



EVALUATION OF UNDP'S SECOND  
REGIONAL COOPERATION FRAMEWORK OF  
**LATIN AMERICA AND  
THE CARIBBEAN**  
2002 – 2006

## REPORTS PUBLISHED UNDER THE RCF EVALUATION SERIES

RCF for the Arab States 2002-2005, (2005)

RCF for Asia and the Pacific 2002-2006, (2007)

RCF for Africa 2002-2007, (2007)

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# FOREWORD

In 2004 the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme requested the Evaluation Office to conduct independent evaluations of regional programmes. This evaluation of the Second Regional Cooperation Framework for Latin America and the Caribbean is one of a series of regional evaluations conducted by the Evaluation Office in 2006. The evaluations assess the contributions of UNDP to development results and look forward to strengthen the formulation of next regional cooperation frameworks.

The second regional cooperation framework was presented as an instrument for UNDP to promote sustainable human development in Latin America and the Caribbean and to reaffirm its role towards achieving the United Nations Millennium Declaration commitment to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty by the year 2015. The second RCF covered three main thematic areas: Poverty Reduction and Inequality, Democratic Governance, and Energy and Climate Change. In addition, the RCF focused on three cross-cutting issues: (i) gender and development; (ii) information and communications technology for development; and (iii) human development at local level.

This evaluation examined RCF's contribution to development results in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. The original design of the evaluation was based on a meta-evaluation approach involving the use of outcome evaluations that were to be commissioned by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean. However, the outcome evaluations were not commissioned. This evaluation was, therefore, conducted using primary data sources.

The evaluation indicates that in comparison to previous regional programmes, and despite the complexity of programme design, UNDP made significant progress in achieving the objectives established originally. This is particularly important given the dynamic characteristics of the region that, in some measure, made it difficult to achieve programme goals.

As the Second RCF got underway, the region appeared to enter into a period of turmoil. Nevertheless, the second RCF was effective in critical areas where the UNDP placed emphasis. Most noteworthy is the contribution made to a better understanding of democracy and its challenge of delivering results for the poor. A second area of impact concerns poverty reduction strategies. The RCF led to a better understanding of poverty reduction strategies by developing measurements, providing analytic studies of the relations and effects of macroeconomic policy on poverty and inequality, and costing out the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Third, the RCF was effective in achieving an improved use of the concept of human development by promoting a regional network of national teams in charge of national human development reports and capacity building through a virtual school on human development.

However, the evaluation team found that policy advice and capacity development under the second RCF had mixed results. The efficiency of the RCF was affected by lack of coordination and poor monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. The greatest area of concern was the sustainability of regional interventions since low local and regional ownership was found and no exit strategies were designed. Many projects got underway with no clear process in place to monitor effects once UNDP participation ended.

Overall the evaluation recommends keeping the knowledge-generation effort applied to policy advice, integrating the concept of human development to other practice areas; concentrating and limiting the regional initiatives to areas of expertise and enhancing the management of projects and programmes with clear monitoring and evaluation structures and mechanisms.

Collaboration and coordination with regional institutions and with other United Nations organizations regionally needs to be strengthened and structuring the projects and initiatives of the new

RCF around the achievement of the MDGs would be commendable. At the same time, enhancing national and regional ownership through broader consultation processes and follow-up mechanisms and considering a sub-regional approach where appropriate was also recommended.

A number of people contributed to this evaluation, particularly the evaluation team composed of Eduardo Gamarra, team leader and specialist in the area of democratic governance, and the following regional specialists Miguel Szekely, in poverty reduction, Juan Mayr, in energy and climate change, Sonia Fleury, in human development, and Gabriela Byron in cross-cutting issues. I would also like to thank Oscar A. Garcia, the EO task manager, Valeria Carou Jones for her background research and Kutisha Ebron and Anish Pradhan for their administrative support.

The research and preparation of the evaluation was also completed thanks to the collaboration and openness of the staff of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, led by director Rebeca Grynspan, deputy director Martin Santiago and the Regional Programme director Freddy Justiniano.

This report would not have been possible without the commitment and support of several Resident Representatives in the region. In particular, the evaluation team would like to thank Jose Eguren, Enrique Ganuza, Lorenzo Jimenez, Carla Khammar, Bruno Moro, and Rosina Wiltshire who hosted missions of the evaluation team and Kim Bolduc, Jorge Chediek, Thierry de Lemaesquier, Pablo Mandeville, Susan McDade, Carlos Felipe Martinez, Antonio Molpeceres and Rene Mauricio Valdez for their time and insights during the cluster meetings for the evaluation. The team is also indebted to those representatives from national governments, including current and former heads of State and ministers as well as representatives from civil society and non-governmental organizations, donor countries and other agencies of the United Nations, as well as the international financial institutions, who generously gave their time and frank views.

We hope that this report will contribute to the debate on policy and development effectiveness, adding value to current UNDP efforts to promoting sustainable human development in Latin America and the Caribbean.



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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>CARICOM</b>	Caribbean Community
<b>CDERA</b>	Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Response Agency
<b>CSME</b>	Caribbean Single Market and Economy
<b>ECLAC</b>	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>GFATM</b>	Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria
<b>ICT</b>	Information and communications technology
<b>IDB</b>	Inter-American Development Bank
<b>IMF</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>LAC</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>MECOVI</b>	Mejoramiento de las Condiciones de Vida
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>OECS</b>	Organization of Eastern Caribbean States
<b>PAPEP</b>	Project for Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios
<b>PANCAP</b>	Pan Caribbean Partnership on HIV/AIDS
<b>PLWHA</b>	People living with HIV/AIDS
<b>PRODDAL</b>	Project on Development of Democracy in Latin America
<b>RBLAC</b>	Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDP)
<b>RCF</b>	Regional Cooperation Framework
<b>SIGOB</b>	Project for Governance Systems
<b>SURF</b>	Subregional resource facility
<b>TRIPS</b>	Trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Agreement Framework
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNAIDS</b>	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
<b>UNIFEM</b>	United Nations Development Fund for Women

# Executive Summary

## INTRODUCTION

1. This report presents an evaluation of the second regional cooperation framework (RCF) for Latin America and the Caribbean, implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) during 2001–2005, extended to 2007. The study assesses development results, highlighting key outputs and outcomes, lessons learned and good practices. The study also reports on the performance of the RCF in the areas of knowledge generation, policy advice and programme support. The evaluation measures how the RCF contributed to strategically positioning UNDP to establish its comparative advantage as an adviser for sustainable human development and as a knowledge-based organization in the region.

2. The second RCF was formulated through a regional consultative process. UNDP priorities, corporate changes and shifting socio-political conditions in the region influenced the priorities established for the RCF in the thematic areas of poverty reduction, democratic governance, energy and climate change, and the cross-cutting themes of gender, information and communications technology for development, HIV/AIDS, and human development at the local level.

3. This evaluation addresses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and sustainability of each RCF programme area. The original design of the evaluation was based on a meta-evaluation approach involving the use of information from outcome evaluations that were to be commissioned by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC). However, the outcome evaluations were not commissioned. This evaluation was, therefore, conducted using primary data sources. In addition to a thorough desk review of documents, interviews were conducted with: UNDP officials; representatives of multilateral institutions; members of private and public organizations in a select number of countries that benefited from regional projects; former and current govern-

ment officials; and independent representatives of academia from Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe and the United States of America.

4. In conjunction with RBLAC, the UNDP Evaluation Office organized cluster workshops in all areas of intervention. Participants included a significant number of UNDP Resident Representatives, regional programme advisers and government officials, including current and former ministers from a number of Central and South American countries. The workshops were held in Chile, Colombia, Panama, and Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, meetings with subregional organizations, such as the Caribbean Community and the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, were organized in Barbados and Guyana. Meetings with regional organizations, including the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Inter-American Development Bank and the Organization of American States, were held in Chile and in the United States of America, and the regional centres of Panama and Colombia were visited. Telephone interviews were conducted with beneficiaries in most of the countries in the region.

## MAIN FINDINGS

### RELEVANCE

5. The programmes of the second RCF are of high relevance to identifying and addressing regional development challenges. In the area of poverty reduction, there is a need to measure the extent and depth of poverty, and to analyse the effects of macroeconomic policies on the poor. In the area of democratic governance, there is a need to strengthen democracy while improving citizens' involvement and reducing inequalities. In the area of energy and climate change, there is a need to assist countries and subregions in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and in mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. The second RCF addressed the

conditions, needs and major problems affecting the region and translated this understanding into a series of concrete initiatives.

6. The RCF enhanced its relevance through identifying and closely collaborating with a number of regional and subregional organizations. Several important efforts were made to coordinate with other development initiatives. Also noteworthy were the relationships with multilateral organizations, particularly European bodies.

7. One of the most significant contributions of the RCF was its ability to engage decision makers of the region in a dialogue about key development issues of the day. Although this engagement was most visible in the democratic governance area, it was present in nearly all practice areas. In the case of energy and climate change, the programme cooperated with the Forum of Ministries of the Environment linked to regional decisions at the United Nations (UN) international conferences in Johannesburg and Monterrey. It should be noted that while engaging in this dialogue was important, it is difficult to gauge the effect of such engagement on policy decisions.

#### **EFFECTIVENESS**

8. The second RCF was effective in the four critical areas where UNDP placed great emphasis. Most significant was the effect of the second RCF on developing a better understanding of democracy and its challenge of delivering results for the poor. This is a specific objective of the democratic governance area and, therefore, represents a major accomplishment that affects all other areas of intervention. The regional programme took 20 years of low-profile but significant academic work in democratic governance and placed the resulting findings at the centre of contemporary policy debates.

9. Another area of positive effect of the second RCF is poverty reduction. RCF programmes have led the region to a better understanding of poverty reduction strategies by developing measurements, providing analytical studies of the relationship and effects of macroeconomic policy on poverty and inequality, and costing out the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

10. Third, the RCF was effective in achieving an improved use of the concept of human development by promoting a regional network of national teams, which produced more than 80 Human Development Reports at national, subnational and subregional levels, and by capacity-building efforts conducted through the Virtual School on Human Development. In this sense, RCF programmes contributed to a better understanding of the changing needs of the region.

11. The fourth objective of the RCF was to generate and share knowledge. The findings show that the RCF was effective in achieving this objective across the areas of intervention. However, this effectiveness did not always translate to quality information products and dissemination strategies.

12. Policy advisory services had mixed results. The area of poverty alleviation linked to the MDGs had important policy results, and several democratic governance programmes significantly influenced contemporary policy debates. Less success can be claimed in the area of energy and climate change, and cross-cutting issues such as gender have a similarly mixed record. Human development has been an important reference point, especially as governments read the policy recommendations of National Human Development Reports.

13. This evaluation revealed inconsistencies in the success of the capacity development efforts of the RCF. Some programmes, such as the Information and Management for Governance System, the Virtual School on Human Development, and local governance fairs, were more effective than others in transferring knowledge.

#### **EFFICIENCY**

14. UNDP achieved efficiency by forging partnerships that allowed it to leverage external resources in order to finance regional initiatives. At the same time, regional initiatives made good use of scarce resources, especially in the areas of poverty reduction, democratic governance and human development.

15. The efficiency of programmes was hampered by spreading the portfolio of interventions too thinly and by poor monitoring systems that allowed for

some duplication of efforts. The duplication was also interpreted by the evaluators as a lack of coordination between regional programme initiatives and UNDP country offices.

16. Efficiency was also affected by poor coordination with other UN organizations, although there were cases where the regional programme worked reasonably well with other UN agencies. Such programmes were in the areas of the MDGs, local governance, environment and gender. In particular, cooperation and coordination were achieved with the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Environment Programme and ECLAC.

### **COST-EFFECTIVENESS**

17. Based on general observation, this evaluation concludes that, overall, a reasonable relationship exists between costs and results; however, the evaluators lacked sufficient evidence to substantiate this conclusion.

18. RBLAC was exceedingly forthcoming with financial data, although confusion existed in clustering programmes according to either their original programmatic categories or the new programming and monitoring structures of UNDP. Thus, poor monitoring and evaluation systems did not provide sufficient data to make it possible to assess this criterion.

19. Major RCF interventions received financial support from other bilateral and multilateral institutions, and extensive programmatic and financial information supplied to donors provided evidence of good use of resources. Quality data, however, was not available for all RCF interventions.

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

20. The sustainability of RCF programmes is the area of greatest concern to the success of the RCF. Overall, the RCF attempted to promote local and regional ownership, but the results have not been as expected. Local stakeholders lacked a sense of ownership of regional programmes and continue to expect UNDP to carry the full burden of most initiatives.

21. The sustainability of RCF interventions may be compromised due to the absence of clearly defined

exit strategies in the design phase. Many projects got underway with no clear processes in place to monitor results after UNDP participation ended. Evidence shows that national contributions to RCF programmes have made these interventions more sustainable, as demonstrated by the *Mejoramiento de las Condiciones de Vida* household surveys or the presidential follow-up system established in many countries of the region.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

22. In comparison to previous regional programmes, and despite the complexity of programme design, UNDP made significant progress towards achieving the RCF objectives established during the design phase. This is particularly important given the dynamic characteristics of the region, which, in some measure, made it difficult to achieve programme goals. Achieving objectives speaks well of complex programmes that were sufficiently adaptable to changing regional circumstances.

23. The second RCF for Latin America and the Caribbean deserves high praise for the complexity of the numerous programmes that were developed during the 2001–2006 period. Most programmes exhibited a degree of sophistication that demonstrated a grasp of the major development challenges that face this vast and complicated region.

24. The RCF has been successful in establishing working agreements with programme countries and donors, and in mobilizing third-party resources to finance regional initiatives. This achievement is particularly noteworthy, as it highlights that other organizations recognize the value of UNDP efforts.

25. The RCF established ambitious goals yet had limited resources to achieve them, thus creating a disparity that posed implementation challenges and affected programme efficiency. While the goals are laudable, the RCF should have aimed to be consistent with the availability of resources. In an environment of limited resources, the RCF portfolio was spread too thinly in an attempt to cover increasing demands.

26. This evaluation concludes that successful interventions are those where UNDP has developed expertise, and where national human and financial resources have been invested.

27. A large 'grey zone' of coordination between regional programme initiatives and national projects has hampered the ability of all initiatives to produce more significant results. Weak coordination hampers the effectiveness, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of regional initiatives.

## LESSONS LEARNED

28. The experience of the second RCF points to several lessons that may enhance the implementation of future regional programmes. The first lesson is that UNDP has been most effective in areas where its expertise was demonstrable, such as poverty reduction, democratic governance and human development.

29. In those areas where UNDP expertise is either incipient or lagging, the evaluation results are mixed. The efforts are commendable, and in some cases even outstanding; however, it is evident that UNDP efforts are complementary to those of other organizations that have developed key competences in areas such as energy and climate change or HIV/AIDS.

30. Particular focus should be placed on cross-cutting issues such as gender, which could be considerably strengthened and streamlined. The concern is that significant efforts are needed to mainstream these key issues.

31. In all areas, arrangements with regional institutions could be significantly strengthened. While the regional programme developed significant ties with these institutions, such ties lack continuity. UNDP could play a positive role by developing strategic, long-term institutional and programmatic arrangements.

32. While improving coordination between regional and national programmes should be a priority, this evaluation concludes that country and regional ownership is effective when outputs and outcomes are clarified through regional interventions, as was the case of the Project on Democratic Development in Latin America and subsequent initiatives and projects.

33. A final lesson learned is that the regional programme needs a coherent and more systematic management and monitoring system with corresponding outcomes, outputs and indicators that help enhance its effectiveness.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

34. The following recommendations are derived from the evaluation framework.

- (a) Keep the knowledge generation effort applied to policy advice, integrating the concept of human development into other practice areas as a guiding framework. Knowledge generation is a key UNDP goal, and policy relevance of all programmes is critical to the countries in the region. Integration of the human development framework into other areas will substantially augment the UNDP position as an important participant in regional development.
- (b) Concentrate and limit the regional initiatives to areas of expertise. The RCF has been characterized by a great diversity of projects. Given the scarcity of resources, it follows to attempt to narrow UNDP engagement.
- (c) Enhance management of projects and programmes with clear monitoring and evaluation structures, and mechanisms with a results-based management approach. The main critique of this evaluation is the absence of monitoring mechanisms and evaluation structures.
- (d) Enhance coordination with UNDP global and national structures, particularly with country offices. Each area examined in this evaluation noted recurring coordination problems. It is clear that this must be an overarching goal of future RCFs.
- (e) Increase collaboration and coordination with regional institutions and with other UN organizations. This evaluation notes that the second RCF was able to promote and develop significant relationships with regional institutions; however, these relationships are incipient and require considerable work to become effective. A similar situation exists internally, where there is enormous potential for regional collaboration and coordination with other UN system agencies.
- (f) Structure new RCF projects and initiatives around achieving the MDGs. This recommendation is self-evident, given the overwhelming MDG focus of the UN system as a whole. Specifically, it is recommended that this objective become transversal to the thematic areas.

- (g) Enhance national and regional ownership through broader consultation processes and follow-up mechanisms. This evaluation concludes that national and regional ownership of the majority of RCF projects was weak. Consequently, consultation processes need to be strengthened, and participatory follow-up mechanisms need to be developed.
- (h) A subregional approach is recommended in view of the diversity of interests within the region. In several of the thematic areas, it is evident that a broad regional approach often misses subregional nuances. The next RCF should consider an approach that can identify such nuances so as to avoid the trap of generalizing efforts while missing specific targets of opportunity. At the same time, the approach should be sufficiently flexible to account for the dynamics of subregional patterns.

## Chapter 1

# Introduction

### 1.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The Evaluation Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was mandated to conduct an independent evaluation of the second regional cooperation framework (RCF) for Latin America and the Caribbean. This evaluation assesses overall programme performance and outcomes of the RCF, covering its scope and range, policy advisory services and knowledge management. Findings of this evaluation will provide inputs for the future RCFs.

