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# ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT RESULTS CAMEROON

EVALUATION OF UNDP CONTRIBUTION



HUMAN DEVELOPMENT effectiveness COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIP  
efficiency COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIP sus  
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP relevance MANAGING FOR RESULTS  
sustainability MANAGING FOR RESULTS responsiveness  
DEVELOPMENT responsiveness NATIONAL OWNERSHIP  
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP effectiveness COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIP  
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### ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT RESULTS: CAMEROON

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# FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to present the Assessment of Development Results (ADR) in Cameroon, conducted between April 2016 and March 2017. This is the first evaluation carried out by the Independent Evaluation Office in Cameroon and it looks at the UNDP contribution between 2008 and 2016 in the areas of governance (institutional capacities and inclusive public policies), poverty reduction, environment and climate change and crisis prevention. This evaluation is part of a series of more than 100 evaluations carried out in countries around the world. It is an essential component of UNDP accountability to its national partners and stakeholders and its Executive Board.

Cameroon is a country in central Africa on the Gulf of Guinea, with a triangular shape extending as far as Lake Chad. It can be divided into three major climatic zones: the Equatorial, the Sudanian and the Sudano-Sahelian – which has earned it the sobriquet of “Africa in miniature”. In addition to its natural diversity, Cameroon possesses great cultural wealth, with some 240 tribes belonging to three major ethnic groups and two official languages, English and French. The country has shown resilience in a regional setting that is subject to security and humanitarian crises, a global economic context marked by stagnation in the OECD countries and the slowdown of growth in emerging economies. However, it is also facing several major challenges. Since the beginning of this century, the percentage of the population living below the poverty line has decreased only slightly, from 40.2 percent in 2001 to 39.9 percent in 2007, falling to 37.5 percent in 2014. In addition, there are substantial social and economic inequalities between the various regions of the country and within its population. In addition, Cameroon is particularly exposed to the effects of climate change, notably in the Sahelian, Sudano-Sahelian and coastal regions. The country is already facing an abnormal occur-

rence of extreme climate events, such as violent winds, high temperatures or heavy rainfall, which put communities and ecosystems in danger. In response to these various challenges, the Government developed the Cameroon Vision 2035, the aim of which is to foster an “emerging, democratic and united country in diversity”. To achieve this vision, the Government has designed a development strategy covering the decade from 2010 to 2020, the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper.

UNDP, which has been present in Cameroon since 1972, accompanies the Government of Cameroon in the areas of governance and strategic State management, poverty alleviation and the promotion of growth and employment, environmental management and improving the population’s resilience to the effects of climate change, as well reducing its vulnerability to crises. The evaluation found that between 2008 and 2012, UNDP helped strengthen the capacity of several governance institutions and, through 2016, had supported pilot initiatives to improve the quality of services. However, in the absence of a plan for scaling-up these pilots, there is a risk they will remain marginal and short-lived. With regard to inclusive public policies, the evaluation noted an increased understanding of the challenges in addressing cross-cutting themes and the expectations of vulnerable groups. However, at the time of the evaluation, no sectoral strategies or local development plans had been adapted to better integrate these perspectives. In the poverty reduction portfolio, UNDP assisted the Government to create centres for listening, orientation, advice and guidance, called CEOCA (the French acronym), a pertinent and promising programme of development assistance for economic, social and community activities in rural areas. In the field of environment and climate change, the evaluation observed that UNDP had helped to improve knowledge about environmental phenomena and

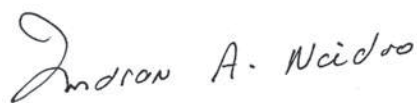
had assisted in developing a regulatory framework for the environment and the fight against climate change. UNDP also assisted in the dissemination of good agro-sylvo-pastoral practices amongst rural communities in the Sahel zone. With regard to crisis prevention and response, UNDP's approach shifted over the period under examination, initially focusing on responses to crises (particularly natural crises) and then adopting the concept of resilience. Since 2014, UNDP has supported initiatives that seek to strengthen social cohesion, prevent conflict and establish a framework for early recovery in the Far North region, which have yielded concrete results.

The evaluation concluded that UNDP interventions respond to Cameroon's development priorities and that UNDP had introduced innovative ideas, but that its efforts had not resulted in significant changes in development conditions. The evaluation observed that UNDP is perceived as upholding values related to gender mainstreaming and integrating the concerns of vulnerable groups, but that its strategic positioning with respect to its partners could be improved. UNDP has shown that it is responsive to changes in context, although a lack of resources and efficiency had an impact on results.

The evaluation recommends that in the future, UNDP should concentrate to a greater extent on

results, strengthen its strategic positioning and cultivate its image. The evaluation team encourages UNDP to consider refocusing its work in the governance thematic area. It also recommends that UNDP continue to concentrate its efforts on the poorest and most vulnerable communities in the country, while at the same time maintaining a balance between upstream and downstream interventions. In addition, UNDP should continue to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, update its partnership and resource mobilization strategy, and continue its positive trajectory of improving the monitoring and evaluation of its programme, focusing on outcome-level change.

The Independent Evaluation Office sincerely hopes that the results of this evaluation will help strengthen UNDP's support to the Government of Cameroon and other national partners in the area of human development, contribute to the development of the next country programme, and feed into broader discussions within the organization on its role in an ever-changing world.



Indran A. Naidoo  
Director  
Independent Evaluation Office



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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AAP	Africa Adaptation Programme
ADR	Assessment of Development Results
ANEMCAM	National Association of Microfinance Establishments in Cameroon
CEOCA	Centres for Listening, Orientation, Advice and Guidance
CFA	African Financial Community currency
CFCE	Business creation centres
CHOC	Change Habits, Oppose Corruption project
CONAC	National Anti-Corruption Commission
CPAP	Country Programme Action Plan
CPD	Country Programme Document
EIFORCES	International School for the Security Forces
ELECAM	Elections Cameroon
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GESP	Growth and Employment Strategy Paper
GRES	Gender Results Effectiveness Scale
HACT	Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
LDP	Local Development Plan
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MINATD	Ministry for Territorial Administration and Decentralization
MINEPAT	Ministry for the Economy, Planning and Territorial Development
MINEPDED	Ministry for the Environment, the Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development
MINJEC	Ministry for Youth and Civic Education
NHDR	National Human Development Report
NIM	National implementation modality
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PAAQSU	Support Programme for the Improvement of Public Services
PADMIR	Rural Microfinance Development Support Project
PNACC	National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change
PRINCES	Programme for Economic and Social Inclusion
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RADEC	Cameroon Economic Development Report
REPECC	Resilience of Populations Facing the Effects of Climate Change
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises

SPRPB	Sub-programme for the Reduction of Poverty at the Grassroots
TRAC	Target for Resource Assignment from the Core
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNV	United Nations Volunteers

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) carried out an Assessment of Development Results (ADR) in Cameroon in 2016. The ADR covers the period between 2008 and mid-2016, namely the entire 2008-2012 programme cycle and three and a half years of the current 2013-2017 cycle.

The evaluation consists of two main parts: firstly, the ADR analysed the effectiveness of the UNDP contribution to development results in Cameroon by thematic area. Particular attention was given during this analysis to alignment with UNDP's global vision for the eradication of poverty and contributions to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Secondly, the ADR reviewed the quality of the UNDP contribution using the criteria relevance, efficiency and sustainability. In addition, the strategic positioning of UNDP in Cameroon was analysed from the perspective of the organization's mandate, the country's recognized or emerging needs and its national development priorities.

The evaluation used a number of data collection methods and approaches, notably a wide-ranging literature review, interviews with central, regional and local authority representatives, civil society, United Nations agencies and development agencies, donors and country programme beneficiaries (men and women), as well as field visits. The field visits provided an opportunity to directly observe the achievements of some projects as well as to conduct semi-structured interviews with local authorities and the beneficiaries of UNDP-supported interventions. The evaluation team consisted of two evaluation experts from the IEO, an international governance expert, a national local development expert and a national gender expert, and benefited from the support of two research assistants.

The main conclusions of the evaluation are as follows:

**Conclusion 1. UNDP interventions within the framework of the 2008-2012 and 2013-2017 country programmes are in line with Cameroon's development priorities. UNDP contributed innovative ideas and helped to develop knowledge by supporting diagnoses and analyses at both the strategic and local level. However, despite sharpening the focus of the country programme from 2013, UNDP's efforts suffer from poor capitalization of lessons learned and, at the time of the evaluation, few lasting or profound changes had occurred as a result of the programme.**

By working on the subjects of inclusion, governance, poverty alleviation, resilience and sustainable development, as well as more recently on a rapid response to the crisis caused by Boko Haram, UNDP has positioned itself with respect to major challenges facing the country. From a strategic perspective, UNDP has contributed to the development of national strategies and plans in various areas as well as tools for analysis, planning and monitoring, and new knowledge. At the local level, thanks to support from UNDP, certain groups have been able to increase their income and strengthen their resilience to erratic climate conditions. The CEOCA is a promising model.

Over the period under review, UNDP made efforts to improve the focus of its programme. The 2008-2012 Country Programme Document (CPD) and the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) identified seven expected outcomes, whereas the 2013-2017 CPAP narrowed its scope to four outcomes. In addition, the thematic approach of the second programme has been accompanied by a geographic concentration in the field, in the Far North. During the implementation of the 2013-2017 programme, with

the escalation of the security and humanitarian crisis, UNDP's actions have been further redirected to strengthen their work in the Far North.

Nevertheless, most of the results of UNDP support are relatively intangible. Over the period under evaluation, progress in terms of the political participation of social groups in situations of vulnerability and the integration of their needs as well as gender or cross-cutting problems (the environment, HIV/AIDS) in plans, policies and sectoral strategies remained marginal. Implementation of the national anti-corruption strategy is still a challenge. The results of the rapid-results initiatives launched within the framework of the anti-corruption programme have not been sustained. The programme to improve public services supported the development and validation of a quality standard for public services; this is an important step, but one which has not yet been disseminated. The programme for poverty reduction at the grassroots (SPRPB) has not fully implemented its strategy of structuring profitable commodity chains, as outlined in the programme document. Disaster response plans ('ORSEC' plans) have been drawn up in a participatory manner, but only in two municipalities, and simulation exercises still have to be organized. Certain agro-sylvo-pastoral practices have been introduced into pilot communities but have yet to be disseminated more widely. The time allotted for the implementation of the CPAP (until the end of 2017) is unlikely to be sufficient to allow all planned activities to be implemented and evaluated, to distil lessons learned and disseminate this learning to a critical mass, in order to generate significant change. Pilot projects risk becoming a goal in and of themselves, whereas in the programme logic they represent just one stage, the purpose being to promote their results in order to secure development on a larger scale.

**Conclusion 2. The strategic positioning of UNDP with regard to its development partners could be considerably improved. Many partners currently see UNDP as just another donor, meaning that it tends to be judged on the amount of funding it makes available to**

**the country. During the refocusing of its programme in 2012, UNDP was timid in its choices in the area of governance.**

UNDP is perceived as defending values relating to gender equality and the needs of vulnerable groups. This is an added value that is recognized by most of those interviewed. At the same time, UNDP is generally seen as just another donor, meaning it tends to be judged on the amount of funding it makes available to the country. As UNDP has been unable to counter this perception and has not adequately cultivated its image, the organization lacks visibility in the development landscape of Cameroon.

At the end of the first programme (2008-2012), UNDP analysed the lessons learned from that period of cooperation, and recognized that going forward it had to focus on some key results, taking into account national priorities, available resources and its comparative advantages. Thus, for a number of subjects addressed during the first programme cycle in the area of governance (promoting human rights, electoral process, fighting corruption), the analysis showed there was a certain withdrawal by UNDP. Choosing to focus on improving public services can be considered relevant when evaluated in terms of management considerations and the efficiency of the action. However, if it is evaluated in terms of UNDP's strategic positioning, the thematic areas of the global UNDP Strategic Plan and those of the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP), namely improving governance and strategic State management, this choice can be considered to be lacking boldness.

**Conclusion 3. UNDP is responsive to changes in context. Focusing its work since 2013 on the poorest regions in the north of the country and the introduction of early recovery programmes in 2014 are judicious choices. However, this refocusing of the programme has not been accompanied by an increased presence in the region, and UNDP strategic planning procedures limit its capacity to adapt quickly in an unstable context.**

UNDP has responded to the emerging crisis in the Far North with new rapid-response programmes, adapting its ongoing programmes in order to work in the communities most affected by the conflict and strengthening its own human resources. At the time of the evaluation, it was too early to assess the effectiveness of the new actions, but the stakeholders interviewed appreciated the early recovery approach as well as the commitment to the most vulnerable communities. However, this refocusing of the programme has not been accompanied by an increased presence in the region, with the exception of the staff of the rapid-response projects, who are not authorized to carry out any monitoring or coordination outside of these projects. The other UNDP staff and the technical advisers for the main programmes are based in the capital. The lack of clarity on the procedures for revising the country programme in order to better respond to the new context and the requests from the Government generated delays in the planning and designing of annual work plans in 2016.

**Conclusion 4. The lack of resources and the inefficiency of the country programme have had consequences on results.**

UNDP is strongly dependent on a limited number of sources of funding. By far its most important financial partner since 2011 is Japan: between 2011 and 2015, 46 percent of total expenditure came from UNDP core resources with Japanese funding providing 37 percent. A number of constraints relating to the mobilization of resources were identified during the evaluation (the general environment for development aid, global economic crises, the fact that as a middle-income country, Cameroon is not a priority for traditional donor countries). In 2013, UNDP developed a resource mobilization strategy, which has yet to show any notable results.

The Government of Cameroon, the second largest financial partner of the country programme, provided 10 percent of total programme resources between 2008 and 2012, but less than 1 percent between 2013 and 2015, and this despite the fact

that the 2013–2017 CPAP envisaged a government contribution of approximately one-third of total expected resources. Even when taking the form of Government ‘counterpart’ funding (allocated to interventions supported by UNDP but not paid directly into UNDP’s bank account), this sum was weakly mobilized (other than for the SPRPB). Thus, a number of planned activities were not implemented. UNDP did not adapt its strategy in light of the uncertainties weighing on its mobilization of resources.

UNDP did not use its limited resources in an efficient manner. Despite the refocusing of its programme for the 2013–2017 period, with a reduction in the number of outcomes and greater geographic concentration, the programme was characterized by very long preparation phases, delays in signing off annual work plans and disproportionate programme management costs. Operating expenses for the main interventions since 2013 represent almost half of total spending. The national implementation modality (NIM) as applied in Cameroon, where UNDP does not advance funds to the Government, means that UNDP programme managers spend a disproportionate amount of their time on management tasks, rather than on substantive work and the development of strategic partnerships.

**Conclusion 5. UNDP focuses on women and vulnerable groups in all its programme documents, and ensures their participation in the activities it supports. While some of its work seeks to achieve transformative changes, the approach tends to be ‘gender targeted’, or focused on the ratio of men to women, rather than on addressing men’s and women’s differential needs throughout its interventions, or by seeking to bring about in-depth changes in the norms or the structures of power.**

UNDP is implementing a specific programme seeking to improve integration of the needs of women and other vulnerable groups in its development plans, policies and strategies, which in time could produce transformative results. In addition, it ensures that the gender dimension

and other types of vulnerability are integrated into almost all programme documents, project documents and the terms of reference for specific activities or outcomes. During the diagnoses and baseline evaluations, women and members of other vulnerable groups were consulted. However, subsequent stages did not always take into account the specific needs of women or other groups. For example, during the development of the communication strategy for climate change adaptation, women were consulted but the strategy that was adopted did not include reference to the communication channels that they use, nor a method for formulating messages in order to increase their participation. Within the context of the ongoing programme, the funding of micro-enterprises or income-generating activities has not reached as many women as men. The construction of livestock markets has particularly benefited livestock farmers, most of whom are men.

**Conclusion 6. During the period covered by the evaluation, UNDP made a great deal of progress in monitoring and evaluation, but monitoring is mainly focused on implementation and the use of budgets, and not on progress towards outcomes. Monitoring in the field remains inadequate, particularly in a context of armed conflict and uncertainty.**

The country office has made great progress in the area of monitoring and reporting, particularly since the start of the current programme. Monitoring in the Atlas management system is detailed, with regular updates covering risks and problems and the application of quality criteria. The country office regularly organizes monitoring meetings. However, this monitoring focuses on technical and financial execution, rather than on an overall analysis and the relationship between actual and expected outcomes. The indicators mainly concentrate on the former and provide little information on the latter. Field visits, other than visits by the Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative and those of the rapid recovery team (based in the Far North), are rare. The context of the area where the interventions take place is very different to that of the capi-

tal and is in constant evolution as a result of the conflicts, which means that careful monitoring is required in order to ensure the relevance of the interventions in the long term. This monitoring is also necessary to ensure that the interventions encourage inclusion and do not inadvertently contribute to exclusion.

The ADR formulates the following recommendations:

**Recommendation 1. UNDP should concentrate more on results, strengthen its strategic positioning and cultivate its image. To achieve this, it should identify a limited number of areas where, given its mandate or its experience, it has comparative advantages. It should then define ambitious yet realistic outcomes and design and implement interventions, while at the same time achieving a good balance between targeted actions that are likely to rapidly produce concrete results, and interventions that address deeper problems. It must communicate on its positioning and its role.**

UNDP must draw on the values of the United Nations, its institutional assets, its experience and its capacities to make strategic choices for its new country programme. Given its very limited resources, UNDP should limit its efforts to a few areas of intervention where it can really make a difference or where it has a clear comparative advantage. It should seek to capitalize on the lessons and results of past experiences, but without hesitating to change direction when previous actions have not produced real changes.

Once the areas of intervention have been identified, UNDP should find a balance between those that can produce fast and visible results, and the longer-term work needed to ensure the sustainability of their outcomes. In parallel, UNDP should design its programme so as to be able to implement its interventions from start-to-end and obtain real results within the initial budget, independently of any eventual additional resources which may allow existing efforts to be developed or completed or other initia-



tives to be implemented. While recognizing the importance of an in-depth analysis, UNDP should focus on the essential knowledge needed to guide its interventions, and then should concentrate on action, experimentation, obtaining and disseminating outcomes as well as on advocacy work. In an uncertain context, UNDP should be agile and responsive while remaining attentive to progress towards outcomes, and continuing its advocacy so that its efforts lead to outcome-level change.

Once the main themes of the new programmes have been clearly outlined, UNDP should actively communicate its positioning. UNDP will never have an advantage in terms of resources, which is why it must adopt another position and clearly communicate it. It must cultivate its specificity and distinguish itself from other technical and financial partners. It must promote its role as an institution working for the universal values of peace, the rule of law, national cohesion and sustainable development. It must remain focused on reducing poverty and inequality and communicate about these efforts. By focusing on rapid results, it can then publicize these results and the lessons learned, in order to highlight its role, which is to act as a catalyst, a facilitator and a guide, and not as a donor or an implementing agency. Once this has been achieved, this role can develop into one of observation, advocacy, and national capacity-building, facilitating development cooperation between the country and donors and with other countries (South-South cooperation). Lastly, UNDP must strengthen its coordinating role, in the capital as well as in the Far North region.

***Management Response:** UNDP recognizes the relevance of this recommendation and had already taken action, notably through the revision of the results framework of the current cooperation cycle (2013–2017) and the formulation of the 2018–2020 CPD. This allowed the programme to be structured and geographically refocused, with the planning of objectives and concrete and realistic outcomes taking into account the trend for a reduction in regular resources.*

*In addition, UNDP intends to carry out specific communications actions to improve the visibility of its results and interventions.*

**Recommendation 2. UNDP must consider reinvesting in the subjects that have been identified as the greatest challenges facing the country and where, as a result of its neutrality as well as its experience internationally and in Cameroon, it has a comparative advantage: strengthening democratic processes and the rule of law.**

During its discussions on the strategic orientations of the new country programme, UNDP must think very carefully about its role, its experience in the area of democratic governance as well as possible linkages to sustainable development and resilience, within the new global framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and notably SDG 16 (peace, justice and efficient institutions) and its specific experience in Cameroon. It must strive to capitalize on the results achieved in the areas of promoting the rule of law, the fight against corruption, strengthening the democratic process (electoral process, role of Parliament and other counterweight institutions, strengthening civil society), support for strategic State management (planning and monitoring at the global, sectoral, regional and local level) as well as crisis prevention and response.

UNDP's capacity to work in an interdisciplinary manner and its experience in the areas of environment management and resilience to climate change and conflicts (interrelated challenges which mutually exacerbate each other in the northernmost regions of the country) also give it a comparative advantage, on which it can draw when developing its new programme.

***Management Response:** UNDP accepts this recommendation and will undertake discussions internally, with the Government and with its key partners in the areas of governance and the rule of law.*

**Recommendation 3. UNDP should continue to concentrate its efforts on the poorest and most vulnerable municipalities in the coun-**

**try, while striking a balance between upstream interventions (of a political or strategic nature) and downstream work (with target populations). It should avoid becoming confined to the role of an implementing agency for rapid recovery projects.**

It is an appropriate choice for the current programme to concentrate on the Far North, which is by far the poorest and most vulnerable region in the country, in that it allows the work of UNDP to have a greater impact on the reduction of inequalities and to benefit the most disadvantaged. In addition, this choice allows UNDP to address the question of youth from this region who are turning towards radicalization and terrorism, a phenomenon that is in the process of becoming one of the greatest challenges for the country and the wider region. Geographical concentration also enhances efficiency, synergies and the visibility of results. This choice should be maintained in the next country programme.

