ETHIOPIA:
Final Evaluation of UNDP Programme

Submitted to:
United Nations
Capital Development Fund

Final
Executive Summary

16 October 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

"The analysis and recommendations of this report do not necessarily reflect the view of the United Nations Capital Development Fund, its Executive Board or the United Nations Member States. This is an independent publication of UNCDF and reflects the views of its authors"

LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BGR	Benishangul-Gumuz Region
BoARD	Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development
BoCB	Bureau of Capacity Building
BoCBC	Bureau of Capacity Building and Coordination
BoE	Bureau of Education
BoFED	Bureau of Finance and Economic Development
BoH	Regional Bureau of Health
BoWR	Bureau of Water Resources
BSE	Barefoot Solar Engineer
CBO	Community Based Organization
CCA	Country Cooperation Assessment
CCE	Community Capacity Enhancement'
CCF	Country Cooperation Frame Work
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CSRP	Civil Service Reform Program
DLDP	District Level Decentralization Program
ETB	Ethiopian Birr
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FET	Final Evaluation Team
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoE	Government of Ethiopia
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IGA	Income Generating Activities
KA	Kebele Administration
KDC	Kebele Development Committee
KII	Key Informant Interviews
KWGs	Kebele Women' Groups
LDP	Local Development Programme
LIG	Local Investment Grant
MCB	Ministry of Capacity Building
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoFA	Ministry of Federal Affairs
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
NEX	National Execution
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NUNVS	National United Nations Volunteers
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PBS	Protection of Basic Services
PCDP	Pastoral Community Development Programme
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
PSCAP	Public Sector Capacity Building Program

PSD	Project Support Document
PTR	Pupil Teacher Ratio
RPC	Regional Project Coordinator
SDPRP	Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme
SNNP	Southern Nations Nationalities and People
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WB	World Bank
WC	Woreda Cabinet
WDC	Woreda Development Committee

1. PROJECT SUMMARY

Country: Ethiopia

ATLAS Programme Number: 00012477

Programme Title: Civil Service Reform Strategy and Implementation Plan for Decentralized Service Delivery in the Emerging Regions

Program Component: Decentralisation

Executing Agency: MoFED- Ministry of Finance and Economic Development

Implementing Agencies: MoFA- Ministry of Federal Affairs; Regional Governments and Capacity Building Bureaux of 4 Emerging Regions of Afar; Benishangul Gumuz; Gambella and Somali; Woredas Administrative Council and Local Communities

Programme Approval Date: 2003

Programme Start Date: January 2004

Programme End Date: December 2006

Total Programme Cost: USD 3.5 million

Financing Breakdown: USD 3.5 million (TRAC)

Final Evaluation Date: February 2007

2. PROGRAMME PROFILE

This section provides the programme **country context** (socio-economic status, policy and institutional environment); **programme summary** (programme hypothesis; intervention strategy; any major strategic changes adopted during implementation; intended results; scope and location of the programme; broader context within which the programme is located and its scale and scope relative to this broader context; expected added value of programme; and partnerships as foreseen in programme document; and **programme status** (implementation, financial).

2.1. Country Context

With an estimated population of 80 million (2007), a population growth rate of 2.16% per annum and a per capita income of US$ 100, Ethiopia is amongst the poorest of the least-developed countries. Although the country's 1.13 million square kilometers are endowed with natural resources, only about 15% has been developed. The population distribution is rather skewed with 85% rural dwellers subject to poor services and public infrastructure (roads, sanitation, water, health and education services), and poor environmental management. An estimated 50% of the population lives in absolute poverty. In addition, many Ethiopians continue to be vulnerable to natural and man-made catastrophes such as droughts, diseases, conflicts and there are few income-earning opportunities available to them. Coupled with the HIV/AIDS pandemic, weak physical infrastructure, inadequate human and institutional capacities continue to limit Ethiopia's progress towards sustainable development and poverty reduction.

While skills and literacy rates are low, considerable progress has been made in the past decade and once the present government came to power there has been substantial progress in the provision of basic social services.[1]. While the general availability of skilled candidates for recruitment into the public administration has been low, the decentralization process initiated by the new 1994 Constitution has increased the demand for such personnel. Regional and Woreda administrative institutions and organizations have been created with new and expanded mandates, while provision of sufficient numbers of (and particularly suitably qualified) staff has been inadequate. Transfers of available staff from federal to regional (and later to woreda) levels may have weakened some institutions, but will have contributed to increasing the available trained human resources in the regional institutions. Alongside this is an increase in the number of third level institutions, especially universities at the regional level with 29,581 graduates from universities in the public and private sector in 200/05 compared to 7,448 in 1994/95[2] Notwithstanding the progress there is a huge need to address structural institutional capacity problems that have come from decades of neglect.

Decentralization in Ethiopia has followed a two-phased approach. During 2002 the more advanced and populous regions of Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya and Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Regional States, were the first to implement decentralization reforms, followed by the four emerging regions, which have been the last to implement decentralization and devolution of

---

[1] World Bank, 2007. Ethiopia Accelerating Equitable Growth. Country Economic Memorandum.

[2] Addis Ababa University 2007. Solomon T and Kitaw .D: Improvement in the Capacity of Higher Education through Doctoral Training.

powers to woredas. The following discussion gives a background of the policy environment and developments leading up to, and supporting Ethiopia's drive towards decentralisation.

Reform of Public Sector Management was initiated with the launch of the Civil Service Reform Program (CSRP) in 1996, in parallel to the first phase of decentralization to the regions. The CSRP was designed to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of public institutions, while seeking to build on the bureaucracy's reputation for discipline and compliance. It included components such as (i) an Expenditure Management and Control Project (EMCP), (ii) Human Resource Management, (iii) top management systems, (iv) ethics, and (v) service delivery. The findings of the World Bank (2005) were that the implementation of the CSRP proved cumbersome, partly due to its attempt to plan the entire process and 'get it right the first time,' and partly because the executing office was understaffed and over controlled, and that only the EMCP made significant progress, with the important Human Resource Management component virtually ignored. This created impatience and frustration within the civil service as well as in the public at large. This initial experience, combined with the capacity problems experienced in implementing the sector development programs in health and education, not least at the regional level, changed the government's approach to reform of public sector management in the direction of increased capacity building.[3]

In 2001, the Government launched a comprehensive National Capacity Building Programme (NCBP), which is designed to strengthen working systems, improve organizational effectiveness, and rapidly develop human resources in the public sector. A 'super' ministry, the Ministry of Capacity Building (MCB), was established to provide policy direction, coordination, and implementation support. Counterpart Capacity Building Bureaus were created in the regions to support capacity building efforts at sub-national levels. Five of the NCBP 14 sub-programs are directly concerned with promoting the durability, efficiency, and accountability of Ethiopia's ongoing public sector transformation process. The NCBP represents a key pillar of the Government's management strategy for supporting institutional transformation at the federal, regional, and local levels which are reflected in Ethiopia's PRSP, known as the Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty (2005/06 to 2009/10)

In support of the poverty reduction strategy, the GoE embarked on a rather ambitious 5-year national Public Sector Capacity Building Programme (PSCAP) in 2004/5 initially funded by the World Bank and DFID, to address major gaps in national capacity. In order to access funding, the nine regions of Ethiopia and two city administrations have drafted and refined five-year Action Plans and strategies, in line with the six federal level sub-programme components of PSCAP. [4]

In terms of institutional and implementation arrangements,[5] the primary stakeholders who are involved in the project are: UNDP, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MoFED), Ministry of Federal Affairs (MoFA), Regional State Capacity Building and Coordination Bureaus, Woreda Administration and Capacity Building Offices, Development Committees organized at

---

[3] See An Independent Review of World Bank Support to Capacity Building in Africa: The Case of Ethiopia - March 11, 2005.

[4] (i) Civil Service Reform; (ii) District-Level Decentralised Service Delivery; (iii) Information and Communications Technologies; (iv) Justice System Reform; (v) Tax Reform; (vi) Urban Management.

[5] See National Execution (NEX) Modality

Woreda level, Kebele Administrations, Kebele Development Committees and the individual communities.[6]

2.2. Programme Summary

This section provides the programme's Results Framework (no reference is made to a logical framework), a synopsis of the programme hypothesis; intervention strategy; intended results; scope and location of the programme; broader context within which the programme is located and its scale and scope relative to this broader context; expected added value of the programme, and partnerships as foreseen in the programme document.

The following key interrelated components form the core of the programme results:

    i.   A Multi-Pronged Innovative/Alternative Service Delivery approach;

    ii.   Gender Mainstreaming Component;

    iii. HIV/AIDS Mainstreaming Component;

    iv. Top Management Systems Component.

The implementation of the decentralization programme activities have mainly fallen into components I, II and IV above, i.e.:[7]

Two mainstream Federal, Regional, Woreda and Kebele level capacity building interventions to achieve the intended programme results can be identified, i.e., training and community infrastructural micro-projects.

Training:

    i.   Short-term trainings in different subjects to woreda officials, civil servants, and communities

    ii.   Conferences and workshops that address the needs of the local communities

    iii. Local and out country study tour programs

    iv. Recruitment programme staff

Community level projects: As a first step towards programme implementation, local consultants were appointed by UNDP during 2004/2005 to draft Community Project Proposals for all implementation areas. The sectoral distribution of the projects identified at community level includes:

    i.   Health (human and animal)

    ii.   Education

    iii. Water

    iv. Residence houses (for teachers and health workers)

    v.   Solar lighting (only Benishangul-Gumuz region)

---

[6] In the context of this evaluation, communities refer to inhabitants of kebeles and villages.