The second RCF, implemented during 2001–2005 and extended to 2007, was presented as an instrument for UNDP to promote sustainable human development in Latin America and the Caribbean, and to reaffirm the organization's key role in achieving the United Nations Millennium Declaration commitment to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty by the year 2015. The RCF represents the policy framework within which UNDP undertook activities in areas of priority concern.

The second RCF covered three main thematic areas:

1. Poverty reduction and inequality;
2. Democratic governance; and
3. Energy and climate change.

In addition, the RCF focused on four cross-cutting issues:

1. Gender and development;
2. Information and communications technology (ICT) for development;
3. HIV/AIDS; and
4. Human development at local level.

The second RCF was formulated through an extensive process of regional consultation that culminated in a regional strategy. UNDP priorities, corporate changes and shifting socio-political conditions in the region affected the setting of priorities and the implementation of work in both thematic and cross-cutting areas.

The principal objectives of this evaluation are to:

1. Assess the achievement of development results, highlighting key areas of outputs and outcomes, lessons learned and good practices.
2. Evaluate the performance of the RCF in the areas of knowledge generation, policy advice and programme support.
3. Ascertain how the RCF contributed to strategically positioning UNDP to establish its comparative advantage as an adviser for sustainable human development and as a knowledge-based organization in the region.

### 1.2 METHODOLOGY

#### 1.2.1 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The evaluation framework consists of five key inter-related sets of questions derived from standard evaluation criteria.

**1. Relevance:** The first set of questions measures the relevance of each programme to assess the extent to which the objectives of the RCF are consistent with regional needs and priorities.

**2. Effectiveness:** The second set of questions aims to measure programme effectiveness to determine the extent to which the achievements and results accomplished the intended organizational and development objectives. The evaluation also highlights the lessons learned from past experience.

**3. Efficiency:** The third set of questions measures the efficiency of RCF programmes to understand how resources were converted into outputs. This process gauges whether the approach used was best suited to achieving the intended objectives. The evaluation seeks to identify best practices and innovative approaches within each thematic and cross-cutting area and within the entire regional programme.

**4. Cost-effectiveness:** The fourth set of questions involves assessing the cost-effectiveness of RCF programmes to evaluate, to the extent possible, whether appropriate use of resources had been established to enable programmes to meet their objectives.

**5. Sustainability:** The fifth and final set of questions of the evaluation framework explores whether sustainable exit strategies were incorporated into the design phase of each project. In this analysis, sustainability is examined in view of the degree to which partners have maintained the benefits of each programme after the active participation of UNDP has ended.

### 1.2.2 DATA COLLECTION

To apply the evaluation framework, data was gathered using a combination of research methods, including desk review, workshop-based outreach, and personal and telephone interviews.

**Desk review:** This evaluation undertook an in-depth desk review of the documentation produced by each project. The Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC) was exceedingly accommodating with the access it provided to the evaluators; documents supplied included not only cursory programme descriptions, but also budgetary information, internal reports and other valuable data.

**Workshops:** Because the areas of activity were so extensive, the Evaluation Office, in conjunction with RBLAC, conducted workshops in all areas of UNDP intervention. Participants included a significant number of resident representatives, regional programme advisers and government officials, including current and former ministers from a number of Central and South American countries. The workshops were held in Chile, Colom-

bia, Panama, and Trinidad and Tobago, and each was attended by representatives from most of the countries in which the regional programme had activities. In addition, the workshops relied on the presence of a number of representatives of organizations outside of UNDP who have been the beneficiaries of projects.

**Interviews:** Individual interviews included: UNDP officials; representatives of multilateral institutions; members of private and public organizations in a select number of countries that have interacted with regional projects; government officials and independent academics from Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe and the United States (See Annex 1). In addition, in the area of democratic governance, a type of Delphi survey of independent analysts was conducted via email to supplement the results of the interviews.

Individual interviewees were selected largely through six cluster programme workshops, where members of the evaluation team were able to interact and interview a large number of persons linked to the regional programme in specific thematic areas. In addition, a substantial number of interviewees were selected for telephone and in-person interviews based on existing information on each interviewee's knowledge of or previous involvement with UNDP programmes. Such individuals included a sitting president, the secretary general of the Organization of American States, and a former president.

### 1.2.3 LIMITATIONS

The second RCF did not explicitly distinguish between outcomes and outputs, and no indicators were provided. As a result, the evaluation team was unable to clearly distinguish outputs from outcomes, and developed only a broad set of mainly qualitative criteria.

A final observation regarding methodology is that the evaluation was intended to utilize a meta-evaluation approach, building upon a series of outcome evaluations in the main programme areas. However, at the beginning of the evaluation process, it was discovered that RBLAC did not commission such outcome evaluations as part of the second RCF. Consequently, the present evaluation had to engage in detailed information collection in the field.

## Chapter 2

# RCF Overview

### 2.1 THE REGIONAL CONTEXT

An understanding of the context in which the second RCF was implemented was critical to conducting this evaluation. In early 2000s, most Latin American countries were celebrating nearly two decades of democratic rule. This process was important in the context of a region that is characterized both by dynamic and constant change and by profound inequality. Over the course of the 20th Century, the region had undergone significant socio-political and economic change, experiencing periodic transformations from military to civilian governments, democratic and authoritarian ruling structures, revolutions and failed attempts at reform.

The general pattern of constant change is also evident in the Caribbean. While greater political stability characterizes the subregion, most of its countries face problems identified as common to small island developing States, such as: small populations, limited resources, susceptibility to natural disasters, vulnerability to external shocks, excessive dependence on international trade, high transportation and communication costs, disproportionately expensive public administration and infrastructure due to small size, and little to no opportunity to create economies of scale. Caribbean countries also face a relatively high level of HIV/AIDS prevalence and a further loss of human resources through a high level of ‘brain drain’.

The most recent wave of democracy came in the early 1980s. In the early part of the 21st Century, democracy in the region faces serious challenges. Over the course of the quarter-century of democratic rule, the region committed to electoral democracy, and most countries adopted significant reforms to the economy by moving away from state-centred development strategies. The measures adopted largely involved a combination of policies aimed at stimulating foreign investment while empowering the local private sectors to assume economic leadership. Privatization strategies were the most heralded, especially in larger countries where

sizable state enterprises were privatized. These structural reforms were broadly grouped around the euphemistic notion of the Washington Consensus, which included a set of recommendations that were adopted in most countries of the region to varying degrees.

Most observers agree that democracy and market-oriented policies failed to adequately address the deep social, economic and political inequities that characterize the region. As a result, a number of countries exhibited a generalized disenchantment with representative democracy and existing economic development strategies. Thus, it is not surprising that in the last decade — and with greater intensity in the last three years — presidents have come into office riding the wave of anti-systemic sentiment and promising to resolve issues that democracy and the market have failed to address. This particular situation is evinced in the Andean countries of Bolivia, Ecuador and Venezuela. In these three nations, questions regarding the quality of democracy, the nature of economic reform, and the citizenship rights of excluded socio-economic sectors were at the core of movements that brought new presidents into office.

As the second RCF got underway, the region appeared to enter another intense period of turmoil. Social movements blocked roads and engaged in demonstrations. Political parties experienced a profound crisis as levels of citizen trust in political institutions dropped to unbelievably low levels. Moreover, the severe economic crisis of the late 1990s had failed to let up, as a large portion of the region’s citizens could only find employment in the informal economy.

This brief overview of the regional context brings into relief the dynamic historical period that the RCF had to face and address. As such, one of the principal elements under observation in this evaluation was the degree to which the second RCF was able to respond to such changing circumstances.

## 2.2 RCF BACKGROUND

It is important to review the principal objectives of the RCF in order to gauge progress towards meeting these central goals. In the year 2000, UNDP spelled out several ambitious objectives that were to become embedded in the RCF:

*UNDP must above all be a facilitator, without assuming itself a policy or decisional role. In fact, quite apart from the precept of each country's 'ownership' of its own development, experience has shown that to be viable in a democratic society, institutional development as well as policy must have endogenous roots, and be compatible with the cultural, historical and legal/administrative matrix of the country concerned. While in many instances UNDP must and will also assume an advocacy role, explicitly or implicitly, its main effort will be in the area of capacity-building, information and the transmission of knowledge. This calls both for an in-house information, information-sharing and capacity-building effort, and for a comprehensive information system to gather, analyze and transmit knowledge on issues related to sustainable human development in the region, providing the space — actual or virtual, using state-of-the-art communications technology — for a dialogue with and among policy makers, other stakeholders and scholars.<sup>1</sup>*

This section provides brief descriptions of select programmes developed as part of the first and second RCF efforts to fulfil this strategic vision. As the programmes in each area are extensive, these descriptions are not intended to be comprehensive, but to provide an overview of the number of programmes and the range of activities under the RCF.

## 2.3 RCF INTERVENTIONS BY PRACTICE AREA

### 2.3.1 POVERTY AND INEQUALITY REDUCTION AND ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MDGS

Supporting household surveys in five countries: In a strategic partnership with the *Mejoramiento de las Condiciones de Vida (MECOVI)*<sup>2</sup> programme, the RCF supported the development and application of household surveys in 11 countries, including Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, Bolivia, Haiti, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Dominican Republic, the Netherlands Antilles and Suriname. The expected results from this effort were to generate data by gender and other relevant indicators and to increase coverage of the population included in household surveys.

A major objective of the initiative was to build a database covering 90 percent of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). This objective was achieved, with four coherent databases becoming available for the first time. The databases currently cover 20 countries, 9 more than the countries supported by the RCF. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), World Bank, and, most importantly, the Centre for Distributive, Labour and Social Studies at La Plata University, supported the initiative jointly with UNDP under the MECOVI umbrella.

**Strengthening the regional network of 35 specialists, including specialists from the Caribbean:** The regional network, created in 1998, was consolidated by the development of seven studies: (i) *¿Quién se beneficia del libre comercio? Promoción de exportaciones y pobreza en América Latina y el Caribe en los 90;* (ii) *Meeting the Millennium Poverty Reduction Targets in Latin America and the Caribbean;* (iii)

1. Governance for Sustainable Human Development: Institutional Strengthening and Policy Dialogue, RBLAC Strategy 2000-2005 for Latin America and the Caribbean (UNDP: 2001)

2. Launched in 1996 by the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, *Mejoramiento de las Condiciones de Vida* is an initiative for the development and application of household surveys throughout the region. Through the RCF, UNDP established a partnership with MECOVI, participating directly through funding, advocacy and consensus-building in specific cases.

*Crecimiento con Equidad: La Lucha contra la pobreza en Centroamérica*; (iv) *Etnicidad y los objetivos del milenio en America Latina y el Caribe*; (v) *La igualdad como Estrategia de Combate a la Pobreza*; (vi) *Exportaciones, crecimiento económico, desigualdad y pobreza en Costa Rica*;<sup>3</sup> and (vii) *Policies to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals* (ongoing). The expected result was to increase knowledge on the relationships between poverty, social inequality and social policy in the region.

The network model of the RCF highlights the 'social capital' component in its design. Rather than opening a call for proposals to identify the highest quality teams of researchers, participation in this scheme is handled by invitation, and the main objective is to maximize country coverage. The most recent working round of this network, 'Assessing Development Strategies to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals in Latin America', covered 18 countries.

**Supporting poverty reduction strategy papers:**

Under the RCF, support for the development of poverty reduction strategies was given to the four highly indebted poor countries (HIPC) in the region (Guyana, Nicaragua, Honduras and Bolivia) and to six non-HIPC countries (Guatemala, Dominican Republic, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela). The expected result of this product was the generation of poverty reduction strategies in eight countries in the region. The original target was surpassed by two countries.

Implemented in line with the International Monetary Fund and World Bank policy, poverty reduction strategy papers in HIPC are initiatives linked to negotiations of external debt reduction. A thorough review of the LAC region reveals that out of the 18 countries for which information is available, only 11 have a national plan or programme for poverty alleviation. The RCF has been instrumental in the development of at least seven of these strategies — in Argentina, Bolivia, Dominican Republic, Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Paraguay.

**Improving the quality and efficiency of social services:** Although multilateral financial institutions such as IDB and the World Bank have traditionally provided technical assistance for policy design and formulation in the region, these institutions typically do so in the context of a loan or a financial operation. This implies a series of procedures and requirements that can occasionally delay the provision of service or attach conditionality to the service. In contrast, UNDP identified experts to meet specific demands in selected countries (including Paraguay, Uruguay, Dominican Republic, Venezuela and Panama), responding to unexpected and urgent demands effectively, efficiently, with low financial requirements and in a flexible way. The main focus of the advisory activities was knowledge sharing and implementation experiences of conditional cash-transfer programmes.

**Establishing permanent targeting mechanisms:**

This evaluation did not identify any specific projects or activities where the development of permanent targeting mechanisms was the main objective. Even though targeting mechanisms are crucial for the implementation of conditional cash-transfer programmes, the materials provided did not allow for an appropriate evaluation of the achievement of this goal. However, the RCF did provide direct technical support to several countries (e.g., Uruguay, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic) in establishing systems of conditional cash transfers to benefit the extremely poor on the basis of permanent targeting mechanisms. The programme made available the experience gathered by Programa Oportunidades in Mexico, Chile Solidario in Chile, and Fomen Zero and Bolsa Familia in Brazil. The RCF financed missions of experts and workshops with participation of high-level government officials of assisted countries.

**Strengthening of financial statistics in Central America and the Caribbean:**

This component of the RCF addressed a structural problem of the poorest countries in the region, a problem that is likely have long-lasting effects. RCF funds financed 10

3. (i) Vos and Ganuza, *Who gains from free trade? Export-led growth, inequality and poverty in Latin America* (Routledge: 2006, London); (ii) *Meeting the Millennium Poverty Reduction Targets in Latin America and the Caribbean* (UNDP: 2002, New York); (iii) de Barros et al, *Growth with Equity: Fight against poverty in Central America* (Alfaomega: 2005, Bogota); (iv) *Ethnicity and the MDGs in Latin America and the Caribbean* (UNDP: 2005, Bogota); (v) *Equity as a Poverty Reduction Strategy* (UNDP: 2004); (vi) *Exports, Economic Growth, Inequities and Poverty in Costa Rica*. Sauma P & Sanchez M. (UNDP:2003)

projects directed at this objective. One of the main initiatives was a partnership with the MECOVI programme to develop and systematize household surveys for the generation of socio-economic statistical data in Suriname, Netherlands Antilles and the Dominican Republic. This particular initiative was launched in 2005, and, as with other similar efforts within this RCF component, the speed at which it can advance in its initial stages is rather low due to the high level of training needed by local researchers and practitioners.

**Supporting MDG follow-up – MDG progress reports:** Follow-up country reports on the status of the MDGs were produced for 23 countries, and some countries produced more than one report. In addition, there were two subregional reports and several methodological publications. These reports are national initiatives completed with the collaboration of the UN system at the country level, and the RCF highlights its technical support to the endeavour.

Since the mandate to follow up on MDG progress dates after the launch of the RCF, such follow-up was not part of the original strategy. Its inclusion in the framework was quite natural, as all products for the poverty and inequality reduction area have a direct relationship to achieving the MDGs. Documenting the evolution of poverty (the first MDG) is only possible when reliable data is available. Two RCF products (supporting household surveys and strengthening financial statistics) are designed to support data production in countries where it is missing. Similarly, the likelihood of meeting the first MDG is directly related to each country's capacity to design and implement relevant policies, a topic that is related to three RCF products (supporting poverty reduction strategy papers, improving social services, and establishing targeting mechanisms).

The objective of consolidating the network of experts in the region is also directly related to the MDGs. The first round's project-related research focused on poverty and its dynamics, but the last round, which was completed at the end of 2006, was specifically designed as an element of support for monitoring MDG progress. This last project, 'Assessing Development Strategies to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals in Latin America', applies general equilibrium models for assessing the likelihood of meeting five of the eight MDGs in

18 countries of the region. The results are expected to inform policy decisions and identify areas where governments should focus in order to address the greatest delays in progress.

### 2.3.2 DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

The democratic governance area rests on the conceptual framework developed by the Project on Democratic Development in Latin America. The regional approach is divided into political instruments (e.g., Regional Project on Democratic Dialogues and Short-Term Analysis and Prospective Scenarios for Improved Governance) and management instruments (e.g., Project for Governance Systems and Local Governance).

**Project on Democratic Development in Latin America:** Initiated in 2003, the Project on Democratic Development in Latin America (PRODDAL) was implemented with support from the European Union. The project's objectives were to analyse the state of democracy in the region through a comprehensive and thorough data-gathering process that involved a series of multidisciplinary methods. Such methods ranged from in-depth interviews with key socio-political actors to a large survey conducted by the Corporación Latino Barómetro. The goals of the project were to: provide a new way of examining the challenges faced by incipient democracies throughout the hemisphere; to engage UNDP in the debate about the direction of democracy in the region; and to offer policy-relevant recommendations. One of the key objectives was to formulate a theoretical framework that identified the specific characteristics of Latin American democracies and distinguished them from Northern and Western democracies. A central concept developed by this approach is the notion that the absence of full citizenship is an important factor in understanding the challenges facing burgeoning democracies in the region.

Within the human development framework, the PRODDAL project established a conceptual contribution that provided coherence to the RCF interventions in democratic governance. A central concept developed by PRODDAL is that the absence of full citizenship is a factor critical to understanding the challenges facing regional democracies.

Despite such progress, PRODDAL is far from becoming the conceptual framework of the area. The success of PRODDAL came after some of the evaluated projects were launched, and no effort has been possible to 'retrofit' projects to the broad framework. Moving forward will involve not only additional conceptual work, but also a substantial effort of making the framework simple, manageable and practical.

The PRODDAL report brought together the best minds in the region and contributed an important text to the debate about the state of democracy in the region. Based on the contemporary debate on transition to democracy, a conceptual approach was developed and tested with empirical data. It considered the specific characteristics of Latin American history and context, identified the differences from Western societies and incorporated the concept of citizenship (political, civil and social). This conceptual approach fed into other initiatives oriented at countries in critical situations (e.g., PAPEP, Regional Project on Democratic Dialogue). The Local Governance Project has also been recognized by multiple actors as a useful and practical methodology for sharing knowledge.