UNDP can also play a more important role in the coordination of interventions in the Far North region. It should ensure that its forthcoming interventions and those of other partners can capitalize on the learning that has already been acquired, in part by disseminating studies and analyses performed as part of the current country programme.

However, and particularly if it proves to be easier to mobilize resources for crisis-response projects rather than for other types of work, UNDP must ensure that it does not become confined to a role of an implementing agency for rapid-response projects. It must maintain a presence in the Far North, in order to act and understand, but also to learn and advocate with the national authorities and partners.

In addition, it must recognize that choosing to focus its actions on the poorest regions may not be optimal for the development of scaled-up models at a national level, because the most advanced models may not be adapted to the most

disadvantaged regions. Resources permitting, and in order to continue to position itself as an actor working to reduce inequalities while being at the vanguard of innovative experiments, UNDP could, in certain cases, consider working in two regions with different profiles: one very poor region and another region where the poverty level was lower, in order to gather learning for advocacy and scaling-up.

***Management Response:** UNDP accepts this recommendation and will ensure that there is a balance between the downstream concerns of the most vulnerable whilst maintaining its advisory role towards the Government on the strategic plan at the central level.*

**Recommendation 4. UNDP should continue to work to reduce gender inequalities and promote the empowerment of women, as well as the reduction of other forms of inequality and exclusion. The participation of vulnerable groups and consideration of their needs must be integrated into all programmes. A separate programme addressing cross-cutting issues is not recommended. The country office must strengthen its gender expertise and strive to satisfy the Gender Equality Seal benchmarks.**

UNDP must continue to focus on reducing inequalities and exclusion, by drawing on the framework of the SDGs and the global commitment that there will be “no one left behind”. However, in light of the experience of the PRINCES programme and the lack of concrete results, UNDP should ensure that gender and other cross-cutting issues are included in all interventions, so that they play their part in strengthening the participation of the most vulnerable and reducing gender inequalities. UNDP efforts must go beyond consultations with women and representatives of vulnerable groups during analyses and baseline studies. Activities and interventions must address the specific needs of these groups. The country office must strengthen its internal expertise. If it is not possible to employ a specialist in this area, the country office must look for other solutions. It could envisage contracting a consultant on a long-term agreement to pro-

vide support to fill in gaps over time, but working part-time and only at key periods. The office should seek to comply with the UNDP Gender Equality Seal benchmarks.

*Management Response:* UNDP recognizes the relevance of this recommendation and has already placed emphasis on the systematic incorporation of gender issues and other cross-cutting concerns in order to reduce gender inequalities during the revision of the results framework for the current cooperation cycle (2012–2017) and the formulation of the 2018–2020 CPD.

**Recommendation 5. UNDP should update its partnership and resource mobilization strategy. It should also strengthen its advocacy with the Government in order to increase the national contribution to the country programme, reminding the Government that the 2013–2017 CPAP envisaged a contribution matching that of UNDP; if this is not possible, UNDP should clearly outline what it can and cannot finance. At the same time, UNDP should take measures to improve its efficiency and direct its resources towards priority programme activities.**

In collaboration with the Government, UNDP must explore new financing opportunities and partnerships, such as the new climate funds. It can facilitate consultations in the form of round tables with donors on the reconstruction of the Far North. An initiative like this could be taken at the level of the country itself or within a cross-border approach bringing together the affected regions in Nigeria, Chad and Niger.

UNDP must also work closely with the Government to mobilize a national contribution to the country programme, drawing on the notion that the “government cost-sharing ... strengthens national ownership as well as contributes to the achievement of country programmes”.<sup>1</sup> UNDP could experiment with a ‘sliding’ planning schedule, where the planning of activities for a given

year takes place in the second half of the previous year, in order to allow enough time for advocacy with the authorities and to take these activities into account in budget decisions. With regard to its own resources, UNDP should clearly determine what it can or cannot finance, limiting its investments to the most relevant interventions that are the most likely to contribute to achieving the expected outcomes detailed in the Country Programme Document.

UNDP should rationalize programme management costs as far as possible, for example by limiting the number of chief technical advisers. It should also look for innovative solutions to reduce the administrative tasks of programme managers so that they can dedicate more of their time to core matters.

*Management Response:* UNDP takes note of this recommendation and actions have already been carried out, notably the updating of the partnership and resource mobilization for 2017. In addition, the office is continuing to lobby for the mobilization and transfer of contributions from the Government for the implementation of cooperation programmes.

**Recommendation 6. UNDP should strengthen its monitoring and evaluation activities, placing the accent on the changes brought about by these activities, as well as on the progress made in achieving the intended outcomes. UNDP should also structure its office according to the geographic concentration of its programming, allocating more staff to the Far North to strengthen coordination and monitoring.**

UNDP should pursue its positive trajectory of improving the monitoring and evaluation of its programme. Monitoring should not be limited to the use of budgets and the implementation of work plans, but should continually evaluate the relevance of interventions and the probability that they will generate tangible results. UNDP must develop and include relevant indicators in

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1 Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, and the United Nations Office for Project Services, Report by the Executive Board on its work in 2015 E/2015/35, p. 117/126.

its programme documents, but must also recognize their limits, and ensure real monitoring of changes resulting from the outputs produced. Indicators must also be gender-sensitive. UNDP must not hesitate to evaluate the effectiveness of its models in order to improve them or change its approach if necessary.

UNDP should strengthen its presence in the regions where its activities are concentrated, particularly in the Far North, in order to ensure close monitoring of its work, to consolidate potential synergies, to facilitate coordination and complementarity of its own interventions and those of other partners, to encourage local ownership,

efficiency and to strengthen its credibility. Monitoring in the field must be peace and conflict sensitive, taking into account the impact of armed conflict on programmes. It should also ensure that its programmes 'do no harm'. This enhanced monitoring will be even more important when UNDP's actions become less focused on analysis and stock-taking and more on concrete actions and achievements.

***Management Response:** Within the framework of the 2018–2020 cooperation programme, UNDP undertakes to strengthen its presence in the Far North, while taking into account the downward trend in regular resources.*

## Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducted an Assessment of Development Results (ADR) in Cameroon in 2016. Carried out in line with the provisions of the UNDP Evaluation Policy<sup>2</sup>, the ADR is an independent evaluation seeking to highlight and analyse the contribution of UNDP to development results as well as its strategic positioning within the country. The objectives of an ADR are to:

- support the development of the next UNDP Country Programme Document;
- strengthen UNDP accountability to its national partners and stakeholders;
- strengthen UNDP accountability to its Executive Board.

This first ADR in Cameroon was conducted in 2016, as the current country programme comes to an end in 2017. This evaluation provides elements for the preparation of a new country programme, which will be implemented from 2018 by the country office and the relevant national stakeholders. The ADR covers the period between 2008 and mid-2016, namely the entire 2008-2012 programme cycle and three and a half years of the current 2013-2017 cycle.

### 1.2 COUNTRY CONTEXT AND DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

The Republic of Cameroon is located in Central Africa, in the Gulf of Guinea. The country stretches from the Atlantic to Lake Chad and includes three major climate zones: the Equatorial Zone, the Sudanian Zone and the Sudano-Sahelian Zone. In 2014, the country had a population of nearly 22 million inhabitants. It is mostly young: 43 percent of Cameroonians are under 15 years old. The country comprises more than 240 tribes belonging to three main ethnic groups. Almost half the population live in urban areas. The biggest cities are Douala and Yaoundé.<sup>3</sup>

The country's economy has shown resilience in a regional setting that is subject to security and humanitarian crises, a global economic context marked by stagnation in the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries and the slowdown of growth in emerging economies.<sup>4</sup> However, growth only reached an average of 3.4 percent per year between 2000 and 2010, and 4.7 percent over the period from 2010 to 2014, which is well below the target of 5.5 percent set by the Government to raise Cameroon to the ranks of the emerging countries by 2035.

The country is also facing several major challenges. Since the beginning of this century, the percentage of the population living below the poverty line has decreased only slightly, from

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2 See the UNDP Evaluation policy: <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/policy.shtml>. The ADR will respect the Norms and Standards and the code of ethical conduct established by the United Nations Evaluation Group (<http://www.uneval.org>).

3 National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'National Report on the Millennium Development Goals in 2015', September 2015, p.17.

4 African Development Bank, African Economic Outlook, 2014: (<http://www.afdb.org/fr/countries/central-africa/cameroon/cameroon-economic-outlook>).

40.2 percent in 2001 to 39.9 percent in 2007, and 37.5 percent in 2014.<sup>5</sup> In addition, there are substantial social and economic inequalities between the various regions of the country and within its population. The poverty rate in rural areas rose from 52.1 percent in 2001 to 55 percent in 2007, and stood at 56.8 percent in 2014. Poverty has worsened in some regions, including in the Far North, the North and in Adamaoua, where record levels were registered in 2014 (74.3 percent, 67.9 percent and 47.1 percent<sup>6</sup> respectively). This worsening of inequalities is corroborated by the trends in the Gini coefficient, which measures inequality between various groups, and which rose from 0.39 in 2007 to 0.44 in 2014.<sup>7</sup>

Although the unemployment rate stood at just 3.84 percent in 2010, 90.5 percent of the active population was employed in the informal sector.<sup>8</sup> The youth unemployment rate (15-24 years) fell from 7.6 percent in 2005 to 6.4 percent in 2010. This apparently low rate nevertheless hides a chronic rate of under-employment (70.7 percent).<sup>9</sup> Unemployment is higher for young women than men. In addition, they are also more severely affected by underemployment than men.

With regard to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the national authorities believe that there is a favourable environment for achieving almost half of their targets by 2020.<sup>10</sup> In the

area of gender equality, Cameroon is ranked 132 out of 154 countries and territories in the Gender Inequality Index.<sup>11 12</sup>

The Far North of Cameroon is experiencing growing insecurity. The Boko Haram group attacks border villages, mounts ambushes with explosive devices on roads, while at the same time assassinating local leaders, carrying out acts of intimidation and stealing goods and livestock. In addition, the political crisis in the Central African Republic has generated the displacement of people into eastern Cameroon. The number of refugees in Cameroon from Nigeria and the Central African Republic stood at more than 331,000 in July 2016.<sup>13</sup>

In response to these challenges to the country's development, in 2009 the Government drew up Cameroon Vision 2035, the aim of which is to develop an "emerging, democratic country united in diversity". To achieve this vision, the Government has designed a development strategy covering the decade from 2010 to 2020, contained within the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP). The first years of implementation of the GESP did not produce the expected growth rates, and in 2014, the President of the Republic announced the implementation of three-year Emergency Plan for the Acceleration of Growth for 2015-2017.<sup>14</sup>

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5 National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'National Report on the Millennium Development Goals in 2015', September 2015, p.21.

6 National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'National Report on the Millennium Development Goals in 2015', September 2015, p.21.

7 National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'Presentation of Preliminary Results of the Fourth National Household Survey in Cameroon (ECAM 4) in 2014', October 2015, p.5.

8 National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'Survey on Employment and the Informal Sector', 2010, p.23.

9 National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'Second Survey on Employment and the Informal Sector (EESI2). Phase 1: Survey of Employment, Main Report', October 2011, p.23.

10 National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'National Report on the Millennium Development Goals in 2015', September 2015, p.47.

11 <http://hdr.undp.org/en/composite/GII>

12 More information on the country context is available in the Terms of Reference (Annex 1) and the Country Overview (Annex 2).

13 ECHO factsheet, [http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/cameroon\\_fr.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/echo/files/aid/countries/factsheets/cameroon_fr.pdf)

14 National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'National Report on the Millennium Development Goals in 2015', September 2015, pp.17-18.

### 1.3 UNDP IN CAMEROON

UNDP has been present in Cameroon since 10 September 1972. During the period covered by this ADR (2008-2016), UNDP carried out two programme cycles (2008-2012 and 2013-2017). The first cycle was part of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the same period, designed in response to the challenges and problems identified in the 2003 Poverty Strategy Reduction Paper (PRSP) prepared by the Government of Cameroon and its revised version of 2005. The assistance provided by UNDP for the period was based around three pillars: democratic governance; poverty reduction and achieving the MDGs; and energy and environment. The Country Programme Document (CPD) and the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) for 2008-2012 identified seven outcomes. In response to the launch of the GESP for 2010-2020 and a mid-term review of the country programme, UNDP modified these outcomes and reduced them from seven to four, while maintaining the three areas of intervention.

The 2013-2017 cycle takes into account discussions with national partners, as reflected in the 2013-2017 UNDAF, which follows on from the GESP. This second programme cycle includes three main pillars: support for the economy and the strategic management of the State; poverty alleviation and sustainable development; and support for governance as well as crisis prevention. The CPD identified five expected outcomes. The 2013-2017 CPAP preparation process then resulted in the identification of four main programmes, derived from the five outcomes of the CPD. These programmes correspond to the four outcomes of the CPAP, which are monitored in the UNDP management system, Atlas. In 2016, the country office started a revision of the country programme in terms of outputs in order to take into account the changing context as well as the responses provided by UNDP.

There is a certain continuity between the two programme periods. Key themes – poverty reduc-

tion and the inclusion of equity, gender and other cross-cutting issues in the development plans, policies and strategies – appear in both programmes. Similarly, improving governance, the management of environmental resources, resilience to the effects of climate change and natural disaster risk management exacerbated by the effects of climate change are to be found in both country programmes. However, there have been changes in the UNDP strategy: in the 2013-2017 CPAP, UNDP focused on a few key results and adopted a programmatic approach that sought to increase the impact of its interventions. The thematic focus – taking into account groups in situations of vulnerability, the resilience of populations, access to public services, employment and income – is complemented by a geographic focus, in the Far North.

Table 1 shows the relationship between the themes and the expected outcomes of the first programme (2008-2012) and those of the second programme (2013-2017). The country office has two programme units, Governance and Crisis Prevention and Sustainable Development, each of which manages programmes linked to two of the outcomes of the current country programme.

At the time of designing the 2008-2012 programme, the indicative resources required to achieve the expected outcomes was \$23.4 million, of which UNDP pledged to contribute \$7.9 million (TRAC). The Government was to provide \$3 million and the remaining \$12.5 million were to be mobilized. UNDP was able to mobilize more resources than expected: total spending between 2008 and 2012 reached \$33 million (\$14.9 million provided by UNDP, \$3 million from the Government and \$15.5 million from other partners, notably Japan). Annual spending stood at \$6.7 million.

The total funding pledged for the implementation of the 2013-2017 CPAP is \$30.5 million (an average of \$6.1 million per year). UNDP is committed to providing \$9.6 million and the Cameroon Government \$10.5 million, with the

remainder to be mobilized from donors.<sup>15</sup> After three years (2013–2015), total spending by the programme stands at \$11.7 million, an average of \$3.9 million per year. UNDP financed 61 per cent, the Government 1 per cent, Japan 20 per cent

and other partners provided 18 percent. For more information on the financing of the programme and the resource mobilization, see section 3.2 and Annex 3 (available online).

<b>Table 1. Programme outcomes<sup>16</sup> and indicative budgets</b>			
<b>2008-2012 Programme</b>		<b>2013-2017 Programme</b>	
<b>Country Programme Outcome</b>	<b>Indicative Budget (CPAP)</b>	<b>Country Programme Outcome</b>	<b>Indicative Budget (CPAP)</b>
<b>Theme: Democratic governance/Governance and strategic State management</b>			
Improved efficiency and transparency in State management	Regular resources: \$2,295,000	Improvement in political participation by vulnerable groups, and integration of their concerns, gender and cross-cutting issues (environment, HIV/AIDS) in sectoral plans, policies and strategies	Regular resources: \$2,200,000
Improved rule of law and strengthened respect for human rights	Other resources: \$4,575,000		Resources to be mobilized: \$1,400,000
Questions of equity and gender systematically taken into account in the formulation and implementation of policies, strategies and development programmes		Improvement in services provided to public service users	Regular resources: \$2,100,000
Decentralization process strengthened			Resources to be mobilized: \$2,500,000
<b>Themes: Poverty alleviation and the achievement of MDGs/Growth and employment</b>			
Achievement of the MDGs is increasing	Regular resources: \$3,850,000 Other resources: \$3,125,000	Improvement in income and access to basic socio-economic services for populations in the Sahel region	Regular resources: \$2,100,000
<b>Theme: Environment management</b>			
Efficient management of environmental and energy resources in order to protect said resources in compliance with the international climate change convention	Regular resources: \$1,700,000 Other resources: \$1,700,000	Improved resilience of populations to the effects of climate change	Regular resources: \$2,100,000 Resources to be mobilized: \$3,000,000
<b>Theme: Crisis prevention</b>			
Reduction of vulnerability to crises	Regular resources: \$100,000 Other resources: \$6,100,000		

15 UNDP, Resource Mobilization Strategy, Cameroon, July 2013, p.8.

16 The outcomes listed in the table are taken from the CPAP results and resources matrix. The narrative text of the 2008–2012 CPAP defines global objectives for each project component. For example, in terms of poverty alleviation, it states that “UNDP action in this area seeks to improve by 2012, at both the local and national level, the implementation and the monitoring/evaluation of macroeconomic and sectoral policies and programmes promoting development and poverty reduction through the creation and equitable distribution of wealth.” In the results matrix, the outcome is described thus: “The level of achievement of MDGs is increasing.” In the 2013–2017 CPAP, the outcomes listed in the matrix and in the body of the text are identical.



## 1.4 METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION

**Scope of the evaluation.** The ADR covers the period from 2008 to mid-2016, and particularly the UNDP country programmes approved by its Executive Board and defined in the CPD and the CPAP. During the evaluation, it became increasingly clear that, given the changes that had occurred in the national context and at the level of the UNDP country office, the lessons learned from the implementation of the current programme would be particularly relevant for the formulation of recommendations for the future. Therefore, data collection focused on the interventions of the current programme. The ADR looked particularly closely at the four main programmes of the current cycle, as well as certain interventions from the first cycle. It also looked at recent projects centred on crisis prevention and rapid recovery, which had not been planned at the time of writing the CPD and the CPAP. The ADR also took into account regional and global initiatives from UNDP that affect Cameroon, but this was mainly limited to a literature review. It also considered the contributions of the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) through a literature review and discussions with the programme coordinator. Annex 4, available online, gives a detailed list of the projects implemented between 2008 and 2015, with notes showing the type of data collected and analysed by the ADR.

**Evaluation process.** The evaluation manager and the associate evaluation manager from the IEO carried out a preparatory mission in Yaoundé in April 2016, as a result of which the terms of reference for the ADR were drawn up (Annex 1, available online). In order to complete the evaluation team, the IEO recruited an international governance expert and two national experts (a

local economic development specialist and a gender specialist). The evaluation manager and the three experts carried out a main data collection mission from 13 June to 1 July 2016.<sup>17</sup> At the end of the field mission, the preliminary observations and areas for reflection (initial recommendations) were shared with the country office during a meeting.<sup>18</sup> Subsequently, the team wrote a set of outcomes reports as well as a report on the gender dimensions of the programme. The findings and conclusions of each outcome report were then collated into the global ADR report.

The draft report was submitted to the IEO, then to the country office and the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa, as well as to an external reviewer<sup>19</sup> and lastly to the Government and other partners. This process allowed certain factual errors and inaccuracies to be corrected. On 2 March 2017, a workshop was organized in Yaoundé with the programme's main stakeholders, offering an additional opportunity to obtain comments and clarifications on the ADR report before it was finalized.

**Methodology.** The evaluation consists of two main parts: (1) analysis of UNDP's contribution to development results by themes/programmes and (2) evaluation of the quality of its contribution.

**UNDP contribution by thematic/programme areas.** An analysis was made of the effectiveness of UNDP's contribution to development results in Cameroon. **Effectiveness** means the extent to which an intervention achieved its development objectives, or the extent to which this objective can be expected to be achieved, given the observed results. For the main programmes, the implicit theory of change for the programme was

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17 One of the experts continued the interviews until 7 July.

18 A national ADR reference group, chaired by the Director-General of Cooperation and Regional Integration at MINEPAT, was formed, but the group was not able to meet during the main data collection mission. The evaluation team did however meet senior management from the Cooperation and Regional Integration Directorate at the beginning and end of the mission to discuss the data collection process and the preliminary observations of the evaluators.

19 Michael Dominique Carbon, Senior Evaluation Office, Independent Office of Evaluation of the International Fund for the Development of Agriculture.

constructed based on the programme documents. Then, the path towards the desired outcomes was traced, in order to assess results achieved at the time of the evaluation (June 2016) and to assess the probability of the outcomes being achieved before the end of the current programme. For the other programmes, the observed outcomes were compared with the objectives described in the programme documents.

The ADR took note of indicators, reference values and the targets of the results frameworks in the programme documents (see Annex 5, available online, for a full list), even if these indicators were not generally very useful for evaluating the UNDP contribution to achieving intended results. With regard to the programme for the 2008-2012 period, most of the indicators did not have a baseline or target value and were not included in the annual reports.<sup>20</sup> Other indicators measured impacts and their relationship with the UNDP contribution is weak.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, this type of information is useful for describing the context and its evolution. For the 2013-2017 programme, the indicators mainly referred to outputs and immediate outcomes. In the case of the outcome “improvement in the services provided to users of public services”, the indicators referred to the existence of minimum quality standards of public services, the publication every two years of a ranking of public services and the satisfaction level of their users. Certain outputs had been achieved, others are still pending. The baseline data and the data from 2015 on user satisfaction rates come from different sources and are not comparable. Thus, certain indicators of the 2013-2017 programme are useful for evaluating progress towards the achievement of

expected outputs, but provide little information on changes in terms of outcomes.