[7] According to the Head of Governance – UNDP – Ethiopia, some training on HIV/AIDS has taken place at Regional and Woreda Levels. Since UNDP has a dedicated programme focussing on HIV/AIDS, it was decided not to focus on this modality, however, no project amendment was made and no riders could be found.

vi. Income generating activities

Table 1: Programme Results Framework

Goal: To improve decentralized public service delivery in the Emerging Regions.		
Under the intended outcome: To enhance institutional capacity, working systems and human capital in an integrated and coordinated way at woreda and kebele levels to ensure the efficient implementation of the democratization and decentralization process, empowerment and good governance.		
Intended outcome	**Outputs**	**Activities**
To enhance institutional capacity, working systems and human capital in an integrated and coordinated way at woreda and kebele levels to ensure the efficient implementation of the democratization and decentralisation process, empowerment and good governance	1. A Multi-Pronged Innovative/Alternative Public Service Delivery Approach Adopted, including: a. Barefoot Approach Promoted towards integrated rural development b. Twinning arrangements established and knowledge shared among local communities within Ethiopia for community-based initiatives c. National UN Volunteers and Community Development Agents Deployed d. Client-oriented Monitoring and Evaluation System for public service delivery institutionalised	a. Barefoot approaches being implemented by the communities themselves and the communities defining what assistance they would need from the college b. Communities tapping into knowledge of other communities by implementing community-based projects c. Number of UNVs deployed Client based M&E system in place.
	2. Gender considerations become increasingly apparent in all tiers of public service and in the design, planning and implementation of community-based development initiatives, including: a. Gender training provided Innovative schemes for facilitating women participation in the civil service developed and supported	a. Number of innovative schemes supported b. Budget allocated to support enhanced female participation in the programme (and employment in the Civil Service)
	3. Capacity and Capabilities of Top Managers and Leaders at Federal and Regional Level Further Enhanced for Effective Decision-Making and Overall Guidance towards improved Public Service Delivery: a. Top management trained on new systems b. Top management attend study tours	a. Number of elected leaders and top management in place at woreda level b. Number of Elected Leaders and top management trained Number of vacancies filled in woredas

In addition, although no mention is made in both the Project Support Document (PSD) and ToR to a **programme hypothesis,** it is understood by the FET that the 'programme hypothesis' relates to the following assertion in the PSD:

**"*By design, PSCAP places certain conditionalities, including 'statutory minimum requirements' in terms of systems and procedures which would need to be fulfilled before regions can access funding. Moreover, it appears that disbursement will be linked to performance, so the weaker and less developed regions may see their share (or at least a portion of their share) being redistributed to those regions that have greater capacity to use the PSCAP funds. Ironically, the emerging regions which are least likely to meet the PSCAP conditionalities for support perhaps have the greatest need for capacity building and ameliorated public service delivery.*

As a response, the UNDP supported intervention in decentralized public service delivery is expected to strengthen productive partnerships between public sector and civil society for local development and governance and ultimately enhance the capacity of the emerging regions to a level where they can derive greater benefits from increased funding under PSCAP as well as other relevant national development programmes."** (See Annex 6)

According to the PSD and ToR: "The **fundamental rationale** for the program is the recognition by government that it cannot achieve the objectives of promoting development, reducing poverty, and strengthening democracy set out in the SDPRP simply through its own institutions, agencies and programs but must work in close collaboration with other development actors. This represents a shift in thinking from previous eras, and a change in the 'rules of the game' from one where the government is compelled to solely drive the development process to a situation where promoting development involves a partnership between government, the private sector and civil society. Under-pinning this rationale is the recognition that most civil society organizations in Ethiopia are currently weak, fragmented and disparate, and that, in order for civil society organizations to play the more effective role that the SDPRP envisages, significant investments will be required to build their capacity. To the extent that community based groups are expected to identify, design, implement, and report on community-based development projects for enhanced decentralized service delivery, the current programme aims to provide appropriate capacity building support to local communities and CSOs in the emerging regions."[8] To this end the UNDP worked together with relevant regional and local governments (woredas and kebeles) and a NGO (Barefoot College-India) in refining and replicating alternative and innovative approaches for decentralized capacity development for public service delivery, including the "Barefoot Approach" which has trained community members in solar electrification in India.

The PSD notes that: "Whereas much of the past achievements of the UNDP supporting the CSRP and SDPRP were largely confined to improvement of systems and processes at federal level, the current focus of support almost exclusively targets the four emerging/least developed regions (Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella and Somali). The main objective is to significantly improve decentralized public service delivery, which is consistent with the aims of the Civil Service Reform and Decentralization sub-components of PSCAP." While UNDP indicated that, through this

---

[8] The preparation of a more expansive and comprehensive programme for Capacity Building of Civil Society Organizations is currently underway, led by the Ministry of Capacity Building. The eventual implementation of such a programme is expected to be catalytic in terms of narrowing the gap of public service delivery in the most remote regions.

programme, "it is committed to contribute to the overarching goals of PSCAP, the UNDP supported interventions on civil service reform and decentralization will be jointly carried out largely within 10 pilot woredas in the emerging regions, as agreed with the GoE. As a distinct departure from past practice, significant emphasis will be placed on building the capacity of local communities to identify and solve their own development problems, thereby reducing the traditional reliance on civil servants who will continue to be scarce and/or lack sufficient capacity to serve the communities (primary clients) in the short to medium-term."

The rationale for this shift of emphasis can be attributed to:[9] "… a number of lessons drawn by UNDP from its previous involvement in supporting the decentralization and capacity building activities are to continue with support to decentralization and planning but extend interventions to include grass root level communities at sub-district level. Within the frameworks of SDPRP, PSCAP and CSRP, the main approach of the proposed project is to provide facilitation, coordination and financial support for the grass root level pilot community groups so as to take a driving seat in making decisions on their own affairs through identification and prioritization of their needs, design the solutions in terms of projects for addressing their prioritized needs, allocate resources (internal and external) for the implementation of their projects, effectively and transparently manage the implementation and operation of their projects."

At the same time, according to the PSD: "The UNDP programme falls within the national overall objective of accelerated public sector reform and capacity enhancement for improved service delivery. It incorporates 4 main components: (1) National Capacity Development; (2) Support to the civil service delivery; (3) Tax system and revenue collection reform programme; (4) Decentralization. The overall objective of the **intervention strategy** is to develop the capacity of the public service at federal and regional levels to a point where they can effectively and efficiently plan and promote development activities for poverty reduction and democratization process. In addition the programme envisaged that any successful approaches and achievements within the emerging regions in terms of innovative modes of decentralized public service delivery may be adopted by the respective regional governments and up-scaled through PSCAP and GoE resources on a demand-driven basis."[10]

The above "shift in emphasis" and overall objective of the intervention strategy" might appear contradictory since it seems on the one hand to be suggest building the capacity of the local communities to reduce reliance on civil servants, and on the other, it states that the aim of the programme is to build the capacity of the civil service to provide service delivery. However it can also be argued that the approaches are not contradictory since building capacity of local communities can be seen as crucial in improving and increasing service delivery. It is through empowering local communities that we can make government structures more accountable and more efficient in service delivery.

---

[9] See: The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia - United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Ministry of Federal Affairs (MoFA) and Bureau of Capacity Building and Coordination (BoCBC) of the Afar National Regional State - Project Title: Support to Community Level Decentralization (CLD) in Afar National Regional State (a Pilot project to be tested in six kebeles of three woredas) - Final Draft Document. September 2005.

[10] The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia - United Nations Development Programme - Civil Service Reform Strategy and Implementation Plan for Decentralized Service Delivery in the Emerging Regions - This project document is an elaboration of Components T02A (Civil Service Reform) and T04 (Decentralization) of the signed Programme Support Document, "Support to Public Sector Capacity Building and Reform Programme"

The PSD makes no reference to the possibility for this programme to influence decentralised policy initiatives. From the PSD it is evident that the programme's **intended result** was not to influence national or regional policy reforms directly, but rather to support policy implementation (with particular reference to support PSCAP interventions in the emerging regions). However, UNDP indicates in the ToR that: "with regard to the intervention strategy, given the limited resources and pilot role of UNDP, it has been envisaged that any successful approaches and achievements within the emerging regions in terms of innovative modes of decentralized public service delivery may be adopted by the respective regional governments and up-scaled through PSCAP and GoE resources, on a demand-driven basis." This in itself shows that the programme intends to have an indirect impact and influence on regional and national policy.

Scope and location of the programme: The emerging regions covered by the programme are Somali, Benishangul-Gumuz, Afar, and Gambella regions. Woredas were selected from the four emerging regions. The selection of the woredas was the responsibility of regional states. Interviews with all Regional Presidents indicated that selection criteria were merely based on targeting the poorest of the poor woredas and kebeles, with limited access to basic infrastructure. Accordingly, a total of 27 rural kebeles were selected from the ten pilot woredas in the regions.

The four 'emerging' (or least developed) regions lie on two opposite ends of the country: the east (Somali and Afar) and the west (Benishangul-Gumuz and Gambella) with pastoral communities in the former and agro-pastoral communities in the latter. Harsh conditions exist in both, inadequate access to water leading to nomadic lifestyles, high prevalence of malaria and sleeping sickness. Literacy levels are low, particularly in the pastoral regions. The emerging regions are characterized by small, scattered and nomadic populations, making it rather difficult to provide basic public services. Most of the areas are spatially remote and inaccessible because of poor or no infrastructure and hardly any basic social services such as schools and clinics. In addition, the regions (particularly in the west) are ethnically diverse and prone to ethnic conflict which has a negative bearing on project piloting.

The primary stakeholders of the program are the citizens of Ethiopia, particularly those living in the selected woredas of the 4 emerging regions (see Table 2 below). Civil servants are secondary stakeholders who also benefit from improved management, planning, and facilitation skills, enhanced understanding and implementation of client-oriented service delivery, and an enabling institutional and physical environment better positioned to assist them, particularly in the emerging regions, to effectively carry out their duties.[11]

Table 2: Pilot regions and woredas selected for UNDP supported intervention

Region	Woreda		
Afar	Assaita	Dubti	Awash
Somali	Shinille	Jijiga	Gode
Benishangul-Gumuz	Belo	Menge	Belojiganfoye
Gambella	Abobo		

---

[11] The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia - United Nations Development Programme - Civil Service Reform Strategy and Implementation Plan for Decentralized Service Delivery in the Emerging Regions - This project document is an elaboration of Components T02A (Civil Service Reform) and T04 (Decentralization) of the signed Programme Support Document, "Support to Public Sector Capacity Building and Reform Programme"

2.3. Programme Status

The following table provides a summary of programme outputs and indicators as per the Results Framework, and the actual achievements, based on the findings of the FTE.