**Strategic Short-Term Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios for Improved Governance in Latin America:** This project was developed in 2004, following the extensive use of alternative scenario analyses conducted by the Human Development Report team in Bolivia, in the midst of a serious local political crisis and on the heels of the PRODDAL project launch. The key objective of the Strategic Short-Term Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios for Improved Governance in Latin America (PAPEP) project is to serve both as a vehicle for the generation of knowledge about unfolding democratic processes and the risks they face, and as an instrument for policy advice to governments facing serious challenges. The main objective of PAPEP is to develop an analytical tool that allows policy makers to understand possible future political scenarios, and to design policy in accordance with the objective of strengthening democratic governance.

The PAPEP project is one of the few in the democratic governance area that were a direct offshoot of PRODDAL, in large measure because of the

significant overlap of the teams. The objectives of PAPEP were straightforward, although the amount of work completed was extraordinary. The project aimed to establish four national teams to conduct data gathering and analysis. This objective was met, and the amount of qualitative and quantitative data analysis that the teams generated was enormous.

**Regional Project on Democratic Dialogue:** Launched in 2001, the Regional Project on Democratic Dialogue aimed to develop a mechanism for governments and socio-political actors to improve their relations through innovative tactics for consensus building. The key objectives of this project were: knowledge creation; codification of dialogue experiences; incorporation of new partners and strengthening of alliances with institutions engaged in dialogue; consolidation of practitioners' networks to strengthen the support to teams and to country offices; and the development of a capacity-building strategy in the region to train key local actors in multi-stakeholder processes. This project engaged governments, civil society organizations, dialogue facilitators and organizations that promote dialogue.

**Strengthening Management Capacity for Good Governance:** This project is a tailored service provided to regional governments who require programmes to train staff and access to new methods and technological tools to improve transparency. In place for over 15 years, the Strengthening Management Capacity for Good Governance (SIGOB) project assumes that good governance is the development of state capacity to deliver services in an effective and transparent manner.

The project created 17 different modules aimed at a variety of levels of public decision-making. Noteworthy examples of SIGOB projects include:

- A module to manage the correspondence of the president to enable the head of state to respond to constituents in a timely and effective manner; and
- A strategic programming system that helps government bureaucrats and political actors establish a national agenda for governance by identifying key local, national or international events and dates that affect a president's agenda.

**Local Governance Virtual Fair:** This project aimed to capture, systematize, promote and facilitate the exchange of useful knowledge in local governance and human development throughout Latin America. The objective was to act as a broker between supply and demand of knowledge. The regional project produced a map of good practices and lessons learned, led advocacy events such as knowledge fairs with mayors and other local political actors, and developed tools for the transfer of knowledge among Latin American municipal governments. The project also built a network of experts and institutions, linking 15 countries through UNDP country offices. In its second phase, the project focused on strengthening local governance with the goal of contributing to the achievement of the MDGs.

**Latin American Governance and Information Knowledge System:** The objective of this project was to build capacity for institutional change through the creation of an information and knowledge network and system on democratic governance. In partnership with the Generalitat of Catalonia, Spain, through the International Institute of Governance of Barcelona, the initiative aimed to enhance public access to knowledge and resources on democratic governance, and on human and social development. The project was discontinued in December 2003.

**Conflict Prevention – Early Warning:** This project aimed to design and validate a methodology for identifying and addressing conflicts and crises in Latin America in a variety of contexts, including societies divided by armed conflict, post-conflict societies and post-transition democracies. Georgetown University professors developed a framework for the implementation of an early warning system. The principal result was the publication of a report, *Democracy, Conflict Prevention and Early Warning in Latin America: The Case of Colombia*. The methodology aimed to integrate levels of democratic governance with levels of violence in a country. The project ended in 2006 and the recommendations of the report have yet to be implemented.

**Security and Democracy in the Andean Region:** A conceptual paper and five national case studies analysing major threats and the socio-economic and political factors affecting security were discussed in

a series of workshops. A regional comparative study and a diagnostic study of the social situation were presented at one of a series of seminars, ‘Democracy and Security in the Andes’, held in La Paz, Bolivia (May 2003), with participation of the Organization of American States, the Andean Development Corporation, UN system agencies, and security and development experts.

**Strengthening democratic governance in the Security Sector in Latin America:** In 2004, the regional project — in partnership with the UN Department of Political Affairs, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, and ECLAC — initiated a project which aimed to strengthen democratic governance in the Latin American security sector. The objectives were: to map the defence sector in Latin America, identifying the main issues and problems, and providing recommendations on how to face these challenges; to make the military institutions more transparent and trusted by designing methodologies of comparison of military expenditures and of Defense White Books; and to increase trust between the military and civilians by promoting dialogue between them. The project concluded in 2005 and the principal deliverables were submitted.

**Regional Project on Rule of Law and Access to Justice:** This initiative provided support to UNDP country offices and counterparts with surveys, diagnostic assessments and policy advice on judicial reform, with emphasis on access to justice in Central America and the Andean subregion.

**Support for the Establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice:** This project provided support to the Judicial and Legal Services Committee (the management body for the Caribbean Court of Justice) in identifying and recruiting judges, in public education and outreach on the Court, and in setting up its internal personnel management, accounting, administrative and information technology systems. Strengthening the Court is perceived as an important dimension of subregional integration, and there is a need to establish a court of final appeal to replace the British Privy Council.

**Spanish Trust Fund:** The Spanish Trust Fund is a programme established by an agreement between UNDP and the Government of Spain in October

1995 with the purpose of strengthening democratic governance in Central America. Spain granted a total of US\$13.4 million to the Fund, allowing implementation of 25 projects, four of which commenced during 2000–2004.

### **2.3.3 ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

The Energy and Climate Change Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean included a number of products and services to assist countries and subregions in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and in mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change through the use of sustainable energy. An additional goal was to provide access to renewable energy to poor families and isolated groups. This programme and all of the projects within its purview ended in 2002.

In 2006, the Knowledge Brokering Platform in Energy and Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean was established. This programme encompasses the MDGs and seeks to increase country-office capabilities in energy and environmental issues to generate new business opportunities through knowledge-based tools. In addition, the programme seeks to promote risk management and the prevention of natural disasters.

The development of a strategic sphere for energy and climate change was slowed by the delay in the Kyoto Protocol negotiations. The goals established for the RCF were linked to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, the adaptation to climate change, the promotion of risk management and the prevention of disasters (linked to climate change mitigation). Additionally, the RCF aimed to provide poor and marginalized groups with access to renewable energy sources. Because the Kyoto Protocol only came into force in 2005, the energy and climate change programme was modified. This had a negative effect on the achievement of goals.

The goals in the area of knowledge creation and dissemination include: the development of a regional network of climate change experts; comparative studies in eight countries based on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), national communications, and the Capacity Development Initiative; development of a website for regional UNFCCC negotiators; and promotion of new partnerships to disseminate knowledge about the financing of

technical cooperation for developing countries.

The goals in the policy area included: augmenting the capacity of national negotiators in the UNFCCC; supporting the development of options for country participation in the global environmental markets; assessing costs and benefits of revamping the energy and transport sectors, upgrading technology and/or marketing forest carbon and other environmental services; the development of climate change adaptation strategies; the formulation of cooperation frameworks with the support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), including pilot programmes in Latin America and the Caribbean; the development of technical capacity to conduct vulnerability assessments, regional climate and socio-economic scenarios, and cost-benefit analysis of adaptation options; and support to the countries of the Andean subregion in adapting the regional framework to their particular needs.

Finally, in the programme support area, the goal was to promote: demonstration projects on renewable energy to benefit 100,000 poor families; climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes; risk assessment, disaster prevention and reduction, particularly in Central America, the Caribbean and the Andean countries, with a special focus on indigenous communities; new funding mechanisms such as the Adaptation Fund, the Clean Development Mechanism and debt-for-nature swaps; synergies among the global conventions, through the Capacity Development Initiative and programmes such as the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor; and GEF funding for new regional UNDP initiatives.

## **2.4 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

### **2.4.1 GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

Efforts to promote gender equality are based on the commitment of LAC governments to international standards (e.g., the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Platform and the convention *Belem do Para* on the elimination of violence against women). In addition to the rights-based approach of these agreements, it is recognized that promoting women's empowerment and full participation is essential to the effectiveness and sustainability of UNDP interventions in RCF practice areas, as well as to achieving the MDGs.

Mainstreaming — an expected result of the RCF — is defined by UNDP as “a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.”<sup>4</sup>

The RCF takes place in a time-frame involving a number of important activities at the UNDP corporate level. Significant studies and policy statements include: *MDGs Through a Gender Lens* (2003); *Resource Guide for Gender Theme Groups* (2005); *A Gender Review of National MDG Reports* (2005); *How to Elaborate a Gender Strategy for a Country Office* (2005) and *Taking Gender Equality Seriously: Making Progress, Meeting New Challenges* (2006);. In view of the UNDP mandate, the efforts to ‘engender’ the MDGs were perhaps most significant. These included specific objectives for women’s equality but did not develop gender indicators for all goals. Extensive gender mapping of UNDP projects indicates that significant work is underway in LAC countries, although the methodology for mapping does not specifically distinguish RCF contribution.

The evaluation of the first RCF acknowledged that advances had been made in promoting women’s rights and mainstreaming gender equality, but significant challenges remain. Such challenges include domestic violence, trafficking in girls, women’s lack of protection in conflict situations, absence of gender equity in poverty eradication strategies and women’s unequal access to basic services.

In the RCF, specific references to gender in practice areas include: recognition of the impact of HIV/AIDS on gender equality, the need to collect “better data on poverty, disaggregated by gender” and, as expected, the results of a gender approach that improved gender mainstreaming in policy-making and democratic governance initiatives.

**Regional Workshop On Gender:** This first significant gender activity in the region took place in 2003

at the initiative of UNDP Mexico. The workshop was attended by 12 country Gender Focal Points and six Resident Representatives. It led to the formation of a working group to develop a Regional Strategic Framework for Gender with a mandate to: provide recommendations for the effective incorporation of a gender focus in the activities of RBLAC, regional programmes and other UNDP development initiatives at the corporate level; establish guidelines for the integration of a gender focus in the service lines of UNDP; and help the ownership of the principal of gender mainstreaming as a corporate objective in the interior of field offices in the region.

**Regional Gender Steering Committee:** The goal of this recently formed Committee is to define strategic priorities and monitor implementation of the gender mainstreaming plan. The high level of the Committee indicates a commitment to accountability. The Committee is chaired by the Regional Director and includes four Resident Representatives, two Deputy Resident Representatives, Gender Focal Points, the Caribbean subregional resource facility coordinator and policy advisers, and representatives from the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

**Gender Knowledge Platform:** The only significant RCF gender project, the Gender Knowledge Platform was established in 2005 and is already infusing energy, resources and technical expertise into the area of mainstreaming in order to strengthen regional capacity. It has developed a website for UNDP and partner use (online as of October, 2006), provides support to field offices in mainstreaming (including a practical guide for elaborating a country-level gender strategy) and coordinates select research.

**Gender Mainstreaming Initiative 2006:** Addressing the global Gender Action Plan 2006–2007, the Gender Mainstreaming Initiative is supported by contributions from the Government of the Netherlands. Fifteen LAC countries have presented proposals for projects, with critical technical support offered by the Gender Knowledge Platform.

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4. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization definition of mainstreaming, quoted in *Transforming the Mainstream: Gender in UNDP* (UNDP:

#### 2.4.2 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

The RCF recognized that growth of information and communications technologies accentuates both opportunities and challenges in an increasingly globalized system. The framework describes “universal access to the knowledge and information needed to address emerging problems effectively” as a “global public good”. The particular roles seen for the RCF in information and communications technology (ICT) are: to enable policies and institutions to serve as engines for growth; to generate greater opportunities for productive activities, thereby resulting in good practice guidelines that support efficient and equitable provision of ICT services; and to contribute to the effective functioning of matrix management and the new knowledge networking modality.

The RCF proposed to use ICT potential for accelerating social and economic development, particularly to benefit the poor. ICT should facilitate the dissemination of information and improve access to social services, empower communities and help integrate small-scale producers into the global economy. Knowledge networks in the areas of democratic governance, climate change and energy would also be enhanced by ICT. UNDP would be in a position to help diagnose the regional ICT situation and bridge the ‘digital divide’. The RCF also proposed the use of ICT to facilitate access to information, to promote knowledge development and sharing, and to reduce costs.

In 2003, a decision was made at the UNDP corporate level to convert Information and Communications Technology for Development from a special initiative/practice area to a cross-cutting theme relevant to all practices, and to integrate it into the poverty reduction and democratic governance practice areas.<sup>5</sup> As this decision came in the middle of implementing the second RCF, it is not surprising that the RCF programme reflects ICT both as a project focus and as a cross-cutting theme particularly relevant as a unique delivery method for programmes. It was assumed that ICT was not a particular strength of UNDP, and that there was

already extensive capacity in the region. The shift from a special initiative to a cross-cutting issue was not accompanied by a new strategic framework.

#### 2.4.3 HIV/AIDS

Unlike in its other practice areas, UNDP works together with eight other co-sponsors of a larger Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), fashioning its particular contribution according to its strengths. The UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS of 2001 highlighted HIV/AIDS as not only a health, but also a development issue. Under the coordinated UNAIDS programme, and through the unified budget and work plan, the role of UNDP at the global level is to: help improve national strategic plans incorporating multi-sector responses; improve access to global and regional support services; strengthen local partnerships and the development of intra- and inter-regional networks; and develop leadership and capacity in governments and civil society, including women and people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA).<sup>6</sup>

The RCF recognized the spread of HIV/AIDS as an increasing challenge for countries in the region, particularly in the Caribbean, where a 2.3 percent infection rate of the adult population has led to the highest incidence of infection in the Americas and the second fastest-growing prevalence rate in the world, exceeded only in the countries of sub-Saharan Africa. In Central America, HIV/AIDS prevalence is also worsening, with an estimated infection rate of 1–2 percent of the adult population — higher in Honduras, Belize and Guatemala, and lower in Mexico, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Eleven countries in the Caribbean or Central America have infection rates of over 2 percent of the adult population, including Trinidad and Tobago with over 3 percent and Haiti with nearly 6 percent.<sup>7</sup> In light of these figures, the major focus of the second RCF is in the Caribbean — including a key role in the Pan-Caribbean Partnership on HIV/AIDS (PANCAP) — and to a lesser extent, in Central America.

5. *Evaluation of the Second Global Cooperation Framework of UNDP* (UNDP: 2004), p. 41

6. From UNAIDS Unified Budget and Workplans, 2002–2006 (UNAIDS: 2006)

7. *The Millennium Development Goals: A Latin American and Caribbean Perspective* (United Nations: 2005), pp. 151–52. Brazil has the largest number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the region; however, given its overall size, it ranks 14th largest in terms of percentage.

UNDP plays a key role in PANCAP, which was formed by CARICOM Heads of State in 2001 to scale up the response to HIV/AIDS.<sup>8</sup> UNDP has helped PANCAP access funds from the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria (GFATM). UNDP also provides technical support to national proposals for GFATM funding.

**Leadership for Results Programme:** This programme has influenced the way HIV/AIDS issues are addressed, as many of its participants occupy positions of responsibility in their own countries. Action Learning Groups act as laboratories for creatively addressing select issues not previously addressed, and a Regional Council of UNDP Change Agents has been formed to continue the work.<sup>9</sup>

Regional programme in collaboration with Central American Ministries of Labour: This programme focused on migrant workers in the maquila sector<sup>10</sup>. A high-level regional seminar provided technical training in such areas as trade and trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS). It was particularly important in securing anti-retroviral drugs and financing sustainable treatment for PLWHA.

#### 2.4.4 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Human development is the concept most associated with UNDP worldwide. Given the organizational focus on this concept and the important conceptual work that has taken place, it is noteworthy that human development at the local level is defined as a cross-cutting issue rather than as the guiding framework for all programmes.

However, human development is not fully incorporated into every programme, and implementation is far from ideal for a cross-cutting issue. Although poverty reduction, democratic governance and even energy and climate change aim to expand people's choices and capabilities and as such are part of

human development, few references are made to the concept in each of these thematic areas. RBLAC has attempted to make human development at the local level a cross-cutting issue for its programmes. To achieve this objective, the bureau has developed three specific mechanisms: the Virtual School on Human Development, a magazine, and the Local Governance Programme.

**Virtual School on Human Development:** The Virtual School opened in 2001 as a single online course in human development. In 2005, the programme evolved into a full-fledged online school, offering training for students outside of UNDP. With the support of the Universidad Abierta de Cataluña and funding from the Catalanian Cooperation Agency and the European Union, the transition appears to have gone smoothly.

The Virtual School on Human Development responds to the demands of country offices and their counterparts for the development of practical tools to apply the concepts of human development and democratic governance in their respective programmes, to share experiences, and to establish a knowledge-sharing human development network. Its principal objective is to strengthen the capacity of strategic actors through the development of tools for political action policy design and implementation. The goal is to ground these tools on a solid conceptual base. Other objectives are to: use the virtual space for the construction of a democratic governance and human development community in the Americas; reduce the education access gap; and foster youth leadership and the presence of women in politics.

At the time of this evaluation, 564 students spanning a large number of countries had completed courses at the school. This represents a 300 percent increase in training programmes for students outside of UNDP. Since the opening of the school in April 2005, 39 percent of the students have been UNDP functionaries, 31 percent have come from

8. PANCAP is a broad partnership incorporating bilateral and multilateral donors, most UN agencies — including UNDP, UNAIDS, UNICEF, the Pan-American Health Organization and the World Bank — and organizations from the region, such as the Caribbean Epidemiology Centre (CAREC) and the Caribbean Conference of Churches.

9. *Shifting Perspectives and Taking Action: UNDP's Response to HIV/AIDS in Latin America and the Caribbean*, Regional Report on HIV/AIDS (UNDP: 2005).