The examination of effectiveness included an analysis of the contribution of UNDP Cameroon to the reduction of poverty and inequality, as well as the advancement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. With regard to the contribution to gender equality, for each identified result, the ADR applied a Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES).<sup>22</sup> This scale was used to organize the results obtained with the support of UNDP into five categories: gender negative (when the result obtained has had negative repercussions on gender equality); gender blind (when the result does not take gender into account), gender targeted (when particular attention is paid to the number of women, men or marginalized groups); gender responsive (when the result respects the different needs of men and women as well as offering an equitable distribution of advantages, resources, status and rights, etc.); or gender transformative (when the result contributes to changes in norms, cultural values, power structures and the roots of gender inequality and discrimination). The categorization of results according to the GRES scale was carried out jointly by the team member in charge of the theme area and the evaluation manager.

**The quality of UNDP’s contribution.** The ADR assessed the quality of the UNDP contribution using the criteria of relevance, efficiency and sustainability. The analysis of **relevance** included an analysis of context, a review of strategy and national policy documents, an analysis of UNDP strategies and interventions, and interviews with stakeholders. The analysis of **efficiency** was pri-

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20 This is the case, for example, for the increase in public resources allocated to equity and gender equality issues, the increase in the percentage of the population who felt that the elections organized in 2007 and 2012 were fair and transparent, the improvement in the quality of information communicated to citizens by the executive, legislative, judicial powers and the media between 2007 and 2012, or the increase in the number of stakeholders with the capacities to sustainably manage the environment based on environmental data.

21 For example, the rural poverty rate (indicator for which new data is not often available) or the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) from Transparency International.

22 Gender Results Effectiveness Scale (GRES). See UNDP Independent Evaluation Office, ‘Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, August 2015, chapter 5 (<http://web.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/thematic/gender.shtml>).

marily based on the data available in the UNDP management system (Atlas), programme and project documents and on annual work plans. In order to analyse **sustainability**, the evaluation looked for evidence of sustainably strengthened capacity, and in the case of current programmes, it estimated the probability of real changes taking place should UNDP cease to provide support.

Next, the strategic positioning of UNDP in Cameroon was analysed through the perspective of the organization's mandate, the country's recognized or emerging needs and its national development priorities. This notably included examining UNDP positioning with regard to country development policies, as well as strategies for maximizing its contribution.

The triangulation of the elements below is at the heart of the methodology adopted for this evaluation:

- Document review including programme documents, documents and reports on projects or programmes produced by UNDP and the Government of Cameroon, UNDP institutional documents (strategic plan, multi-year funding plans, annual results-based reports, etc.), published research and publications about the country. The Cameroon country office had conducted 15 evaluations since 2009, including a mid-term review in 2015 of the four programmes corresponding to the four outcomes of the current country programme. These evaluations were a precious source of information for the ADR. The main documents consulted are listed in Annex 9, available online.
- Face-to-face and telephone interviews held with representatives from the national, regional and local authorities, civil society, United Nations agencies and development agencies, donors and beneficiaries (men and women) of the country programme, in order to gather their opinion on all of the questions

addressed by the ADR, including services provided by UNDP, the implementation of projects and programmes and their impact (strengths, weaknesses and funding). More than 140 people were consulted and many groups of beneficiaries were interviewed in the field (see the list in Annex 8, available online).

- Field visits which allowed direct observation of the achievements of some projects as well as semi-structured interviews with local authorities and the beneficiaries of interventions supported by UNDP. The team visited a sample of sites in the regions of the Far North (the town of Maroua, and the municipalities of Mokolo, Mora, Maga and Touloum) and the North (the town of Garoua and the municipality of Pitoa) where UNDP has concentrated its action, particularly since 2013. It also visited two sites in the vicinity of Yaoundé. During the preparatory mission, the associate evaluation manager also visited the Douala Business Creation Centre.

In general, the ADR was carried out under good conditions. However, the evaluation team had some difficulties in obtaining certain appointments within the required time, as well as receiving information and documents in order to carry out its analysis. Documentation relating to the interventions of the first programme cycle was scarce, other than the project documents, and institutional memory was limited.

Most of UNDP's projects and programmes in Cameroon have a local or community component and mainly concern the Far North region, with some interventions in the North and to the east, near the border with Central African Republic. Given the travel and time constraints,<sup>23</sup> the ADR chose to focus its field visits on the Far North. This region is classified as Zone 3 (moderate risk) by the UN Department of Safety and Security, with the exception of a 15-kilometre section along the Nigerian border, which is a

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23 For example, there are only three flights per week between the capital and Maroua, capital of the Far North region.

Zone 4 (high risk) area. The evaluation team was strongly encouraged to overnight in the town of Maroua and had a military escort to certain sites. For security reasons, visits outside of Maroua were limited to towns, restricting the choice of sites and beneficiaries to visit. In addition, travel between Maroua and the chosen sites shortened the time available for interviews and meetings, limiting the possibility of meeting beneficiaries or organizing spontaneous interviews to examine certain questions in greater depth. A vehicle breakdown resulted in the cancellation of a series of visits to the village of Moulvoudaye, which explains the limited number of end beneficiaries of UNDP interventions interviewed by the evaluation team. As the team was unable to interview many women beneficiaries or representatives of other vulnerable groups (other than many groups of beneficiaries of the rapid-response project), it was difficult to determine whether the participation in the interventions by women or other vulnerable people had strengthened their empowerment or the advancement of equality, meaning that the GRES analyses may lack certain nuances. However, the field visits did allow the evaluators to compare the information con-

tained in the reports and the opinions expressed during interviews at the central level with the realities of actors in the most northerly regions.

## 1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE REPORT

This report consists of five chapters. The second chapter, which follows the executive summary and this first introductory chapter, analyses the UNDP contribution to development results (effectiveness). The third chapter examines the quality of this contribution (relevance, efficiency and sustainability). The fourth chapter analyses the strategic positioning of UNDP in Cameroon and looks at cross-cutting issues. The fifth chapter draws the main conclusions of the evaluation team and formulates recommendations. This chapter also includes the management response to the evaluation, prepared by the UNDP country office. Lastly, this report is completed by annexes that include the terms of reference of the evaluation, an overview of the country, an overview of the country office, a list of projects, the programme results framework and its indicators, the list of persons interviewed and the list of the main documents consulted.<sup>24</sup>

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24 The annexes are available online at <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/detail/8283>.

## Chapter 2

# UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

This chapter examines the UNDP contribution to development results in Cameroon between 2008 and mid-2016, in the areas of governance (capacities of governance institutions and inclusive public policies), poverty alleviation, the environment, climate change and crisis prevention. This analysis of UNDP's effectiveness seeks to respond to the fundamental question of the evaluation, namely: what contribution did UNDP make to the expected outcomes listed in its country programme documents?

### 2.1 GOVERNANCE: INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITIES

**2008-2012 outcomes:** Improved efficiency and transparency in State management/improved rule of law and strengthened observance of human rights/strengthened decentralization process

**2013-2017 outcome:** Improvement in services provided to public service users

#### 2.1.1 THE EXPECTED OUTCOME AND UNDP'S STRATEGY

**Context.** In Cameroon, the National Governance Programme for the 2006-2010 period preceded the preparation of Cameroon Vision 2035 and the GESP. The aim of this programme was to favour good governance, founded on the strengthening of the rule of law and improved institutional efficiency, good management of public resources and the participation of the population in public life. It was structured around the following six themes: (i) administrative reform; (ii) modernization of justice; (iii) improved economic and financial management; (iv) capacity-building

of parliamentary institutions; (v) modernization of the framework for decentralization and deconcentration; and, (vi) fight against corruption.

Drawn up in 2009, Cameroon Vision 2035 sees the country as an “emerging, democratic and united country in diversity”. This political vision must be analysed from the perspective of the participation of citizens in public life, through the strengthening of the decentralization process and the participation of all social groups. According to the GESP, two major objectives underpin the improvement of governance and strategic State management. The first seeks to guarantee greater respect for individual rights and civil liberties for all. The second seeks to strengthen good governance, notably by fighting against corruption, improving the quality of services, and information and monitoring of the same by civil society.

**UNDP strategy.** According to the 2008-2012 CPD, the UNDP intervention strategy was to support the strengthening of democratic governance within the context of the National Governance Programme, more specifically by (i) encouraging more transparent management, through the anti-corruption project “Change Habits, Oppose Corruption” or CHOC; (ii) continuing efforts towards electoral reform; (iii) capacity-building of the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms; and (iv) capacity-building of local authorities to implement development plans and plans to fight HIV/AIDS at the municipal level.<sup>25</sup>

Analysis of the implementation of the 2008-2012 CPD showed that, to increase the impact of its interventions, UNDP needed to focus on

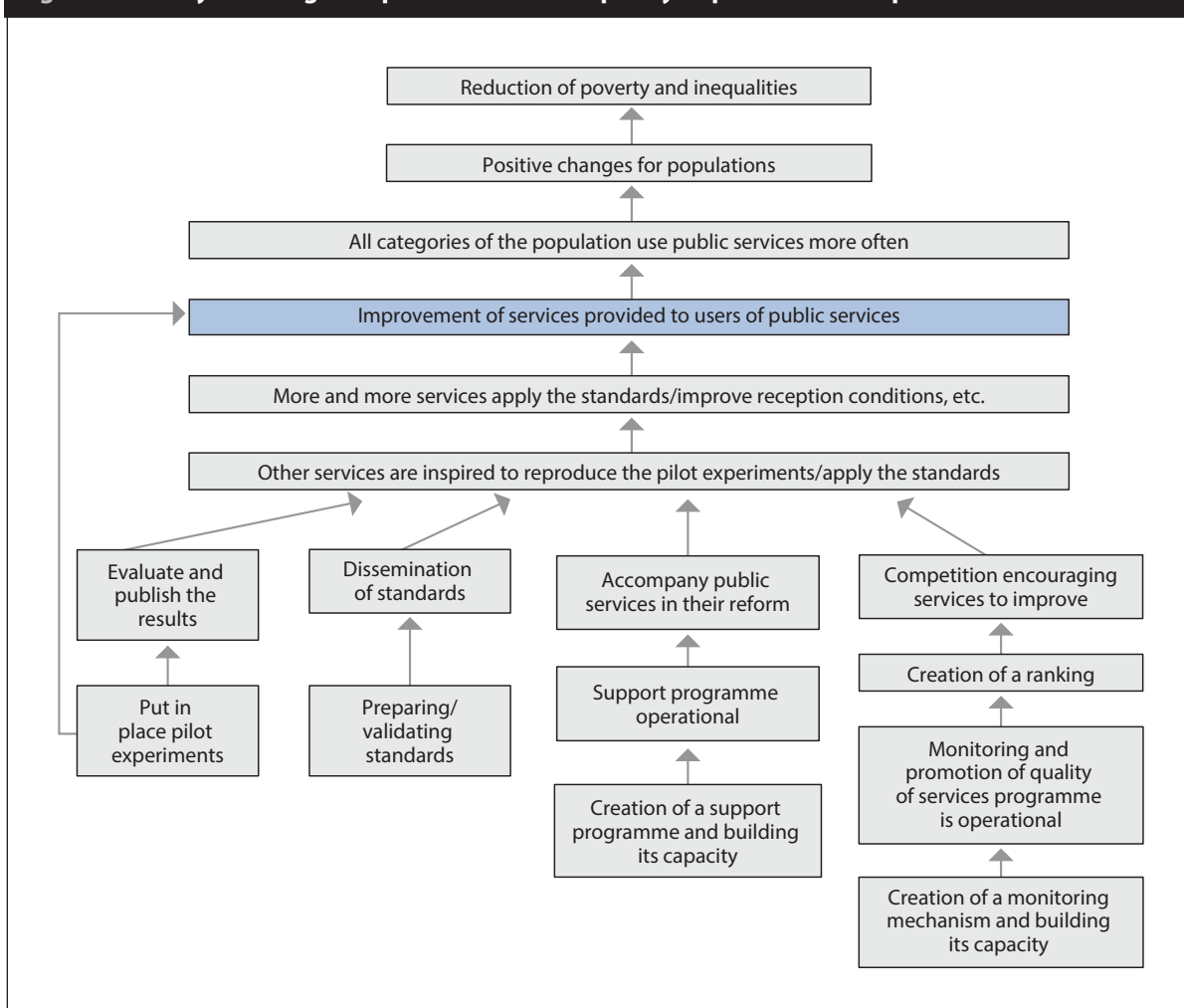
<sup>25</sup> The ADR did not examine the HIV/AIDS programme in detail.

some key results, determined by national priorities, available resources and its comparative advantages. Thus, the 2013-2017 programme focused on the improvement of the quality of services provided to users of public services (PAAQSU). The intervention logic consisted of: (i) defining minimum standards that should be met by public services; (ii) periodic evaluation of their application through a ranking accompanied by awards; (iii) the implementation of measures to help them reach the standards; and (iv) applying a quality approach to five pilot services before defining a development strategy on a larger scale. The theory of change underpinning the 2013-2017 programme strategy is shown in Figure 1.

## 2.1.2 RESULTS OBTAINED WITH THE SUPPORT OF UNDP AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE OUTCOME

**During the first programme cycle (2008-2012), UNDP contributed to strengthened capacity of a number of governance institutions, including Elections Cameroon (ELECAM), the National Anti-Corruption Commission (CONAC) and the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms. UNDP helped to build the capacity of civil society and to draw up draft normative or strategic frameworks. Despite the absence of indicators and data, it can be said that UNDP played a modest role in consolidating the rule of law between 2008 and 2012.**

**Figure 1. Theory of change: improvement in the quality of public services provided to users**



**Most of the interventions carried out during the first programme cycle were not retained in the next cycle (2013-2017). This latter cycle builds only to a limited extent on the achievements of the previous programmes and has little chance of achieving the expected outcomes within the given time-frame.**

**During the period covered by the evaluation, UNDP contributed to the establishment of an institutional framework, strengthened capacities and greater awareness of the situation with regard to corruption in Cameroon.** A national anti-corruption strategy plus an implementation plan were drawn up and approved with the participation of civil society. CONAC, which received support from UNDP, is operational, although its independence is relative. A network entitled *Intégrité Network Cameroun* has been created, made up of fifty members; their capacities have been enhanced with UNDP support. This includes leading organizations such as the Cameroon Network of Human Rights Organizations and Dynamic Citizenship. The production of sectoral studies on the state of corruption and the capacity-building of civil society organizations has also helped to improve awareness of this phenomenon.<sup>26</sup> CONAC continues to implement “rapid results initiatives” (very short-term actions, lasting less than 100 days), a tool that was developed and piloted with UNDP support. Thus, the transfer of technology that occurred within the framework of the UNDP project has allowed the emergence of a certain expertise and knowledge in the area of fighting corruption.

The implementation of the national anti-corruption strategy is still a challenge. Anti-corruption units have been created in certain ministries, with an awareness-raising and prevention role, but they do not have a budget and are not independent. A draft anti-corruption bill, which incorporates the recommendations of the United Nations Convention against Corruption has also

been drawn up, but it has not yet been adopted by the Government, which contributed to the breakdown of dialogue between the Government and the partners involved, hastening the end of the project managed by UNDP. During the preparation of its 2013-2017 country programme, UNDP decided to limit its efforts to improving the services provided to users of public services (see below).

**UNDP has contributed to capacity-building for Elections Cameroon.** To contribute to the consolidation of the rule of law, UNDP supported the electoral process between 2008 and 2012, by supporting the creation and the capacity-building of ELECAM, the body in charge of the organization, management and supervision of the electoral and referendum process. It also facilitated the capacity-building of other players in the electoral process (such as journalists and civil society organizations). Thanks to this support, the electoral register was rationalized and double entries were deleted before the presidential elections of 2011. In terms of democratic gains, according to ELECAM, there is no longer any contestation of this register, which is now accepted by consensus. UNDP support, which also made it possible to harmonize laws and regulations within a single code, facilitated the transparency of texts that apply to an election, as well as greater effectiveness of the electoral dispute process. ELECAM offers a tripartite area for dialogue (civil society, political parties, technical and financial partners) and organizes an annual meeting to discuss progress.

With regard to the political participation of vulnerable groups, ELECAM has put in place a more inclusive electoral register from a political point of view, but also from the perspective of vulnerable groups and gender issues, through the use of mobile census units and the distribution of census kits, including people with disabilities in the census and ensuring polling stations are acces-

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26 Around 40 training courses have been organized and 200 organizations have been invited to take part in the process of drafting the anti-corruption law. Of these organizations, 30 have filed amendments and assistance was provided to consolidate the leading organizations.

sible to people with disabilities. It also created a platform allowing citizens to monitor the elections. UNDP facilitated better representation of women in politics through its advocacy, alongside UN Women, for the integration within the electoral code of incentive measures to increase the participation of women in the electoral process.

The indicator proposed by UNDP in the CPAP to measure the impact of this support (increase in the percentage of the population who consider the elections in 2007 and 2012 to have been fair and transparent) was not supported by data. As UNDP support came to an end in 2012 and ELECAM subsequently worked with a number of partners, it is difficult to precisely evaluate the contribution of UNDP to the current capacities of ELECAM and/or to the democratic framework in 2016. Nevertheless, in terms of achievements, the country has a specialized electoral body that has put in place an effective technical platform for elections,<sup>27</sup> as well as an improved legal framework. All of these measures help to foster consensus building around the electoral process and make it fully inclusive and, in time, accepted by all. UNDP has played an important role in this construction process.

In collaboration with UN Women, during the 2008-2012 programme UNDP also supported the creation of a Committee in charge of Gender Equality at the National Assembly, the carrying out of studies and the organization of training on gender-sensitive budgeting. However, these interventions have not resulted in real changes with regard to the integration of gender equality in the planning and budgeting process.

**UNDP contributed to the institutionalization of human rights issues, particularly in the education sector, and to the capacity-building of those involved, notably the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms and certain civil society organizations.** As a result, a National Plan for the Promotion and Protection of Human

Rights (PNDH) was drawn up and adopted. Focal points were identified in the various ministries. The education sector made a major effort to take into account the question of human rights, by preparing handbooks and providing teacher training. A human rights training module was also to be included in teacher training programmes. A number of training courses have been organized for members and staff of the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms as well as for a large sample of civil society representatives.

**During the period covered by the evaluation, UNDP contributed to pilot projects to improve the quality of services. These pilots demonstrated that it was possible to obtain tangible results. However, in the absence of a plan to scale up, these achievements are likely to remain very marginal and short-lived.**

UNDP learned lessons from the first programme with respect to anti-corruption, notably observing that the development of low-level corruption at the level of services had encouraged a deterioration in their quality. Thus, during the second country programme, UNDP supported the Permanent Secretariat for Administrative Reform and the Standards and Quality Agency of Cameroon in the preparation of a baseline study on the quality of public services, drafted and published a quality standard for public services, raised awareness and trained managers and staff of the pilot services in appropriation of the standard. A quality standard for services that complies with international standards now exists. This standard brings a new perspective to all the services provided by the public administration, the local and regional authorities and all the quasi-public or private companies working with essential services (water, electricity, telephone, urban sanitation, etc.). This standard needs to be disseminated to and adopted by the various target organizations and structures with the aim of creating an environment that facilitates good quality services and which will, in turn, speed up its application by the public administra-

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27 This includes a biometric file within a centralized database, platforms for gathering and processing results at the regional level and mobile census kits.



tion. The Government now needs to popularize and tailor it to the different services, a series of challenges that demonstrate the standards alone are not enough to produce quality.<sup>28</sup>

It should be noted that the public service quality standard takes into account vulnerable people. Two target populations have been explicitly defined and addressed at all stages: people with specific needs<sup>29</sup> and people with reduced mobility<sup>30</sup>.

UNDP has contributed to success in improving the quality of services in pilot projects. Experiments to eliminate undeserved privileges have been carried out by creating islands of probity and using rapid-results initiatives, as part of the fight against corruption in several different services: hospitals, schools, transportation corridors, etc. Thus, to give just one example, in the Bertoua-N'Gaoundéré transportation corridor, irregularities fell by 66 percent. Although this result has not been sustained, it has been proven that it is a realistic objective. Within the framework of the current programme, UNDP provides support to three business centres and this has resulted in a rise in the rate of business creation as well as improvement in the communication and transparency at the Yaoundé Emergency Centre. Considerable results have been seen where actions have been carried out. Despite this, these results cannot be considered as overall progress, beyond the fact that they demonstrate what is possible,

as they were produced through experiments that have remained too marginal to generate a wider improvement in services to the population.

## 2.2 GOVERNANCE: INCLUSIVE PUBLIC POLICIES

**2008-2012 outcome:** Questions of equity and gender systematically taken into account in the formulation and implementation of policies, strategies and development programmes<sup>31</sup>

**2013-2017 outcome:** Improvement in political participation from social groups in situations of vulnerability, and integration of their needs, and of gender and cross-cutting issues (environment, HIV/AIDS) in sectoral plans, policies and strategies

### 2.2.1 THE INTENDED OUTCOME AND UNDP STRATEGY

**Context.** Cameroon is facing a number of major challenges, as described in the country's main development policy documents.<sup>32</sup> These challenges include the consolidation of national unity and cohesion, strengthening the democratic process and improving governance. In 2003, Cameroon initiated a process to encourage the participation of civil society and the private sector in the design and the monitoring of the general development framework, with the adoption of the first framework document,<sup>33</sup> the

28 Results in this area are obtained from the end of a value chain incorporating the allocation and management of resources, the organization of processes and the motivation of agents. The ISO 9001 standard mentions, among other conditions of successful commitment from management and priority given to quality, a work approach centred on processes, the commitment of staff, dialogue with stakeholders, including users and partners, and the implementation of a continuous improvement mechanism.