Table 3: Summary of programme outputs as per the Results Framework

Outputs	Indicators	Progress as of February 2007 and verified by the FET
1. A Multi-Pronged Innovative/ Alternative Public Service Delivery Approach Adopted in the Emerging Regions, including: a) Barefoot Approach Promoted towards integrated rural development	a) Barefoot Approach implemented by the communities themselves and the communities defining what assistance they would need from the college	Memorandum of Understanding (contract agreement) signed between Barefoot College and 4 presidents of the Emerging Regions i. 34 (17F) selected community members trained in India as Barefoot Solar Engineers (BSEs). This is followed by supply of solar panel by Bare-foot college ii. Installation of solar panel, by BSEs with the assistance of Barefoot College in 16 of the 17 targeted villages, benefited 50-90 households per village in the 4 Emerging regions. iii. At the time of the evaluation, all BSE's interviewed indicated that no more assistance or contact exists between the communities/BSE and Barefoot College[12] iv. No application of Rain Water Harvesting was reported by all BSE's interviewed.
a) Twinning arrangements established and knowledge shared among local communities within Ethiopia for community-based initiatives b) National UN Volunteers and Community Development Agents Deployed c) Client-oriented Monitoring and Evaluation System for public service delivery institutionalized	a) Communities tapping into knowledge of other communities by implementing community-based projects. b) Number of NUNVs deployed. c) Client based M&E system in place.	a) Local study tour program to Tigray, Amhara and Southern National and Nationalities (SNNP) regions; and training on participatory planning; budgeting; good governance and project management were organized for 67 Woreda officials and community members. The tours enhanced interest in decentralization among woreda staff and promoted a self-help attitude among community. b) 4 Regional and 10 Woreda Coordinators were employed by the programme. No NUNVs deployed by this programme, except for the Programme Coordinator within MoFA. c) Client based M&E system has not been implemented
2. Gender considerations become increasingly apparent in all tiers of public service and in	a) Number of innovative schemes supported	a) Gender equality at community level promoted: − Training on gender equality and roles of women in development was provided for 120 people drawn

---

[12] It should be noted that according to the UNDP/UNCDF Programme Officer, "the project has organised a final workshop participated by Barefoot Engineers and facilitated by BC India to establish an association of Ethiopian Barefoot engineers. During the workshop one international NGO has been also involved in supporting the association."

Outputs	Indicators	Progress as of February 2007 and verified by the FET
the design, planning and implementation of community-based development initiatives, including: a) Gender training provided b) Innovative schemes for facilitating women participation (in the civil service) developed and supported	b) Budget allocated to support enhanced female participation in the programme (*and employment in the Civil Service*)	from women group of Sabure village and Woreda & Kebele officials *in Afar Region*. – Half of the 34 BSE trained in India, and now working as solar engineers, are women – Only 1 (at most 3) of the Kebele Development Committee (KDC) members and management of community projects (e.g. water projects) is a woman. – b) Women are empowered to own and manage Income Generating Schemes (e.g. Flour mills, Cooperative Shop) established with the support of the budget allocated by the project. 13 Grain mills and 11 Coop shops constructed. – The budget allocated to enhance female participation in the program ranges from about 5% in BGR to over 25% in Afar.
3. Capacity and Capabilities of Top Managers and Leaders at Federal and Regional Level Further Enhanced for Effective Decision-Making and Overall Guidance towards improved Public Service Delivery: a) Top management trained on new systems. b) Top management attend study tours	a) Number of elected leaders and top management in place at woreda level b) Number of Elected Leaders and top management trained c) Number of vacancies filled in woredas	a) Managerial skills strengthening was started for 26 regional officials of the four emerging regions and experts from MoFA through 3-year distance-learning for MBA using the fund from UNDP. Presently, 19 students are, reportedly, attending the program while the rest quit the training for various reasons. One civil servant from the emerging region is back in the office after his 2 years of study in South Africa for his master's degree. b) Training on budgeting, planning and human resource management conducted for 141 woreda political leaders and 181 civil servants in Afar region, for 130 (out of which 33 are women) in Gambella region. A workshop on Human rights and democracy was conducted for 41 woreda officials and community leaders in Gambella region. Training on decentralization, good governance, and related issues organized for elected leaders and elders-154 in Gambella region, 54 in BGR. A public conference on local governance and community empowerment conducted for 496 people in Somali region. c) Study tours on barefoot approach to India, and on decentralization to South Africa and China organized for 11 Federal and Regional Senior officials. d) There is no information as to the number of vacancies filled in the woredas, except for woreda coordinators that were hired by the project budget.

From the table it can be seen that all intended activities were not achieved. The exceptions, which are serious, are the following:

- there is no more assistance or contact between the communities/BSE and the Barefoot College;

- no application of Rain Water Harvesting was reported;

- no NUNVs were deployed by the programme except for the Program Coordinator within MoFA;

- the Client based M&E system has not been implemented;

- only 1 (at most 3) of Kebele Development Committee (KDC) members and management committees of community projects (e.g. water projects) is a woman; and

- the FTE could not obtain any evidence as to the number of vacancies filled in the woredas, except for woreda programme coordinators that were hired and paid from the programme budget.

As the aim of the program is to devolve power and resources to the grass root levels, consensus was reached between MoFED, UNDP, MoFA and the regions, to allocate the bulk of the budget to woredas and kebeles: out of the total budget allocated, 86% was allocated to the pilot woreda and to the rural kebeles, while the remaining 14% was allocated for regional coordination. At the woreda level, 40% of the budget was allocated to implement community initiated development projects in the rural pilot kebeles while the remaining 46% was used for the woreda capacity building.[13]

According to the UNDP Programme Coordinator's (MoFA) 'Terminal Report: Decentralization Project - 15 January 2007': "UNDP allocated USD 5.2 Million for executing the decentralization programme in the four emerging regions. Out of the allocated budget, 1 Million Dollars was utilized for preparatory assistance. The budget was utilized to procure 5 field vehicles, motorcycles, and other office equipment to the four regions and the coordination unit in the MoFA.[14] The remaining USD 4,2 Million was allocated to the regions based on the index of the House of Federation. According to the index, the biggest share of the budget was allocated to Somali and Afar region." The allocation of the budget, according to UNDP Programme Coordinator; Terms of Reference and UNDP Programme Officer respectively, is showed in Tables 4 - 6 below:

Table 4: **Allocation of budget per region/institution (USD)**

Region/Institution	Final Allocation
Somali	1,890,000
Afar	960,000
Benishangul-Gumuz	510,000
Gambella	360,000
MoFA (for coordination)	480,000
Total	4,200,000

---

[13] The situation in Somali is slightly different from the other regions. After alleged mismanagement of resources at woreda level, the regional government decided to reallocate the 86% project budget, whereby the budget allocated for community-based projects increased from 40% to 77%, with the woreda budget reduced from 46% to 11%.

[14] No vehicle was procured for MoFA.

Source: National Programme Coordinator – MoFA - 2007

Table 5: Summary of the project's financial performance (USD)

Year	Initially allocated	Revised Budget Allocated	Spent to date (IIQ 2006)
2003	1,300,000	-	-
2004	1,500,000	634,537	39,687
2005	1,500,000	1,606,128	1,015,298
2006	1,200,000	1,283,087	442,965
Total	**5,500,000**	**3,523,752**	**1,497,950**

Source: Terms of Reference - 2006

Table 6: Budget allocation and total expenditure (USD)

Year	Allocation	Expenditure
2003	1,000,000	1,000,000
2004	446,772	252,555
2005	1,276,615	1,543,654
2006	852,822	806,036
Total	**3,576,209**	**3,602,245**

Source: UNDP Programme Officer - 2007

In addition to the budget figures provided by MoFA, UNDP provided the FET with two rather contradictory sets of budget figures. Table 5 shows expenditure provided in the ToR, whereas Table 6 shows what UNDP provided following additional requests by the FET for a detailed updated financial breakdown of programme expenditure, disaggregated by year, quarter, federal, regional, woreda and kebele level, with a further breakdown for capacity building training programmes and the various small infrastructural projects by sector. [15]

Table 4 above shows final budget allocations per region, without a yearly breakdown by allocation and expenditure. In the first instance the total allocated budget differs from the total amount allocated in terms of the PSD (3.5 million USD). Although tables 5 and 6 show a relative similar amount in terms of 'revised allocation' and 'allocation', there is a huge difference in terms of yearly and total expenditure. The FET finds it almost impossible to interpret these tables in any meaningful way except for the fact that both table 5 and 6 show expenditure.

---

[15] It should be noted that the combined delivery report showed in Table 7, as given to the FET after the mission was completed, include the latest (March 2007) data sets and direct payments carried out by UNDP on behalf of the project, which in turn also explain the variance in terms of delivery targets.

3.   PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

This evaluation is undertaken on behalf of the UNDP as a final evaluation of its **Civil Service Reform Strategy and Implementation Plan for Decentralised Service Delivery in the Emerging Regions of Ethiopia.**

Given the pilot nature of the programme, the mission's understanding of the purpose of this evaluation is to primarily focus on assessing the extent to which the institutional capacity of the woredas and kebeles to manage and implement projects has been strengthened particularly in relation to the implementation of small scale infrastructural projects, and secondarily to assess the potential of the project to upscale the programme to regional level.

