable Forestry Management and Bio-energy Markets to Promote Environmental Sustainability to Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Cambodia".
- 15 Thematic evaluations included: "Livelihoods and Economic Recovery Interventions from 2009 until 2012," "Assessment of Crisis Prevention and Recovery Funding Mechanisms," and "Evaluation of Support to Mobile Court Arrangements in Post-conflict Situations." The GEF related evaluations comprised: "Arafura and Timor Seas Ecosystem Action Programme," "Implementing Sustainable Integrated Water Resources and Wastewater Management in Pacific Island Countries," "Terminal Evaluation of LDC and SIDS Targeted Portfolio Approach for Capacity Development and Mainstreaming of Sustainable Land Management Project (PIMS 3130)," and "Implementation of the Benguela Current LME Action Programme for Restoring Depleted Fisheries and Reducing Coastal Resources Degradation (BCLME SAP-IMP)".
- 16 The team includes a results-based management specialist and programme monitoring associate, and draws on half the time of a programme specialist on capacity development and institutional strengthening.
- 17 This included support for the full process of 9 evaluations (including 3 outcome evaluations) and for different stages of 26 evaluations (e.g., evaluation design), as well as feedback on 18 terms of reference.
- 18 Support includes: feedback on evaluation plans and follow-up on compliance; technical and methodological assistance (e.g., on outcome evaluations); promotion of the use of evidence in country office reports and national discussions; facilitation of a regional [community of practice on evaluation](#); and [dissemination of tools](#) on evaluation management.



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