29 "People experiencing physical or social difficulties in their contact with the administration. This can be visual or hearing impairment, people with a mental or physical disability, people who have difficulties writing, reading or speaking official languages".

30 "People with a physical disability, the elderly, pregnant women and people with pushchairs and children."

31 In the UNDP management system (Atlas), there are no projects relating to this outcome, which no longer appears in the system from 2010.

32 The main documents are Cameroon Vision 2035, drawn up in 2009 and the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP), which is the implementation instrument of the former. Before these documents, there had been the PRSP for 2003-2009.

33 Cameroon has had five-year development plans since 1960, but the PRSP is the first general framework document drawn up after the implementation of the structural adjustment programme and as part of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC).

Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). This practice was renewed with the design in 2009 of Cameroon Vision 2035, and its first implementation document for the period from 2010-2020 (GESP). The GESP is considered not only a framework for the integration and coordination of all development actions, but also a framework for consultation and dialogue between the Government, the private sector, civil society and development partners. As a result, the participation of socio-economic groups in the design and monitoring of public policies has become an increasingly common practice in the management of public policies.

Nevertheless, it is observed that this participation is that of the groups that are the most active and the most capable of defending their interests to the authorities, which is not the case for vulnerable groups whose needs are barely taken into account in the design of public policies. The implementation of the 2003-2009 PRSP revealed gaps in the monitoring of achieved results due to a lack of technical capacity and resources for the collection, processing and dissemination of the information, at both the regional and national level. This gap in the monitoring of the PRSP has had a negative impact on the monitoring of the MDGs,<sup>34</sup> hindering the authorities from taking the right decisions at the right moments.

**UNDP strategy.** To ensure that cross-cutting issues and the needs of vulnerable groups are taken into account in public policies, a number of interventions were carried out to strengthen capacity in strategic planning as well as in terms of advocacy and drawing up appropriate handbooks. Capacity-building in strategic planning has been a constant feature since 2003 in the wake of the design of the PRSP. UNDP accompanied the consultation and needs-identification process in all sectors, including the drafting and approval of the document, and the monitoring and evaluation of results. This action was car-

ried out in parallel with the monitoring of the MDGs at the national level and the production of the human development report, for which UNDP has a natural global mandate, and which are inextricably linked with the monitoring of employment strategies.

During the period covered by the evaluation, the main actions that were carried out included: (i) national capacity-building in the areas of poverty alleviation and achieving the MDGs (2008-2010); (ii) support for coordination of the implementation of the UNDP country programme for 2008-2012; (iii) support for the integration of HIV into Cameroon's major development projects (2012-2014)<sup>35</sup>; (iv) support for the evaluation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2008-2012); and (v) the economic and social inclusion programme (PRINCES), which is the main intervention in the 2013-2017 programme cycle. The first actions sought to develop planning capabilities while the later actions sought to improve their quality, by strengthening the incorporation of cross-cutting themes and the needs of vulnerable groups. The 2013-2017 programme cycle identified six expected outcomes:

- An audit of the integration of cross-cutting issues and the needs of vulnerable people in sectoral strategies, ministerial strategies and local development plans in the target municipalities of the North, the Far North and the key project areas has been carried out.
- Technical assistance has been provided to institutions in charge of preparing national socio-economic reports;
- The institutions and actors in charge of planning and local development have the competencies and the tools needed to integrate gender and cross-cutting issues (HIV/AIDS, the environment, disability) in sectoral and ministerial strategies and in local development plans;

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34 GESP, p.12; CPAP 2013-2017 p.8.

35 The ADR did not analyse the contribution of the programme supporting the coordination and implementation of the country programme and support for the integration of the HIV aspect into major projects.

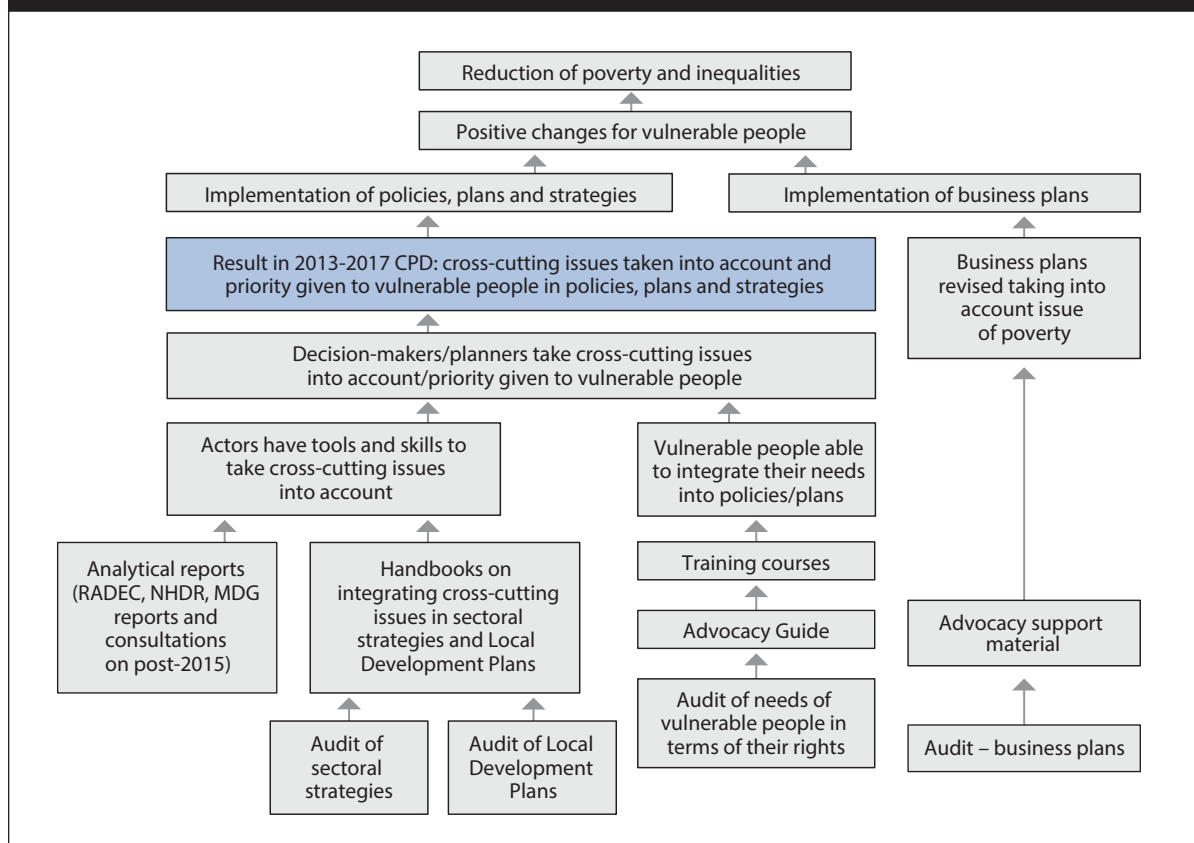
- Populations in situations of vulnerability in the target municipalities are better able to ensure their needs are integrated into programmes, policy documents and strategies, and to take part in decision-making bodies at the national and local level.
- The private sector receives support for including poverty alleviation in the value chain;
- The development strategy for the social sector (basic social services) has been updated to include a social protection aspect.

The implicit theory of change that underpins the UNDP approach during the 2013-2017 programme is shown in Figure 2.

## 2.2.2 RESULTS OBTAINED WITH UNDP SUPPORT AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE OUTCOME

Over the period covered by the evaluation, if reference is only made to the CPD indicators, very little progress has been achieved in this area. A simple analysis of the table of indicators of the current programme with their baseline and target values would suggest that no progress has been made. In other words, the programme has had no impact on any sectoral strategy, any local development plan, or any business plan<sup>36</sup>, in terms of better incorporating cross-cutting themes or the needs of vulnerable groups.

**Figure 2. Theory of change for the improvement of political participation of vulnerable people and the inclusion of their priorities in policies, plans and strategies**



36 A report from PRINCES dated 15 November 2016 (after the evaluation mission) showed that “examples (drafts) of three sectoral strategies incorporating cross-cutting issues and the needs of vulnerable populations [have been] designed and validated technically” and that annual plans incorporating cross-cutting issues and the needs of vulnerable populations were drawn up for three municipalities.

**Table 2. CPD indicators according to the 2013-2017 CPAP**

Indicator	Reference value	2017 Target <sup>37</sup>	Situation in mid-2016
1.1. Number of sectoral strategies taking into account the needs of vulnerable groups and cross-cutting issues	0	4	0
1.2. Number of action plans integrating the needs of vulnerable groups and cross-cutting issues	0	10	0
1.3. Proportion of groups in situations of vulnerability in decision-making bodies, or not, in the target councils	To be determined	30%	Unknown
1.4. Percentage of local development plans integrating the needs of vulnerable groups and cross-cutting issues	To be determined	50%	Unknown

Nevertheless, several improvements have been observed, even if they have not altered the indicators. These include, but are not limited to, the real capacity of the central departments of MINEPAT (notably the Directorate-General of Economy and Programming of Public Investments, the Directorate-General of Cooperation and Regional Integration and the National Statistical Institute) to take on the key tasks of planning, monitoring and preparing development reports, thanks to the support received since 2008 in project and programme management, monitoring official development assistance, monitoring the MDGs, preparing the Cameroon Economic Development Report (RADEC) and preparing national human development reports. All the departments involved in the programme said that they had acquired the capacities and tools they needed, particularly thanks to the contribution of UNDP. With regard to building national and local planning capabilities based on the MDGs, UNDP helped to prepare local development plans centred on the MDGs with two municipalities and trained more than 30 individuals in implementing the plans.<sup>37</sup>

The evaluation noted an **improved visibility of cross-cutting issues and the needs of vulnera-**

**ble populations in the production of economic information**, thanks to the new format of the RADEC for which a new handbook had been published, while a number of training sessions had been organized with the regional delegations of MINEPAT.

Thanks to UNDP support, MINEPAT is **capable of maintaining a database and producing reports on official development assistance (ODA)**. Before the intervention of UNDP in 2008, ODA data was scattered, hence the need to create a baseline database, which allowed the first report on ODA to be published in 2014. In principle, a report will be published every two years. Although a categorization of aid already exists, as does a handbook of procedures, two modules need to be developed, one on aid for local and regional authorities, and one on aid to civil society organizations. The technical department in question now has the capacities needed to update the database and produce the next reports, while maintaining the good practices acquired during the period of UNDP support. Continuing with this assistance is essential, less for financial reasons and more to give credibility to its capacity to produce an ODA report.

<sup>37</sup> According to programme managers, targets for the first two indicators were altered in 2016. Target 1.1 will be 7 (instead of 4) and target 1.2 will be 6, as the programme is focused on six municipalities). The table shows the information in the CPAP.

In terms of the progress made, of note is also the **improved awareness of the issue of integrating cross-cutting themes** and the needs of vulnerable groups in public policies and local development plans in certain regions of the Far North, as well as in the business plans of certain companies thanks to the analyses carried out since the start of the programme. A handbook was created on the integration of cross-cutting issues in plans and strategies. The existing documentation and the interviews that were carried out show that **the people involved are beginning to have the tools and the skills needed to take cross-cutting issues into account in the planning process.**

Actions have been carried out to strengthen the capacities of vulnerable people to make their needs and their priorities known and taken into account. An analysis was carried out on the incorporation of the needs of vulnerable populations in local development plans in three councils of the Far North region. In addition, a handbook for advocacy with the traditional, religious and political authorities was prepared, intervention requirements were identified, as were local partners (NGO) and support structures, who were trained in this regard. Training and awareness-raising and support actions for the groups in question still need to be carried out to achieve the intermediate result, namely “Populations in situations of vulnerability in the target municipalities are better able to ensure their needs are integrated into programmes, policy documents and strategies, and to take part in decision-making bodies at the national and local level”.

The expected outcome (integrating cross-cutting issues and needs of vulnerable people into account in policies, plans and strategies) has not yet been achieved. No sectoral strategy or local development plan has been adapted to better

integrate these perspectives.<sup>38</sup> One of the difficulties stems from the fact that the resources for the departments in charge of the strategic planning of public policies are not always available in time to allow the timetable of the cycle of activities to be respected. Another obstacle is related to poor motivation from managers for these activities, which require total commitment. Similarly, at the central level, the planning chain is supplied by sectoral ministries, which do not necessarily have as many tools as MINEPAT. Lastly, any subject that requires interministerial management faces the question of departmental compartmentalization. The limits of UNDP action come from the fact that capacities have been strengthened for one link in the programming chain (the MINEPAT departments). To obtain better results, the entire chain should receive support. At municipal level, it has proven difficult to revise the existing development plans.

**The logic underpinning UNDP’s intervention in this area envisaged a contribution towards gender equality and the empowerment of women, but the reality is that the actions carried out have not produced any significant changes in this area.**

The programme places the question of gender equality and the empowerment of women among its main objectives, in order to integrate these issues in the sectoral policies and local development plans. The programme has helped to raise awareness of the challenges, for example in the detailed analyses in the audit of the inclusion of cross-cutting issues in three local development plans.<sup>39</sup> Its impact on policies and local development plans has not yet been felt and no effect has yet been observed beyond the raising of awareness, with the exception of the beginnings of a dialogue between vulnerable populations and local authorities at the municipal level.

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38 With regard to assistance given to the private sector in order to incorporate poverty alleviation in their *business plans*, from 2016 these activities were interrupted, given the crisis being experienced in the Far North region.

39 Government of Cameroon and UNDP, ‘Audit of incorporation of cross-cutting issues (gender, HIV/AIDS, environment) and the needs of vulnerable people in local development plans in Maga, Moulvoudaye and Touloum in the Far North region’, 2015.

## 2.3 POVERTY REDUCTION AND ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MDGS

**2008-2012 outcome:** Level of achievement of the MDGs is increasing

**2013-2017 outcome:** Improvement in income and access to basic socio-economic services for populations in the Sahel region

### 2.3.1 THE INTENDED OUTCOME AND UNDP STRATEGY

**Context.** The country is facing a number of major challenges in terms of poverty alleviation. The social context is characterized by wide economic and social disparities between the regions of the country and within populations, inadequate access to good quality basic social services, unequal access to the factors of production and sources of funding, the incapacity of the populations to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the environment and inadequate appreciation of the role that can be played by the private sector in poverty alleviation efforts, within the context of a boom in the informal economy. These problems explain the weakness of the national economy, and their negative impact on the social context is exacerbated by the lack of a solid social protection mechanism.<sup>40</sup>

With regard to the MDGs, the national authorities believe that there is a favourable environment for achieving almost half of their targets by 2020.<sup>41</sup> The country is far from having reached the objectives relating to maternal and under-five mortality. With regard to the elimination of extreme poverty and hunger (MDG 1), 37.5 percent of Cameroonians still live below the national poverty level (2014 data). In absolute terms, the number of poor people has increased, from

7.1 million in 2007 to 8.1 million in 2014, due to demographic growth. In addition, disparities in standards of living have become wider, between urban and rural areas, as well as between people affected by poverty or not.<sup>42</sup> This mixed review can be attributed to the low growth rate, which is not enjoyed by all sectors and which excludes the majority of the country's labour force.<sup>43</sup>

In response to this situation, the Government has developed and implemented the PRSP and, from 2009, the GESP, which are focused on wealth creation and which rely on the creation of jobs to ensure a satisfactory distribution of the benefits of economic growth, while at the same time continuing to achieve the MDGs. The GESP seeks to (i) increase economic growth to an annual average of 5.5 percent between 2010 and 2020; (ii) reduce under-employment from 75.8 percent to less than 50 percent by 2020 through the creation of tens of thousands of formal jobs per year over the next ten years; and (iii) reduce the level of income poverty from 39.9 percent in 2007 to 28.7 percent in 2020, the new target date for achieving the MDGs in Cameroon.<sup>44</sup>

**UNDP strategy.** In the area of poverty alleviation, UNDP adopted a two-pronged approach during the first programme (2008-2012). It provided support at a strategic level (such as support for the preparation of the GESP and the production of human development reports and MDG reports) as well as support at the local and community level. At the local level, UNDP provided support for the creation of two 'Millennium Villages'. It contributed to the development of community micro-projects (Sub-Programme for Poverty Reduction at the Grassroots, SPRPB I), management of micro-entrepreneurs and capacity-building in the microfinance sector.

40 UNDP, Country Programme Action Plan 2013-2017.

41 National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'National Report on the Millennium Development Goals in 2015', September 2015, p.47.

42 National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'National Household Survey in Cameroon (ECAM 4)', 2014.

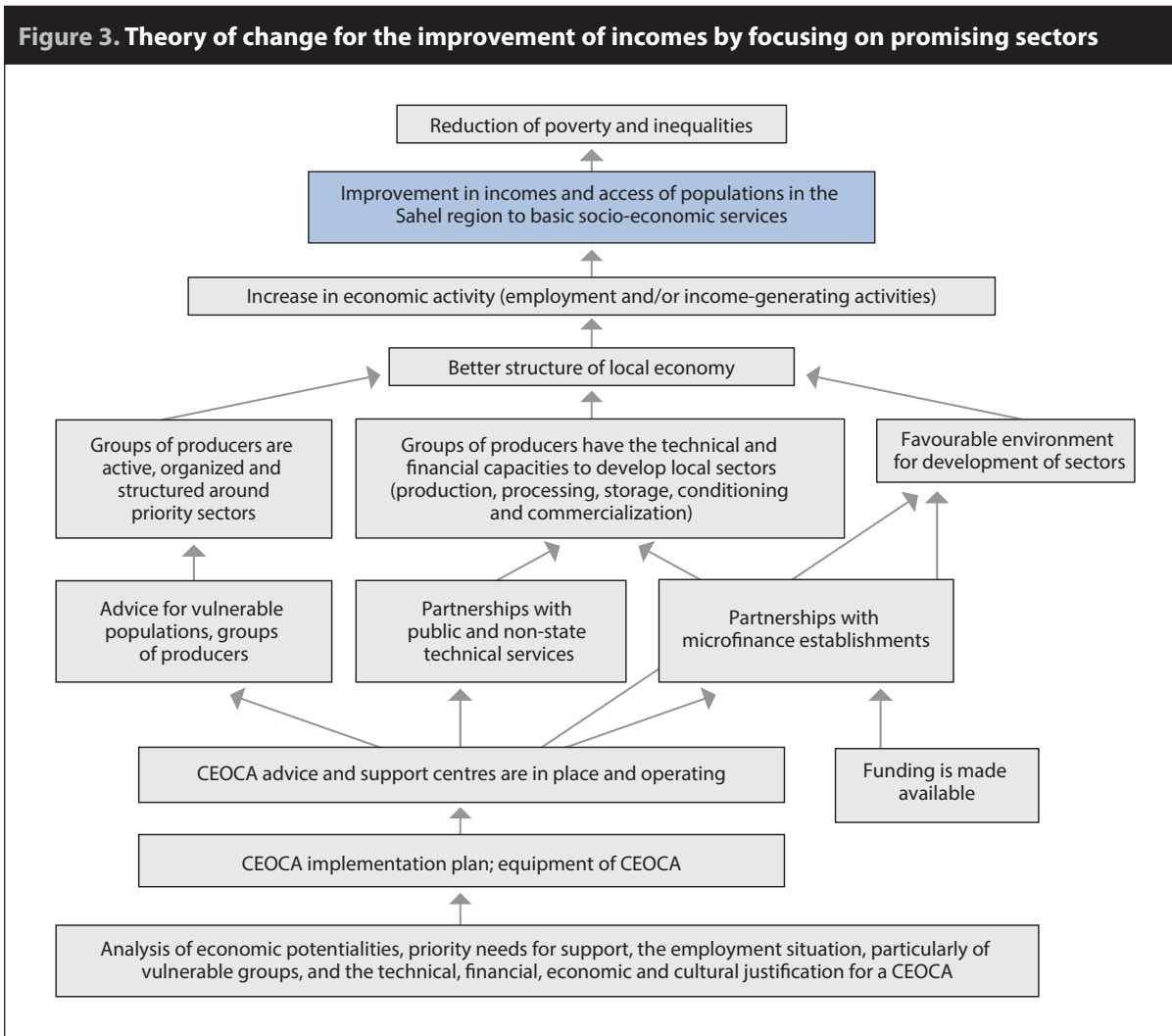
43 UNDAF 2013-2017, p.2.

44 Cameroon has postponed the deadline for achieving the MDGs to 2020, in line with the GESP. National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'National Report on the Millennium Development Goals in 2015', September 2015, p.xiii.

During the second programme cycle (2013-2017), UNDP continued to articulate its programme along these two lines, but with links to different outcomes in the programme documents. At the strategic level, the PRINCES programme offered support for report preparation with the aim of improving planning and monitoring (see section 2.2).