In addition it is understood that the UNDP seeks a strategic review of its pilot intervention that will enable it to assess the potential to replicate an alternative approach for decentralized service delivery, support national decentralization policies, and assess its comparative advantages in donor support.

More specifically, the purpose of the evaluation, elaborated in the Terms of Reference is:[16]

   i.   To assist the recipient Government, beneficiaries, and the concerned co-financing partners, to understand the efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and impact of the programme, the sustainability of programme results, the level of satisfaction of programme stakeholders and beneficiaries with the results, and whether UNDP was effectively positioned and partnered to achieve maximum impact;

   ii. To contribute to UNDP and partners' learning from programme experience.

   iii. To help programme stakeholders assess the value and opportunity for broader replication of the programme.

   iv. To help programme stakeholders determine the need for follow-up on the intervention, and general direction for the future course of the programme.

   v.   To ensure accountability for results to the programme's financial backers, stakeholders and beneficiaries.

   vi. To comply with the requirement of the programme document/funding agreement and UNDP Evaluation Policy.

---

[16] See Annex 1

4. KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

4.1. Results Achievement Measured Against Development Objectives

The intended outcome of the programme is **"**To enhance institutional capacity, working systems and human capital in an integrated and coordinated way at woreda and kebele levels to ensure the efficient implementation of the democratization and decentralisation process, empowerment and good governance." In addition two mainstream Federal, Regional, Woreda and Kebele level capacity building interventions to achieve the intended programme results can be identified, i.e. training and community infrastructural projects. Against this background, this section provides key findings measured against the programme's development objectives and outputs.

Finding 1: Alleviating programme-relevant dimensions of poverty

All FGD and key informant interview respondents at national, regional, woreda and kebele interviewed on the question of poverty alleviation, were in agreement that most pilot interventions have the potential to contribute to the alleviation of poverty. Particularly in the eastern regions, agricultural productivity enhancement through irrigation and procurement of tractors (Afar and Somali) is portrayed by all stakeholders as "important interventions to alleviate poverty." In addition, although a limited number of households benefited from this intervention, since it is a pilot intervention, and the fact that there is no verifiable data available to quantify an increase in productivity, the community and government officials at woreda and regional levels maintain that productivity levels have increased.

Other outcomes of the programme such as Income Generating Activities (IGA) (flour mills, bee hives, and cooperative shops), have the potential to contribute to poverty alleviation. According to the Head of Capacity Building Bureau in Gambella: *"Women used to pound grain for a day to prepare food or travel long distance to get to a flour mill - now there is a flour mill at their gate or village. They have less drudgery and now use their time spent for pounding/travelling for more productive purposes"*

From the six[17] infrastructural project interventions, 10 out of 14 Focus Group Discussions (FGD) unanimously confirmed that agricultural productivity enhancement through irrigation and procurement of tractors, and IGAs have the strongest potential to alleviate poverty.

However, it should be emphasised that it is premature to draw any definite conclusions on the impact of the programme on poverty alleviation measured in terms of improved income/consumption and reduction of malnutrition, etc, since some interventions were implemented only last year, and because there is no reliable data to measure progress against.

Finding 2: Improving access to infrastructure and services

The evidence gathered by the team indicates that most pilot projects such as schools, access to potable water, health posts, veterinary posts, flour mills; and installation of solar lights (which are operational), have improved, or will when complete improve, beneficiaries' access to infrastructure and services.

---

[17] Health (human and animal); Education; Water; Residence houses (for teachers and health workers); Solar lighting; Income generating activities

However, the FET noted that, that besides solar energy projects, 50% (9 out of 18) of pilot projects *visited* are not yet operational. All beneficiary households in pilot kebeles visited (FGDs) reported a rather dramatic improved quality of life due to solar light installation. As reported by community members, solar power has reduced the time needed for collecting fuel wood for lighting purposes, time and money spend on buying Kerosene from distant towns, and enabled children to read at night. In Afar it was reported that solar lights, particularly mobile solar lanterns have improved services offered by Traditional Birth Attendants, during social ceremonies/occasions, and during a wake period for the deceased

From relevant regional and woreda respondents, all were in agreement that the expansion of existing schools (additional class rooms), or upgrading of schools from non-formal to formal schools, enabled more children to attend school, and according to most respondents where solar energy is provided to schools, more learners are able to attend (night) school. Potable water supply has also been reported by all respondents to reduced time and energy required to fetch water from distant locations.

From a list of 104 combined planned infrastructural activities, 66.6% are fully operational, 30.7% are partially operational, and 11.4% are not operational. Conversely, according to the UNDP Program Coordinator (MoFA): "… almost all of the projects are ready to start their operation. From the projects that are implemented in the target rural kebeles, on average a total of 130,000 people residing in the target kebeles and nearby communities will be directly benefiting from the programme."[18]

Our overall assessment in terms of improved access to infrastructure and services by beneficiary communities and individuals points to the fact that whether the projects are operational or not, there is a sense of appreciation and optimism.

Finding 3: Achieving more equitable participation and distribution of benefits across ethic and gender groups

The FET found it unlikely that the programme will have succeeded in the equitable participation and distribution of benefits across ethnic groups in the pilot areas, and also it had not succeeded in securing equitable participation across gender groups and the empowerment/rights of women to determine their own choices.

It was recognised by all key informant interviews at regional level that the intervention activities at woredas and kebeles were selected to try and ensure equitable distribution of benefits among different ethnic/clan groups, specifically in BGR, Gambella and Somali. However, a desktop study by the FET on the spatial distribution of ethnic groups in the pilot areas showed that to some extent ethnic/clan minorities in the emerging regions appear to have not received as much attention, and that the larger ethnic groups/clans attracted the attention of regional governments because of the fact that they are most vulnerable to poverty as compared to other ethnic groups. For example, the FET established that the two woredas selected in BGR are located within the Gumuz and Berta ethnic groups' geographical location, which are ethnic majorities in the region, whereas Shinasha, Omo, and Komo, which constitute ethnic minorities, are noticeably not included. In Gambella for example, among the five indigenous ethnic groups, the project is located in Agnua and Newier, the

---

[18] [Incomplete] Consolidated Terminal Report - Program: Decentralization - Executing Agency: MoFA - Reporting period: 1 January 2004 -- December 31, 2006.

dominant ethnic group, whereas ethnic minorities such as the Mezhenger, Opo and Komo are not included. Similarly, in Somali the project is located in the dominant clan woredas. The FET finds that the issue of exclusion of minority groups is largely a project design issue. (See section 8 of the Evaluation Report for further details)

Training on gender equality and roles of women in development was provided for 120 people drawn from women groups of Sabure village and Woreda and Kebele officials in Afar Region. Half of the 34 BSE trained in India, and now working as solar engineers, are women. The programme succeeded to empower women to own and manage Income Generating Activities (e.g. Grain Mills and Cooperative Shops) established with the support of the budget allocated by the project (13 Grain Mills and 11 Cooperative Shops were constructed).

Without exception, during all key informant interviews and FGDs where gender issues were discussed, respondents were in agreement that both women and men were given an equal opportunity to participate in the planning process. However, in 90% of FGDs, ones where only women were present, it was emphasised that men generally dominated the planning and final decision-making process, particularly in Afar and Somali, where there still appears to be a deeply rooted culture of marginalization of women in leadership and decision-making processes. As a prominent Somali regional official noted: *"This issue is a cultural thing – women are too busy with other things to participate – they need to support the men more than anything else."* Our findings show that only 1 (at most 3) of the Kebele Development Committee (KDC) members and management of community projects (e.g. water projects) is a woman.

Conversely, of particular significance is the finding of the FET that 75% of community, woreda and regional respondents were of the opinion that women benefited more than men from the interventions/projects. In addition, it was noted during almost all (90%) key informant interviews and FGD's at woreda and kebele levels that both officials and community members confirmed that flour mills and cooperative shops which are exclusively owned and managed by women, solar lights (limited to beneficiaries only), potable water supply, and health posts, are benefiting women more than men.

Despite evidence that women had little opportunity to participate in decision-making as opposed to men, the programme design, and activities undertaken, effectively secured that women benefit more from the programme in terms of activities undertaken.

Finding 4: Improving the management of natural resources (in relation to the promoted Barefoot Approach)

The FET found that improvement in natural resource management, which was, inter alia, the intention behind adopting the 'Barefoot College' approach, is limited since the majority of community members still use wood and fossil fuels for lighting purposes. At the same time, the majority of households rely on wood for cooking and thermal purposes.

The skills taught and promoted by the 'Barefoot College' in India are aimed at providing the basic services villagers need: safe drinking water, sanitation, education, and health care. The College is a non-formal training institute where young men and women are taught practical skills by village teachers, many of whom have no formal qualifications. Teaching and learning are based on the day-to-day needs of villagers. In addition it promotes solar energy for lighting purposes to improve natural resource management – the use of solar battery powered lighting instead of wood or fossil fuels. In addition, the 'Barefoot Approach' promotes an integrated developmental approach to

access to drinking water; rainwater harvesting; solar power; night schools; health centers; environment; housing; income generation; traditional media; peoples action and women's groups.[19]

Some improvement in the management of natural resources can be seen as a positive, however in a limited way. This is merely because a small number of households (2-3%) per village gained access to solar technology.

Finding 5: Influence on policy reforms and implementation that support effective decentralization:

In terms of the PSD, programme outputs should have focused on emerging regions to support policy implementation rather than to influence policy directly. However, the FET's analysis of the pilot nature of the programme, and its concomitant intention for successful approaches within the emerging regions to be adopted by regional governments and up-scaled through PSCAP and GoE resources, shows that the programme also had an indirect impact and influence on regional and national policy.

The intended outcome of this programme in support of decentralisation policies and capacity development is to enhance institutional capacity, working systems and human capital in an integrated and coordinated way at woreda and kebele levels to ensure the efficient implementation of the democratization and decentralization process, empowerment and good governance, with particular focus on women empowerment.