10. A **maquila** is a factory that imports materials and equipment on a duty-free and tariff-free basis for assembly or manufacturing and then re-exports the assembled product, usually back to the originating country

universities, 10 percent were public servants, and 9 and 2 percent were members of NGOs and other international organizations, respectively.

**Revista Latinoamericana de Desarrollo Humano:**

Established in 2004, the *Revista Latinoamericana de Desarrollo Humano*<sup>11</sup> is a journal aimed at the creation of an intellectual community linked closely to the production of national Human Development Reports. Above all, the journal aims to become the principal source for theoretical, methodological and practical material on human development in the region. It also has the internal objective of providing an intellectual space for the sharing of ideas and experiences by national human development teams. Finally, the journal aims to support national human development teams through the development of a database.

**Local Governance Programme:** Despite being housed in the democratic governance strategic area, another human development outreach mechanism is the local governance programme and its virtual fair. The linking of human development and local governance is an interesting approach that aims to connect theory with practice. Based largely on the experiences of the city of Bogotá, the three central themes in this programme are citizen culture, citizen security and the public use of space.

**National Human Development Reports:** The other significant product in this area is the support to the production of National Human Development Reports. Launched only a decade ago, the National Human Development Reports have become the principal mechanism for the dissemination of the concept of human development. The reports have also led to an improvement in the gathering of statistical data and have had an arguable effect on public policy.

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11. Latin American Human Development Magazine

## Chapter 3

# Programme Findings

### 3.1 RCF INTERVENTIONS BY PRACTICE AREA

#### 3.1.1 POVERTY AND INEQUALITY REDUCTION AND ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MDGS

This evaluation goes beyond assessing the delivery of products and services, as the objective of the RCF is not only to deliver products, but also to improve human development. The evaluation concludes that the RCF was executed through flexible mechanisms with which complementary financial resources were attracted. The fulfilment of the objectives in terms of service and product delivery is commendable. Above all, the objective of contributing to knowledge of the relationships between macroeconomics, poverty and inequality was achieved.

However, it should be noted that the RCF did not completely fulfil its original goals, particularly the goal of establishing targeting mechanisms, and that at least 8 percent of the original budget was assigned to products that were not in line with the original RCF objectives.

#### **Supporting household surveys in five countries:**

The RCF was essential to improving the possibilities of undertaking surveys in various countries using the same methodology, making the results comparable. Comparing the evolution of development indicators for the same country over time allows assessing progress in poverty reduction. Without access to a regional or subregional data, it is difficult to determine whether or not the performance of a country is satisfactory. The availability of household surveys for a country where data was previously lacking opens a range of possibilities for a more realistic assessment of national and regional conditions.

The support of household surveys through the RCF has been effective. In all countries where surveys were undertaken with UNDP support, high-quality databases that have fulfilled expectations were developed. The surveys are all state-of-the-art and incorporate technical improvements and technologies that have allowed for reduction of development costs and effectiveness of use.

The efficiency of this intervention is equally noteworthy, as the strategy followed by the RCF — mainly its partnership with the MECOVI programme — was not only adequate, but highly rewarding. The MECOVI programme, the leading effort of this kind in the region, has been operating for almost a decade with substantial resources from multilateral development banks. The decision to strengthen this ongoing effort rather than to follow an independent path was well-founded.

Since household surveys are owned by the country where they are performed, this product has the additional benefit of guaranteeing that the local authorities and beneficiaries of technical assistance appropriate to the initiative are involved in all stages of decision-making. This is a good example of an activity that identifies potential synergies with other relevant actors in the development process, and, through a strategic partnership, provides demonstrable value added without a large financial investment. The high cost-effectiveness of this particular intervention provides an excellent benchmark for other activities.

The effort is also notable for its sustainability, as evidence suggests that investing in the development of household surveys has long-lasting effects that do not necessarily require continued investment. In all cases, the development of household surveys was accompanied by support for local technical capacity, often through the support of the local statistics department. Consequently, even if the RCF does not continue financing the production of additional databases, this newly developed capacity will have long-lasting, positive external implications for many other activities. In most cases, the development of the first household survey is a breakthrough for a country, and after its benefits have been identified and capitalized upon, international and regional experience demonstrates that they become systematic over time.

**Strengthening the regional network of 35 specialists, including specialists from the Caribbean:** Strengthening the regional network of specialists is

highly relevant to poverty and inequality reduction, as many Latin American countries lack adequate technical capacity to perform research and generate knowledge in this area. In some cases, analytic possibilities are restricted by data availability, and high-quality academic research on these issues has not been particularly abundant even when data was available. Proactive efforts to improve the quality of research and to stimulate additional research and knowledge generation are unquestionably needed in the region.

Although the academic import of the products of the network might be viewed as modest, there are demonstrably high gains in terms of 'social capital' construction and cross-fertilization across countries and researchers. The project is also precedent-setting, as no comparable initiative — a team of 18 or more country specialists working on the same topic and systematically producing comparative research — exists in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The initiative's effect on policy-making is varied. In cases of smaller countries with lower technical capacities the network's studies have had influence on public opinion. They have also become an important tool for UNDP country offices for including the poverty and inequality agenda in mainstream policy discussion. In larger countries where technical capacity is higher, the effect of the network's studies in policy circles has been more limited.

The regional network had significant added value for the region. Unlike its partnership with MECOVI in supporting household surveys, UNDP chose an alternative strategy in this case. Rather than joining the IDB network, UNDP chose to launch a complementary initiative directed at a different segment of the LAC academic community. By focusing on country coverage, the main goal of the network is to contribute to capacity-building and creation of social capital among researchers throughout the region.

The investment per individual study, channelled through the RCF network, was highly efficient. With rather modest resources per study, the network was able to launch a large number of projects and to trigger a process of technical cooperation that will raise academic standards among participating researchers. This is an adequate strategy compared

to the alternative of investing in partnership in the IDB network, where the value added in terms of additional studies would have been rather low, and would not have necessarily contributed to capacity-building. Given the low administrative costs involved, the initiative has had an adequate cost-to-effectiveness ratio.

**Supporting poverty reduction strategy papers:** Typically, UNDP established partnerships with other relevant multilateral actors to undertake these initiatives. In addition to multiplying resources and inputs for the receiving country, the advantage of such partnerships is that they allowed linking the poverty strategy to mainstream macroeconomic policy and country priorities. Moreover, cooperation was established between UNDP, the World Bank and IDB. In the last few years, permanent coordination of donors interested in poverty reduction strategies has been achieved. This particular RCF intervention was highly effective precisely due to such coordination. The partnerships also allowed reducing financial the requirements for UNDP through cost-sharing.

The sustainability of this initiative has yet to be verified and remains a function of political will. Some countries, such as Honduras, have committed to continue updating their poverty alleviation strategies even when going through challenging political cycles. In other cases, when the poverty reduction strategy is de-linked from international funding, the strategy's effect is reduced, and it stands to lose its role as a guiding framework for policy formulation. In addition, the region demonstrates large disparities in levels of ownership over poverty reduction strategies.

**Improving the quality and efficiency of social services:** Incorporating this component into the RCF is a positive element. Policy advice — excluding supporting household surveys and developing poverty alleviation strategies, discussed in the preceding sections — allowed UNDP to meet the demand for services that were not being provided in several countries.

Due to the flexible nature of this particular type of policy advice, the sustainability of this service is not guaranteed — with few exceptions where the support triggered a series of research activities that continued for a longer time period. Usually, after the

policy advice was delivered, follow-up mechanisms were not in place. This made it difficult to assess the effect of the service or to maximize the benefits of the support provided. A number of ‘one shot’ advice services have been provided to meet urgent specific needs, and it seems that in many cases a more structured and systematic support could have been beneficial for the receiving countries.

**Strengthening of financial statistics in Central America and the Caribbean:** In order to ensure success and sustainability, there is a need for a substantive investment in strengthening local technical capacity in each country at the initial stages of this effort. Consequently, it is difficult to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, and cost-benefit ratio of the effort at this point. However, currently available information provides an optimistic view.

**Supporting MDG follow-up – MDG progress reports:** The inclusion of the MDGs in the RCF is of the utmost relevance, as the MDGs are the first systematic, widespread effort to evaluate and monitor country progress in terms of poverty reduction and improvement in gender equality, health and education under the human development paradigm. Thus far, UNDP participation in elaborating country progress reports has been important, of high profile, and especially significant in countries that would not have been able to otherwise follow up on progress.

The initial effort has been quite effective in triggering a process with country-level partnerships characterized by high local ownership and exposure, an aspect critical to ensuring long-term sustainability. The role played by UNDP varied on a case-by-case basis, and the RCF has yet to be able to identify the areas of collaboration where the organization could have greater value added in the long term. In addition, efforts are executed effectively in cases where UNDP plays the role of critical reviewer, rather than the main producer.

The efficiency of this initiative can be improved considerably, although country reports are typically produced within a reasonable time-frame and with low costs due to modest UNDP funding requirements. Specifically, the country reports could be used as inputs for other activities, such as the production of the regional MDG progress report. The regional report was produced through a joint

effort by many UN agencies, including UNDP, and coordinated by ECLAC. As an important effort at partnership-building, joint work was carried out with the World Bank’s Research Department and its Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (PREM) Network for Latin America and the Caribbean.

It is likely that the production of country MDG progress reports will become a regular institutional activity, at least until the year 2015. A number of countries have produced several reports with a strong national presence and the participation of local institutions. Several countries have assigned MDG responsibility to specific government agencies. Multilateral donors, such as the World Bank and IDB, use MDG information regularly in their programming exercises and follow-up.

**Summary:** This evaluation presents a positive view of the results of the second RCF. However, permanent targeting mechanisms were not established, and the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and sustainability of this initiative cannot be ascertained. At the same time, considerable resources were dedicated to activities not initially contemplated in the framework.

Table 3.1 presents the evaluation matrix of the products specified in the RCF. Of the six products delivered in the RCF, five are considered fully relevant. Four of seven projects are considered to be of high effectiveness. No information was available to judge the effectiveness of strengthening financial statistics in the Caribbean and of the MDG progress reports.

Efficiency is equally high for the four projects evaluated as having a high level of effectiveness. In contrast, MDG progress reports production is of low efficiency, as the reports’ use has not been extensive (i.e., they have not been used in the production of the regional progress report). On the other hand, all five products for which information is available are considered to be of satisfactory cost-effectiveness.

There are only two cases — the support of household surveys and the strengthening of the regional network of specialists — where the nature of the product assures long-lasting effects, translating to a satisfactory rating for project sustainability.

Table 3.1. Evaluation matrix for the seven products in the poverty reduction area					
Product	Relevance	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Cost-effectiveness	Sustainability
Supporting household surveys in five countries	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Strengthening regional network of 35 specialists	Uncertain	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Supporting poverty reduction strategy papers	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Uncertain
Improving the quality and efficiency of social services	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Uncertain
Establishing permanent targeting mechanisms	Not delivered	Not delivered	Not delivered	Not delivered	Not delivered
Strengthening financial statistics	Satisfactory	Uncertain	No information	No information	No information
Supporting MDG progress reports	Satisfactory	Uncertain	Low	Satisfactory	Uncertain

In the areas of poverty reduction strategy papers and policy advice, sustainability depends on the local political will for continuing with the original efforts, and on the level of local appropriation. In the area of MDG progress reports, the evaluation team concludes that sustainability depends on the specific role that UNDP plays in this activity.

### 3.1.2 DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

The evaluation of democratic governance projects reflects the importance of this thematic area to the RCF efforts in Latin America and the Caribbean. The breadth and depth of the projects are impressive and reflect not only the dynamism of the region, but also the responsiveness of the RCF in dealing with the challenges of democratic governance.

Some democratic governance projects achieved the objective of becoming policy-relevant by engaging in policy debate in many countries of the region. However, it is important to note that only PRODDAL achieved a front-and-centre status, and only briefly. Engaging in policy debate requires continuity and the delivery of outputs — which leads to a set of conclusions regarding the aim to position UNDP as a significant knowledge generator in the region.

The latter is a worthy goal, and this evaluation found that substantial progress has been made towards achieving it. In particular, strategic partnerships with leading academic figures, the development of a conceptual framework, and significant research and methodological work have made extremely important contributions. Unfortunately, the effort as a whole is impeded by two clear realities.

First, the academic and intellectual community — including its members who participated in UNDP projects — continue to view the products as ‘institutional’ and, therefore, as somehow not worthy of the so-called ‘real’ academic attention. Despite such perceptions, this evaluation found that PRODDAL has taken old academic debates about the state of democracy and put them in the public limelight, an accomplishment that the local academic and intellectual community had not been able to achieve on its own.

Second is the issue of the content of the PRODDAL project report and how it can be ‘sold’ to the majority of the region’s citizens. The theoretical constructs are aimed at trained social scientists, and even the interpretation of the surveys is not user-friendly. While public relations campaigns appear to have translated the complexities of the PRODDAL report to decision makers and average citizens, the effort was not sustained.

This evaluation has noted the significance of the broad networks and alliances that the RCF has been able to achieve. PRODDAL has augmented these alliances and has positioned UNDP in such a way that it is no longer simply perceived as a service delivery institution. It is also important to note that UNDP is perceived as a neutral institution in most countries. This is a valuable asset that is largely a product of the UNDP mandate as a multilateral organization.

UNDP regional projects have played an important role in capacity-building in a variety of areas. The Virtual School on Human Development, the Regional Project on Democratic Dialogue and, particularly, the SIGOB project serve as examples, because of the effect that these services appear to have on public administration in number of countries. Even the rather short-lived justice strengthening projects have included an important institutional capacity-building component. However, the effect on capacity-building is difficult to measure. It is clear that country offices have been the beneficiaries of some programmes, as they tend to attract the most talented and best trained individuals to projects such as PAPEP and PRODDAL.

**Strategic Short-Term Political Analysis and Prospective Scenarios for Improved Governance in Latin America:** The short-term political analysis

reports are of high quality and are useful research-based futures scenarios. The development of this methodology is also an important output. The number of interviews with regional policy makers and leaders is unsurpassed by any previous projects. In short, this is a project where all objectives appear to have been met. The effect with reference to a particular country makes it difficult to establish a causal relationship between the project and conflict prevention or crisis management initiatives.

**Regional Project on Democratic Dialogue:** In the difficult context of the first part of this decade, the Regional Project on Democratic Dialogue project was, perhaps, one of the most relevant. The project reflects both what UNDP can do in the region and the pitfalls of overly ambitious projects. It brought together a significant group of institutions, including the Organization of American States and a significant number of national development agencies. The aim was to help foster national dialogue to promote democratic governance and facilitate human development. The results, however, are difficult to gauge.

**Local Governance Virtual Fair:** In a region where the debate about democracy has included significant discussions about decentralization and regional autonomy, this project is of great relevance. Throughout the region, decentralization efforts

<b>Table 3.2. Evaluation matrix of RCF programmes in the democratic governance area by type of intervention</b>			
<b>Democratic Governance</b>	<b>Policy Advice</b>	<b>Knowledge Creation and Advocacy</b>	<b>Strategic Alliances and Capacity-building</b>
PRODDAL	Achieved objectives	Exceeded expectations	Exceeded expectations
PAPEP	Achieved objectives	Achieved objectives	Achieved objectives
Regional Project on Democratic Dialogue	Achieved objectives	Achieved objectives	Achieved objectives
SIGOB	Achieved objectives	Exceeded expectations	Exceeded expectations
Local Governance Virtual Fair	Achieved objectives	Achieved objectives	Achieved expectations
Latin American Governance and Information Knowledge System	Did not achieve objectives	Did not achieve objectives	Did not achieve objectives
Conflict Prevention – Early Warning	Did not achieve objectives	Did not achieve objectives	Did not achieve objectives
Security and Democracy in the Andean Region	Achieved objectives	Achieved objectives	Did not achieve objectives
Justice and Democracy	Achieved objectives	Achieved objectives	Did not achieve objectives
Spanish Trust Fund	Achieved objectives	Achieved objectives	Achieved objectives

have been underway and have led to the design of programmes and policies that had had a significant effect on how politics are conducted in the hemisphere. The thrust towards decentralization has led to strengthened municipal governments and other regional political bodies. This process has also led to a much higher level of political participation at the local level. For these reasons, this regional project is highly relevant and holds great promise.

**Summary:** Nearly all RCF projects demonstrated their relevance in a very dynamic political context. The quality and effects of each project, however, vary significantly. For example, PRODDAL had both a high-quality output and a significant effect on the policy debate in terms of the generation of knowledge about democratic governance. In contrast, the Conflict Prevention – Early Warning System project exemplifies that not all quality projects translate into implementable products.

In this area, the issue of quantity versus quality of projects must be addressed. Instead of being the thematic area with the highest number of programmes, democratic governance should strive to focus on a smaller number of well-conceptualized, managed and financed programmes.

### 3.1.3 ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The risk management and disaster prevention component of this area suffered severe delays, though with some key exceptions, such as the Coordination Center for the Prevention of Natural Disasters in Central America programme, which focused mainly in the Caribbean. In the Andean region, delays were the result of regional dynamics, low institutional capacity, and the absence of monitoring and follow-through mechanisms. Nonetheless, the effect at the discussion stage and in the development of materials for reducing disaster risk and adapting to climate change was positive, especially in the Caribbean.

**Table 3.3. Evaluation matrix of RCF programmes in the democratic governance area by evaluation criteria**

<b>Democratic Governance</b>	<b>Relevance</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Efficiency</b>	<b>Effectiveness</b>	<b>Sustainability</b>
PRODDAL	High	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Regional Project on Democratic Dialogue	High	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
PAPEP	High	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
SIGOB	High	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Local Governance Virtual Fair	High	Information not available	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Latin American Governance and Information Knowledge System	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Low	Low	Programme ended
Conflict Prevention – Early Warning	Not Delivered	High	Low	Not delivered	Uncertain
Security and Democracy	High	High	Satisfactory	Low	Uncertain
Justice and Democracy	High	Information not available	Satisfactory	Low	Uncertain
Spanish Trust Fund	High	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Information not available	Uncertain

Initiatives such as the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor and support for the Consultation on Financing for Sustainable Development achieved highly notable results not only from a partnership-building perspective, but also in terms of policy influence. These projects, along with the Paraná-Paraguay Waterway, the Regional Unit for Technical Assistance (RUTA) IV and Tierramerica, captured the highest share of the budget and are a continuation from the first RCF. Nevertheless, these projects were an extension of the first RCF, were not central to the objectives of the second RCF and, therefore, were not considered under this evaluation, with the exception of the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor.