UNDP continued to provide support at the local and community level, with the aim of improving income and access to basic socio-economic services for populations in the Sahel region, and more particularly in certain target villages. The UNDP programme in this area for the 2013-

2017 period “was based on the learnings of the Sub-Programme for Poverty Reduction at the Grassroots, to address both the advancement of employment and increased incomes for the population in the localities in question, by helping to strengthen sectors that can generate growth and a spill-over effect, the development of socio-economic infrastructures and facilitating access to long-term funding.”<sup>45</sup> The overall objective of the Sub-Programme for Poverty Reduction at the Grassroots – Phase II (SPRPB II) was to “make a significant and sustainable contribution to poverty reduction in rural areas by structuring the local economy through an improvement in the productivity and competitiveness of pri-



45 CPAP 2013-2017, p.18, section 4.31.

ority sectors”.<sup>46</sup> The capacities of those directly concerned were to be strengthened throughout the intervention chain, at the local, regional and central level. At the local level, a new one-stop shop, the CEOCA (advice, guidance and support centres) is at the heart of all the expected changes. A simplified theory of change of the programme approach to improving the income of populations in the Sahel region is illustrated in Figure 3. Regarding community infrastructure, a second phase of the Millennium Villages project was to have, depending on the availability of resources, built on the achievements of the first phase, strengthening the impact on populations and making it possible to achieve the MDGs in the pilot villages, but this area of intervention was not maintained.

### 2.3.2 RESULTS OBTAINED WITH THE SUPPORT OF UNDP AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE OUTCOME

**The expected outcome of the 2008-2012 country programme, namely an increase in the achievement of the MDGs, has not been achieved.<sup>47</sup> However, UNDP supported the production of a certain number of outputs. It has notably strengthened institutional and individual capacities at the central, local and community level, while creating funding opportunities at the local level, with a very localized impact on incomes and access to basic services. With regard to the expected outcome of the 2013-2017 country programme, UNDP supported the creation of municipal services (CEOCA), which, although they show certain potential, have yet to have a real impact on the structure and development of the local economy.**

The expected outcome of the 2008-2012 programme, namely an increase in the level of achievement of the MDGs (measurable, according to the CPAP, via the reduction in the incidence of poverty in rural areas and nationally) has not been achieved. However, it should be noted that the achievement or otherwise of one or many MDGs cannot be directly imputed to a programme with a budget of \$50 million over five years. Therefore, it is more reasonable to assess the outputs of the interventions supported by UNDP as well as changes generated within the framework of the MDGs. UNDP contributions at the strategic level were covered in section 2.2 above.

**With UNDP support, financing opportunities were created for micro, small and medium-sized businesses as well as rural producer organizations, allowing certain groups to increase their income. Their scope remains limited and the support mechanisms are short-lived.** According to UNDP reports of and the final evaluation report on the project<sup>48</sup>, the SPRPB I funded 385 micro-projects in 237 municipalities<sup>49</sup> between 2007 and 2011, through subsidies to community initiative groups where at least 60 percent of direct beneficiaries were women and 15 percent were people living with HIV/AIDS. This aid benefited 12,087 people directly and 36,251 people indirectly.

In order to estimate the impact of this financing, the ADR team analysed the information from the final project report. According to its estimates, the income generated by each member of the groups that received funding ranged, at the end of the project, from 22,000 to 45,000 CFA (or from \$37 to \$80) per month.<sup>50</sup> If the beneficiary

46 Republic of Cameroon and UNDP, ‘Sub-programme of poverty reduction at the grassroots – Phase II (SPRPB II)’, project document, March 2012, p.15.

47 The indicator and the target for this effect was a 10-point reduction in the incidence of poverty in rural areas and nationally by 2012.

48 Damiba André E., ‘Final evaluation report of the sub-programme of poverty reduction at the grassroots’, September 2010, p.45.

49 An average of 1.6 projects per municipality.

50 Damiba André E., ‘Final evaluation report of the sub-programme of poverty reduction at the grassroots’, September 2010, p.52.



groups had not had any commercial production activity before the subsidy, the programme would have been effective. On the basis of the level of income poverty, set at 931 CFA<sup>51</sup> per day in 2014 (around \$47 per month), the programme would have lifted certain people out of poverty. If these groups already had some commercial production, their income before and after the programme should have been measured in order to determine its effectiveness, but this was not possible due to a lack of available data. In addition to the immediate results of the grants, a number of groups that benefited from the SPRPB I programme obtained results and managed to find new grants from other development support organizations with the aim of improving, developing or diversifying their income-generating activities. In sum, SPRPB I produced results, but with an average of 1.6 projects per municipality, its scope and impact were limited.

The second phase of this programme, SPRPB II (2012-ongoing) builds on the achievements of the first phase and, among other things, facilitates the funding of income-generating activities (Government-funded micro-projects). In the three most northerly regions (Adamaoua, Far North, North), 321 micro-projects<sup>52</sup> in 26 municipalities were funded for a total of 470 million CFA (around \$800,000, or \$2,500 per project on average, between 2013 and 2015). This geographical concentration (an average of 12 projects per municipality) could prove to be more effective than the more dispersed approach adopted during the first phase. At the time of

data collection for the ADR it was, however, too early to evaluate such outcomes (see below for more information on the new model adopted in SPRPB II).

In the case of the Millennium Villages, in the municipality of Maroua 1, nearly 135 million CFA (\$230,000) were paid out to young people in six villages as part of highly labour-intensive community infrastructure projects. Other groups, in particular women and Baka pygmies also received grants to fund cooperative income-generating activities. These latter contributions were, however, occasional and there was no deliberate strategy either to withdraw or to sustain them.

According to the final report on the programme to boost small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), 397<sup>53</sup> young people were trained in the creation and management of businesses, 15 percent of whom were women. The same applied to 234 creators of small businesses, 29 percent of which were women, and who received training in the business management best practices. To this can be added the 348 people who were trained in five regions of the country in networking, the day-to-day management of a micro-enterprise and business opportunities. The programme helped 69 small businesses in the service, agriculture industrial and retail sectors to obtain bank loans, 12 percent of these companies were managed by women. According to the final report<sup>54</sup>, as a result of this assistance, the micro-enterprises increased their investments and created 212 jobs between 2008 and 2011.

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51 National Institute of Statistics of Cameroon, 'Presentation of Preliminary Results of the Fourth National Household Survey in Cameroon (ECAM 4) in 2014', October 2015, p.3.

52 Despite a specific request from the evaluation mission, the National Director of SPRPB-II did not provide all the necessary information, which mean that it was not possible to evaluate the effectiveness of the sub-programme during the period in question, to draw comparisons or to determine UNDP's contribution.

53 Other than the project report, a number of articles in the press have described the training activities of this project:

Article in the *Cameroon Tribune* published on 27 July 2005 at <http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/200507270294.html> (retrieved on 4 October 2016)

Article in the *Cameroon Tribune* published on 3 August 2005 at <http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/200508030423.html> (retrieved on 4 October 2016)

Article in the *Cameroon Tribune* published on 24 June 2008 at <http://fr.allafrica.com/stories/200806240339.html> (retrieved on 4 October 2016)

54 Entrepise Cameroun, final report, 00060542 *Dynamisation du sous-secteur des microentreprises*, 13 January 2012.

Although all the beneficiaries were able to start their businesses, this programme did not have any notable impact on the local economy due to their geographical dispersion. Implemented from 2008 to 2011 by Enterprise Cameroon, these actions to boost SMEs with the aim of encouraging local development to create wealth and employment were interrupted and replaced by a strategy focused on promising sectors at the municipal level in the SPRPB II (see below).

**In the area of microfinance, the infrastructure for financial intermediation is still largely out of the reach of poor populations in the countryside.** As a complement to the support for the development of micro-enterprises, UNDP worked with the microfinance sector to encourage the widening of a viable range of financial services for people with low incomes and vulnerable people. In 2011, UNDP provided assistance for a study to map the microfinance sector and the adoption of a calendar for drawing up the national microfinance strategy. Between 2011 and 2012, the project trained the managers of the National Association of Microfinance Establishments in Cameroon (ANEMCAM) and the microfinance division of the Ministry of Finance on a range of technical aspects. A long-term funding mechanism for rural small businesses is still pending, however, because the agricultural bank on which it was to depend has not yet been created. In 2013, UNDP assisted the Government in drawing up a national inclusive finance strategy, in partnership with microfinance establishments, the United Nations Capital Development Fund, and the development of rural microfinance support project (PADMIR), funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).<sup>55</sup> The strategy received technical approval but does not seem to have been disseminated or implemented. However, a mechanism of repayable funds, with a budget of \$290,000, is operational. A number of other partners have indicated their desire to support its implementation (World Bank, Euro-

pean Union, Agence française du développement, African Development Bank) and are waiting for a formal request for funding from the Government. In the zone where SPRPB is implemented, rural entrepreneurs have access to financial services through financial partnerships put in place at the CEOCA with other public support initiatives or directly from the latter.

**With the support of UNDP, basic infrastructure and access to essential services have been improved in some areas, but without generating a transformative or multiplying effect and with a low likelihood of long-term sustainability.**

With the aim of contributing to the achievement of the MDGs in a local development perspective founded on participation and community empowerment, the Millennium Villages programme provided a range of support to the Government between 2010 and 2013 at two pilot sites, Meyomessi and Maroua 1. The programme invested around \$1.75 million in each of the municipalities for the construction and rehabilitation of community infrastructure (roads, schools, electricity grid, wells and boreholes, health centres). The aim was to have technical ministries and public agencies involved in the various actions in favour of the MDGs working on each site and to mobilize available funding or to integrate them into the public investment budget, but such an agreement was not concluded. Although infrastructure management committees were put in place, no truly structured support for the implementation of infrastructure programmes was seen during the visit to Maroua, nor was it possible to access the database on the existing community infrastructure and amenities. However, changes were seen: the programme has built boreholes, laid electricity cables, connected villages to the mobile telephone network, built and/or renovated classrooms and integrated health centres, reforested the areas around schools, provided teaching materials and equipment to schools (computers), trained teachers including in administrative tasks, distributed improved seeds to farmers, disinfected

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<sup>55</sup> UNDP, 'Results-based annual report', 2013, p.41-42.

livestock, created two agro-pastoral cooperatives and awarded grants for stock fattening in the villages of the municipality of Maroua 1.<sup>56</sup> Factors that have contributed to these results include the involvement of traditional chiefs and communities in the awareness-raising phase, training the leaders of local committees before the infrastructure was built (health, education, roads, electrification, etc.), good synergy with the deconcentrated departments of MINEPAT and effective mass communication (community radio provided by UNICEF).

Other infrastructure that should have been constructed by various technical ministries are still pending, due to delays in signing contracts, non-respect of standards or abandon of the works by the contractors.<sup>57</sup> Lastly, the evaluation team was unable to obtain data on developments in the income of beneficiaries in the Millennium Villages during its interviews and despite various requests to the administrations involved, evidence of an ineffective monitoring and evaluation mechanism.

**The implementation of the 2013-2017 programme did not comply with the programme document. To date, the programme has obtained only limited results in terms of restructuring the local economy. However, the CEOCA is a model with potential.** Although the development of promising sectors at the municipal level envisaged by the SPRPB II offered an opportunity to take the progress made by SPRPB I further, this has not been realized due to the accumulated delays and lack of compliance with the strategy outlined in the programme document. The SPRPB II included plans to identify bottlenecks in promising sectors using feasibility studies, develop micro-projects to address them and create a value chain with a spillover effect on the local economy. Direct observation and

an analysis of the available documentation did not allow this result to be confirmed. SPRPB II funded microprojects in the identified sectors (see above) but not micro-projects for the sectors in the sense of an integrated value chain approach with participants at various levels.

The new element introduced by SPRPB II is the CEOCA, a one-stop shop of services situated at the town hall and covering the municipality. According to the model, the CEOCA mobilizes partners (public technical services including ministries or nongovernmental and private agencies) to provide development assistance for economic and socio-community activities in rural areas. During the CEOCA feasibility study, promising growth sectors that were likely to have a positive effect on local economic development and incomes were to be identified and an implementation plan was to be adopted. Subsequently, the CEOCA is intended to act as a platform for job-seekers, supporting women and young people in business creation and income-generating activities through partnerships designed to mobilize funding and the necessary public and/or private technical services.

Eight CEOCA have been created in municipalities, seven of which are in the UNDP area of intervention. Feasibility studies have made it possible to identify economic opportunities and carry out an audit of promising sectors in 23 municipalities, in compliance with a methodological handbook written in 2015. The sectors vary according to the municipality and include agriculture, livestock, fisheries, handicrafts, trade, quarrying and the various small service providers.

According to the 2015 activity report on SPRPB II, 225 projects organized by common initiative groups or associations in the sectors of rice, corn,

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56 Jeanot Minla Mfou'ou, Blaise M'balla Atsama, Roland Mvondo, David Mbea Njock and Gustave Mfou'ou, 'Millennium Villages Cameroon, Report of the final evaluation of the first phase', Republic of Cameroon, United Nations Development Programme, November 2013.

57 These companies are often based in Yaoundé and are unaware of the realities in the field. This is one of the reasons why some give up, because the costs are much higher than expected. To give an example, an electricity grid built three years ago has still not been connected to the national grid, due to the lack of a transformer.

millet, soya, animal fattening, onions, cowpeas, peanuts and small ruminants had been financed, for a total of 230 million CFA (\$400,000) in 19 municipalities in the regions of Adamaoua, the North and the Far North.<sup>58</sup> The ADR was unable to obtain information clearly indicating that these were structuring projects for the sector, even if the funded activities were all related to one of the identified sectors. The evaluation team was also unable to obtain information indicating that the programme had encouraged the grouping of producers into effective organizations (unions, federations, cooperatives), as was planned in the programme document. In other words, it is not manifestly clear that a sector approach was adopted, as the structuring activities that accompanied this funding were not identifiable in the field, notably measures allowing local beneficiary organizations to make a profit from the purchase price of inputs and the sale price of their production. Similarly, no mechanism designed to resolve the bottlenecks identified at the level of the promising growth sectors in the area of intervention was seen. No operational difference was visible between the implementation of the micro-projects of each common initiative group and the micro-projects gathered around a sector (as categorized in the SPRPB II reports). In sum, “the capacities to pool resources and efforts in order to effectively address the challenges of the sectors”<sup>59</sup> does not seem to have improved as had been hoped.

Observations in the field showed that CEOCA is a pertinent and promising system, as it has the potential to build partnerships with public and private structures and become an ideal framework for synergies, facilitating the access of poor and isolated populations to a range of services that are likely to increase their capacity and their productivity, and in doing so breaking the chain

of poverty. The CEOCA also acts as an anchor point for other interventions supported by UNDP, such as the REPECC (see below). However, it is too early to assess the effectiveness of this new model. Certain CEOCA have only just been put in place, such as the CEOCA in Maga. There are not enough qualified staff or adequate logistical resources to cover all the areas of the target municipalities. Population displacements as a result of the unstable situation complicate the awareness-raising activities carried out in these regions. A more in-depth evaluation of the model should be carried out after some time, in order to learn the lessons and adapt or possibly replicate the model.

**From one cycle to another, UNDP has targeted the poorest regions of the country, without an additional mechanism for identifying the poorest populations in the area of intervention. The rate of participation of women in the interventions varies considerably.** Other than the geographical targeting of regions where the incidence of poverty is particularly high, no additional mechanism had been planned for selecting the beneficiaries of interventions based on their relative poverty levels. Consequently, the programme contributed to the reduction of inequality between the populations of various regions but not within the target municipalities. While requiring a deposit or collateral as a condition of access to microfinance strengthens the commitment of the entrepreneur, it can also limit the access of the poorest to the programme, as well as access by displaced people in areas affected by conflict.<sup>60</sup> The evaluation of SPRPB I highlights actions specifically targeting women and observes that women represented 60 percent of direct beneficiaries. The report also notes women’s enthusiasm for pastoral activities that had previously been controlled by men.<sup>61</sup> However, the reports also show that the

58 Republic of Cameroon and UNDP, ‘Sub-programme for poverty reduction at the grassroots – 2, 2015’, Activity Report, December 2015.

59 According to the project document, one of the expected outcomes of the SPRPB II was the improvement in “the organization of active groups of producers around local priority sectors and their capacity to pool their resources and efforts to respond efficiently to the challenges of their sectors”.

60 Other UNDP interventions respond to the specific needs of internally displaced persons (see section 2.5).

61 Damiba 2010, p. 49.

micro-enterprise programme did not benefit as many women. SPRPB II funded 321 micro-projects in the three northern regions, with 43 percent of beneficiaries being women. This rate is lower than the results obtained during the first phase.

A number of factors impact on the inclusion of women and vulnerable people. Cultural traditions constitute a barrier to gender equality, particularly in the northern regions, which could explain the differences between the figures of SPRPB I (covering the whole country) and SPRPB II (covering the three northern regions). In addition, when making budgetary decisions, local authorities favour actions with immediate benefits, to the detriment of initiatives that focus on vulnerable groups, conditioning the inclusion of the needs of the most disadvantaged to political considerations.

## 2.4 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**2008-2012 outcome:** Efficient management of environmental and energy resources in order to protect said resources in compliance with the international climate change convention

**2013-2017 outcome:** Improved resilience of populations to the effects of climate change

### 2.4.1 INTENDED OUTCOMES AND UNDP STRATEGY

**Context.** Cameroon offers remarkable geographical diversity with forest regions, high plateaux, high savannah and, in the north, its Sudano-Sahelian region. In terms of the diversity of its flora and fauna, it ranks fourth and fifth on the African continent.<sup>62</sup> A number of eco-

nomical activities essential for national growth are related to natural resources: agriculture, forestry, fisheries, livestock and tourism. Human activities inevitably exert pressure on ecosystems and impoverish biodiversity as well as deplete the soils. In Cameroon, climate change has particularly impacted the Sahel region, which is severely affected by desertification, and the coastal areas threatened by the rise in sea level. The country is facing an abnormal recurrence of extreme climate events, such as violent winds, high temperatures<sup>63</sup> and heavy rainfall, which put communities and ecosystems in danger, as well as the ecosystems and the services they provide<sup>64</sup>.

In response to these challenges, the Government has drawn up: (a) a National Environment Management Plan in 1996, updated in 2010; (b) a National Contingency Plan in 2002, revised in 2011; (c) a National Energy Action Plan for the reduction of poverty in 2005; (d) a National Anti-Desertification Plan in 2007; (e) a national strategy for the sustainable management of waters and soils in the agro-sylvo-pastoral areas, in the same year, as well as a number of other strategies and sectoral programmes. More recently, in 2015, it adopted a National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change. The GESP recognizes the importance of rational and sustainable development of the environment and calls for the implementation of actions in favour of the management of the environmental aspects of rural activities, biodiversity management and the valuation of resources and reforestation.<sup>65</sup>

**UNDP strategy.** UNDP has been a partner of Cameroon in the area of the environment for a very long time. It notably contributed to the development of the first National Environmental

62 Republic of Cameroon, 'Fifth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity', May 2014, Ministry for the Environment, the Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED), p.3.

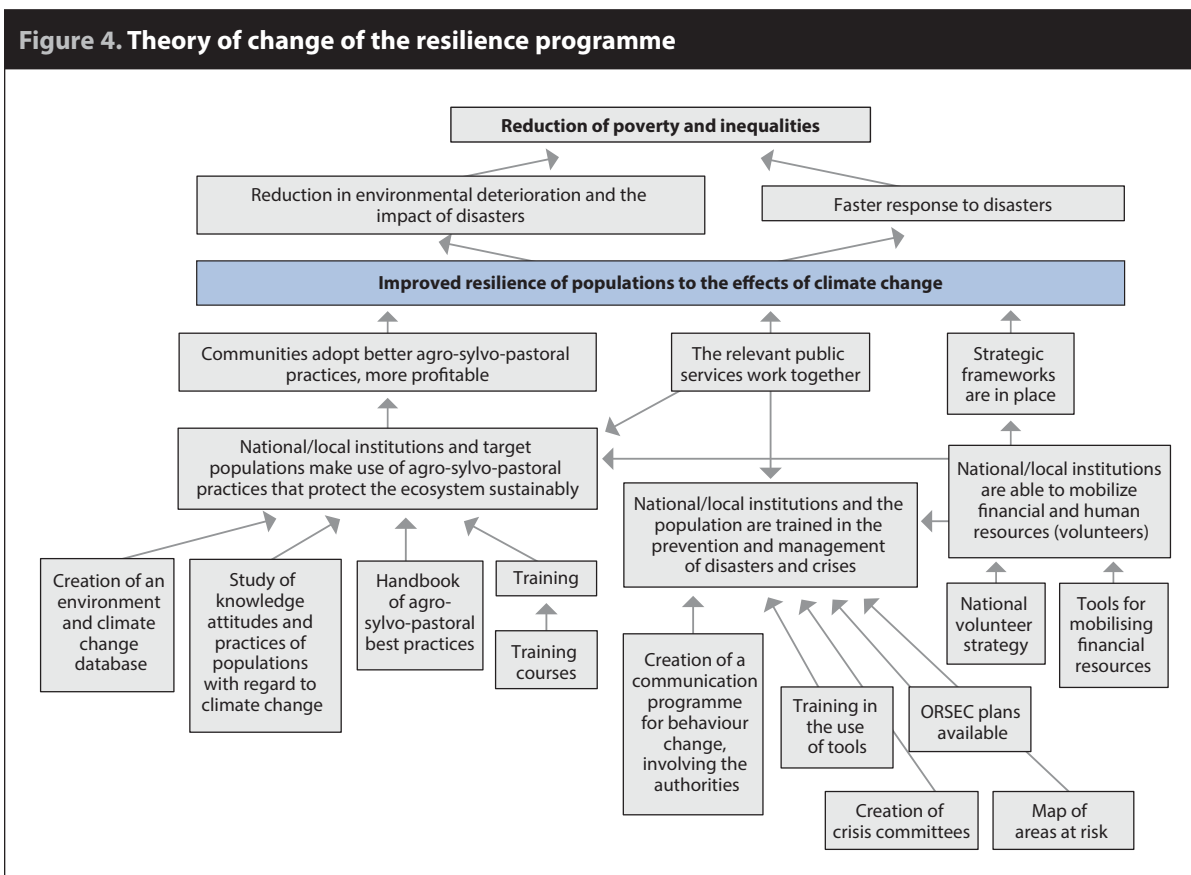
63 According to studies performed during the process of drawing up the National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, the annual average temperature in Cameroon rose by 0.7°C from 1960 to 2007. This represents an average rate of 0.15°C per decade (Ministry for the Environment, the Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development, 2015, National Climate Change Adaptation Plan, p.15).