In terms of enhanced institutional capacity, the programme provided short-term trainings to woreda officials, civil servants, and communities; conferences and workshops; and local and out-country study tour programmes, to support the GoE decentralisation drive. A total of 6013 delegates attended such training interventions. Annexure 12 shows the various training interventions at federal, regional and community levels. All regional, woreda officials and community members interviewed expressed the view that they have benefited from all training activities in a manner that improved their relevant capacities. Most (about 55%) of respondents indicated that they need further and more in-depth training on modalities that they already received training on.

In addition to direct assistance to the PSCAP process (in 2006, UNDP and MoFED assisted the emerging regions in Government Disbursement Records),[20] the programme appears to have had little (if any) influence on policy formulation and reforms during its implementation phase, but rather supported existing reforms (specifically the decentralisation component of PSCAP) through innovative service delivery interventions. These include the "Barefoot Approach" with interventions such as solar energy for lighting purposes and 'back-stopping' through the direct employment of a National Programme Coordinator (based in MoFA), four Regional Programme Coordinators (based in the respective Regional Bureaus for Capacity Building), and 10 Woreda Programme Coordinators. In addition, the programme reached lower administrative tiers of Government (woredas and kebeles) not reached by PSCAP by providing training and equipment at Federal and Regional Level.

Finding 6: Replication of the programme approach by government /other donors

---

[19] See: www.barefootcollege.org.

[20] See Final Evaluation ToR: Annex 1

In terms of replicating the UNDP programme approach, the FET found that since this programme was, by design, meant to be a bottom-up endeavour, the real needs of the intended community beneficiaries have not been addressed; rather, a top-down approach was undertaken. The FET found that the actual programme implementation does not reflect the needs identified by communities during the needs analysis assessment process. With particular reference to solar energy, implementation was supply driven (top-down); Particularly in Somali and Afar regions, solar energy was considered a luxury or an enhancement need which did not form part of the communities' original basic needs identification.

The UNDP programme was a pilot which sought to test ways of building capacity of local government and communities to undertake various forms of development that would improve the infrastructure and services in these areas and their accessibility to the poor in particular. The programme activities as set out in the PSD that were particularly experimental, are the intended active engagement of the programme with relevant NGO and donor partners (in refining and replicating alternative and innovative approaches for decentralized capacity development for public service delivery), the solar energy and Roof Rain Water Harvesting components of the 'Barefoot Approach', and 'Community Capacity Enhancement' (CCE). However, the programme failed to partner with any NGO's or donors and implement Roof Rain Water Harvesting, and the CCE was never implemented. None of the key informants interviewed knew what Roof Rain Water Harvesting and CCE were all about, or that it formed part of the PSD, and why it has been neglected as a planned activity.

Given the limited resources of UNDP, it was envisaged that "any successful approaches and achievements within the emerging regions in terms of innovative modes of decentralized public service delivery may be adopted by the respective regional governments and up-scaled through PSCAP and GoE resources, on a demand-driven basis."[21]

As a first step towards programme implementation, consultants were appointed during 2004/2005 to undertake a needs assessment in the emerging regions, pilot woredas and kebeles, which formed the basis of project interventions. The main objective was to identify the selected communities' priority needs.[22] The FET found that such commissioned research established training as an identified needs intervention, but rather peculiarly excluded an analysis of capacity-gaps to support the nature of the training interventions provided,[23] which, under normal circumstances, is a prerequisite in terms of what kind of training is required.

The FET found that although the basic needs identified by the programme have been implemented to a large extent, so-called 'committed interventions', such as solar lighting, have been prioritised by the programme management as priority needs. In addition, out of the four emerging regions' needs analyses, none of the communities prioritised solar energy as a need. However, except for Benishangul-Gumuz, the so-called 'committed intervention' preceded the needs analysis modality and has been incorporated as part of community needs.

---

[21] The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia - United Nations Development Programme - Civil Service Reform Strategy and Implementation Plan for Decentralized Service Delivery in the Emerging Regions - This project document is an elaboration of Components T02A (Civil Service Reform) and T04 (Decentralization) of the signed Programme Support Document, "Support to Public Sector Capacity Building and Reform Programme"

[22] See four individual regional research documents were drafted, entitled "Support to Community Level Decentralization (CLD) in Afar/Somali/Benishangul-Gumuz National Regional State.

[23] See Terms of Reference for consultants.

In this respect the FET found convincing evidence that it would be unlikely and risky for the 'Barefoot Approach', in terms of the household solar lighting intervention, to be replicated or expanded. Besides the fact of the high costs involved in piloting (USD 920.45 per household - see Annex 10 for a detailed cost benefit analysis of solar energy as provided by the programme) and replicating photovoltaic technology, it was found to be unaffordable to government, regions, woredas and kebeles (without external assistance). In addition, our findings on the harmful side-effects and impact of unequal distribution of solar lights (in which they were piloted with a small % of households, leading to the division of communities and potential for resource based conflict), militates against a piecemeal application to other households. When deciding who to provide solar lights to, the PSD should have set down criteria that the first recipients should have been schools or community centres, which are used by the community at large.

Finding 7: Consistency with government decentralisation support initiatives (PSCAP/DLDP)24

The FET found that by and large the programme is consistent with GoE decentralisation initiatives, directly through support, and indirectly to inform policy initiatives.

PSCAP has provided a common framework for the implementation of its six inter-related programs, which include CSRP and District Level Decentralization. These components are implemented in emerging regions, with the support of UNDP, by Bureaus of Capacity Building and Coordination and therefore capacity building related training interventions (of various forms) included within the Civil Service Reform Programme and training programmes incorporated in the decentralization component on governance and other issues directly supplement each other.

In the emerging regions of Afar, Benishangul-Gumuz, Gambella and Somali, DLDP is coordinated by the Ministry of Capacity Building in close partnership with the Ministry of Federal Affairs. The MoFA is assisting the emerging regions in coming up with PSCAP Action Plans where DLDP is one of the components. In these regions, DLDP started in 2004. Woreda restructuring as per the provisions of the revised constitutions of the regions had been considered as a precondition for starting the PSCAP process.

This pilot programme was intended to do more than just support national policy, but also to experiment with modalities of decentralisation that would be workable in these poor regions. Our findings show that the programme's consistency to PSCAP/DLDP also relates to:

- Support: Focus on decentralisation component and capacity building for good governance;

- Additionality: Strengthen emerging regions' capacity to access PSCAP funding – Most regional bureaus indicated that through training, their capacities have been enhanced to access PSCAP funds (however, this could not be quantified);

---

[24] (PSCAP) - Public Sector Capacity Building Program: (DLDP) - District Level Decentralization. DLDP is one of the PSCAP Sub-Programmes which plays a role in the current decentralization policy of the government. The objective of the sub-program is to deepen the devolution of power to the lower tiers of sub-national governments, to institutionalize decision-making processes at the grassroots level with a view to enhance local participation, to promote good governance, and to improve decentralized service delivery. From the sub-programme objective it is clear that the sub-program has linkages with the Civil Service Reform (CSRP), Urban Management (UMCBP), and Tax System Reform (TSRP) sub-programs. See: PSCAP JSM, March 27- April 12 - District Level Decentralization Program Progress Review (not dated)

- Complementarity: UNDP funding modalities directly benefit emerging regions' woredas and kebeles ability to access funding for training and small infrastructural projects

Finding 8: Programme results monitoring system validation by evidence

The FET could not find any significant compliance to the intended Client-oriented Monitoring and Evaluation System for public service delivery, which was to measure changes in behaviour/practice and benefits to the client, based on client and expert agreed objectively verifiable indicators and means of verifications.

This section provides a critical evaluation of the effectiveness of the programmes monitoring system and the way in which the programme management structures validated their intended outcomes by evaluative evidence. The FET perceives Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) as a mechanism through which conditions are facilitated for the realization of the intended project objectives and outcomes within the limits of the proposed time and budget. This could become possible through implementing a M&E system that facilitates the proper functioning of the implementation process: namely, that inputs are delivered on time and within a reasonably acceptable range of the proposed cost; activities are performed on time and in a technically acceptable standard; and thereby the intended outputs are achieved or conditions are created for their achievement in the subsequent time.

The PSD requires the design and implementation of a monitoring and evaluation system that will cascade from central to regional and woreda levels, and that specific and quantitative data should be gathered at frequent intervals at the lowest levels and shall be disaggregated by gender and integrated at regional levels to inform decision making. In addition, a narrative and qualitative results-based report shall be prepared by each component office and submitted to MoFED on a quarterly basis. Moreover, the PSD states that monitoring visits would be undertaken at different levels. The concerned staff of UNDP and the project implementing agencies are required to undertake, preferably jointly, monitoring visits to programme implementation sites at least once a year.

However, because of capacity constraints, especially at woreda (finance) level and other unforeseen external factors such as a lack of reliable transport and ICT, in many instances regular reporting requirements were not achieved. From kebele level, there appears to be little evidence of required regular reporting from KDC to KA, and reporting from KA to Woreda level - be it verbal or written (due to a lack of report writing skills, guidance and monitoring). At the same time, because of delays in budget disbursements, as the Chairperson of Tumat Jibrona Kebele of BGR said: *"There is no report or action plan submitted to woreda as the priorities set in the previous year are not yet implemented."* Our findings also show that about 70% of the respondents in other regions held the same view.

There appears to be regular visits by UNDP-PC (MoFA) to the regions; RPC's to Woredas, and Woreda Programme Coordinators (WPC) to Kebeles to follow-up activities and solve problems occurred in the implementation process. Over a three year period, the UNDP Programme Coordinator (MoFA) made 15 visits to the programme implementing areas (average of 5 visits per annum); the Regional Programme Coordinators made 12 visits to programme implementing areas in Benishangul-Gumuz (average of 4 visits per annum); 24 visits in Somali (average of 8 visits per annum); 8 visits in Gambella (average of 2.7 visits per annum); and 26 visits in Afar (average of 8.7

visits per annum). Given that the Programme Coordinators were full-time employees, the FET is of the opinion that more visits could have been undertaken.