On the basis of the information provided, the results of energy and climate change projects were mixed and not entirely favourable. Of the 18 objec-

tives established in the three key areas of service, only four performed as expected. Six obtained partial results and eight were unsuccessful. Providing a critical judgement of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and sustainability is only possible in cases where objectives were either partially or satisfactorily met. Nonetheless, projects that failed to achieve their objectives also provide an important point of reference for the purposes of this evaluation.

Table 3.4 lists the initial objectives for each of the RCF energy and climate change service lines. These objectives were compared to the projects and actions implemented during 2001–2005, with the aim of determining achievements.

**Summary:** As demonstrated by the results in each of the three service lines, the energy and climate

Table 3.4. Evaluation matrix of RCF products in the energy and climate change area						
		Relevance	Effective-ness	Efficiency	Cost-effective-ness	Sustain-ability
<b>Knowledge generation and knowledge sharing</b>						
1	The regional network of specialists will be strengthened.	satisfactory	satisfactory	satisfactory	uncertain	without results
2	Comparative studies will be carried out in eight countries on the basis of UNFCCC, national communications and the Capacity Development Initiative.	satisfactory	satisfactory	satisfactory	uncertain	information not available
3	The website <a href="http://www.cdmonline.org">www.cdmonline.org</a> for the UNFCCC negotiators of the region will be expanded to additional users.	satisfactory	satisfactory	satisfactory	uncertain	without results
4	Partnerships resulting in knowledge-sharing will be promoted, especially with funding from technical cooperation among developing countries.	without results	without results	without results	without results	without results
<b>Advice for policy formulation</b>						
5	Services will be provided to increase the capacity of UNFCCC national negotiators.	satisfactory	satisfactory	satisfactory	uncertain	without results
6	The formulation of a menu of options for country participation in the global environmental markets will be supported.	satisfactory	satisfactory	satisfactory	uncertain	uncertain
7	Costs and benefits of revamping the energy and transport sectors, upgrading technology, and/or marketing forest carbon and other environmental services will be assessed.	without results	without results	without results	without results	without results

Table 3.4. Evaluation matrix of RCF products in the energy and climate change area						
		Relevance	Effective-ness	Efficiency	Cost-effective-ness	Sustain-ability
8	Adaptation strategies to climate change will be developed.	satisfactory	satisfactory	uncertain	uncertain	without results
9	Cooperation frameworks will be developed with GEF support, with pilot programmes in Central America and the insular Caribbean.	without results	without results	without results	without results	without results
10	Capacity will be developed for vulnerability assessments, regional climate and socio-economic scenarios, and cost-benefit analysis for adaptation options.	without results	without results	without results	without results	without results
11	Andean subregion countries will receive support in adapting the framework to their specific needs.	without results	without results	without results	without results	without results
<b>Support to programmes</b>						
12	The programme will promote demonstration projects on renewable energy benefiting 100,000 poor families.	satisfactory	uncertain	satisfactory	uncertain	uncertain
13	Programmes for climate-change mitigation and adaptation.	satisfactory	without results	without results	information not available	information not available
14	Action taken on risk assessment and on disaster prevention and reduction, particularly in Central America, the Caribbean and the Andean countries. Poor, vulnerable and isolated communities, especially indigenous people, will benefit from these adaptation and mitigation initiatives.	satisfactory	uncertain	without results	information not available	information not available
15	The mobilization of resources will include possible new funding mechanisms such as the future Adaptation Fund, the Clean Development Mechanism and debt-for-nature swaps.	without results	without results	without results	without results	without results
16	Synergies among the global conventions will be promoted through the Capacity Development Initiative.	without results	without results	without results	without results	without results
17	Regional Programmes supported such as the Mesoamerican Biological Corridor.	--	--	--	without results	--
18	New UNDP regional initiatives will receive GEF financial support.	without results	without results	without results	without results	without results

change programme has not been effective, and its performance must be carefully analysed and strengthened. In part, this lack of effectiveness can be explained by the absence of specific goals,

indicators, baselines or a basic chronology for the RCF. No mechanisms were available to reorient the actions of RBLAC once the programme continuity for energy and climate change was lost in 2003.

As the demand for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions increases and markets become a critical development tool for attaining the MDGs, the RCF is again attempting to enter this field with the Knowledge Brokering Platform in Energy and Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean. However, this important decision is somewhat late, as multiple competitors have already established well-funded programmes and assumed leadership roles in this area.

The results in the disaster management and prevention area were unsatisfactory, with the exception of the Central American programme. The remaining interventions were focused in the Caribbean, and a critical assessment is not possible, because these interventions remain in the development phase. Overall, programmes lack personnel qualified to deal with existing demand. At the same time, there is a lack of coordination with other UNDP units that specialize in these areas. The programme also lacked mechanisms that would have allowed it to manage delays, resulting in a programmatic vacuum during 2003–2005.

Nonetheless, the programme is of high regional relevance, due to the potential effects of climate change and natural disasters on the economies and development of many LAC countries. This is reflected by the importance governments are placing on this area in the face of the vulnerability and fragility of their national territories.

The results reveal low efficiency and capacity of RBLAC to carry out the RCF in the field of renewable energy. No adequate mechanisms exist for monitoring and providing feedback for decision-making. Frequent reassignment of programme officers and the scarce management time dedicated to the programme contribute to poor results. One possible conclusion is the lack of a clear structure for the management of this area. Another possibility is that this thematic area was not viewed as an important priority during the different restructuring attempts at RBLAC.

The circumstances surrounding the implementation of the RCF make it difficult to determine the cost-effectiveness of the energy and climate change programme. A first impression is that positive effects lacked follow-through, and opportunities were lost. Another observation is that activities unrelated to the RCF hindered the efficiency of achieving the originally intended results.

Finally, programming delays and the suspension of one of the climate change components of the programme do not allow for judgement on the sustainability of the initiatives, with the notable exception of the renewable energy programme in Costa Rica.

## 3.2 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

### 3.2.1 GENDER MAINSTREAMING

The shortcomings encountered during most of the period under consideration related almost exclusively to weak internal capacity. The message to staff, which varied depending on Resident Representative leadership, was that gender was not a high priority, and that achievement in this area would not lead to professional advancement. Integration of gender was not assessed in performance reviews, partly because there were very few specific, measurable gender objectives or indicators.

In addition, gender focal points are often seen as solely responsible for gender at the country level, although most are not in decision-making positions, typically spend only 5–10 percent of their time on gender-related work do not necessarily have sufficient training or experience to effectively carry out this role. There is no subregional resource facility-based gender specialist to further support the gender mainstreaming process, though to some extent, the Gender Knowledge Platform project fills this role.

Although programme staff has generally reacted positively to the encouragement to integrate gender, there is continued resistance due the inertia of established bureaucratic processes, a tendency to see projects for women as ‘gender projects’ rather than a cost-effective way to improve existing programmes, and negative cultural attitudes.

**Summary:** While there were some notable achievements during the period of the evaluation, they can largely be characterized as ‘islands of success’. Factors for success included commitment at the Resident Representative level, inter-agency cooperation, a strategic alliance with UNIFEM, gender capacity in the team, integration of a gender perspective in the UNDP country offices and support to partners in mainstreaming gender.

The record for gender mainstreaming in practice areas is mixed. In all cases, there were some achieve-

ments that were noticeably related to the factors listed in the preceding paragraph. Geographically, the Caribbean subregion most consistently integrated gender, with the Eastern Caribbean office presenting a model of good practices. However, with few exceptions, gender was absent or very weak as a cross-cutting issue, with research activities and products particularly inconsistent in addressing gender issues.

Sustainability in cross-cutting issues depends, to a large extent, on how well programmes are integrated into existing practice areas. The current emphasis on increasing internal capacity to mainstream across all programmes — including clear, unequivocal senior management commitment, implementing a comprehensive monitoring system, involving the Regional Steering Committee and infusing resources in the medium term — will substantially contribute to sustainability. While resources should be assigned to gender, the evaluation team concludes that the lack of funds is not a reasonable excuse for inaction; simple actions such as incorporating gender criteria into research products and networks, for example, could have significant gender-related effects in the RCF.

The gender strategy itself addresses sustainability through the integration of gender into management plans, while the Gender Knowledge Platform seeks strategic alliances for the ongoing components of training and research. The Knowledge Platform Web site<sup>12</sup> will need to be maintained through a project open to competitive bidding by suitable institutions, with continued funding by Japan Women in Development.

The key partnership in the area of gender is with UNIFEM, which concentrates expertise and experience in the UN system but does not have as extensive a field network as UNDP. There are already several successful project collaborations, as well as significant technical support in efforts to integrate gender into UNDP programmes. The Latin America Faculty for Social Science and ECLAC have also been identified as valuable collaborators.

### 3.2.2 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

A self-evaluation of the RCF conducted by RBLAC in 2005 suggested that this area needs further development. Reference is made to three programmes: SIGOB, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) teleconferencing facility<sup>13</sup> and the Caribbean regional ICT strategy (CARICOM Connectivity Agenda). The former two have been highly effective, while the latter has been stalled for reasons unrelated to the programme.

A number of example projects illustrates UNDP success in the use of ICT for development in the areas of:

- sharing knowledge and supporting regional knowledge networks in all practice areas, including the delivery of cost-effective training;
- promoting e-governance at regional, national and local levels, including the promotion of regional integration in two senses: use of ICT in government processes to improve efficiency in service delivery and administrative transparency; and the governance and regulation of ICT; and
- supporting poverty reduction through integration of small businesses and producers into broader networks.

In addition, ICT has been an important factor in the success of various programmes. The Local Governance Virtual Fair for information sharing, the Virtual School on Human Development, the Winner Programme for Strengthening and Connecting Women's Small Business Initiatives and the Genera website of the Gender Knowledge Platform are all examples of innovative uses of ICT for development. ICT has also been used in the Eastern Caribbean to train civil servants (based on programmes designed for training use within UNDP) and at the community level to connect producers to markets.

12. [http://www.undp.org/surf-panama/boletin/vol3ed2\\_gender05page3.html](http://www.undp.org/surf-panama/boletin/vol3ed2_gender05page3.html)

13. It is efficient and cost-effective in connecting small island developing States, which are stretched in terms of human resources and need to operate on economies of scale. The technology received unsolicited praise from managers in various organizations who have used it.

**Summary:** The evaluation team agrees with the RCF self-evaluation in that ICT needs to be further developed. In line with the Global Cooperation Framework, the RCF could pay more attention to fundamental governance issues that may affect ICT potential as a development tool in the future. The digital divide could become a new source of exclusion and marginalization, affecting first those already disadvantaged through poverty, illiteracy, ethnicity or gender.

The RCF has not been systematic about the use of ICT and may miss the opportunity to benefit from lessons learned. While UNDP does not have particular expertise in ICT, there are ICT issues that may have an effect on key UNDP competencies.

### 3.2.3 HIV/AIDS

In the Caribbean region, and to some extent in Central America, the HIV/AIDS programme has achieved results in the areas of advocacy, data collection, policy dialogue, legal and regulatory frameworks, and improving access to prevention and care. In particular, UNDP has met its mandate in leadership and capacity development, improving access to support services and strengthening local partnerships and intra-regional networking.

HIV/AIDS is integrated into ongoing work on data collection and analysis in CARICOM and the OECS, ensuring availability of reliable data both for policy-making and for monitoring of the MDG. Effort has been made to ensure that a gender perspective is integrated into work in this area, recognizing the alarming increase in infection of young women (aged 15–24) and the particular way in which HIV/AIDS affects women in their multiple roles.

Outside of the Caribbean, links to other practice areas are weak. HIV/AIDS does not appear in the Multi-year Financial Framework report for 2005, or in the LAC Cooperation Programme, built on the RCF. This may stem from the fact that the programme is accountable directly to the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR).

Sustainability is promoted through a strategy of capacity-building, both through individual leadership and at the organizational level, particularly

through working with key partners — PANCAP and the organization of PLWHA. Funding for the programme is not dependent on the RCF; rather, it comes from UNAIDS, and partners are increasingly funded by GFATM and other donors.

**Summary:** HIV/AIDS has not been consistently incorporated into the second RCF, nor is it a clearly defined and documented RCF priority. Despite the successes of subregional programmes and individual projects, linkages between HIV/AIDS interventions and RCF practice areas are weak.

### 3.2.4 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

Some debate surrounds the participation of UNDP functionaries in the Virtual School for Human Development's courses. Because the courses are not compulsory, a very small group tends to participate. Some argue that it would be beneficial to make the course compulsory, especially if the idea is to imbue the human development and democratic governance frameworks.

**Virtual School on Human Development:** The school has been a successful initiative. The school and its virtual campus use modern technology and available pedagogical tools. Its long-term prospects are promising. Moreover, the school has mainstreamed gender in its academic, management and administrative framework. However, several critical decisions must be made regarding course costs, tuition and scholarship policies, inter-institutional agreements and the development of a promotional strategy.

The school's location in Colombia is an advantage, given the high quality of academic institutions in the country. The downside is that the school could remain of a local profile in its course offerings and in the demand for its courses. Thus, the regionalization of the school that coincides with the proposed creation of a virtual community should be an ongoing concern. It is also clear that, despite the school's overall quality of education and achievement, it cannot fulfil the need for UNDP to establish stronger links with the region's academic community to help foster the creation of disciplines that incorporate the concepts of human development and democratic governance.

**National Human Development Reports:** Available data reveals that 83 National Human Development Reports have been produced in Latin America and the Caribbean since the early 1990s. These have not been produced in all countries, and in some cases there is a lack of continuity in report production and publication. In recent years, the trend has been to develop subnational, thematic and regional reports. In one of the significant achievements of this period, the regional programme supported two Central American regional reports.

Enormous differences exist between countries in frequency of production, institutionalization of the research team, report quality, types of indices used, effect on policy, topics covered, networks established and overall sustainability of the initiative. Nevertheless, no regional policy appears to exist regarding the production of National Human Development Reports. As national realities vary, it would not be wise to homogenize the reports; however, the RCF has been timid in attempting to set guidelines for enhancing the quality of the analysis and the inclusiveness of the production and dissemination processes.

The regional programme is not utilizing the National Human Development Report data as a baseline for major decisions. The highlighted strong points are corporate acknowledgement, country-level and regional capacity-building, quality improvement and the thematic focus of each report. There is great potential for systematizing and disseminating

the activities, the documents and their recommendations, and for the creation of more subregional reports.

The regional programme has developed a human development network as one of its most important assets in this area. The network represents an effective vehicle for the democratization of knowledge and power, with horizontal relationships within the programme. The interaction between participants has made it possible to share experiences and information flow, as well as to provide support by qualified teams of experts for the production of national reports.

### 3.3 FINANCIAL EXECUTION

The second RCF was approved assuming the mobilization of financial resources from external parties, including government cost-sharing, development funds and third-party cost-sharing. Planned third-party contributions amounted to \$42.5 million (71 percent) out of \$59.5 million.

Execution figures between 2001 and 2005 reveal that core resources from the regional programme made up 23 percent, and other UNDP funds amounted to an additional 11 percent. The actual figure raised from non-UNDP sources for the 2001–2005 period was \$42 million, broken down as follows: bilateral donors, including the European Commission, contributed \$19 million; multilateral donors and institutions added \$13 million;

<b>Donor Category</b>	<b>Expenditures (2001-2005)</b>	<b>%</b>
1. Bilateral (including the European Commission)	18,767,779	30
2. Multilateral	12,555,434	20
3. Latin America and the Caribbean countries	10,489,501	16
4. UNDP (4.1 + 4.2 + 4.3)	21,792,281	34
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>63,604,994</b>	<b>100</b>
4.1 UNDP Regional TRAC	14,847,167	23
4.2 UNDP Programme Support RBLAC	4,240,017	7
4.3 UNDP Other funds	2,705,097	4
<b>Subtotal UNDP</b>	<b>21,792,281</b>	<b>34</b>

14. RCF officials argue that external funding doubled their projected expectations. This may be the case if one considers resources budgeted for 2006–2007.

and government cost-sharing from Latin American countries contributed \$10 million.<sup>14</sup> According to expenditure figures through December 2005, the second RCF met its funding goals. In addition, the RCF has budgeted \$48.5 million for 2006–2007 from non-UNDP resources, claiming a total budget of \$112 million. Since those figures were not

executed by the time the evaluation was conducted, that amount was not considered in the purview of this evaluation.

Table 3.6 presents expenditures by thematic areas in 2001–2005. Project expenditures are grouped according to the information provided by RBLAC in November 2006.