64 Republic of Cameroon, National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change, June 2015, MINEPDED, p.13.

65 Republic of Cameroon, 'Growth and Employment Strategy Paper (GESP), Framework for Government Activity from 2010-2020', August 2009, p.69.

Management Plan in 1996. Over the period covered by the evaluation, UNDP has, as for other areas, adopted a dual strategy that consisted of accompanying central institutions in the development and implementation of policies and strategies in favour of the management of environmental resources and climate change adaptation, whilst at the same time providing support for interventions at the local and community level. The 2008–2012 country programme aimed to achieve “efficient management of environmental and energy resources in order to protect said resources in compliance with the international climate change convention”. To achieve these objectives, UNDP supported an environment management capacity-building programme (2009–2012) as well as a climate change adaptation programme (national component of a pan-African programme, 2010–2014).<sup>66</sup>

The 2013–2017 programme supports national interventions through two complementary approaches: (a) the preservation of ecosystems; and (b) improving the resilience of the populations to the effects of climate change. The resilience programme for populations facing the effects of climate change programme (REPECC) draws on the achievements of earlier interventions in the area of the environment as well as those from the 2008–2012 programme in the area of vulnerability to crises (see section 2.5 below). The first strategy consists of equipping national and local institutions and the populations with the capacity to sustainably manage ecosystems, notably through the development of tools, organizing training courses and distributing handbooks in order to encourage populations to adopt agro-sylvo-pastoral practices that are environmentally and economically beneficial.



66 Along with Gabon and the Congo, Cameroon is part of a regional GEF project for biodiversity conservation in the interzone of Dja-Odzala-Minkébé, a cross-border complex of protected areas. The ADR did not examine this regional project beyond a document review.

The second part of the programme supports the implementation of the national risk and disaster management policy, with the creation of tools and structures that are supposed to render institutions and communities more able to manage disasters and attenuate their impact. The theory of change that underpins the resilience programme is illustrated in Figure 4.<sup>67</sup>

#### 2.4.2 RESULTS OBTAINED WITH UNDP SUPPORT AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE OUTCOME

**Over the 2008-2015 period, most of the planned outputs were delivered, although this did not necessarily result in significant changes in environment management practices or in notable changes in the lives of the target populations.**

**In the area of the environment and climate change, the evaluation noted that UNDP helped to improve knowledge about environmental phenomena as well as establishment of a regulatory framework for the environment and combating climate change, and that it supported the dissemination of agro-sylvo-pastoral best practices amongst rural communities in the Sahel zone.** UNDP assisted the Government in updating the National Environment Management Plan in 2010, ensuring it included obligations set out by international conventions as well as concerns relating to climate change. In 2011, UNDP contributed to the preparation and publication of a national communication strategy on climate change adaptation, followed by other analyses (evaluation of risk, vulnerability and climate change adaptation, analysis of stakeholder capacity to adopt to change, consolidation of information available on the risks and vulnerabilities in the regions of the North and Far North). From 2011, UNDP supported the process of preparing a National Adaptation Plan for Climate Change, adopted in 2015. The Government of

Japan financed this process and UNDP provided technical and operational support alongside other partners such as GIZ and Global Water Partnership-Central Africa.

**UNDP strengthened the capacities of public actors in the production of environmental data while also putting planning tools at their disposal. The usefulness of these tools has not yet been demonstrated.** UNDP equipped national institutions with agro-meteorological and hydro-meteorological stations, IT hardware and software for collecting and analysing local climate data. Further capacity-building is still needed for these tools to become fully operational.<sup>68</sup> A climate change database was developed over the 2008-2012 programme cycle but the national report on the environment, which should draw on this database, has never been produced. More recently, UNDP provided support for the preparation of 455 maps of areas at risk of flooding and drought (an initiative at the national level), tools for which technical capacity is required if they are to be used correctly. A database on climate change and the risks for seven municipalities in the Far North was put in place and declared operational (it is accessible by MINEPDED, but not by the public).

**Aside from a few pilot interventions, communities have not yet adopted improved agro-sylvo-pastoral practices.** The REPECC programme provides for the adoption of new practices in these areas. A communication plan was drawn up in 2014 to raise awareness, inform and educate the populations with the aim of changing behaviour. The training of managers of 10 community and local radio stations resulted in the production of two disaster prevention and risk management micro-programmes, 11 public service announcements in local languages and 1,000 brochures. In addition, certain good practices have been disseminated to some of the

67 It should be noted that UNDP implements the GEF Small Grants Programme, which provides grants to improve the environment at the global level and the conditions for development at the local level. The ADR did not examine this programme in detail.

68 REPECC Mid-term review, p.4.

rural communities in the Sahel zone. These populations and the managers of two CEOCA were trained in four modules of sustainable ecosystem management, notably in agro-sylvo-pastoral best practices (production and use of compost, in particular). A best practices handbook was to be produced for widespread distribution, but it was not available at the time of the evaluation. Despite the interest shown by stakeholders at the municipal level for the activities of this project, their impact on the management of ecosystems is not clearly apparent.

**UNDP has contributed to initial capacity-building of local authorities and populations in disaster management.** The Ministry for Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MINATD), in charge of civil protection, accompanied the authorities and the local population in drawing up two emergency assistance plans (ORSEC) for the departments of Logone-et-Chari and Mayo-Danay, in the Far North region. Capacity-building workshops on risk management and the prevention of climate disasters were organized in seven localities in the area of intervention and multistakeholder crisis committees were created.

**The capacity to mobilize volunteers has been strengthened but this potential remains untapped.** The volunteer section of the Ministry for Youth Affairs and Civic Education (MINJEC) has existed since 2005 but it is under-resourced. From 2012, the Government decided to get more involved in volunteerism and in 2015, UNDP and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) programme assisted MINJEC in drawing up a national volunteer strategy and a national programme to facilitate the mobilization of the human resources needed for risk management and disaster prevention in the areas exposed to the effects of climate change. Two thousand leaflets relating to this strategy were distributed throughout the country. A platform bringing together volunteer organizations was put in place by MINJEC and meets on a monthly basis. According to MINJEC, 124 leaders have been trained, but including only a small minority

of women due to their low level of schooling and difficulties linked to Muslim customs.

**Problems relating to gender equality are not explicitly taken into account in the design of most UNDP interventions relating to the sustainable management of the environment.** Certain results obtained with the assistance of UNDP have not, as result of their very nature, had a direct impact on gender quality. This includes the National Environment Management Plan, the creation of agro-meteorological stations and the maps of areas vulnerable to natural disasters. Interventions at the local level strive to include women and other vulnerable groups, but the evaluation team does not have any information on any contributions to gender equality or the empowerment of women. The Small Grants Programme has made a specific mention of indigenous people in its strategy for the fifth operational phase, and its strategy for the sixth phase specifies that “projects funded during OP6 must promote gender equality and the empowerment of women”. However, the evaluation team did not have the opportunity to validate these results on the ground.

## 2.5 CRISIS PREVENTION

**2008-2012 outcome:** Vulnerability to crises is reduced

### 2.5.1 THE INTENDED OUTCOME AND UNDP STRATEGY

**Context.** At the beginning of the period covered by the evaluation, Cameroon was a haven of peace and stability in Central Africa, such that crisis prevention and response was focused on natural disasters such as desertification and the alternating episodes of drought and flooding, or diseases such as avian influenza. The country took in refugees and asylum seekers from neighbouring countries, mainly Chad, the Central African Republic and then Nigeria. February 2013 marked a turning point, with the advance of Boko Haram into Cameroon and the kidnapping of a French family. In 2014, Cameroon started to



deploy troops to fight against these incursions. Since then, the arrival of refugees and attacks on villages and markets in the Far North region is having a severe impact on the already precarious living conditions of the population in that part of the country.

**UNDP strategy.** The UNDP country programme for 2008-2012 aimed notably to reduce vulnerability to crises and envisaged building Government capacity in crisis prevention and crisis management, with the aim of fighting avian influenza and rehabilitating Lake Nyos.<sup>69</sup> UNDP then completed its portfolio with a pilot project seeking to encourage sustainable local development in the border region, which included issues of management of migratory flows and conflicts as well as a response to the flooding of August 2012.

The Country Programme Document for 2013-2017 did not include specific crises prevention objectives, although elements relating to the management of natural disasters are included in the REPECC programme, analysed in section 2.4. However, with the growing crises in the northern regions caused by Boko Haram, UNDP has responded with interventions that seek to bolster crisis prevention and rapid-response mechanisms in order to strengthen the resilience of the populations of the Far North. At the time of the evaluation, UNDP was putting in place a new project designed to prevent radicalization and strengthen capacity for rapid recovery.

### **2.5.2 RESULTS OBTAINED WITH THE SUPPORT OF UNDP AND PROGRESS TOWARDS THE OUTCOME**

**As it did not adopt a coherent and continuous strategy in the area of crisis prevention and cri-**

**sis response, UNDP has not contributed to any notable changes in this area. During the period in question, its approach evolved, initially focusing on response and then adopting the concept of resilience, with stops and starts. Recent interventions in the Far North have produced concrete results, but with a limited scope.**

At the beginning of the period, the main UNDP interventions included responses to specific problems: avian influenza<sup>70</sup> and Lake Nyos. With regard to the latter, concrete results were obtained from a technical perspective with the installation of gas venting towers and the strengthening of a natural dam.<sup>71</sup> UNDP also facilitated awareness-raising among populations and their involvement in the programme, the development of ORSEC plans with, for the first time, participation of the affected communities as well as the organization of simulation exercises. From 2013, the REPECC programme built on these achievements by favouring community participation in the preparation of ORSEC plans from the outset. However, the fundamental problems of the displaced communities from Lake Nyos persist 30 years after the disaster and the simulation exercises date back six years. A new national programme is yet to be developed.

In 2009, UNDP designed a pilot intervention for sustainable local development in the border region with Chad. This was implemented from 2010. Project objectives included integrating the management of migratory flows, managing conflicts and improving social cohesion and the security of people. According to reports, community infrastructure was built and leisure and sporting activities were organized to promote social cohesion, however the evaluation team was unable to confirm either their scale or their

69 In 1986, a volcanic explosion in Lake Nyos released poisonous gases causing the death of more than 1,700 people and the displacement of 4500 inhabitants from surrounding villages.

70 The ADR did not examine this project as these are specific interventions in the veterinary and public health sectors, without any links with other UNDP programmes. The latter also implemented a capacity-building project for the International School for the Security Forces (EIFORCES), the results of which are not directly related to the Cameroon country programme. ADR did not examine this project in depth.

71 In partnership with the European Union.

impact. According to the financial data, around 75 percent of the budget was spent on project management and 20 percent on project design, leaving few resources for the activities or for capacity-building. At the end of the pilot intervention, a national project of support for the border regions was developed by UNDP but it was not pursued.

In 2014, UNDP launched new initiatives seeking to create the conditions needed to strengthen social cohesion, prevent conflicts and put in place an early recovery framework in order to allow communities from the Far North region of Cameroon to improve their resilience to attacks from Boko Haram and other crises and disasters. In partnership with UNESCO and FAO, the programme facilitated the implementation of income-generating activities (FAO), community infrastructure (rehabilitated or newly-built livestock markets, UNDP), and platforms for dialogue and community radio stations (UNESCO). The livestock markets were meeting points and strong symbols of economic activity, and the people interviewed (local authorities, local del-

egations from ministries, centre managers and beneficiaries) appreciated the UNDP contribution, which complemented the humanitarian activities of other partners. However, given the deep and growing poverty in the region, aggravated by the security situation, the contribution of UNDP is modest.

The nature and the location of its intervention (villages affected by conflicts) means that the rapid-response programme contributed to the reduction of inequalities. Through the inclusion of women, and notably those at the head of the household, it also encouraged their empowerment. However, certain interventions, such as the construction or rehabilitation of livestock markets were not designed to take into account gender issues. These markets are male-dominated areas and adjustments made for other activities that are mainly performed by women (such as the sale of drinks or food) and/or for women's specific needs, as they were also starting to bring livestock to market, were not taken into account during the project design, but afterwards.

## Chapter 3

# QUALITY OF UNDP'S CONTRIBUTION

This chapter analyses the quality of the UNDP contribution to development in Cameroon, examining the relevance, efficiency and sustainability of the results to which UNDP has contributed.

### 3.1 RELEVANCE

This section examines the extent to which UNDP interventions are in line with national priorities and the UNDP mandate, as well as the country's human development needs. It will also analyse the relevance of UNDP's approach and strategies adopted to achieve the intended outcomes.

**UNDP's interventions in Cameroon correspond to national priorities and the global mandate of UNDP. However, the approaches adopted to achieve these objectives have not always been appropriate. For example, there has often been only a partial implementation of the theory of change, and the right levers to achieve results for the beneficiaries have not always been used.**

**In recent years, UNDP has positioned itself in line with the major challenges facing Cameroon.** By working on support for development planning and monitoring, reduction of corruption, quality of services, sustainable and inclusive development by better taking into account cross-cutting issues and the needs of vulnerable populations in public policies, and, more recently, the rapid response to the crisis caused by Boko Haram, UNDP has positioned itself well. Indeed, the challenges of Cameroon, which is a middle-income country, include boosting growth to accelerate development as well as better distributing the fruits of this growth, notably to the benefit of the most vulnerable, whose needs must be better identified and taken into account, improving essential services and reducing the risks relating

to climate uncertainties (such as the alternating episodes of drought and flooding in the Sahel regions) and HIV/AIDS. The examination of national strategies such as the PRSP and the GESP, the National Governance Programme, the National Environment Management Plan, on the one hand, and the UNDP country programmes, on the other, reveal that the latter are perfectly in line with national priorities.

**The themes chosen correspond to UNDP's mandate which is to work towards the reduction of poverty and inequality and in favour of sustainable development, democratic governance and resilience.** In general, UNDP interventions focused on vulnerable populations (taking into account their needs (PRINCES), respect for their rights (projects in the areas of human rights and political participation), improvement of income (SPRPB), improvement of resilience to the effects of climate change (REPECC)) as well as populations affected by violence and the influx of refugees. In general, the programmes supported by UNDP sought to reduce inequalities. Nevertheless, as underlined in the SPRPB analysis, although UNDP targeted the poorest regions of the country, no complementary mechanism had been planned to identify the poorest populations within the area of intervention.

**With regard to the relevance of UNDP's approaches, its general approach is coherent, but the implementation of the theory of change is only partial.** The theory of change adopted by UNDP for the programme as a whole consists of working on the conceptualization or modelling of positive institutional approaches likely to respond to national challenges, as well as experimenting with pilot services at the central and local level with the aim of putting in place advocacy activities as well as a development strategy on a wider

scale. This inevitably requires the Government and local development players to take ownership of the projects, and the mobilization of technical and financial partners. This approach is justified by the extensive experience of the global UNDP network which the country office can draw on, by its experience in South-South cooperation, and its limited resources. This fits within a context where advocacy must be supported by factual examples. This theory of change requires the country office to redefine itself as a laboratory and a promoter of ideas and projects and not as a project implementing agency. This would also imply that the management of projects that are proving successful is transferred to the administration with the assistance of other partners. However, experience shows that ensuring the sustainability of results takes time. The evolution of the UNDP programme between 2008 and 2015 is marked by changes in strategy with mixed results in terms of capitalizing on experience, with a tendency to focus on the implementation of activities rather than obtaining results. Thus, UNDP was mainly working on modeling<sup>72</sup> and experimentation or the production of rapid results<sup>73</sup>. It invested less in dissemination and advocacy for ownership by the Government and ensuring the technical and financial support of partners, or accompanying the development of projects on a larger scale.

**The theory of change model underpinning the CEOCA has gaps.** Over the 2013-2017 period, the programme approach in terms of improving incomes and the access of populations in the Sahel zone to basic socio-economic services was focused on the creation and operation of CEOCAs at the municipal level. This approach is pertinent and viable in a national context that is characterized a move towards decentralization.

According to the Constitution, the decentralized local and regional authorities (municipalities) are the basic units in the design and implementation of the country's development. The CEOCA is a promising system, because it could offer the entities involved in development an efficient and effective relay for the extension of their services to rural populations, which still represent nearly half of Cameroon's population, but which are currently still isolated. However, the theory of change for improving incomes and the access of populations to basic socio-economic services has gaps: how do the synergies operate between the existing public services and the other development initiatives in the region, particularly the National Participatory Development Programme (PNDP) as a public instrument for strengthening the capacities of municipalities? Does the supporting role played by the CEOCA mean that its staff replace the more qualified human resources that already exist? What role must the staff of the CEOCA play? How can they work with companies to promote employment without duplicating the activities of the National Employment Fund?

**UNDP has not always identified the right levers for achieving results with beneficiaries.**

For example, in the case of the economic and social inclusion programme, the current implicit theory of change involves carrying out an audit of the extent to which cross-cutting themes and the needs of vulnerable groups are taken into account in development plans, taking stock of the vulnerable groups in the municipalities in question, and through awareness-raising actions and strengthening the capacity of vulnerable populations to make them more able to defend their rights, leading to plans that take their issues into account. This approach was not applied in full in any of the municipalities. No local plan was revised.<sup>74</sup>

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72 For example, the preparation of plans, strategies and handbooks.

73 For example, the promotion of human rights in the sector of education, rapid-response initiatives in the fight against corruption, the pilot services within the public services project, the two Millennium Villages, and composting as good environmental practice.

74 Before revising a single local development plan, the programme planned to work on taking into account the issues and needs of vulnerable populations in annual action plans, which does not seem very wise, as annual action plans are rather short-lived.

The analysis of stakeholders shows that working through the PNDP, which supports councils in drawing up and implementing local development plans, to improve integration of these cross-cutting issues, and supporting pilot projects would have been more effective and more sustainable, whilst at the same time offering a faster scale-up given the national coverage of the programme.

Another limitation comes from the very concept of integrating the needs of vulnerable groups, as well as cross-cutting issues. Would integration result in a percentage of resources being attributed to projects specifically covering these themes or specifically targeting vulnerable groups? Would this mean using a classification scale for each project (such as the UNDP gender equality marker, for example)? If the second option appears to be more relevant, it would not be necessary to adapt the local development plans, instead a handbook could be prepared explaining how to draw up local development projects (and once again, the PNDP would be the most appropriate target here). The other target would be the public contracting authorities (the infrastructure department, among others) who sign off the works that should be integrating these cross-cutting issues. In the absence of a law, this would require, as for the environment, developing a government recommendation or directive regarding the integration of these themes and requirements in local projects.

**UNDP has emphasized in-depth analyses (which, in theory, are an asset) but often to the detriment of results.** Examples of this are found in the institutional analyses of councils as well as the actions seeking to improve the quality of

services. To accompany councils in their efforts to improve the quality of services to citizens, the standard procedure recommends a quality audit. Through PAAQSU, UNDP financed full institutional audits<sup>75</sup> of the councils, followed by restructuring plans, with budgets ranging from 109 million to 162 million CFA (around \$185,000 to \$320,000). This choice is questionable for a number of reasons. The first is that a quality audit is not an institutional analysis. A quality audit verifies the key points of the quality approach, namely: the priority given to the question of the quality of its services by the council, the commitment of elected representative and the council administration towards this objective, the organization of the work process to achieve service quality, a constructive dialogue with stakeholders and a continuous improvement mechanism. For each point, it should have been possible to identify gaps and propose simple and inexpensive corrective actions.<sup>76</sup> A second reason is that the actions plans created as a result of the audit are unrealistic in terms of their budget and their scope. Neither the councils nor UNDP have that level of resources.

Within the framework of the inclusion programme, to ensure that programming at the council level took into account cross-cutting issues and the needs of vulnerable groups, UNDP performed an audit, which took a lot of time, then drew up a handbook, before identifying people who could act as relays to raise awareness among vulnerable groups. These preparatory actions took up nearly three quarters of the programme duration, without achieving any real progress towards the outcome. The next phase is the support for some councils to integrate these

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75 On average 90 pages each in the three villages of Maga, Toumo and Moulvoudaye.