At the same time, most missions were not properly documented. The feedback, in most instances, was limited to verbal communication - on site, or by telephone. Written feedback was infrequent – leaving the programme with limited institutional memory. As a result, the FET found that the programme monitoring system failed its intended objective by merely undertaking sporadic monitoring and reporting activities (Woreda-Region-MoFA-MoFED-UNDP).

Finding 9: Other critical issues relating to the programme results areas

The programme focused on emerging regions, which have only recently been given the opportunity towards autonomy through the devolution of powers and functions at all levels, except for aspects relating to central government such as competencies relating defence etc.. During the lifetime of the programme, the only significant change in terms of the programme environment, as noted by the WB, was the post-election violence which resulted in a number of development partners' not being able to provide further assistance to the GoE through General Budget Support (GBS).[25]

UNDP budget and disbursement modalities appear to have had a competitive advantage to absorb political uncertainties as it is not GBS based in that it makes use of Channel 2 funding. At the same time there is indication, provided by all relevant regional, woreda and kebele respondents interviewed, that the programme has succeeded in a rather short period to expedite the commitment towards the concept of decentralisation and democratisation at regional, woreda and kebele levels to secure political buy-in and to create a relative degree of capacity through a bottom-up approach.

The following key issues relating to the critical importance of the UNDP programme were identified by a Joint Supervision Mission…:[26]

- Increased flexibility allows UNDP to respond more quickly to the needs of counterpart communities. For example, submitting Statements of Expenditure is a bottleneck preventing some regions from replenishing PSCAP funds. During 2006 UNDP and MoFED assisted the emerging regions in preparing their Government Disbursement Records to ensure that funds would be replenished and programmes implemented. MoFA is assigned the responsibility for assisting the emerging regions, and is currently UNDP's counterpart for the decentralization program: "For the specific purpose of implementing planned civil service reform measures, it is recommended that for the next programme cycle attention will be given to targeted skills up-grading efforts in terms of training and re-training all civil servants from the most senior to the most junior employees as part of their professional life, so MoFA can better assist in DLDP implementation." However, in terms of the FET's observation, it should also be noted that this is not necessarily an added value since the programme should also assist regional

---

[25] This is a sum of money given directly to the Government within the framework of an agreed poverty reduction strategy and objectives, but not earmarked for specific purposes. See: THE PROTECTION OF BASIC SERVICES PROJECT (PBS) IN BRIEF – World Bank – 22 March 2006.

[26] See Public Sector Capacity Building Programme – PSCAP - Joint Supervision Mission (JSM) Addis Ababa City Administration. April 3-April 7, 2006. Report by: The GTZ & Italian Development Cooperation representatives of the field JSM; and Ethiopia: Public Sector Capacity Building Program Support Project (Cr. 3899-ET) Joint Supervision Mission Aide-Memoire. March 26-April 12, 2006.

and local government to access PSCAP/larger programmes' funds provided through channel 1, more than offering an easier alternative;

- The UNDP pilot programme targets kebeles, allowing more grassroots level participation and can disburse through the regions directly to woredas (who are already managing own funds) and kebeles. In a decentralization programme: "… this is a distinct advantage because it allows the woredas and kebeles the opportunity to manage their own funds. PSCAP funding can only be used for training, and regional officials have informed that the transfers to woredas from Treasury are insufficient to allow communities to make capital investments."

Finding 10: Comparative programme effectiveness and efficiency

The FET finds it almost impossible to give an informed assessment of the relative effectiveness and efficiency (cost-benefit and value for money) of the programme strategy, compared to other strategies pursued by the Government e.g. PSCAP, and other donors or actors to achieve the same outcomes, because of a severe lack of detailed financial information relating to the programme, and the mere fact that, because of availability and time constraints, the FET only had the opportunity to hold discussions with the WB and GTZ.

However, in terms of key informant interviews, FGD's and general observation, it appears that the programme proved to be relatively effective in creating awareness and interest in decentralized service delivery among regional, woreda and kebele stakeholders, and there is confirmation that impetus was created among the community for self-reliance, ownership, participation, and women empowerment.

In some implementing locations the cost of putting facilities in place was reduced, since some communities contributed their labour and offered locally available materials. This was particularly found where the project used locally produced mud blocks (in Afar) and semi-skilled community workers (in Somali) to build schools, health posts, and solar houses/workshops. For example, in the Afar region the RPC reported that: "PCDP allocated up to ETB 300,000 – 400,000 to build a school, whereas a fraction of this (ETB 80,000) was used by the project using locally available materials."

In addition, according to the Head of Capacity Building Bureau in Afar region: *"Planning and implementation at Kebele level has enhanced the understanding of decentralization and good governance … Now we have understanding of decentralization in practice. We have seen villagers can plan implement by themselves. We learnt how to do big things with small money using locally available material. The other kebeles, where such project is not implemented, is not capacitated as that of target kebeles of the project."* This opinion was complemented by the BGR Capacity Building Bureau Head and former Regional Program Coordinator who observed that: *"Enhanced participation of the community, enhanced sense of ownership, together with improved access to infrastructure and services' are the major achievement of this program."* This was also witnessed during field visits and discussion with the community groups and woreda authorities. The FET found that an elevated need was articulated among the communities for self-reliance, ownership, participation, and women empowerment, because of the programmes' inherent participatory and decentralised approach to service delivery, and its extensive training interventions in most regions (except Somali). The strategy of linking capacity building with community based infrastructure appears to be the key factor that contributed to the success of the programme in this regard, which was not formerly attended to by government in these areas.

Finding 11: Unintended negative effects of programme outcomes

In terms of projects, the most visible unintended negative finding by the FET was found to be the provision of solar lights to a small number of pilot households, which not only divided communities, but created antagonism and potential resource based conflict. No general criteria were established to select pilot households beneficiaries.

For example, in Benishangul-Gumuz and Gambella regions a more practical approach was undertaken by communities to select pilot households. Criteria included random sampling, and if a recipient was a family member of another, then one of them had to be excluded. Conversely, in the eastern regions of Afar and Somali, it was widely reported that few selection criteria were used. It was merely "a snatch and grab" and "first come first served" situation. At the same time, in most areas the selection of target households/users has been carried out according to their willingness to pay a monthly fee to sustain the salaries of the Barefoot Engineers, which was agreed to/with the Kebele Development Committees.

An encouraging observation in all implementing areas was that there appeared to be no visible form of nepotism in the allocation of solar lights and panels to community members. At the same time, it cannot be overemphasized that most respondents felt (at regional, woreda and kebele levels) that they will be under severe pressure if no more solar panels are supplied to the community (especially in western regions).

For example, particularly in the western regions (BGR and Gambella), woreda officials indicated that they would face extreme difficulties if they were not able to duplicate this pilot intervention. In addition, the community members indicated that it had resulted in divided communities, breakdown of social cohesion, heightening tensions and the possibility of increased intra- and inter-community and ethnic conflict.

However, in the eastern regions of Afar and Somali, which are intrinsically pastoral societies and "… usually well organized in terms of decision-making and division of responsibilities…very effective in ensuring survival for a number of years… [and have] traditional practices of community mobilization [that] could easily be geared towards poverty reduction endeavours"[27], attitudes and perceptions towards the 'novelty' of solar lights were rather different.

Finding 12: Satisfaction levels of programme stakeholders

Through interviews, focus group discussions and general observation, the FET found that taken the views of all respondents, the following most significant satisfaction levels can be generalised:

Regional and woreda authorities expressed satisfaction with:

- Enhanced participation of the community

- Enhanced community sense of ownership

- Improved access to infrastructure and services to communities

- Introduction of solar technologies

---

[27] See: The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia - United Nations Development Programme - Project Title: Support to Community Level Decentralization (CLD) in Somali National Regional State (A Pilot Project) - Area of Support: Public Sector Capacity Building and Reform Programme for Decentralized Service Delivery in the Emerging Regions (Final Project Document). September, 2005

Regional and woreda authorities expressed dissatisfaction with:

- 'Unilateral' budget revisions/cuts by UNDP/MoFED

- Delayed disbursements of funds to implementation areas

- Unpaid salaries to RPC's and WPC's (Somali and Afar)

- Unilateral change of community priorities/projects to some areas

- Lack of official response from UNDP/MoFED in grievances such as delayed disbursements and budget cuts, and priority changes/exclusion

Communities expressed satisfaction with:

- Their involvement in the planning and implementation process of the project

- Improved access to infrastructure and services.28

- Introduction of solar lights for those that have access to it - for some "it is like 'opening the eyes of a blind person" (Afar) – for others "it is perceived as an enhancement need - a technology that makes their village to be seen like urban centre" (Somali).

Communities expressed dissatisfaction with:

- Not having the luxury of solar lights (the possibility that solar lights might not extended to all households).

- Delayed disbursements of funds to implantation areas.

- Unilateral change of community priorities/projects in some areas.

- 'Unilateral' budget revisions/cuts by UNDP/MoFED.