<b>Table 3.6. Project expenditure by practice area (2001–2005, as of November 2006) (US Dollars)</b>	
<b>Thematic Area</b>	<b>Expenditure 2001-2005</b>
Democratic Governance	26,628,978
Poverty and Inequality reduction and MDG	19,146,523
Energy and Climate Change	12,314,623
Crisis Prevention and Recovery	4,782,765
HIV/AIDS	732,101
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>63,604,992</b>

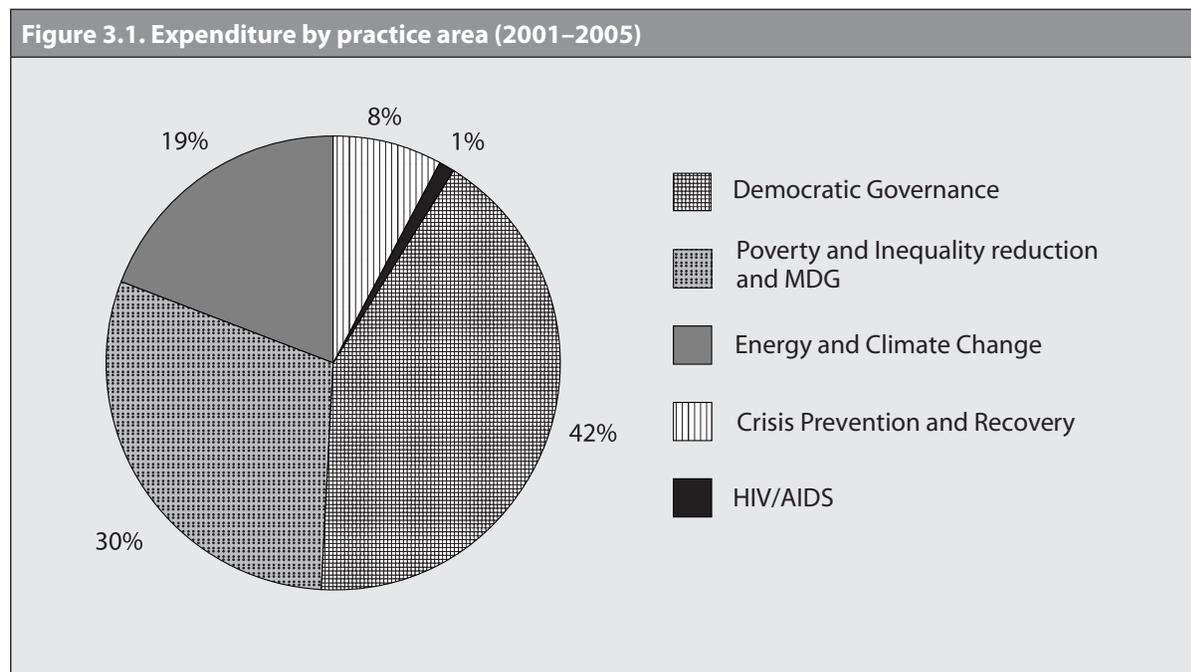


Table 3.7 was provided by RBLAC in April 2007. It presents expenditures according to the original categories used in the design phase. It is clear that democratic governance commands the largest share of the budget, with MDG and poverty reduction

a distant second. This speaks to the significance, relevance, size and breadth of the democratic governance area. The data also show the limited resources dedicated to initiatives such as gender, HIV/AIDS, energy and climate change and disaster prevention.

<b>Table 3.7. Second RCF resources by practice area and cross-cutting theme (2001–2005, as of April 2007) (US Dollars)</b>		
<b>Thematic Area</b>	<b>Expenditures (2001-2005)</b>	<b>%</b>
Democratic Governance	22,956,526	36
MDG and Poverty Reduction	15,261,558	24
Energy and Climate Change	11,575,692	18
Disaster Prevention	3,469,611	5
Gender	2,374,200	4
Support to the Implementation of Strategic Planning	2,323,888	4
Conflict Resolution	2,003,395	3
Support Services to Development	1,373,842	2
Human Development	1,311,285	2
HIV/AIDS	732,101	1
Information and Communications Technology for Development	222,894	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>63,604,992</b>	<b>100</b>

## Chapter 4

# Strategic Positioning and Partnerships

This section evaluates the strategic positioning and the partnerships of the RCF to examine the position that UNDP has achieved in Latin America and the Caribbean and the quality of the partnerships that have been established. First, the position of the RCF within the UN system is evaluated. This is followed by an evaluation of the external partnerships developed by RBLAC through RCF programmes. Finally, this section examines the value added by RCF focus on knowledge creation and advocacy, policy advice and programme support efforts. In addition, this section addresses the principal challenges, identifies areas of promise and notes outstanding efforts.

### 4.1 RCF POSITION WITHIN THE UN SYSTEM

There is a general UN system consensus that RCF programmes are complementary to core specialized activities. Interviews with officials in other units revealed support and even gratitude for UNDP activities. Other units within the UN system welcomed the coordinating role that UNDP plays in each country and in particularly complex situations. The conclusion is that, given the coordination experience of the RCF, others are comfortable with following its leadership. Moreover, some units expressed an enormous interest in expanding relationships with RBLAC and participating in future RCFs to a larger extent.

However, this is not necessarily the case throughout the system. In some areas, officials questioned the involvement of the RCF in specialized areas of other agencies. Thus, UNDP participation in certain areas is described as interloping and uncoordinated. While such voices were certainly in the minority, some were rather forceful. This sends an important signal to RBLAC to improve lines of communication in the design and implementation phases of the RCF.

At the regional level, the UN lacks the coordinating framework found at the national level — such as the United Nations Development Agreement

Framework, Common Country Assessment, and the UN Resident Coordinator system — with the exception of the Barbados office, which functions as both a national and a regional programme.

UNDP presence in almost every country of the region is a distinct advantage cited by agencies like ECLAC and UNIFEM, which do not have comparable in-country networks. This makes for a natural partnership based on the partners' specific areas of expertise and the implementing capacity of UNDP. For example, UNDP and UNIFEM are negotiating to have the latter's programme on gender budgeting in Central America implemented by UNDP. The Economic Agenda of Women is a joint programme aimed at strengthening knowledge on gender and the economy in Central America, and at using this knowledge in advocacy, including gender budgeting, by regional and national actors.

### 4.2 PARTNERSHIP STRATEGIES

Each area of this evaluation has noted the remarkable ability of the RCF to develop networks and alliances of scholars, specialists, trainers and policy makers. The networks in the poverty and democratic governance areas are noteworthy, and so are the networks in energy and climate change and cross-cutting issues. The human development concept holds an enormous potential for network consolidation. This evaluation highlights the central nature of the RCF to the long-term sustainability of these networks. In the poverty area, for example, the networks of scholars and policy makers are extremely dependent on the relevance of the issues discussed and on continued support from the RCF. The PRODDAL network is less structured, but it is the single most regional important effort linking important minds in the democratic governance field. Such a network, in and of itself, is a very significant accomplishment. Similarly, RCF programmes in the energy and climate change area have contributed to the establishment of a network but were less able to guarantee its long-term sustainability.

UNDP has a specific partnership model in the Caribbean, implementing its core programme through two regional organizations, OECS and CARICOM, and their respective agencies. The model provides a logical partner for a regional programme and supports initiatives that are identified as critical to subregional development but are outside of the scope of country programmes. In addition, this model is a cost-effective way of providing highly effective upstream support to a large number of members, including those affected by regional policies but not eligible for country funding. Finally, given the well-established framework in which the programmes operate, this model has enormous advantages in ensuring both ownership and sustainability.

The Caribbean model highlights some key issues in the RCF. The strong sense of ownership by OECS and CARICOM required flexibility on the part of the RCF, given that there is not always a perfect correlation in priorities. Working with established regional organizations is a natural fit for a regional programme. In such cases, UNDP provides advantages that include:

- a cost-effective way of providing highly effective upstream support (policy, capacity-building) to a large number of members;
- supporting the regional development framework that complements country programmes but could not be financed by them. As a country-focused organization, only the RCF allows UNDP to do this; and
- supporting net contributing countries (not eligible for grants from UNDP or UNAIDS) through technical support and strengthening of regional organizations that will benefit from them. As small island developing States, they suffer from many of the vulnerabilities faced by their poorer neighbours.

### 4.3 VALUE ADDED OF THE RCF

#### 4.3.1 KNOWLEDGE GENERATION AND ADVOCACY

The objective of the RCF to be a significant generator of knowledge is an area that requires careful analysis. According to RBLAC, the strategy of

the RCF emphasized knowledge management as transforming theoretical and empirical knowledge into tools that can nurture UNDP operations and promote human development. The RCF has indeed contributed to the generation of knowledge in the areas under evaluation. It is less clear, however, how significant the contributions have been in translating that knowledge into development policies.

The RCF work has set important benchmarks that are often cited in major academic works and intellectual debates. The works on poverty reduction (e.g., Vos and Ganuza, *Who gains from free trade? Export-led growth, inequality and poverty in Latin America*, Routledge: 2006), democratic governance (e.g., *Democracy in Latin America: Towards a Citizens' Democracy*, UNDP: 2004), and several national human development reports deserve to be mentioned in this regard.

The knowledge generation goal must also be placed in a regionally specific context. The LAC region has one of the lowest ratios of expenditure on research to GDP (gross domestic product). However, the region also has a vast number of universities, non-governmental organizations, think-tanks and other organizations competing for funding to conduct training and research activities. In some measure, the perception exists that the RCF has become another competitor for these funds. RBLAC is urged to link its objective to become a significant generator of knowledge with a more institutional-building approach. The areas of intervention should develop local talent with the objective of helping local research institutions become sustainable.

Similarly, this evaluation has noted that the RCF has been searching for ways to complement the corporate framework of human development. In each area of intervention, an effort to make these complementary linkages is ongoing. PRODDAL, for example, is part of the overall human development framework, and it strives to contribute conceptual developments concerning transition to democracy and citizenship as a complement. Thus, 'citizen's democracy' is not a new framework separate from human development, but an attempt to conceptually advance the framework.

The relationship between the MDGs, human development and citizen's democracy appear to be clear on the surface but require more thinking and

development. Now that there is some consensus about the central nature of these concepts, future programme development must assume these to be the base that provides guidance and focus.

This evaluation also examined the quality of the material produced by RCF programmes in view of their contribution to knowledge generation. While the evaluation team is impressed with the overall quality of the deliverables, ranging from the PRODDAL report to publications on poverty reduction and energy and climate change, there nonetheless exists a significant amount of variation in quality. Some products are of excellent quality and could well compete in the most rigorous academic setting.

In the energy and climate change area, however, the studies did not go beyond country case studies and did not achieve the goal of providing serious comparative analysis. In the poverty reduction area, the RCF programme shifted from the focus of research on economic growth and stability during the 1990s to an emphasis on the analysis of the effects of macroeconomic policies on poverty and inequality. The programme shared the use of contemporary mathematical models that allowed simulation of effects upon poverty and inequality by labour markets and distribution among households, in order to nurture the work of government and national academic partners. The new approach and its analytical tools were positively appreciated by national counterparts of the RCF.

Furthermore, the national studies and regional comparisons allowed for a critique of economic reforms implemented in the region during the second RCF. The knowledge generated by household surveys was found to have an important effect on policy design at the local level, because it yielded a good description of the socio-economic conditions of the population. As a result, the surveys are useful for identifying needs, establishing priorities, and identifying areas of opportunity, although they could be improved through routine disaggregation of data by sex at the household level.

The RCF has placed great emphasis in all areas on the generation and sharing of knowledge through Internet-based initiatives. This is an important approach, as it facilitates access to data and studies

that are not readily available in the region. Virtual schools and portals have become the preferred mechanisms for creating and sharing knowledge. They can also become very significant training tools across the region. At this stage, these are important initiatives that require continuity and a large amount of resources.

RBLAC must keep in mind, however, that Web-based tools are expensive in both human and financial resources. Creation of content is a very labour-intensive task, and maintenance of networks and Web pages can be quite costly. Moreover, great competition exists in this area such that an expensive portal becomes one of thousands that may provide similar content. In contrast, Genera was created because there was no existing, comprehensive portal in Spanish. It is also focused particularly on sharing knowledge rather than creating it, recognizing that there are many lessons learned in the region that are not adequately disseminated or discussed. The value added by Genera is not only to consolidate the existing Spanish-language resources on gender mainstreaming in one platform, but also to aim the service at practitioners.

Finally, it is clear that the knowledge management methodology promoted has influenced other UNDP units and other organizations. These include: the Panama Regional Centre, the Global Energy Programme, the Bangkok Regional Centre, the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy, other UN agencies and external partners, including the European Commission, which has capitalized on the RCF experience to design a knowledge management system for key programmes.

#### **4.3.2 POLICY ADVICE**

This evaluation examined the degree to which programmes affected the public policy cycle in Latin America and the Caribbean. The results have been mixed. Few would argue that the MDGs have been readily accepted and incorporated into policy initiatives such as national development plans or other pieces of legislation. Some countries have been more meticulous in their adoption of MDGs than others. Overall, this area has been the most successful at engaging governments and policy makers in critical issues, yet such broad success is not the case in every instance of intervention.

Most programmes remain largely unknown and have been inconsequential to national policy debates. Again this reality strongly suggests the need for a greater focus on those areas that have reasonable prospects of success.

The effect of RCF programmes on public policy must also be measured in terms of the influence they had on policy makers and practitioners in general — not only through the generation of important ideas that were widely disseminated, but also by the quality of policy-making. In a large number of countries, individual members of RCF networks have gone on to become important members of their countries' bureaucracies. More importantly, in some cases, after completing their terms as public servants, individuals returned to the network. Moreover, during their tenure in a particular bureaucracy they noted how important it was to continue to have access to the networks.

Another example involves the HIV/AIDS Leadership for Results programme, where participants were or became key figures in their national HIV/AIDS efforts. Among the goals of this programme was to change the focus of HIV/AIDS response from strictly a health problem to the broader development perspective envisioned in the UN General Assembly Special Session on HIV/AIDS. Specific initiatives such as the TRIPS workshop have helped countries define policies on the accessibility of drugs needed by PLWHA.

In the Eastern Caribbean, UNDP helped to establish and fund a Social Development Unit within the OECS. The Development Unit is active in ensuring that social indicators are included in national surveys, and that the data is analysed and integrated into national and subregional policy. In the area of statistical collection and analysis, UNDP has been credited with effective advocacy to ensure the inclusion of social and development indicators across the Caribbean.

#### **4.3.3 PROGRAMME SUPPORT**

RCF programmes generally include programme support provisions that address the administrative services needed to implement development projects. In the energy and climate change area, the principal objective was the provision of regional services, particularly through experts who assisted in project

development and diagnosis both at the national and subregional level. Additionally, RCF programmes assisted in the generation of resources and the development of associations.

The results for this subregion are important. In the democratic governance area, UNDP helped to strengthen Caribbean integration through its support to: the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice to replace the British Privy Council as the highest court of appeal; the development of the CSME plan being implemented; and the implementation public information campaigns about its effect and opportunities. Teleconferencing has helped to make CARICOM operations more efficient and cost-effective, and solid preparatory work has been carried out towards the implementation of a regional ICT connectivity plan. The Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre, sponsored by multiple donors, provides technical and professional support in taxation, macroeconomic and finance policies necessary not only to improve effectiveness, but also to prepare for the CSME. A senior CARICOM official described UNDP support as “pivotal in governance”, not in the electoral sense, but in terms of good governance and accountability.

In the area of poverty reduction, the main contribution of UNDP has been in developing regional and national capacity for data gathering and analysis, with a particular emphasis on social, gender and environmental data. In OECS, this included funding the establishment of a social policy unit. Efforts in this area will be carried into a new multi-year, multi-donor project, Support to Poverty Assessment and Reduction in the Caribbean.

In the area of energy and climate change, results have been mainly in the area of disaster preparedness and response, although a GEF renewable energy project is also underway. Given the region's vulnerability to natural disasters, especially hurricanes and volcanoes, UNDP support for CDERA is critical. Climate change goals were quite ambitious and ranged from the training of negotiators and helping governments craft strategies to advising Andean nations on issues. While negotiators were indeed trained, there has been little continuity in training programmes.

In the area of HIV/AIDS, UNDP played an important role in supporting the development of PANCAP and accessing funds for three regional proposals from GFATM. Leadership programmes have helped to influence regional and national policies and programmes to take a broad multi-sector approach. UNDP has supported a strong gender focus and the empowerment of PLWHA in programmes.

In the area of capacity development, significant programme support was offered to CARICOM. CARICOM suffers from the same problems that affect other organizations in the region, including a small base of human resources, exacerbated by the brain drain; the difficult logistics caused by the region's geography; and the need to respond

to the varied demands of donors, member States and others. However, CARICOM has a great deal of credibility and is the only established regional organization other than the subregional OECS.

In addition to supporting regional programmes, UNDP supports Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Development for the CARICOM Secretariat. This includes, apparently on a responsive basis, executive leadership development for managers, technical training and advisory services. One of the weaknesses that could most affect the influence of UNDP support is strategic planning capacity. While UNDP responsiveness is generally positive, it would have more bearing in the context of an effective strategic planning framework.

# Chapter 5

## Key Findings

### 5.1 RELEVANCE

The programmes of the second RCF are of high relevance to identifying and addressing regional development challenges. In the area of poverty reduction, there is a need to measure the extent and depth of poverty, and to analyse the effects of macroeconomic policies on the poor. In the area of democratic governance, there is a need to strengthen democracy while improving citizens' involvement and reducing inequalities. In the area of energy and climate change, there is a need to assist countries and subregions in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and in mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change. The second RCF addressed the conditions, needs and major problems affecting the region and translated this understanding into a series of concrete initiatives.

The RCF enhanced its relevance through identifying and closely collaborating with a number of regional and subregional organizations. Several important efforts were made to coordinate with other development initiatives. Also noteworthy were the relationships with multilateral organizations, particularly European bodies striving to become more engaged in Latin American and the Caribbean.

One of the most significant contributions of the RCF was its ability to engage with decision makers in of the region in a dialogue about key development issues of the day. Although this engagement was most visible in the democratic governance area, it was present in nearly all practice areas. In the case of energy and climate change, the programme cooperated with the Forum of Ministries of the Environment linked to regional decisions at the United Nations (UN) international conferences in Johannesburg and Monterrey. It should be noted that while engaging in this dialogue was important, it is difficult to gauge although the effect of such engagement on policy decisions is difficult to gauge.

### 5.2 EFFECTIVENESS

The second RCF was effective in the four critical areas where UNDP placed great emphasis. Most significant was the effect of the second RCF on developing a better understanding of democracy and its challenge of delivering results for the poor. This is a specific objective of the democratic governance area and, therefore, represents a major accomplishment that affects all other areas of intervention. The regional programme took 20 years of low-profile but significant academic work in democratic governance and placed the resulting findings at the centre of contemporary policy debates.