76 To illustrate this point, the field visit to one of the villages revealed that in the only office of the town hall dedicated to the civil registry, an essential service provided by the council, the registers and civil documents were mostly piled up on the ground and covered in dust. More documents were piled up on a damaged shelf unit. The only positive element was the new registers that the civil registry officer had just received and which allowed him to improve the efficiency of the services provided. Fitting out this room and acquiring some cupboards and registers, coupled with capacity-building for the three civil registry officers and the creation on the veranda of an area where users could sit, would be a much more efficient and cheaper improvement of the quality of service than the approach initiated through institutional analyses, for which it is uncertain that the recommendations will be implemented before the end of the programme. If a simple queuing system was added, with a list of prices and procedures in local languages, the impact would be further strengthened.

cross-cutting issues and the needs of vulnerable groups. As it would be difficult at this stage to revise the local development plans, it has been envisaged to revise the action plans, which are simpler to revise but shorter-lived, as the progress made can be wiped out from one year to another. Maybe it would have been preferable in this case to directly organize actions in line with the actions plans in order to take these issues into account? Once again, the chosen target does not seem to be the right one, as the PNDP would have been a more judicious choice here as well.

In other areas, UNDP could have invested in more in-depth analysis. In the case of SPRPB I and II, UNDP supported the implementation of various procedures for financial intermediation with rural communities in order to develop income-generating activities that were likely to reduce poverty. A range of procedures has already been tested in Cameroon and UNDP has put in place other microcredit experiments around the world. Previous experiences with rural credit in Cameroon, Niger and Benin have been described in a very detailed study of the feasibility of revolving funds. However, the study's recommendations are not fully supported by the analysis of previous experiences and do not correspond to the financing procedures adopted by the SPRPB II.

### 3.2 EFFICIENCY

This section analyses the efficiency of UNDP interventions in terms of the use of human and financial resources. Firstly, it will look at programme efficiency, in order to respond to the following questions: Did UNDP focus its resources on interventions that were likely to produce significant results? Were UNDP resources invested to obtain maximum impact? Did UNDP encourage synergies in order to reduce costs and amplify results? Did it form effective partnerships? Secondly, the evaluation will look at the internal organization of UNDP and certain aspects of the programme management in relation to the expected results (managerial and operational efficiency).

In order to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the programme, UNDP refocused its programme as it moved from the first to the second programme cycle, reducing the number of outcomes and adopting a more pronounced geographical concentration. However, other factors limited the programme's efficiency. For example, in certain cases, this refocusing resulted in rupture, making it difficult to capitalize on past achievements and create synergies, and certain actions were carried out without having any direct relation to the objectives in question. The preparation phases are very long and most of the resources were allocated to analysis and audits, meaning that the implementation of the identified solutions has only just begun. The development of partnerships and the mobilization of resources is a challenge and UNDP depends on a limited number of partners. UNDP has improved strategic planning and monitoring and evaluation over the period in question but the accent is placed more on outputs and less on outcomes. From an operational perspective, the national implementation model (NIM) as applied in Cameroon and the planning delays have reduced the effectiveness of the efforts undertaken. In addition, management costs are disproportionate.

#### 3.2.1 PROGRAMME EFFICIENCY

**UNDP refocused its programme as it moved from the first to the second programme, reducing the number of intended outcomes and outputs and introducing a geographic focus in the northern regions.** The 2008-2012 programme appears as a collection of projects, rather than a programme with clearly defined intended outcomes. The CPAP included seven expected outcomes and 23 expected outputs. In the area of governance, at the beginning of the programme there were two outcomes, "improved efficiency and transparency in State management" and "improved rule of law and strengthening of respect for human rights", which were then combined into one outcome, "improved efficiency, transparency, democracy and respect for human rights in State management", without there being any changes in the interventions supposed

to bring about these outcomes. There were few synergies between the interventions (support for elections, for the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms, notably with the introduction of human rights into the school syllabus, and the fight against corruption). However, the programme for 2013–2017 limits the scope of interventions. The CPAP includes only four outcomes and 14 outputs. In addition, the territorial coverage of the programme, initially spread over the entire country during the 2008–2012 cycle, was limited to municipalities in the north of the country (Far North, North and Adamaoua) during the 2013–2017 cycle. This choice should increase the effectiveness and efficiency of these operations. However, with regard to the poverty reduction programme, it should be noted that although the funds mobilized by UNDP were used for spending in the agreed target zone, the operational structure and the staffing in particular, continued to cover the entire country.

**In certain cases, refocusing the programme caused ruptures, resulting in a lack of capitalization on achievements and weak synergies.** The change in strategy between the two programme cycles is particularly notable in the area of governance. Most of the actions carried out during the previous cycle were not pursued in the second, and even when links could be established between, for example, the anti-corruption programmes and the improvement of public services, the operational reality shows that the second cycle did not build on the achievements of the first. As an illustration, the pilot services that received strong support through the PAAQSU (Yaoundé Emergency Centre and the Business Creation Centre (CFCE)) were not chosen from among the rapid-response initiatives nor from the islands of probity developed as part of the anti-corruption programme. The mid-term review of the REPECC showed that the programme does not take into account all the achievements of the Africa Adaptation Programme (AAP) in Cameroon, the implementation of which was coordinated by UNDP. Through

the AAP, the national meteorology directorate received climate forecasting equipment and materials. As part of the REPECC, monitoring and capacity-building in the correct utilization of the above-mentioned tools would have made it possible to optimize the sub-outputs relating to crisis and disaster management.<sup>77</sup> In the area of poverty alleviation, the results are mixed: SPRPB II was designed on the basis of SPRPB I, and a number of groups who received grants through SPRPB I demonstrated their achievements and succeeded in obtaining other grants from other development support organizations, with the aim of improving, developing or diversifying their income-generating activities. However, the actions to boost small and medium-sized enterprises implemented between 2008 and 2011 as a local development strategy for the creation of wealth and employment by Enterprise Cameroun have been interrupted. The pilot projects in the Millennium Villages have not had any impact outside of the villages themselves.

**Certain actions are carried out without a direct link to the desired results and with poor capitalization on past results.** In a context where the mobilization of resources is difficult, it is crucial that available resources are used wisely. A number of examples show that this has not always been the case. For example, in the case of PAAQSU, a number of actions were carried out to strengthen the capacities of the Permanent Secretariat for Administrative Reform, including study visits for the main technical adviser to the programme. These missions would have been more effective if they had allowed pilot departments to discover the experiences of a similar department in a different country. Similarly, the study of the connection of fibre optic cables in regional public sector headquarters was a very useful action but without any direct link with the results. In contrast, where tangible results could have been obtained, there was reluctance to provide the necessary resources. The most flagrant case is that of the simplification of business creation formalities. Five procedures were identified to this end. The only procedure

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<sup>77</sup> REPECC mid-term review, p.53. It is noted that REPECC organized training courses on using databases in August 2016, after the evaluation mission.

that was actually simplified substantially reduced the time required to start a business as well reducing the costs and favouritism. The programme only impacted on one of the five procedures and in three out of 11 centres. The generalization of this action would have had a notable effect on the entire business creation process across the whole country. This was a missed opportunity.

**The preparation phases are very long, greatly reducing the time available for implementation and an exit strategy.** As one of UNDP's partners remarked during an interview, "Many more problems have been diagnosed than solutions have been proposed". In the case of PAAQSU, the period from 2013 to 2016 was dedicated to preparing audits and drafting, validating and transmitting to Government the service quality standard, while 2016 and 2017 were focused on the creation of pilot projects. This timetable does not make it possible to improve services via implementation on a wider scale. Similarly, in the case of the PRINCES project from 2013 to 2016, the focus was on auditing and producing handbooks. As a result, the distribution of these handbooks to accompany the sectors and the councils in integrating cross-cutting issues when formulating sectoral policies, which was postponed to 2016-2017, leaves barely any time for sectoral policies and local development plans to evolve. In the case of the programme to reduce poverty at the grassroots, the CEOCA, which were only created in 2015 and 2016, have yet to achieve their full potential. The REPECC has prepared a number of studies, but the implementation of the solutions that have been identified is only just starting.

**A large proportion of resources was spent on analysis and audits.** A study of the categories of spending of the main programmes between Jan-

uary 2013 and June 2016 confirms the emphasis placed on analysis and audit. Around 30 percent of the budget of PRINCES<sup>78</sup> was spent on a variety of audits and inventories, and more than 50 percent of the budget was used for technical assistance to institutions in charge of preparing national reports. Training, advocacy and support for direct target-stakeholders represents just 8 percent of the budget. In the case of the resilience programme, around 90 percent of the programme spending was used to pay for audits, inventories, handbooks and action plans. In the case of PAAQSU, around 20 percent of resources were used for audits and 73 percent for pilot projects, the majority of which (54 percent) on business-creation centres. The SPRPB II is different from the others, with only 8 percent of resources spent on audits, handbooks and action plans. Most of the resources (77 percent) were spent on the construction of the CEOCA (see Annex 6, available online, for more details).

**The development of partnerships and the mobilization of resources remains a challenge. UNDP depends on a limited number of partners.** Between 2008 and 2015, the Japanese International Cooperation Agency was the most important financial partner for UNDP, with a contribution of \$5.73 million between 2010 and 2015 for the Millennium Villages programme. More recently, Japan contributed to the funding of rapid-response programmes in the north of the country.<sup>79</sup> The second largest partner was the Government of Cameroon, with a contribution of \$2.7 million between 2008 and 2012, particularly in the areas of poverty alleviation and the fight against corruption, and the evaluation of aid partnerships.<sup>80</sup> From 2012, the Government directly contributed little to UNDP ('contributions'), although from 2014, the annual work

78 These are the proportions of spending for programme activities. The ratio between spending on programme activities and spending on programme management is analysed below.

79 Japanese funds represent around 40 percent of the programme budget in 2016.

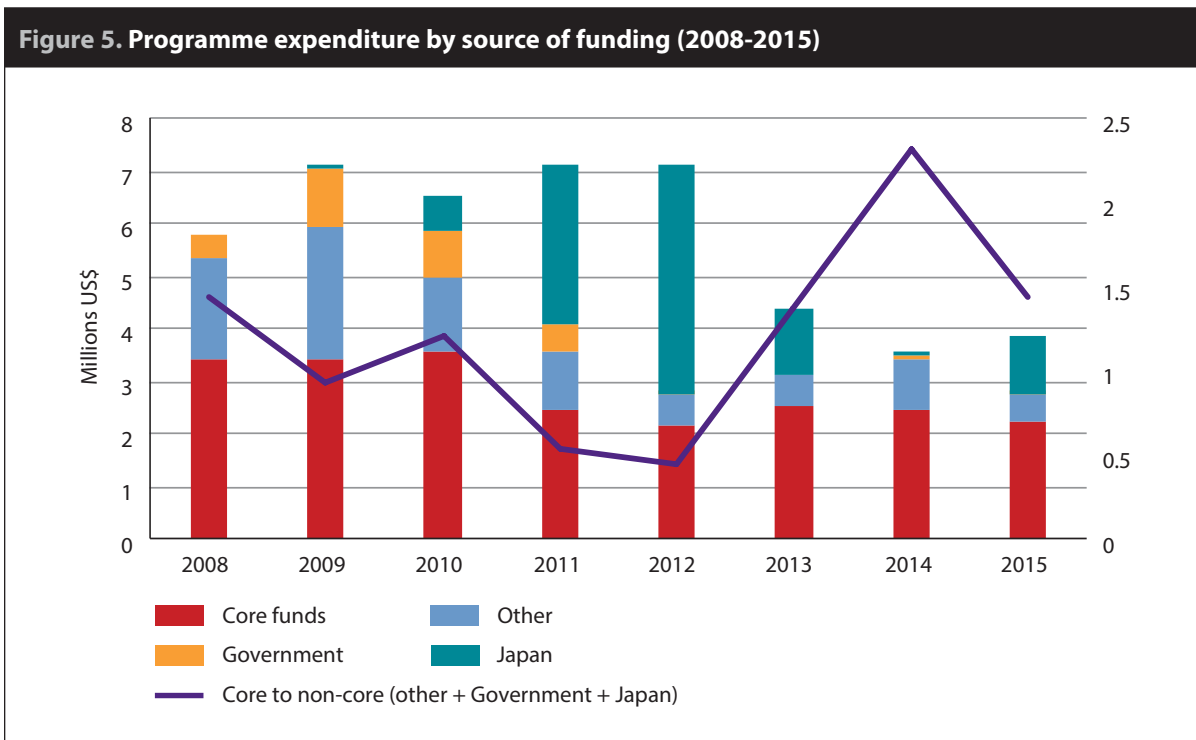
80 Other contributions have been recorded, particularly during the 2008-2012 programme, from the European Commission and the World Bank for the fight against avian influenza, the Common Fund of the GIZ (*Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*) for the fight against corruption, from the World Bank funding the creation of a multi-donor committee for the operationalization of the Paris Declaration, and the Canadian International Development Agency which made a contribution in support of election in 2011.



plans showed ‘counterpart’ funding from the Government, mobilization of which was difficult (with the exception of the SPRPB II where, according to the country office, the Government invested \$6.7 million in a counterpart fund for the 2013-2016 period). The ratio between the regular resource base of UNDP and partner contributions is shown in Figure 5, highlighting the reduction in contributions from 2013 (an analysis of preliminary data for 2016, carried out during the finalization of this report, indicated a change in tendency, with two thirds of the 2016 budget coming from partners and around 40 percent of the budget provided by Japan). The Global Environment Fund (GEF) is not a major partner for UNDP. Of 30 national GEF projects in Cameroon, only three are implemented by UNDP (compared to 10 project implemented by UNDP out of the 22 national GEF projects in Chad, and 12 out of 33 in Nigeria).<sup>81</sup>

The country office developed a resource mobilization strategy in July 2013, which identified the challenges relating to this mobilization. These challenges are twofold: the overall environment for development assistance and aspects intrinsic to UNDP (perceived complexity of its procedures, making it appear too bureaucratic, lack of visibility of its actions and lack of tangible results in the field and internal organizational considerations). This strategy, which “particularly seeks to identify new sources of funding”<sup>82</sup> has not produced convincing results, other than the partnership with Japan.

**UNDP did not adapt its resource mobilization strategy to uncertainties.** One of the operational problems of the country office comes from the lack of clear visibility as to resources that can be realistically mobilized, given the uncertainty surrounding Government contributions or counterpart funding. In such a context, it is unwise



81 [http://www.thegef.org/projects?f\[\]=field\\_country:38&page=2&views\[view\\_dom\\_id\]=52629d5e46541287f8bd582a06bd580&views\[view\\_name\]=projects\\_listing\\_search&views\[view\\_display\\_id\]=page&views\[view\\_path\]=projects&index\\_id=main&facet\\_field=field\\_p\\_implagencies](http://www.thegef.org/projects?f[]=field_country:38&page=2&views[view_dom_id]=52629d5e46541287f8bd582a06bd580&views[view_name]=projects_listing_search&views[view_display_id]=page&views[view_path]=projects&index_id=main&facet_field=field_p_implagencies) (retrieved on 4 October 2016). It should be noted that two regional GEF programmes were implemented in Cameroon during the period in question.

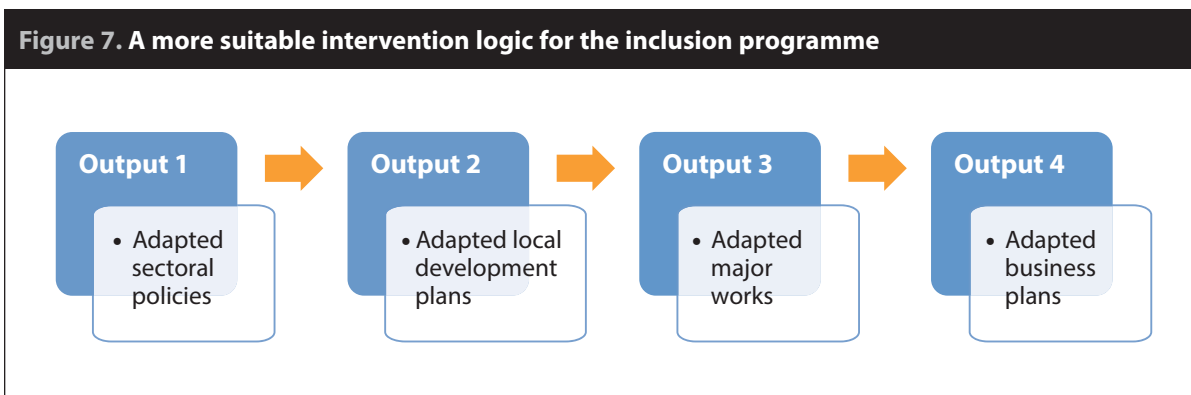
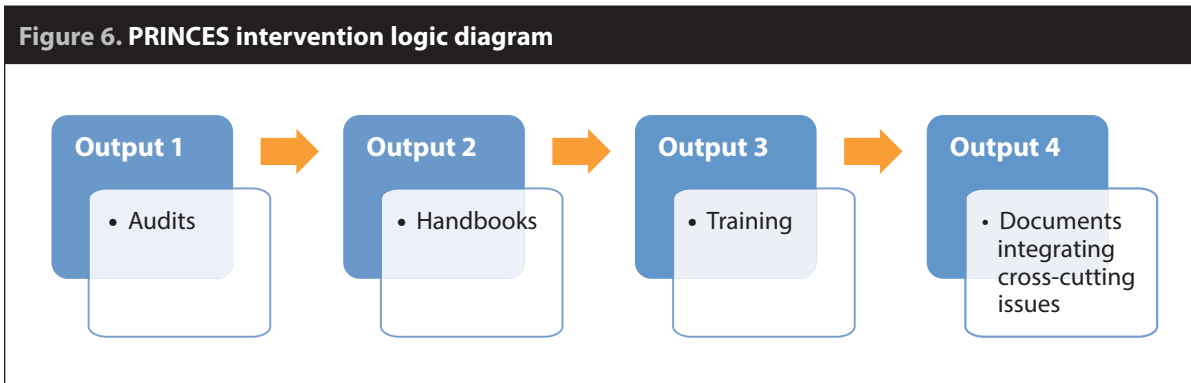
82 UNDP, ‘Resource Mobilization Strategy, Cameroon’, July 2013, p.9.

to plan to start all pillars of a project at the same time without being sure that the resources needed to complete them are available. For example, in the case of PRINCES, the current intervention logic is shown in the diagram in Figure 6. The programme first starts by performing all the audits, and then preparing all the handbooks, without being sure that it will have the resources it needs to complete the tasks, meaning that the actions undertaken may not reach completion and the expended resources thus being wasted.

In this context, it would have been preferable to define actions plans with two perimeters: one for definite resources, such as UNDP's own resources and a second perimeter based on probable resources, such as the contribution of the Government and other partners. The programme should be designed in such a way that it can complete the interventions using a minimal budget, but with scope for the interventions to be developed, completed or for others to be carried out using the additional resources that become available (see Figure 7).

The programme designed on the basis of 'definite' resources could then integrate independent interventions based on sectoral policies, local development plans, major works or business plans. In this way, some results would have been obtained by now. A similar argument applies to the programme for improving public services.

**Although UNDP has demonstrated its capacity to adapt to the changing situation, it has nevertheless missed certain opportunities.** From 2013, after the reduction of the country programme for the 2013-2017 period, the presence of the armed group Boko Haram started to make itself felt in Cameroon. In May 2014, the Government reorganized its security forces in order to better combat these incursions, which were having an increasingly noticeable impact on populations and the local economy. UNDP responded in 2015 with a series of interventions to strengthen crisis prevention mechanisms as well as the resilience of populations in the Far North. In 2016, UNDP and the Government worked together to adapt the country programme to the changing context. Similarly,



ongoing programmes were revised in order to work with the most severely affected municipalities.

However, within its ongoing interventions, UNDP has sometimes allowed opportunities to pass it by, such as with the PRINCES programme. As mentioned earlier, the timetable for the programme included carrying out half a dozen audits<sup>83</sup>, followed by the production of handbooks and advocacy documents. Until the end of 2015 and early 2016, these works formed the main part of results achieved. One and a half years before the end of the programme, although the actions carried out and their potential are undeniable, lack of time means the programme is likely to be unable to put in place a sectoral policy that truly integrates cross-cutting issues as well as the needs of vulnerable populations, despite the real possibilities to have achieved meaningful results. In 2014, seven sectoral policies were initiated in key sectors for vulnerable populations such as agriculture and infrastructures. The programme could have seized the opportunity to contribute to formulating these policies. It could have concentrated on a key sector, that of sectoral policies, by drawing up a handbook from the audit that had been carried out and by strengthening the capacities of the stakeholders involved. This missed opportunity suggests that the approach adopted was too focused on planned actions irrespective of the context, and suffered from a lack of strategic guidance.

**Over the period covered by the evaluation, although the UNDP country office significantly improved its strategic planning as well as the effectiveness of its monitoring and evaluation, emphasis was placed more on outputs than on results.** The country programme results framework for 2008-2012 is characterized by general outcome statements such as “improved efficiency and transparency in State management” and indicators such as the Transparency International Perception Index (without baselines or targets). The 2013-2017 country programme includes more

precise outcomes such as “improving the services provided to users of public services” with coherent indicators such as “the percentage of users satisfied by the quality of the services provided” (with baselines and targets). However, the formulation of these outcomes is confusing: there are five UNDAF outcomes, five outcomes mentioned in the CPD narrative, three components in the results framework, and four CPAP outcomes, which complicates their monitoring and evaluation. A number of CPD indicators are not included in the UNDP management system.