4.2. Sustainability of Results

- The programme will not be economically sustainable without future UNDP support because of limited resources available at woreda level for disbursement to kebeles – most woredas' budgets are limited to about 10% for capital investment projects at kebele level – 90% of their budgets are earmarked for recurrent expenditure. At the same time, neither the GoE nor regions have the financial capacity to expand and replicate innovative approaches to service delivery such as solar lights;

- With particular reference to the provision of solar lights to a fraction (sample) of pilot kebele households, it appears that in terms of social dynamics and sustainability the project had a detrimental impact on community cohesion and created the potential for impending community hostility and conflict. This could have been an implementation/project management issue and the potential for expanding this element of the programme was not addressed sufficiently. However, such sentiments differ in terms of degree within regional implementation areas and between regions. For example, we found that the regions of Benishangul and Gambella are a

---

[28] "Although some of the infrastructure is not functioning we are really satisfied by having it here, as we hope it will start functioning soon, as long as the facility that might cost much is put in place", said community of Tumat-Jibrona of BGR

great deal more prone to community division and hostility than that of Afar and Somali (who appear to be more practical and realistic in terms of piloting, acceptance and sharing);

- The PSD and workplans are silent on a programme exit strategy, except for the possibility that the regions and GoE might replicate the programme if it proved successful. Since the programme is considered a large success by all pilot kebeles, rising expectations were created among communities (and woredas) that the programme will by default continue, expanded and replicated;

- The programme caters for two 'social groups' in terms of projects – projects focused on women groups (Cooperative Shop; Grain Mill; income generating activities), and projects focused on a 'wider' group (Education; Health; Agriculture; Water Supply; and Solar Power). Most certainly women benefit most from both – projects that focus on women are self explanatory, and with regard to 'wider' projects, the relatively few women involved in the project benefited the most since they decrease drudgery in terms of the long distances travelled to fetch water and wood; limit the negative side effects of child birth in darkness; and lead to healthier children (less water borne diseases), etc;

- The understanding and acceptance of decentralization at the local level can be achieved in a rather short period of time. This is not only due to training but also the link created with the implementation of 'real' development projects that created participation by all, visible and concrete results, and a strong sense of ownership;

- The decentralized nature of the programme modalities had a positive effect on top level (MoFA and Regions) commitment, engagement, and political buy-in, which also secure future sustainability and the choice of UNDP as a preferred partner in development;

- The budgetary and financial modalities of the UNDP through Channel 2 budgeting is also more flexible and preferred by all emerging regions. However this is the way donors have been working for the last 20 years; establishing parallel funding modalities and this needs to be revised. WB (PSCAP) for example follows Channel 1 budgeting procedures which are perceived by the regions and woredas as rigid, complex, time consuming and therefore not feasible for ODA programme and project implementation with a limited 3-5 year timeframe (however, UNDP is in the process of phasing out Channel 2 funding towards Channel 1 funding modalities)

- To sustain and improve its competitive advantage the UNDP needs to actively pursue partnerships (because of its relatively small budget) to promote and deepen decentralization through pro-poor modalities and additionalities such as complimentary small infrastructure and capital investment projects;

- Because of unilateral budget cuts and changed priorities on the side of UNDP/MoFA, it appears that good relations between MoFA and MoFED might have been blemished to some extent. At the same time, it also appears that MoFA/UNDP relations with the emerging regions have become questionable because of this;

- The continuation of the programme in any form will not be sustainable in the medium term without the continued assistance of the UNDP (including UNDP partners). Besides the inability of the GoE or regional government to replicate/expand the programme because of severe

capital budget constraints, an issue of concern is that neither the PSD, MOU's nor NEX provided clear modalities on an exit strategy of this pilot programme;

- Capacity building in terms of systems to increase efficiency (office equipment and furniture) was satisfactory in the woredas of Shinille and Jijiga;

- However there still remain huge capacity gaps at regional, woreda, and kebele levels;

- Regional governments received little capacity building in terms of training – PSCAP funds have been used for training which falls under the 6 sectors covered by PSCAP only;

- There is certainly a need for supplementary training that focuses on sectors not covered by PSCAP components, such as focused training on education, health and pastoral issues. UNDP can provide additionality to PSCAP here, without the possibility of avoidable duplication;

- It appears that the biggest capacity gap in the Somali pilot areas lies at the woreda level. This is primarily to the change of programme budget allocations (decided upon by the regional government) between regional/woreda/kebele levels (in response to alleged misappropriation of funds by woredas at the start of the programme – see below), which resulted in a smaller allocation to woredas. The need for the regional government to redefine the budget formula allocation in order to enhance woreda capacity is therefore desirable – to be initiated and implemented by the region itself.

4.3. Factors Affecting Successful Implementation and Results Achievement

4.3.1. External Factors

- The *policy environment in terms of budget allocations* to the emerging regions (problems with access to PSCAP funding)[29] is not conducive for accelerated decentralisation efforts and places an additional burden on UNDP's already limited resource base;

- High turnover of competent staff at regional and woreda level which impeded on programme continuity in terms of institutional memory and a well archived paper trial;

- Inability to attract qualified staff to the impoverished emerging regions (especially at woreda level) because of harsh climatic conditions and a lack of basic infrastructure;

- Lack of leadership and a resistance to change and innovation (e.g. prevailing cultural and traditional practices towards women and their marginalisation in development);

- Lack of ODA partnerships and coordination;

- Prevalence of HIV/AIDS, e.g. – national average = 6.6% - Benishangul = 8.5%; Somali = 19%;

- Extreme poverty, poor health, illiteracy, high infant mortality, low life expectancy, inequalities, unemployment, Chat[30] dependency, marginalisation by previous regimes, isolation, drudgery, single parent households;

- Natural disasters, conflict and political instability

---

[29] See section 3.2 above.

[30] A prohibited narcotic in most of the western and less developed countries. It accounts for about 8 % of national exports.

4.3.2. Programme Related Factors

Programme design – relevance and quality

Except for the 'Barefoot College' (solar) modality, the programme logic, design and strategy appears optimal to achieve the desired programme objectives/outputs, given the national/local context and the needs to be addressed. Some key positive and negative findings include:

- Gender issues were adequately addressed in programme design;

- The programme appears to be relatively well rooted in and effectively integrated with national strategies (e.g. poverty reduction strategy) and UN planning and results frameworks (CCA, UNDAF);

- The Barefoot College rainwater harvesting modality has not been implemented (was part of the Tilonia Agreement and the four Regional Barefoot Contracts);

- The HIV/AIDS and M&E modalities have not been satisfactorily addressed;

- Asset management and maintenance issues not addressed;

- Programme design excluded a detailed and viable exit strategy;

- Partnerships and additional resource mobilisation were not pursued.

- Despite evidence that women had little opportunity to participate in decision-making as opposed to men, the programme design effectively secured that women benefit more from the programme in terms of activities undertaken.

- The FET found that since this programme was by design meant to be a bottom-up endeavour, the real needs of the intended community beneficiaries have not been addressed, and that a rather top-down approach was undertaken. The FET found that the actual programme implementation does not reflect the needs identified by communities during the needs analysis assessment process.

Key findings on institutional and implementation arrangements

- The UNDP Head of the Governance Unit and the responsible Programme Officers, and the UNDP Project Coordinator at MoFA indicated, inter alia, a lack of capacity to run a programme of this wide geographical spread; high turnover of programme staff which results in a lack/absence of institutional memory; weak monitoring and evaluation systems; lack of integration with other UNDP programme activities; lack of direct interaction with regions; and lack of response to regional/woreda/kebele grievances;

- Again, another unexpected externality to successful project implementation was the unilateral decision by MoFED/UNDP to cut the budget to the regions, and the scrapping of some identified and planned community development projects.

- Regardless of official correspondence to MoFA from the regions – and from MoFA to MoFED and UNDP, regarding budget cuts and scrapping of community projects, no official feedback has been received from MoFED/UNDP – this clouds the relationship between programme beneficiaries, responsible federal agent (MoFED) and UNDP. As mentioned by senior regional officials: *"UNDP must change their attitude in that they are not donors – but that they are our partner"* … *"UNDP should believe in decentralization and practice what they preach – they*

should not decide on the fate of the people at grassroots level – this is also true for MoFED's attitude to the programme as well" … *"We need full transparency between MoFA / MoFED / UNDP / Regions / Woredas / Kebeles;"*

- Such lack of transparency in Somali for example, culminated in an increasing loss of faith in UNDP credibility as a development partner. For example, in response to an urgent request from Somali region for clarification and immediate disbursement of outstanding funds, the MoFA Minister of State requested MoFED and UNDP to release funds in order to finalize outstanding projects and projects planned. In addition he wrote that*: "Failure to do so may negatively influence the credibility of the future UNDP supported programmes that will be implemented in the emerging regions;"*[31]

- According to the Somali RPC, the lack of transparency and timely release of budgets also negatively affected good intra-regional governmental relations. *"We (the region) could not give any informed response to the queries and demands of woredas and kebeles for the non-disbursement of funds and budget reallocation and priority community project cuts. Kebeles lost confidence in woredas, region and MoFED/UNDP – woredas lost confidence in region and MoFED/UNDP – and region lost confidence in MoFED and UNDP (as a preferred partner in development)"*;

- In addition, it appears that because of this issue, good relations between MoFA and MoFED have been spoiled to some extent. At the same time, it also appears that MoFA/UNDP relations have become questionable because of this;

- The UNDP Programme Coordinator (MoFA) indicated that he received no technical assistance from UNDP. In addition he indicated that he has received little support from MoFED;

- With regard to the effectiveness of Regional Programme Coordinators in the implementation in reporting progress and lessons from the areas it was mentioned that:[32] *"They reported on a quarterly basis. We had some problems with reporting – in particular with regard to woreda quarterly financial reports – not timeously submitted and not up to standard – this affected and delayed the whole reporting process from Regions, MoFA and to MoFED/UNDP – [this might explain partially MoFED/UNDP budget revisions at the beginning of 2006]". However, it was indicated by most regional presidents, heads of capacity building bureaus , and woreda officials interviewed, that capacity was still in it's infancy at woreda level, and financial officers which belong to a pool system, the "UNDP programme activities were added on their already busy work schedule – without any additional incentives. Thus, if budget cuts were a result of this, it was based on external impediments to the programme – and not inherent and direct related programme variables that resulted in a failure to report and spend allocated budgets;"*

- The programme created a formal and informal networking mechanism between kebele, woreda and regional levels, which increased good governance and relatively sound governmental relations (intra-regional and inter-regional levels), and brought government closer to the people and vice versa;

---

[31] See letter from MoFA to MoFED to SPSCBP Programme Coordinator – Mr. Admassu Nebebe – CC State Minister (MoFED) and UNDP Resident Representative – dated 24 October 2006

[32] Key Informant Interview with: UNDP Programme Coordinator (MoFA) Date- 24 Feb 2007

- During the 2005 election some officials involved in the coordination and implementation modalities of the programme were also involved in the election process – this affected the speedy implementation of the programme to some degree;

- External impediments also differ from region to region – Dubti Woreda, for example, had a severe flood during the implementation process, which literally brought the programme to a halt – Gambella region faced serious difficulties in terms of implementation, monitoring and evaluation because of conflict and political instability;

- In addition, although also a result of the flawed programme design, the remoteness of some pilot woredas and kebeles such as Gode (Somali) impacted negatively on project implementation;

Programme Management

To increase the synergy between the Decentralization Programme and Civil Service Reform Programme it has been decided to establish a joint steering committee for the two programmes, however, this did not materialize. The proposed steering committee should have included regional presidents and the committee should have met quarterly and having a quarterly report made available to them for discussion. The current practice (asking for reports) is task oriented, rather than results-based. Poor financial management (delay in reporting from the woreda levels) has resulted in implementation failure. Lack of division of labour, weak internal control of settlement of advance, poor expenditure reporting, non-compliance with tax laws, absence of monthly bank reconciliation and verification, etc, are among some of the weaknesses observed by independent auditors.