Another area of positive effect of the second RCF is poverty reduction. RCF programmes have led the region to a better understanding of poverty reduction strategies by developing measurements, providing analytical studies of the relationship and effects of macroeconomic policy on poverty and inequality, and benchmarking progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Third, the RCF was effective in achieving an improved use of the concept of human development by promoting a regional network of national teams, which produced more than 80 Human Development Reports at national, subnational and subregional levels, and by capacity-building efforts conducted through the Virtual School on Human Development. In this sense, RCF programmes contributed to a better understanding of the changing needs of the region.

The fourth objective of the RCF was to generate and share knowledge. The findings show that the RCF was effective in achieving this objective across the areas of intervention. However, this effectiveness did not always translate to quality information products and dissemination strategies.

Policy advisory services had mixed results. The area of poverty alleviation linked to the MDGs had important policy results, and several democratic governance programmes significantly influenced contemporary policy debates. Less success can be claimed in the area of energy and climate change, and cross-cutting issues such as gender have a similarly mixed record. Human development has been an important reference point, especially as governments read the policy recommendations of National Human Development Reports.

This evaluation revealed inconsistencies in the success of the capacity development efforts of the RCF. Some programmes, such as the Information and Management for Governance System, the Virtual School on Human Development, and local governance fairs, were more effective than others in transferring knowledge.

### **5.3 EFFICIENCY**

UNDP achieved efficiency by forging partnerships that allowed it to leverage external resources in order to finance regional initiatives. At the same time, regional initiatives made good use of scarce resources, especially in the areas of poverty reduction, democratic governance and human development.

The efficiency of programmes was hampered by spreading the portfolio of interventions too thinly and by poor monitoring systems that allowed for some duplication of efforts. The duplication was also interpreted by the evaluators as a lack of coordination between regional programme initiatives and UNDP country offices.

Efficiency was also affected by poor coordination with other UN organizations, although there were cases where the regional programme worked reasonably well with other UN agencies. Such programmes were in the areas of the MDGs, local governance, environment and gender. In particular, cooperation and coordination were achieved with the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Environment Programme and ECLAC.

### **5.4 COST-EFFECTIVENESS**

Based on general observation, this evaluation concludes that, overall, a reasonable relationship exists between costs and results; however, the evaluators lacked sufficient evidence to substantiate this conclusion.

RBLAC was exceedingly forthcoming with financial data, although confusion existed in clustering programmes according to either their original programmatic categories or the new programming and monitoring structures of UNDP. Thus, poor monitoring and evaluation systems did not provide sufficient data to make it possible to assess this criterion.

Major RCF interventions received financial support from other bilateral and multilateral institutions, and extensive programmatic and financial information supplied to donors provided evidence of good use of resources. Quality data, however, was not available for all RCF interventions.

### **5.5 SUSTAINABILITY**

The sustainability of RCF programmes is the area of greatest concern to the success of the RCF. Overall, the RCF attempted to promote local and regional ownership, but the results have not been as expected. Local stakeholders lacked a sense of ownership of regional programmes and continue to expect UNDP to carry the full burden of most initiatives.

The sustainability of RCF interventions may be compromised due to the absence of clearly defined exit strategies in the design phase. Many projects got underway with no clear processes in place to monitor results after UNDP participation ended. Evidence shows that national contributions to RCF programmes have made these interventions more sustainable, as demonstrated by the *Mejoramiento de las Condiciones de Vida* household surveys or the presidential follow-up system established in many countries of the region.

## Chapter 6

# Conclusions, Lessons and Recommendations

### 6.1 CONCLUSIONS

In comparison to previous regional programmes, and despite the complexity of programme design, UNDP made significant progress towards achieving the RCF objectives established during the design phase. This is particularly important given the dynamic characteristics of the region, which, in some measure, made it difficult to achieve programme goals. Achieving objectives speaks well of complex programmes that were sufficiently adaptable to changing regional circumstances.

The second RCF for Latin America and the Caribbean deserves high praise for the complexity of the numerous programmes that were developed during the 2001–2006 period. Most programmes exhibited a degree of sophistication that demonstrated a grasp of the major development challenges that face this vast and complicated region.

The RCF has been successful in establishing working agreements with programme countries and donors, and in mobilizing third-party resources to finance regional initiatives. This achievement is particularly noteworthy, as it highlights that other organizations recognize the value of UNDP efforts.

The RCF established ambitious goals yet had limited resources to achieve them, thus creating a disparity that posed implementation challenges and affected programme efficiency. While the goals are laudable, the RCF should have aimed to be consistent with the availability of resources. In an environment of limited resources, the RCF portfolio was spread too thinly in an attempt to cover increasing demands.

This evaluation concludes that successful interventions are those where UNDP has developed expertise, and where national human and financial resources have been invested.

A large ‘grey zone’ of coordination between regional programme initiatives and national projects has hampered the ability of all initiatives to produce more significant results. Weak coordination hampers the effectiveness, efficiency, cost-effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of regional initiatives.

### 6.2 LESSONS LEARNED

The experience of the second RCF points to several lessons that may enhance the implementation of future regional programmes. The first lesson is that UNDP has been most effective in areas where its expertise was demonstrable, such as poverty reduction, democratic governance and human development.

In those areas where UNDP expertise is either incipient or lagging, the evaluation results are mixed. The efforts are commendable, and in some cases even outstanding; however, it is evident that UNDP efforts are merely complementary to those of other organizations that have developed key competences in areas such as energy and climate change or HIV/AIDS.

Particular focus should be placed on cross-cutting issues such as gender, which could be considerably strengthened and streamlined. The concern is that significant efforts are needed to mainstream these key issues.

In all areas, arrangements with regional institutions could be significantly strengthened. While the regional programme developed significant ties with these institutions, such ties lack continuity. UNDP could play a positive role by developing strategic, long-term institutional and programmatic arrangements.

While improving coordination between regional and national programmes should be a priority, this evaluation concludes that country and regional ownership is effective when outputs and outcomes are clarified through regional interventions, as was the case of the Project on Democratic Development in Latin America and subsequent initiatives and projects.

A final lesson learned is that the regional programme needs a coherent and more systematic management and monitoring system with corresponding outcomes, outputs and indicators that help enhance its effectiveness.

### 6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Keep the knowledge generation effort applied to policy advice, integrating the concept of human development into other practice areas as a guiding framework. Knowledge generation is a key UNDP goal, and policy relevance of all programmes is critical to the countries in the region. Integration of the human development framework into other areas will substantially augment the UNDP position as an important participant in regional development.
2. Concentrate and limit the regional initiatives to areas of expertise. The RCF has been characterized by a great diversity of projects. Given the scarcity of resources, it follows to attempt to narrow UNDP engagement.
3. Enhance management of projects and programmes with clear monitoring and evaluation structures, and mechanisms with a results-based management approach. The main critique of this evaluation is the absence of monitoring mechanisms and evaluation structures.
4. Enhance coordination with UNDP global and national structures, particularly with country offices. Each area examined in this evaluation noted recurring coordination problems. It is clear that this must be an overarching goal of future RCFs.
5. Increase collaboration and coordination with regional institutions and with other UN organizations. This evaluation notes that the second RCF was able to promote and develop significant relationships with regional institutions; however, these relationships are incipient and require considerable work to become effective. A similar situation exists internally, where there is enormous potential for collaboration and coordination with other UN system agencies.
6. Structure new RCF projects and initiatives around achieving the MDGs. This recommendation is self-evident, given the overwhelming MDG focus of the UN system as a whole. Specifically, it is recommended that this objective become transversal to the thematic areas.
7. Enhance national and regional ownership through broader consultation processes and follow-up mechanisms. This evaluation concludes that national and regional ownership of the majority of RCF projects was weak. Consequently, consultation processes need to be strengthened, and participatory follow-up mechanisms need to be developed.
8. A subregional approach is recommended in view of the diversity of interests within the region. In several of the thematic areas, it is evident that a broad regional approach often misses subregional nuances. The next RCF should consider an approach that can identify such nuances so as to avoid the trap of generalizing efforts while missing specific targets of opportunity. At the same time, the approach should be sufficiently flexible to account for the dynamics of subregional patterns.

## Annex 1

# List of People Interviewed

**Acuña, Guillermo**, Legal Adviser, Sustainable Development and Human Settlements, ECLAC, Chile

**Allen, Aileen**, Programme Specialist, Latin America and the Caribbean Section, UNIFEM

**Al Nashif, Nada**, Coordinator, Regional Programme for Arab States, UNDP

**Alvarez Correa, Cecilia**, Economic Adviser, Presidency of Colombia

**Ames, Barry**, Professor of Political Science, University of Pittsburgh

**Ardaya, Gloria**, Director, Postgraduate Centre for Development Sciences University of San Andres UMSA, Bolivia

**Arias, Nestor**, Policy Adviser, HIV/AIDS, Caribbean Subregional Resource Facility, UNDP

**Armstrong, Jane**, Regional Adviser, United Kingdom Department for International Development, Barbados

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## Annex 2

# Terms of Reference

### I. BACKGROUND

The Second Regional Cooperation Framework (RCF) for Latin America and the Caribbean Region, 2002-2006, was approved by the UNDP Executive Board in November 2001. The RCF was developed in response to the Millennium Declaration, whose development goals underpin the overarching goals of the RCF. The RCF objectives are also parallel to those of the Second Global Cooperation Framework within the corporate mandate for poverty reduction. The RCF supports the provision of regional public goods, minimizing cross-border externalities and spill over, and promotes regional advocacy. The second RCF was designed building upon an extensive round of regional, subregional and national consultations, the mid-term review of the first RCF (DP/RRR/RLA/1) and the annual results of the regional programme in 1999 and 2000. The RCF covers three main thematic areas:

1. Poverty Reduction and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals
2. Democratic Governance for Human Development
3. Energy and Climate Change

In addition to the three main themes, three cross-cutting issues are included in the RCF: (i) gender and development; (ii) information and communications technology (ICT) for development; and (iii) human development at local level.

The RCF is intended as part of a broader regional cooperation agenda pursued by the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as other parts of the UN system. The RCF emphasises consultative activities with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and subregional intergovernmental groupings, as well as a close relationship with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB).

The RCF is implemented under the overall supervision of the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean in the headquarters. Important players in the implementation of the RCF include a range of intergovernmental, non-governmental, academic and policy institutions in the region. Results-based management (RBM), which includes beneficiary and stakeholder participation in monitoring and reporting, has been incorporated into the RCF.

The financial resources required for the RCF five-year period (2002-2006) estimated at approval were US\$59 million, with UNDP providing core resources for \$17 million. Consequently, it mobilization of non-core funds of \$42 million was foreseen to meet the objectives of the RCF.

### II. PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

At the annual session of the Executive Board in June 2004, the Associate Administrator indicated that UNDP would undertake forward looking evaluations prior to the drafting and submission of new Regional Cooperation Frameworks (RCFs) to assess the effectiveness of the overall approach of the RCF in each of the four regional programmes. Since the RCF for the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean ended in December 2005 an extension until December 2006 was approved so as to incorporate the priorities in the following RCF set by the new Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean. The evaluation will be conducted by the Evaluation Office of UNDP in the last quarter of 2006.

The evaluation will assess the overall programme performance and outcomes of the RCF (2001-2005) covering its scope and range, policy advisory services and knowledge management. Findings of the evaluation will provide inputs to the next RCF for the region. The evaluation will be presented to the Executive Board in the June session of 2007.

Specific objectives of the planned independent evaluation of the RCF are as follows:

1. Assess the achievement of the intended organizational goals and development results, highlighting key results of outputs and outcomes, lessons learnt and good practices both as they relate to specified UNDP programme goals and in relation to broader national strategies in the region.
2. Assess performance of the RCF and specify the development results achieved in the area of policy advice, capacity development and knowledge management within the core results areas that the regional programme has focused on as well as assessment of the scope and range of strategic partnerships formed.
3. Based on the actual results, ascertain how the RCF has contributed to strategically positioning UNDP to establish its comparative advantage or niche as a major upstream global policy adviser for poverty reduction and sustainable human development and as a knowledge-based organization in the region.
4. Identify innovative approaches used within the RCF programmed project portfolio, their related outcomes and lessons learned within UNDP and in programme countries.

The findings of the evaluation will be useful for the Regional Bureau, Country Offices of the region, corporate units working in the region and main national counterpart of the programme.

### **III. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT**

After the lost decade of the 1980s, the majority of Latin American economies resumed growth during the first half of the 1990s but was hit by the repercussions of the South East Asian financial crisis which started in 1997, experiencing a setback at the end of the decade with uneven results. During the 1990s, most countries implemented trade and financial liberalization policies based on the prevailing idea that they were efficient strategies for growth in contrast to past excessive trade protection and high levels of State intervention. However, vulnerability and macroeconomic management that emphasized overvalued exchange rates and high interest rates produced low rates of growth. High levels of debt-

servicing and a downturn of the global economy, lower foreign direct investment and shrinking markets for exports were major concerns.

The institutional reforms did not set up mechanisms that guarantee economic competition and ensure access to formal markets by the poor. Although the trend with respect to the incidence of poverty was favourable in the period 1990-1997 compared with the 1980s, the situation worsened in the following years. At the same time, income inequality worsened during the 1990s and is still the highest worldwide.

The consolidation of democratic governance is a challenge to the region. In the past 20 years, the overwhelming majority of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have adopted democratic political regimes. However, some democracies are fragile and incomplete and are subject to failure. Longstanding poverty, deteriorating patterns of income distribution and personal and social insecurity erode democracy. The sustainability of democracies is linked to the ways in which society resolves the issues of poverty, unemployment and social inequity, incorporates the concerns of minorities, in particular ethnic groups, and ensures enjoyment of fundamental rights. Public opinion polls show that in many countries, people have low confidence in political parties, judicial systems and the police. Political and civil leaders identify corruption as a factor that undermines the credibility and legitimacy of institutions. In several countries, internal conflicts persist and drug trafficking remains a major threat to internal and regional security. Civil society organizations, local governments and other actors, assuming new roles, have mobilized in support of democratic processes, leading to a more participatory and inclusive society.

Natural resources and global public goods like water, forest and the environment are overused. One third of the population of the region is poor and lives in isolated communities, without access to energy. Energy investments of more than \$17 billion per year are increasing the use of fossil fuels. Climate change exacerbates natural disasters with enormous human and economic costs. The 244 million poor of the region are the most vulnerable to climate change and related risks and disasters. Yet, an environmentally sustainable approach has not been fully mainstreamed into development policy.

#### **IV. DESCRIPTION OF THE SUBJECT OF THE EVALUATION**

The evaluation will assess the second regional cooperation framework (RCF) for Latin America and the Caribbean. The (RCF) was designed as an instrument for UNDP to promote sustainable human development in the region and to reaffirm its role towards achieving the United Nations Millennium Declaration commitment to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015. The RCF was designed to undertake activities in areas of priority concern to the countries in response to the aggregated regional demands and priorities; and serve as an interface between national, regional and global issues. Its will was to contribute to shifting the role of UNDP in the region towards the provision of knowledge-based advisory services; institutional strengthening; facilitation of multi-stakeholder consensus-building; advocacy work; and demonstration projects. These functional areas did underpin interventions in three priority thematic areas: poverty reduction; democratic governance; and energy and climate change. The RCF was supposed to incorporate three cross-cutting themes: gender and development; information and communication technology for development; and human development at the local level.

#### **V. EVALUATION SCOPE**

The evaluation will assess the contributions of UNDP through the RCF to development results, which is expected to strengthen the formulation of the next Regional Programme, assessment of all outcome/programme evaluations undertaken in the region during the period of the RCF (2002-2006). In assessing strategic importance, relevance, and development effectiveness of the RCF, the evaluation will cover five key areas inter alia:

- a. Programme performance of the RCF programme portfolio and development results achieved;
- b. Organizational strategy and modality/mechanisms of delivering service lines and their effectiveness;
- c. Overall institutional results;

- d. Partnerships and resource mobilization results; and
- e. Lessons learnt and future directions.

In addition, the evaluation will examine the following:

- 1) The extent to which the RCF has addressed the three development areas and the attainment of the immediate objectives;
- 2) Strategic focus of the RCF support and its relevance to the country and regional priorities, including relevance to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- 3) Synergic relationships between various components of the RCF (e.g. linkages between the three development areas with human development issues).
- 4) Synergies and alignment of the RCF with other initiatives and partnerships, including that of United Nations Development Agreement Framework (UNDAF), country programmes, Global Cooperation Framework, as well as regional cross practice linkages (e.g. gender and women's empowerment and ICT for sustainable human development). Such an assessment may include examination of how the RCF leveraged resources towards achievement of results, the balance between various advocacy, analytical work and networking of the RCF contributing to the achievement of the MDGs.
- 5) The relevance and quality of SURF support to RCF programmes and projects and value added as well as cost effectiveness of the SURF mechanism in delivering RCF products.
- 6) Institutional and management arrangements of Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC) for programming, managing, monitoring and evaluating the regional programmes.
- 7) Institutional arrangements by BDP for programming, delivery and monitoring of implementation of the RCF at the HQ level, at the subregional level (SURFs) and at the country level.

## **VI. GENERIC EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

- Has the RCF done the right things? (was it relevant, appropriate and strategic),
- Has the RCF done things right? (was it effective, efficient and sustainable),
- How might RBLAC do things better in the future? (lessons and recommendations)

## **VII. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK**

Triangulation of information and data sources will constitute the primary methodology for the assessment. The concept of triangulation refers to empirical evidence gathered through three major sources of information: perception, validation and documentation. Validation of the information and findings will be achieved through cross-referencing of sources. This means that document reviews will be supplemented by interviews and focus group discussions with key informants and/or stakeholders at both UNDP HQs and the country offices that will be visited. If necessary, a rapid questionnaire and/or informal snap survey would be used to provide quick information on the programme. More details of the analytical and evaluation techniques to be used are given below:

### **DESK REVIEWS**

The Evaluation Team will review the RCF, its constituent projects and other related initiatives and key documents to extract information, bring out key trends and issues, to develop key questions and criteria—including a survey—for analysis, and compiling relevant data during the preparatory phase of the evaluation. The Team will also analyse all outcome/programme evaluations undertaken by UNDP during the RCF period before country visits, and undertake additional desk review based on interactions with Country Offices and Regional Offices and other focal points for RCF activities during and after country visits. A stakeholder mapping will be also drawn to identify key stakeholders during the country visits.

