

Guatemala socio-economic and political contexts is challenging and volatile. Against this background, UNDP has made efforts to introduce strategic planning but the effects have been relatively weak in terms of orienting and improving its programmes.

The context in Guatemala has been characterized by deep divisions in the population, reflected in a shifting political party spectrum as a consequence of weak coalitions since the Peace Accords. Overall tax collection has traditionally been very low, and the legal framework for public administration complicated.

UNDP Guatemala's strong dependence on external resources provided incentives to respond to shifting external demands for its services, not always in accordance with its substantive mandate. Resources and tools have been limited for substantive support from the headquarters to the country office. Senior management of the UNDP country office changed frequently in the evaluated period, with consequent changes in priorities. Against this scenario, the strategy defined by UNDP and its partners retained little power to orient its activities. At the country level no strong mechanisms (such as an Advisory Council with high-level members from major sectors in the country) were in place to introduce greater continuity beyond government cycles.

UNDP was active in the management of public programmes for the Government. There are incentives for UNDP and for the Government to entrust the administration of public programmes to UNDP. However this substitutes for strengthening the efficiency of the

State and inflates UNDP's resources in less substantive administrative activities. Its effects on long-term institutional strengthening are ambiguous at least.

Twelve years after signing the Peace agreements, a sobering recognition of limited advances in attaining its objectives prevails, pointing also to the need for a more effective use of international cooperation resources.

Crucial socio-economic structures such as access to and ownership of production factors, inclusion into political decision centres, and enforcement of human and civil rights changed little. International cooperation and UNDP, while providing support in many public areas, have produced limited results for a more equal development in favour of disadvantaged groups, and of indigenous peoples in particular.

In the field of security, due to the configuration of the political forces in the country and limited public and international commitment, the spread-out support could not reverse a continuously worsening situation of violence and insecurity and this during a time of economic stability and growth.

For both the development and the security agenda, there is an urgent need to better align and harmonize international development cooperation with government policies and local efforts, calling for national coordination capacities to be strengthened, a role UNDP could support, at the request of the government, to a greater extent.

GUATEMALA

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Clarify UNDP's intended role and value added in the areas of poverty reduction, energy and the environment.
- Rebalance UNDP support to the Government in favour of increased high-level advisory services. In particular, strengthen high-level advisory mechanisms in the country representing its major sectors to support UNDP senior management in shaping and maintaining long-term strategies.
- Support the Government when and where it requests help to better comply with harmonization of international cooperation and quality control mechanisms.
- Within the UN System, support a process of greater harmonization among the agendas of each agency, eliminating duplication and acting with one voice where pertinent from the perspective of the national authorities.
- Enhance the strategic and programmatic support of the Regional Bureau towards the country office, from its central office in New York and/or from its sub-regional office in Panama.
- Increase opportunities for collaboration with the private sector in the issue of corporate social responsibility, including its private, national and overseas foundations.
- Reinforce the function of monitoring and evaluation at the UNDP project and programme level and help establish monitoring and evaluation capacities of the Government.



The UNDP Evaluation Office (EO) provides systematic assessment of UNDP's contribution to development results by conducting independent thematic and programmatic evaluations.

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