4.4. Strategic position and partnership

The FET found that UNDP, through its decentralized programme approach, is the only agency providing support in the *emerging regions* directly to kebeles/communities through grass-roots participatory and decision-making modalities. Besides serious complaints about UNDP not responding to grievances relating to budget cuts, from regional, woreda and kebele respondents, there still remains strong evidence that most of the pilot regions, woredas and kebeles favour the UNDP as their preferred development partner compared to agencies such as the WB (PSCAP) which follows a more centralized approach to development planning and implementation, and which this programme aims to support in terms of innovative and complementary approaches to decentralised service delivery activities. UNDP's decentralised grass-roots implementation interventions proved to be instrumental in creating local ownership and approval at regional, woreda and community levels, which, in turn increases the sustainability of UNDP's future country involvement. The decentralized nature of the programme interventions had a positive effect on top level (MoFA and Regions) commitment, engagement, and political buy-in, which also secure future sustainability and the choice of UNDP as a preferred partner in development.

5.   LESSONS

5.1.   Programme-level lessons

- The FET found that the reality and context at grassroots level dictates that there must be appreciation for the fact that Ethiopia, and particularly the emerging regions, are ethnically diverse and historically and currently prone to ethnocentrism. As a result, any form of intervention that might spark a negative social dynamic or resource based conflict must be avoided in future interventions.

- It is possible to train semi-illiterate rural people on solar light systems, but this is very costly

- Communities can successfully manage project funds that are allocated to address their needs with some technical support from the woreda or the regional administrations

- There are Pastoralists who have keen interest to engage in farming if they get full support and guidance

- The burden and drudgery of rural women can be relieved by developing projects that supports their income

- It takes time to change the mindset of people at different levels of government to convince that the rural communities can manage funds allocated to local development programmes by the government or NGOs

- Putting a Client-Based M&E system in place is critical to the success of any programme

- Open dialogue and transparency should be institutionalised between the GoE, UNDP, and the target regional, woreda and kebele administrations

- Capacity building interventions in terms of training should be preceded by a capacity-gap analysis

- Operation and maintenance modalities should be built into programme intervention activities from start

- In the event where a limited number of community households are being targeted for a pilot intervention, such as solar energy, there is need to establish uniform and transparent selection criteria and guidelines

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

This section provides key recommendations on the strategic positioning and partnerships and the future role of UNDP's intervention strategy. It excludes recommendations on sustainability of results and factors affecting successful implementation. Since this is a final evaluation it does not, by default, require under normal UNDP practice, as per *The Evaluation Policy of UNDP*[33], common issues that form part of a MTE. These include what has been achieved in the start-up and expansion phases; realistic recommendations on how to realign the expected sustainability of results; factors affecting successful implementation; external and internal constraints and/or unintended negative effects, which might impede the successful implementation of the programme.

6.1. Strategic positioning and partnerships

- Since UNDP's budget is limited and rather small compared to other ODA's, UNDP should as part of their mandate to pursue partnerships in a more vigorous manner to upscale and expand their activities in the emerging regions.

- Since UNDP is not essentially mandated to pursue capital infrastructural projects (unlike UNCDF), and given the urgent need for infrastructural investment in the emerging regions and pilot kebeles, there is need to partner with the UNCDF and agencies and NGO's which are geared towards community infrastructural investment programmes.

6.2. Future UNDP role

- The Government of Ethiopia and the World Bank have been preparing a project known as Decentralized Fiscal Support for a Local Investment Grant (DFS-LIG). In addition, the WB also anticipates the implementation of a project on the Protection of Basic Services (PBS). It is suggested that it would be ideal for high-level talks between UNDP and WB to mobilise additional resources for infrastructure development in the UNDP's pilot areas in the emerging regions. Of importance to note here is that both LIG and PBS will be subject to strict performance conditionalities attached to funding and disbursements (emerging regions already struggle with PSCAP conditionalities).

- Focus on Kebele – Firstly, strengthen capacities at existing pilot kebeles in providing expanded training and basic infrastructural projects. As a further additionality to PSCAP, there is need to focus more on Health and Education training modalities.

- Therefore, it is recommended that future focus of development intervention should be directed at the existing woreda and particularly kebele pilot areas.

- Strengthen and deepen existing development interventions in the implementation areas to create successful 'models' of decentralized integrated rural development – which in turn will act as an added incentive to attract multiple partners in order to expand and replicate the programme in the emerging regions.

- There is need for UNDP to focus on additionalities – identify the sectors and necessary activities to deepen decentralization in the emerging regions. At the same time, it is necessary

---

[33] Executive Board of the UNDP and the UNPF – June 2006, Geneva.

not only to support but also find additionalities to realize the GoE PSCAP/DLDP philosophy in a more accessible and visible manner and where it is most needed (at kebele level in the emerging regions).

- UNDP and UNCDF should consolidate their lessons and experience in working with the established and emerging regions respectively, and use this as a basis for contributing to the development of capacity and small infrastructural projects in the pilot implementation areas.

7.   TEAM COMPOSITION

The FET consisted of the Team Leader, Mr. Mike Meyer, the international consultant and expert on decentralization and policy issues, and Mr. Dereje Dejene, the local consultant who is a gender and participation expert.

During the mission both members attended all Briefings, Interviews, Focus Group Discussions in Benishangul-Gumuz and Afar. Because of time constraints it was decided that the local consultant should cover the (added) mission to Gambella, whilst the team leader should proceed to Addis Ababa to conduct Key Informant Interviews. In Somali a similar approach was followed because of the vast distances between pilot kebeles and woredas. The team leader covered the mission in the area of Jijiga woreda, and the local consultant covered the mission in the area of Shinille woreda. In most instances, especially at kebele level, the local consultant acted as translator since most respondents could only speak Amharic. In other instances, especially in Benishangul-Gumuz, the team had to acquire an additional translator fluent in Arabic. The Team Leader of the FET is concerned that some information might have been lost in translation: English – Amharic – Arabic – Amharic - English.

The FET recognizes that the evaluation methodology had some constraints and limitations, i.e.:

- The original Terms of Reference (ToR) intended for this evaluation to be a joint assessment of the UNDP final evaluation and UNCDF's mid-term evaluation on its Local Development Projects (LDPs). However, it was subsequently divided into two separate and distinct missions.

- Under normal UNDP practice, as per The Evaluation Policy of UNDP[34], a Final Evaluation is preceded by a Mid-Term Evaluation. The absence of a Mid-Term Evaluation (MTE)[35] placed additional research burden on the FET since common issues that form part of a MTE, ranging from what has been achieved in the start-up and expansion phases; realistic recommendations on how to realign the expected results, management structure, etc., to external and internal constraints and/or unintended negative effects, which might impede the successful implementation of the programme, had to be investigated as part of the Final Evaluation.

- The in-country revision of the ToR to include Gambella Regional State resulted in a change of workplan, with the effect that less time could be spend in Addis Ababa for follow-up interviews and for fieldwork in Afar, and concomitant additional costs for air travel.

- Some key informants such as the UNDP Programme Assistant, who has been involved in the programme since its inception, were excluded from the interview list in the workplan. In addition, a rather important key informant, the UN Team Leader (MoFED), declined to be interviewed by the FET since he did not want to "influence" the FET's findings.

---

[34] Executive Board of the UNDP and the UNPF – June 2006, Geneva.

[35] In this instance, the first draft of the TOR for the evaluation of the UNDP programme in Ethiopia indicated that since the inception of the programme, no Mid-Term Evaluation had been undertaken "due to problems encountered in the implementation of the activities, with particular regard to the Regions of Somali and Gambella… [and] … specifically, problems related to suspected mismanagement of funds have been reported in Somali Region, while in Gambella the monitoring and implementation of the activities has been heavily affected by security problems and inaccessibility of program's target areas."

- The FET experienced serious difficulties in accessing up-to-date financial records disaggregated by region, woreda, kebele and project levels. Besides numerous requests, in-country and post mission, such detailed information has not been made available to the FET. This has seriously reduced the FET's capacity to undertake an analysis of the cost effectiveness of operations.

- There appears to be a lack of institutional memory and paper-trail with regard to the programme. For example, the UNDP Head of the Governance Unit was unable to answer critical questions relating to the programme since she has been in office for only about 2 years. UNDP, MoFA, MoFED, Regional States and Woredas officials could not provide the FET with documents critical to the evaluation, such as detailed quarterly workplans. The FET could not find a single location where all programme documents were kept. This dilutes the depth of the final evaluation findings and recommendations.