## **REVIEW AND ANALYSIS BY EVALUATION TEAM**

The overall evaluation methodology, approach and programme of work will be agreed between EO and the Evaluation Team Leader before the start of the evaluation. The evaluation team will assemble in NY in late-September 2006 for orientation and briefing. Country visits and other data collection will be held between October 2006 and January 2007. The team leader will come to UNDP NY in late January 2007 for deliberation on the emerging findings; lessons, and recommendations; further on he or she will prepare an initial report prior for moving to the final stages of evaluation.

### **SURVEYS**

The RCF's work is meant to influence and impact the work of country offices, countries, donors, other development partners and constituencies in the region. To the extent that it has succeeded in collecting relevant information, the evaluation team will review and analyse data collected by the corporate and partnership surveys conducted by UNDP to ascertain the effectiveness of the RCF's work particularly in relation to policy advice, knowledge management and networking and its integration into UNDP work as well as to obtain the perception of key partners and clients on the outcomes and effectiveness of this approach.

### **VISITS TO SAMPLE OF COUNTRY OFFICES AND SURF**

Based on consultations with the HQ Units, a sample of at least 4 representative countries and 5 partner institutions in each of these countries will be visited by the international team to validate the findings coming out of the desk reviews and information and views from the interviews. Country visits will be used to identify good practices and lessons for the future at both the country level and corporate levels. EO will in consultation with BDP and RBLAC, select the sample countries. The sample countries will be selected on the basis of: balance of programme and project portfolio, geographical locations of programme and projects and lessons-learning potential.

The international team members will each spend a total of 3-5 days per country and may be supported by a locally recruited consultant, if necessary. The main purpose of the field visits will be to (a) obtain on-site knowledge of how the RCF work links to country level priorities and vertical integration, (b) obtain the views of the government and national stakeholders and the UN country team, (c) bring some level of specificity and context to the assessment and (d) come up with contextual findings and recommendations that can complement the desk-based analyses.

#### **FINALIZATION OF REPORT**

The last stage of the assessment will be devoted to report writing and further triangulation of country specific data and findings with HQ sources. The Draft Final Report will be made available to the Evaluation Office by February 2007, and will also be submitted to the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC) for review. The Team Leader will finalize the Evaluation Report after the HQ consultation/validation process and will make it available to EO by February 2007 at the latest.

#### **VIII. EXPECTED PRODUCTS**

The Final Evaluation report, should be a 25-30 paged analytical report, excluding annexes, detailing key findings, good practices and clear recommendations for the next RCF for the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC), taking into account UNDP corporate priorities reflected in the UNDP Multi-year Funding Framework (MYFF) and MDGs.

#### **IX. COMPOSITION AND EXPERIENCE OF EVALUATION TEAM**

The team members should have in-depth knowledge of developments in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The composition of the Evaluation Team should reflect the independent and substantive results focus of the exercise. The Team Leader must have a demonstrative capacity in strategic thinking and policy advice and in the evaluation and management of complex programmes. The Team composition should reflect ample experience in development in Latin America and in evaluation including expertise in poverty reduction, democratic governance, local development and gender.

In general, the Team members must possess high educational qualifications in the social sciences or related disciplines. The Team is expected to be familiar with UNDP modus operandi and also have extensive knowledge in development and institutional changes, and in management and modalities of impacting changes through advisory services and advocacy. The Team will also include a designated task manager from EO to support the Team at HQ and during country visits.

#### **X. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

EO will manage the evaluation process, provide backstopping support and ensure the coordination and liaison with concerned agencies at the HQs level as well as at the country level. EO will be responsible for the production of the Evaluation Report and presentation of the same to the Executive Board.

## Annex 3

# Evaluation Framework

Issues	Sub-Questions	Variables to be Considered	Sources of Information
<b>Effectiveness</b> (What did they achieve? What is the quality of the results)	Is RCF meeting its intended organizational and developmental objectives (or expected to reach its developmental objectives)?	Are the development goals clearly defined and measurable?	Government officials UNDP Programme officers and staff at HQ Country and Regional Offices Implementing partners
		What are the indicators of achievement?	
		Is there a baseline or timeline data? How good?	
		What is level of progress?	
	What are the key results (outputs and outcomes)?	Development results (MDG) expected/intended	Other donor agencies Thematic experts (NGOs academics) Beneficiaries Programme and project documents Management reports Performance reports (quantitative)
		To what extent has RCF addressed the development dimensions? (Poverty and inequality reduction, democratic governance, energy and climate change for sustainable development and crisis prevention and recovery, gender equality)	
		To what extent has RCF attained its immediate objectives?	
		To what extent is RCF contributing to the achievement of outcomes?	
		What are RCFs capacity development results?	
	What are the results achieved in the areas of knowledge generation, policy advice and capacity development?	What are the results of RCF in knowledge generation or sharing?	
		What are the results of RCF's policy advice? Is there evidence of policy impact?	
		What are the results of capacity development or strengthening obtained by the RCF?	
		What is the level of actual versus intended results?	
		What is the level of actual versus intended benefits to Latin America and to UNDP?	
	How did the RCF identify and manage emerging changes? (risk management)	To which extent did the RCF adjust its scope to changes in the region?	
	What lessons have been learned?	Are there any unintended results that can be attributed to the Programme?	
What knowledge management results has RCF produced?			

Issues	Sub-Questions	Variables to be Considered	Sources of Information
<b>Efficiency</b> (How does it work?)	Is this the best way to achieve the objectives? What good practices have been developed?	Are management structures effective in responding to ongoing challenges and in promoting creativity and innovation?	Government officials UNDP Programme officers and staff at HQ Country and Regional Offices Implementing partners Other donor agencies Other UN agencies Thematic experts (NGOs academics) Beneficiaries Project evaluations and monitoring reports Management reports (Multi-year Funding Framework RR reports LAC Bureau annual reports) Financial reports Performance reports (quantitative) Relevant Government ministries Non-government stakeholders
		Are there effective monitoring processes in place to provide necessary management information?	
		What are the strengths and weaknesses of management structures?	
		Are resources and services delivered in a manner that effectively responds to conditions, including risks, needs, opportunities or problems?	
		What is the number and nature of systems in place?	
		Evidence of timeliness of using information to manage effectively, appropriateness of actions	
	What innovative approaches have been used?	To what extent did UNDP develop, encourage and support new approaches and practices?	
		What were their outcomes?	
		What are the lessons learned from this?	
		Was there effective sharing of information?	
	How effective were the organizational strategy and institutional arrangements? How effective was the coordination within UN agencies in the region?	Are there synergic relationships between the various components to RCF?	
		Are there synergies/alignment between RCF and other initiatives (e.g. UNDAF/Country programmes, Global Cooperation Framework, gender, other cross-cutting or cross-practice linkages)?	
		Balance between advocacy, analytical work and networking	
		What are, and how effective are the mechanisms for aligning regional programmes with global principles of gender equality, national ownership, MDG, etc.	
		Regional Bureau for LAC management	
		Regional Centres in Panama and Bogotá management	
		Decentralized programme management	
		Relevance and quality of SURF support to RCF	
		Value added of SURF	
		What is the scope and range of strategic partnerships formed?	
	What evidence is there of effective partnership relationships, results-based management, effective risk management?		
	Is there is shared responsibility and accountability for results?		
	Is there is active participation of local country partners and beneficiaries in the design, implementation and monitoring of the Programme?		
Is there is an appropriate level of coordination between the various stakeholders?			
How do programmes interact with subregional integration initiatives?			
Do local partners have the appropriate authority and tools required to make decisions and take actions?			

Issues	Sub-Questions	Variables to be Considered	Sources of Information
<b>Efficiency</b> (How does it work?)	What lessons learned are there for use within UNDP?	What has been learned from programme implementation to date that could strengthen the programme's capacity to respond to its development challenges, priorities and objectives?	
		What methods were successful?	
		What needs to be done to achieve the programme objectives?	
		What are the core constraints to realizing such development cooperation opportunities? How should these constraints be overcome?	
		What changes (if any) to present strategies and practices are recommended	
		Is there evidence of the success of systems in responding to change? Of the application of lessons?	
		Did UNDP anticipate and respond to change based on adequate information?	
<b>Cost-effectiveness</b> (Is it worth it):		Level of planned expenditures, level of actual expenditures, explanations for variances, level of expenditure compared to schedules and results.	UNDP Programme officers and staff at HQ
		Is the relationship between costs and results reasonable?	Country and Regional Offices
		Are the expected results achievable with the level of resources available for implementation?	Implementing partners
		Are human, financial and physical resources used appropriately and financial information accurately and adequately maintained?	Other donor agencies
		Is there an adequate level of management personnel and resources in place for effective management and monitoring of the Programme?	Country, programme, programme level Government officials
	Is it making good use of the resources provided to meet its objectives?	Has the Programme identified and is it making effective use of local areas of competitive advantage?	Beneficiaries
		Where does 'ownership' of the programme lie?	Performance reports (quantitative)
		Is there effective synergy and complementarity between national and regional UNDP programmes?	
		Is there demonstrated local commitment to Programme activities, to the attainment of results and the methods chosen to achieve them?	

Issues	Sub-Questions	Variables to be Considered	Sources of Information
<b>Relevance</b>	How do the results achieved relate to specified UNDP programme goals	Is the strategic focus of RCF support relevant to the MDG priorities?	Government officials UNDP Programme officers and staff at HQ Country and Regional Offices Implementing partners Other donor agencies Thematic experts (CSO, Academia) Beneficiaries Performance reports (quantitative)
		Does the RCF make sense in terms of the conditions, needs and problems that it was intended to address?	
	To broader national strategies in the region?	Is the strategic focus of RCF support relevant to the country and regional priorities?	
		Who are the key stakeholders, and how have they participated in defining priorities?	
		Are regional and national policies and strategies supportive of the RCF?	
		Were the beneficiaries clearly identified and targeted throughout implementation?	
		Is the intervention appropriate and based on a sound understanding of the local context?	
		What effect does the funding structure have on the selection of priorities?	
	What is the value added of the RCF at regional and sub regional levels?	Do the results contribute to the achievement of regional public goods?	
		Were efforts made to coordinate with other development initiatives?	
What are the linkages between the RCF areas of focus?			
What is the comparative advantage or niche?			
<b>Sustainability</b> Were the benefits of RCF interventions sustainable?	Did the RCF promote local or regional ownership?	Is there active participation of local country partners and beneficiaries in the design, implementation and monitoring of the Programme?	Project partners Beneficiaries Key informants in thematic areas
	Were exit strategies considered in the design phase of the programme?	Did programme planning contemplate continuity of benefits after project activity ended? Are there processes in place to monitor continued programme impact?	Project planning documents
	Were the programmes or projects replicable?	Is there evidence of follow up activities in programme areas without UNDP funding? Have partners maintained programme benefits?	Project partners Beneficiaries Key informants in thematic areas

## **Annex 4**

# **List of RCF Projects (November 2006)**

### **A. POVERTY AND INEQUALITY REDUCTION AND ACHIEVING THE MDGS**

1. Capacity Building for Collection of Social Data for Poverty Reduction Strategies and Monitoring MDGs in the CARICOM Member and Associated States
2. Capacity Building of the OECS Secretariat through the Establishment of a Social Statistics & Indicators Program
3. CARICOM Music Industry (Copyright) Development (CARMID)
4. Contribución a una estrategia de comunicación sobre ODM
5. Información, conciencia y participación. Contribución a una estrategia de comunicación sobre los Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio
6. Institutional Strengthening of the OECS in Information Management and Communications
7. Institutional Support for Policy and Strategy Development
8. Managing & Financing Health to Reduce the Impact of Poverty in the Caribbean
9. Pobreza, Equidad y Política Macroeconómica
10. Programa de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (PROEIMCA)
11. Programa Regional de Seguridad Alimentaria y Nutricional para Centroamérica (PRESANCA)
12. Regional Consultation on Financing for development for CARICOM Member States
13. Support to Poverty Reduction and Achieving the MDG's through improved Health Services Delivery: Mental Health and Non Communicable Diseases
14. Towards A New Socio-Economic Agenda for Latin America
15. Una nueva agenda para América latina y el caribe. Reformas que funcionan: lecciones para decisores políticos

### **B. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

1. Caribbean Programme Support Project
2. Acceso A La Justicia: investigación para el desarrollo y la capacitación
3. Access To Justice: Research For Development And Training
4. Análisis Político y Escenarios de corto y mediano plazo para Fortalecer la Gobernabilidad Democrática en América Latina (PAPEP)
5. Apoyo a los Procesos de Concertación y Paz en América Latina
6. Capacity building assistance to support governance reforms in St. Kitts and Nevis

7. Capacity Building Support to the Government of St. Lucia on its Election To The Presidency of the Fifty-Eighth General Assembly
8. CARTAC Project (Caribbean Technical Regional Assistance Center)
9. Conflict Prevention/Early Warning: Assessing Conflict In Latin America To Better Target International Assistance
10. Democracy and Governance in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM)
11. Democratic Dialogue Regional Project. Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue as a Tool for Conflict Management and the Strengthening of Democratic Governance
12. Desarrollo de Capacidades de Gestión Gubernamental para Gobernabilidad Democrática SIGOB
13. Development of Tourism Resource Materials & Training for Caribbean Teachers & Students at Primary and Secondary Schools
14. Governance Reform in the OECS Policy & Institutional Development
15. Improving the Structure of Governance in the CARICOM Community
16. Institutional Strengthening And Capacity Development For The Caricom Secretariat
17. Institution-building Support for the re-establishment and transfer of Secretariat of the Caribbean Group for Cooperation in Economic Development (CGCED) To the Caribbean Development Bank (CDB) RLA/03
18. Mejores partidos, mejor democracia en Bolivia, Ecuador y Perú
19. Modernization of Information Systems - CARICOM Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Permanent Missions to the UN
20. Partidos Políticos, Sistemas de Partidos, Sistema Político y Gobernabilidad Democrática
21. PRODDAL
22. PRODDAL ARGENTINA # RLA01009
23. PRODDAL Component on dissemination and diffusion of the report Democratic governance trust fund
24. PRODDAL EL SALVADOR # SLV10 00012404
25. PRODDAL II Project for Democratic Development in Latin America II
26. PRODDAL Programme for Democratic Development in Latin America –
27. PRODDAL Support to Democratic Development in Latin America
28. Programa de Apoyo a la Integración Regional Centroamericana (PAIRCA)
29. Promoción del Estado de Derecho y Apoyo al Acceso a la Justicia de los Pobres
30. Proyecto Centroamericano de Control de Armas Pequeñas
31. Proyecto Regional para el Control de los Productos Precursores en los Países Andinos (PRECAN)
32. Public education program in support of the Caricom single market and economy (csme)
33. Red Iberoamericana Para El Desarrollo Institucional

34. Red y Sistema Latinoamericano de Información y conocimiento sobre gobernabilidad - LAGNIKS
35. Regional Project on Local Governance for Latin America
36. Research Study to inquire into the Brain Drain from the Caribbean and the Caribbean Diaspora in North America
37. St. Kitts and Nevis 1997 Constitutional Review Commission
38. Strengthening Capacity to support Jamaica's chairmanship of the group of 77 and China
39. Strengthening Civil Society Participation in CARICOM Regional Governance and Decision-making Organs
40. Strengthening Democratic Governance of the Security Sector in Latin America
41. Support for the establishment of the Caribbean Court of Justice
42. Support to csme contingent rights & medical accreditation
43. The further implementation of the SIDA program of action CARICOM multidisciplinary workshop in preparation for Mauritius
44. Virtual fair to strengthen local governance In Latin America. Feria Virtual

### **C. ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

1. OECS Disaster Response and Risk Reduction
2. Apoyo al Centro Regional de Bosques Modelo para América Latina y el Caribe
3. Caribbean Renewable Energy Development Programme
4. Caribbean Risk Management Initiative
5. Energy and Climate Change Programme for Latin America and the Caribbean
6. Establecimiento de un Programa para la Consolidación del Corredor Biológico Mesoamericano
7. Field Testing The UNDP Clean development mechanisms Manual
8. Hidrovia Paraguay-Parana
9. Knowledge Brokering Platform in Energy and Environment for Latin America and the Caribbean
10. La Unidad Regional de Asistencia Técnica - RUTA IV
11. Promoción del Conocimiento y la Transferencia de buenas prácticas en Preparación para Desastres Naturales y Reducción del Riesgo en el Caribe DIPECHO
12. Proyecto Regional de Apoyo a la Consulta Mundial sobre Financiamiento del Desarrollo
13. Regional Strategy for Disaster Reduction in Central America
14. Regional strengthening and disaster risk reduction in Major Cities in the Andean Community. DIPECHO ANDINO
15. Strengthening of the Search and Rescue Capability of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA ) Project
16. Tierramerica

#### **D. GENDER MAINSTREAMING**

1. Knowledge Management Platform on Gender Equality in LAC (GENERA)
2. WINNER: Women into New Network Entrepreneurial Reinf.

#### **E. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

1. Support for CARICOM ICT/Connectivity Agenda Activities: CKLN Pilot Project and Internet Governance Workshop
2. Support for the Establishment of Video Conferencing Facilities Linking the Caribbean Community Secretariat and the Governments of Member States

#### **F. HIV/AIDS**

1. Creation of a Caribbean Technical Network for the process of Strategic Planning
2. Expansion of the regional PLWHA network programmes to the Netherlands Antilles
3. Information Systems for PLWHA in the Caribbean
4. Iniciativa Mesoamericana para la prevención del VIH-SIDA en Centroamérica y México (IMPSIDA)
5. Support for an Effective Regional Response to HIV/AIDS in the Caribbean
6. Towards a determination of national and regional resource mobilization capabilities

#### **G. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

1. Preparación del Proyecto Regional de Desarrollo Humano
2. Proyecto Regional de Desarrollo Humano.