

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUSIONS

6.1.1 DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

The UNDP country office has effective working relationships with the GoR and the government considers UNDP contributions to be very relevant. However, highly relevant UNDP contributions have sometimes been delivered with less-than-optimal efficiency, particularly in governance and environment. The main problems have been shortcomings in programme administration, management and financing.

UNDP support for poverty reduction has been increasingly upstream-oriented and geared towards institutional support and policy development while direct, field-level interventions have diminished. UNDP and UNEP support should help GoR ensure that their emerging EDPRS will effectively be a 'sustainable development strategy'.

Overall, UNDP has made significant progress towards a more sustainable long-term development approach, though several UNDP projects still play gap-filling roles. The dispersion of the UNDP programme across many small projects in multiple thematic areas impedes efforts to improve the quality of programme administration and technical expertise in its core areas.

6.1.2 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

With UNDP support, Rwanda and its development partners have made considerable progress in the harmonization and alignment of development cooperation and their experience should be of interest to the international community.

Systematic performance monitoring is lacking in most UNDP interventions. This has a direct negative impact on their relevance and efficiency.

6.1.3 STRATEGIC POSITIONING

External factors that will most significantly shape UNDP's strategic environment in future years are the new architecture of aid, including the One UN approach being piloted in Rwanda, and regional and national stability. Participation in the pilot for UN reform will enhance the status of UNDP in Rwanda but also place greater pressure on the country office to improve its performance and address areas of chronic weakness across the UNDP system related to human resource management, administrative and technical services, and monitoring and evaluation. Partners within and outside the UN system in Rwanda expect more clarity from UNDP regarding the nature of its role in Rwanda. The situation in Rwanda's crowded rural areas and in surrounding countries, particularly the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi, will continue to be critical determinants of the country's long term stability. UNDP Rwanda must stay well informed of these dimensions of Rwandan reality.

6.2 LESSONS LEARNED

6.2.1 DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

Strong government ownership and leadership greatly accelerate progress towards effective alignment and harmonization of international cooperation.

6.2.2 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

Systematic capacity development, including training and skills transfer, needs to be an integral part of any project, regardless of its technical contents or institutional set-up.

6.2.3 STRATEGIC POSITIONING

Chronic administrative and management deficiencies, if not addressed effectively, can undermine partners' faith in the country office's capacity to provide high quality support.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.3.1 DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

If environment is to be retained as one of two areas of focus for UNDP under the new UNDAF, then the country office needs to enhance its capacity to provide strong technical and policy support and to participate effectively and consistently in the national dialogue on interactions among environment, development and poverty.

UNDP should launch a dialogue with the GoR with the aim of expanding UNDP partnerships with Rwandan civil society organizations.

UNDP needs to ensure an ongoing dialogue and careful monitoring in response to reports of tensions surrounding the operations of the Gacaca system.

Project designs need to be consistently based on initial analyses of problems and clear objectives defined together with stakeholders. Project documents should consistently follow UNDP guidelines as well as international norms and standards. The role of steering committees in project design should be clarified and strengthened with the objective of enhancing national ownership and sustainability.

6.3.2 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

With support from headquarters, the country office needs to establish a robust, functional M&E system that systematically generates ‘lessons learned’ then ensures these are reflected in programme management and design decisions.

National ownership and the sustainability of results should be strengthened by ensuring that on-the-job training and skills transfer activities figure prominently in the terms of reference of all technical assistance contracted by UNDP Rwanda.

Separate, autonomous project implementation units can impede national ownership and sustainability. They should be replaced, where possible, with technical assistance that works

directly within government institutions—using and adapting their systems and mechanisms for project management. The country office should prepare a strategy to phase out autonomous project implementation units in collaboration with the concerned GoR institutions and development partners.

The results of the gender audit should be used to raise the profile on gender in UNDP Rwanda’s portfolio, from an ‘incidental concern’ to a core issue. This should build on the UNDP successful support to Rwanda’s women politicians.

6.3.3 STRATEGIC POSITIONING

UNDP should sharpen the focus of their programme, concentrating on areas within the second UNDAF framework where UNDP can bring the most value added while strengthening corresponding in-house capacities. The country office needs to strengthen their human resource planning and management, with headquarters’ support.

The country office also needs to improve its capacity for ensuring that clear and useful financial information can be shared with government and cost sharing partners in a timely and effective manner.

UNDP should help GoR to foster harmonization and alignment among those development partners that pursue the project approach, building on UNDP Rwanda’s experience in aid coordination. UNDP should explore the options for assuming a facilitator’s role to support the pooling of technical assistance from different development partners.

UNDP needs to clearly identify its role in each context where it intervenes, ensuring that other members of the UNCT and other development partners in Rwanda understand what role UNDP Rwanda is playing in any given situation. UNDP needs to focus on roles where it can achieve maximum coherence and synergies with the programmes of these partners.

UNDP should look for ways to help GoR enhance national and regional stability. The country office should look for opportunities to play non-traditional roles within UNDP's areas of focus, in the context of One UN. For example, they should consider options for helping to strengthen cross-border

programming links that can contribute to the stabilization of the Kivu region. Nationally, UNDP should continue support to strengthening the rule of law and the decentralization process. Enhanced ties between UNDP and Rwandan civil society are needed to improve UNDP capacities in these areas.