There was a clear improvement between the first and second programme cycles in monitoring using the UNDP management system. Regular programme progress reports were available for the second cycle, which had not been the case for the first cycle. Between 2011 and 2013, the country office scored 17/20, in 2014 18/20, and in 2015 25/30 (which corresponds to 17.4/20 according to the previous methodology) for the quality of its annual reports. In recent years, the country office has organized regular monitoring meetings, a good practice. However, they mainly cover the annual action plans and the financial implementation rate, and not the progress made in towards the outcomes. If the progress made had been taken into account, this would have, for example, led to a change in strategy for certain interventions as suggested above in the case of the inclusion programme. Field visits by the programme team are rare (other than the visits made by the Resident Representative and by the small team based in the Far North region to manage the rapid-response interventions). However, the office commissioned a mid-term evaluation of each of the four main programmes relating to four country programme outcomes, and this is a positive point.

### 3.2.2 EFFICIENCY OF MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

**The national implementation modality (NIM) as applied in Cameroon and the implementa-**

83 On policies and actions plans (audit 1), on local development plans (audit 2), on major works (audit 3), on policies for indigenous peoples (audit 4), on taking into account the needs of vulnerable populations in local development plans (audit 5) and on poverty issues in the development of private sector activities (audit 6).

**tion schedule for the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) compromises the efficiency and thus the effectiveness of the country programme.** The 2008–2012 CPAP planned for the implementation of the HACT policy.<sup>84</sup> The mid-term review of the programme in September 2010 recommended its application, which would “make it possible to substantially reduce payment processing times, whilst also giving more responsibility to the implementing partner and focusing more on achieving results than on administrative procedures”. An audit carried out in 2012 observed that a macro-study had been proposed in 2009, but had not been followed up. At the time of the ADR, this macro-study had been carried out, but not the micro-study of the implementation partners, which is still pending. Thus, UNDP does not make advance payments to Government and UNDP programme managers have to spend time on administrative tasks rather working on substantive issues and advocacy.

**Annual work plans are systematically signed with delays.** Stakeholders recognize that the annual work plans are often signed off well after the beginning of the year, which delays the start of activities and thus the progress made towards obtaining results.<sup>85</sup> One of the main reasons given for this is the delay from the Government in deciding the size of its contribution to annual work plans. To this can be added the fact that the UNDP timetable and the preparation of work plans are not adequately synchronized with the national budgetary agenda, preparation of which starts at the end of the last half of the previous year. In all cases, this is an untenable situation in terms of an efficient use of resources and effective action, partly because the fixed costs are consumed without any relation to the activities that would

justify them, and partly because this impinges on the time actually spent on activities, given that towards the end of the year, the programme has to report on and plan for the next year. This suggests that programme staff spend a disproportionate amount of time on planning and writing reports, to the detriment of programme activities.

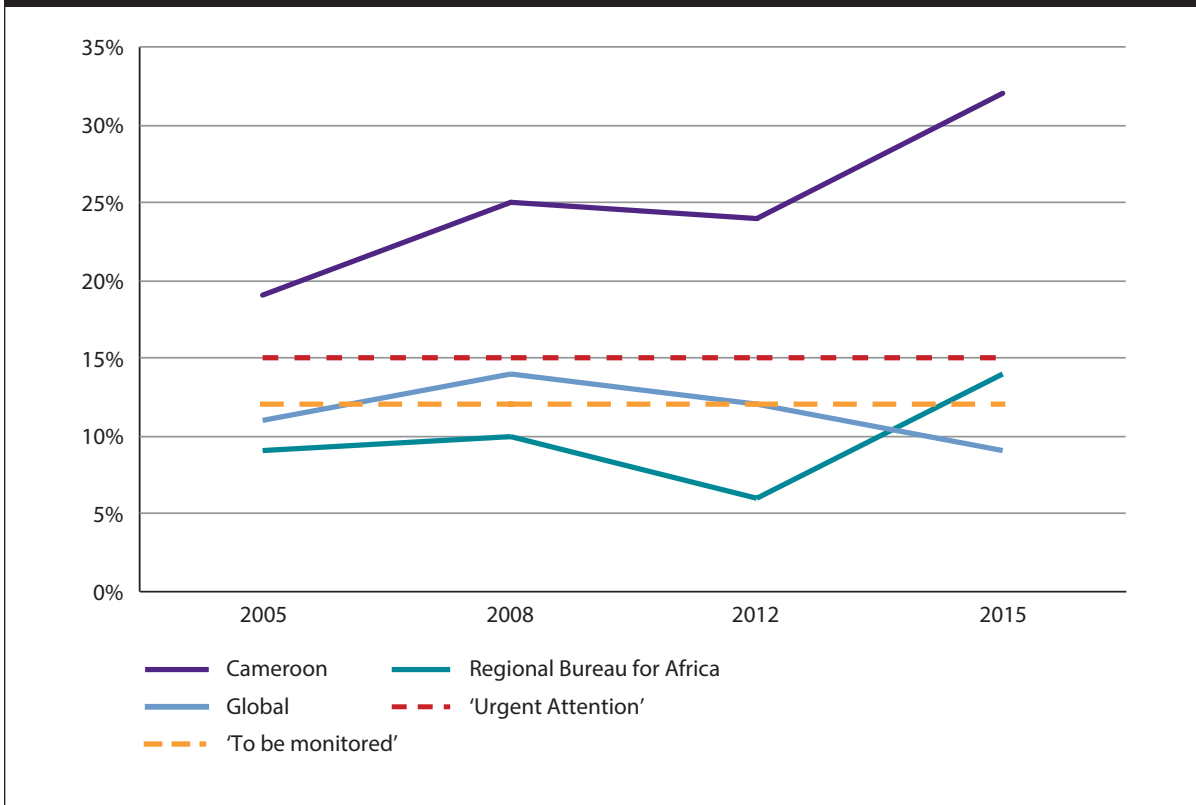
**The complexity of the United Nations and UNDP planning system contributes to the delays.** In mid-2015, the Government asked the United Nations country team and UNDP to revise strategic documents in order to take into account the new challenges facing the country. UNDP and MINEPAT organized a CPD revision workshop from 29 March to 2 April 2016 to take into account the new priorities in terms of early recovery, resilience and the employment of young people in the Far North region, aligning them with the UNDP global strategic plan. At the time of the data collection mission, nearly one year after the Government’s initial request, this revision had not yet been finalized. One of the reasons given for the delay was the lack of clarity from UNDP on the process to follow and the format to adopt when revising the CPD. A new planning exercise for the UNDAF and the next country programme is under way, although the revision of the current programme has barely been completed.

**UNDP programme management costs are disproportionate.** According to UNDP management recommendations, a ratio of 12 percent between management costs and the global programme cost requires close monitoring and 15 percent requires urgent attention. According to UNDP data, Cameroon is situated well above both of these levels, as well as above the average for the Regional Bureau for Africa (see Figure 8). An analysis of financial

84 “In accordance with the Harmonization on Cash Transfer mechanisms (HACT), the United Nations agencies will carry out a macro-study on the capacity of public financial systems. This study will be completed by a micro-study of each implementing partner”. CPAP 2008–2012, p.14.

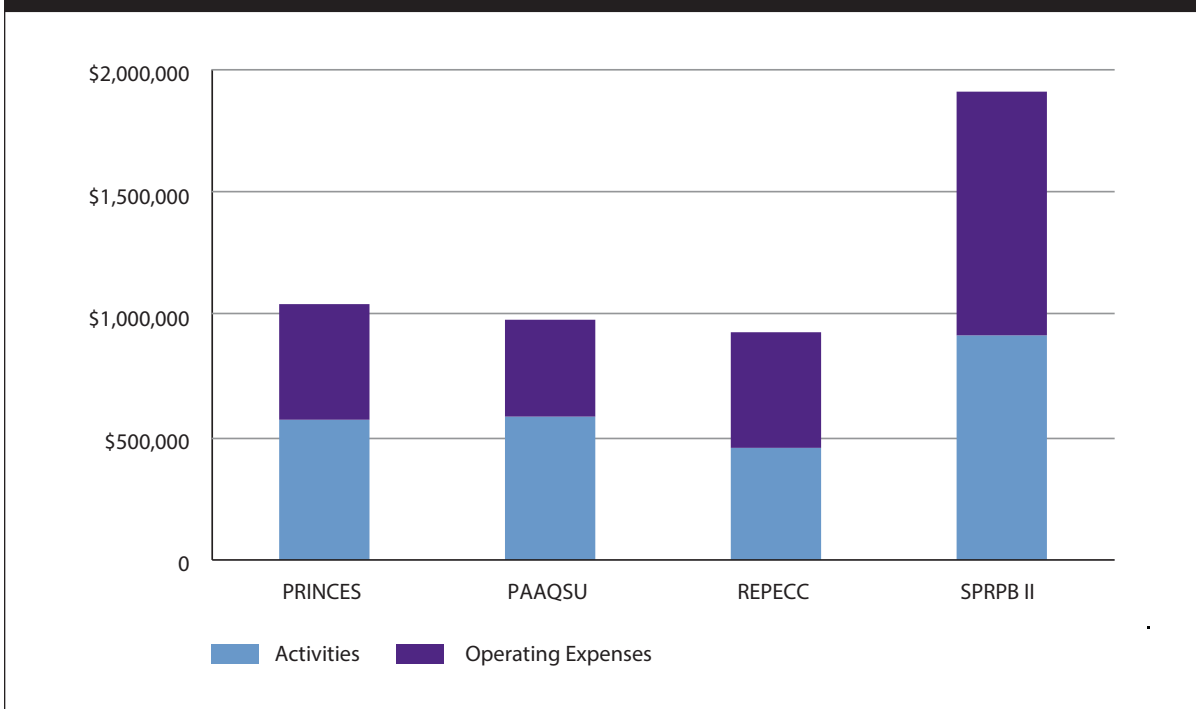
85 The majority of annual action plans are not dated, but according to the country office, all work plans are generally signed off at the same period. The evaluation team was able to identify at least one dated annual action plan for each year from 2013. As an example, the CPAP was signed in April 2013 (three months late) and the 2013 work plan of the programme for improving public services was only signed in August. In 2014, the work plan of the resilience programme was signed in March and in 2015 it was signed in June. At the time of the evaluation mission, the 2016 annual work plans were not signed off because of the revision of the country programme (a retreat to this end was held in April).

**Figure 8. Ratio of expenditure on management to total expenditure (2005-2015)**



Source: Atlas Executive Snapshot, June 2016

**Figure 9. Expenditure on activities and operating expenses**



Source: Atlas Executive Snapshot, June 2016

data for the four main programmes during 2013–2016 shows that activities represents around 52 percent of total spending while operating expenses represent on average 48 percent of total spending (see Figure 9 and Annex 6, available online).

**UNDP in Cameroon has not created an enabling environment for the integration of gender issues in programming.** The UNDP country programme emphasizes inclusion and seeks to strengthen the Government’s capacity to integrate cross-cutting issues such as gender and the environment in its planning and strategy documents. However, UNDP itself has not yet put in place all the necessary elements for producing results in terms of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The country office carried out a self-assessment as part of the UNDP Gender Equality Seal and scored just 8 out of 42 points (19.05 percent). The country office does not have a strategy for this issue other than the UNDP global strategy. At the time of the preparatory mission, the UNV programme manager was acting as the gender focal point, but at the time of the main ADR mission, she had left and was yet to be replaced. The composition of UNDP staff is still far from achieving gender balance (see Annex 3, available online). Nothing suggests that the programme design integrates a gender-based analysis. Most of the programme indicators do not have different targets for men and women, although data disaggregated by gender appears in annual reports (see Annex 5, available online).

**Instability in the country office management team until 2013 was a factor with the potential to undermine programme effectiveness.** From early 2008 until the arrival in 2013 of the current Resident Representative, the country had seen five Resident Representatives or ad interim Resident Representatives, including a six-month period in 2012 during which the Deputy Resident Representative occupied the role. Between 2008 and the time of the ADR, the programme had seen three Deputy Resident Representatives, one of whom occupied the role for just 13 months. Since 2013, the country office has experienced a period of stability.

### 3.3 SUSTAINABILITY

This section examines the sustainability or the potential sustainability of the results to which UNDP has contributed.

**Certain institutions that received UNDP support during the first programme cycle have achieved results. However, the changes in strategy that occurred between the two programme cycles and the lack of capitalization on achieved results leave an impression of unfinished work. With regard to the current interventions, progress is very slow and the potential viability of results, if UNDP were to reduce or stop its support, is low.**

Experience shows that if results are to be definitive, development takes time. The evaluation team noted for example that MINEPAT is capable of monitoring development through national reports, at least partly thanks to the assistance provided without interruption since 2000 by UNDP, as part of the preparation for the PRSP. Other institutions, which received support for a shorter period, also increased their capacities thanks to UNDP interventions. For example, when aid to the National Human Rights Commission was stopped, the Commission continued its work in the area of primary education, but it could not make the progress it wanted to in the secondary and university levels, due to a lack of resources. ELECAM, supported by UNDP when it was created, continues its work with the support of multiple partners. The institution notably achieved progress in taking into account the needs of citizens with disabilities (with the support of SightSavers) and in terms of participation of women in political life. CONAC, despite the challenges, is continuing its anti-corruption work.

However, the results of other interventions have not lasted. The rapid-results initiatives and the islands of probity of the CHOC project are eloquent examples of experiences that were successful but not capitalized upon. They show that initiatives that bring about change can be undertaken at all levels, including at a structural level, without

necessarily coming from on high. CONAC continues to implement rapid-results initiatives – use of this tool is a definite achievement – but the programme implementation schedule has proven to be too long. These initiatives, which seek to raise awareness of the phenomenon and test ideas before the application of structural reforms as part of the anti-corruption strategy, have become the core action of the project. Although PAAQSU was supposed to build on the CHOC project, its design and the choice of new pilot services did not take into account the experiments already carried out by CHOC<sup>86</sup>, which shows the gap between the two programmes. To give another example, during the first period, and even earlier, actions had been carried out to take into account the issues of gender equality and HIV/AIDS in certain sectors and regions. There does not appear to have been any capitalization on these efforts, and the PRINCES programme embarked upon costly and lengthy audits that delayed the launch of any concrete actions. Investments in the integrated development programme in the border region did not produce sustainable results, with the proposed national programme being abandoned. With regard to capacity for risk prevention and risk management, the competencies acquired within the framework of support for the rehabilitation of Lake Nyos were also put to use in supporting the populations and the administrative and traditional authorities in the Far North in drawing up emergency response plans in the event of natural disasters as well as in the formation of mixed crisis committees as part of the REPECC, which is a positive point. However, with regard to the region of Lake Nyos itself, the needs of the affected populations have not been satisfied, the simulation exercises are six years old and the knowledge acquired risks being forgotten.

With regard to the ongoing programmes, progress is slow and achievements are fragile. Without continued support, real change seems very unlikely. As mentioned above in the case of PRINCES, no strategy, policy or local devel-

opment plan has been revised. In the case of PAAQSU, the quality standard for public services is a concrete result, but on its own, it is far from representing a guarantee of quality. The CEO-CAs, which appear to have a certain potential, are still very recent and councils will probably need continuing support to realize this potential, build staff capacity, guarantee that all populations have real access to their services and clearly position this institution among the others. It should be noted that although certain municipalities with a CEOCA have already allocated operating costs from their budget, and others are planning to do so, a sign of support for the model, their long-term financing still must be ensured. Within the framework of REPECC, UNDP support for MINATD, MINEPDED and MINJEC allowed the central and decentralized public services, traditional authorities and community organizations to acquire knowledge, expertise and tools (maps, databases, materials and procedures) necessary to improve the resilience of decentralized local and regional authorities against climate change, but their capacity to pursue these actions once they are no longer receiving the leadership and financial support of UNDP remains to be proven. In all cases, although results are observable at the level of some municipalities, the time needed for their implementation limits the possibility of analysis, evaluation and capitalization on achievements before the end of the programmes.

The sustainability of the achievements raises a number of challenges. UNDP works on complex, multidimensional issues. For example, the question of quality of services is not only one for administrative mechanisms but also requires an evolution in organizational culture and a commitment from the upper echelons of the administration. In the current context, there is a risk that the experiments in quality will remain limited number to a few structures with dynamic leadership. The frequent rotation of administrative managers does not encourage sustainability. The mobilization of resources for disaster risk

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86 It would appear that there is no documentation on the experience and lessons learned from the first rapid-results initiatives.

reduction remains difficult, due to the absence of adequate political visibility. The budgetary situation at the national level is not conducive, with a growing proportion of resources allo-

cated to the security response in the north of the country, which correspondingly reduces the counterpart funding available to the UNDP programmes.



## Chapter 4

# STRATEGIC POSITIONING AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

This chapter presents a succinct analysis of some of the cross-cutting aspects of the UNDP country programme in Cameroon, relating to its strategic positioning in the national context and its capacity to capitalize on its comparative advantages, its contribution to the advancement of gender equality and the reduction of inequalities, and the impact of the crisis on achieved results. It concludes with brief observations of the contribution of the UNV programme to results.

**UNDP is seen as an organization upholding United Nations values. While UNDP is recognized for its commitment to vulnerable people and appreciated for the priority it places on capacity-building, its role and its comparative advantages are not clearly perceived by all its partners.**

UNDP is recognized for the support it provides to the authorities for the fulfilment of national commitments with the global development agenda (notably in the area of the MDGs), the organization (in conjunction with the United Nations system) of consultations on the SDGs and preparing human development reports. It has supported Cameroon in the adoption of international instruments in the areas of anti-corruption and respect for human rights. In this regard, a draft law in line with the United Nations Convention against Corruption was drawn up, although the Government has not adopted it. The preparation of the National Plan for the Promotion of Human Rights also responds to international recommendation. UNDP has integrated cross-cutting issues in all of its support programmes (see below).

UNDP is also distinguished by its role in facilitating dialogue between technical and financial partners and the Government. During the 2008-2012 programme cycle, it led a committee of 10

ambassadors who engaged in close dialogue with the authorities on the fight against corruption. It also piloted the anti-corruption project financed by a multi-donor fund and continues to co-chair the multi-donor committee scheduled to meet on a monthly basis.

UNDP has the capacity to bring together various partners and reinforce interministerial cooperation, two essential elements to meet the complex and multidisciplinary challenges which the country is confronted. UNDP has chosen areas where intervention, to be effective, must be interministerial (human rights, gender equality, environment, climate change, the fight against corruption, quality of public services, etc.). The essence of the PRINCES programme is to encourage multidisciplinary management of many of these subjects. The same applies for the PAAQSU, whose aim is to promote the commitment of various public bodies to enhance service quality. The partnership between MINEPDED and MINATD for the implementation of the REPECC is a positive and tangible step towards breaking down silos.

However, no tangible result on these cross-cutting questions can be sustainable without operational institutional and management mechanisms, and without the breaking down of silos and the development of effective dialogue between ministries. Today, the multidisciplinary management of these themes is organized around three levers: assistance to the department playing the driving role in a particular area to launch a policy; the existence of focal points or units in the other departments (focal points for the environment, anti-corruption unit, HIV unit, focal points for quality, human rights unit, etc.); and, the preparation of handbooks on how to incorporate these questions into sectoral policies. UNDP has con-

tributed to strengthening these three levers, all of which are relevant. However, their effectiveness would be optimized were there to be real multi-disciplinary management based on strengthened interministerial coordination.

Some partners underline the relevance of the concept of resilience, a central tenet of the UNDP global strategic plan and the Cameroon country programme. UNDP is in a good position to promote reflection on this complex issue, as it already works on the closely interrelated questions of economic poverty, inclusion, climate change and conflicts.

Many of those interviewed recognize and appreciate the emphasis UNDP places on capacity-building. In addition, UNDP has been able to use its international network to facilitate South-South cooperation, although it does not have a clearly defined South-South strategy. For example, several study visits were organized, notably to Senegal and Benin on anti-corruption questions, as well as to Rwanda and Morocco on the question of quality of services.

Despite this positioning, UNDP's partners do not have a clear image of UNDP's role. UNDP is seen by many of them as just another donor. As a result, UNDP suffers from what one partner called the 'amount effect', where national partners tend to value the size of the financial contribution from the technical and financial partners. In terms of volume of aid, UNDP will never rival certain actors, especially given the reduction UNDP core resources and difficulties in mobilizing resources for this middle-income country which further limit its latitude in this area. In discussions held with other government departments, there were hints that some feel that UNDP should adopt a role of implementing agency for the Government.

Their point of view is reinforced by the requests for Government contribution to the operation and funding of country office activities.

**In addition to the programme specifically focused on improving integration of the concerns of women and other vulnerable groups in plans, policies and sectoral strategies, UNDP integrates cross-cutting issues into its programmes and advocacy work. Results are noted particularly in terms of inclusion of women and vulnerable people in programme activities ('gender targeted' on the Gender-Results Effectiveness Scale).**

The 2008-2012 CPAP notes that "UNDP will ensure that the projects and programmes that it supports systematically integrate questions of gender and equity"<sup>87</sup> while the 2013-2017 CPAP indicates that "in addition Programme 1 which addresses different forms of exclusion, the gender, disability and participation dimensions will be systematically taken into account in all programme when formulating activities"<sup>88</sup>. An analysis of the gender markers<sup>89</sup> assigned by the country office to its projects shows a positive change between the two programme cycles, with greater attention paid to this question in the 2013-2017 programme. For example, during the first programme, the country office rated eight projects as being 'GEN0', but none of those implemented since 2012 have fallen into this category (see Figure 10 and Annex 4, available online). Nevertheless, the programme has not achieved the benchmark ranking of the UNDP Gender Equality Seal, for the percentage of projects with gender equality objectives.

An analysis of results achieved with the support of UNDP using the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale shows that most of the results are

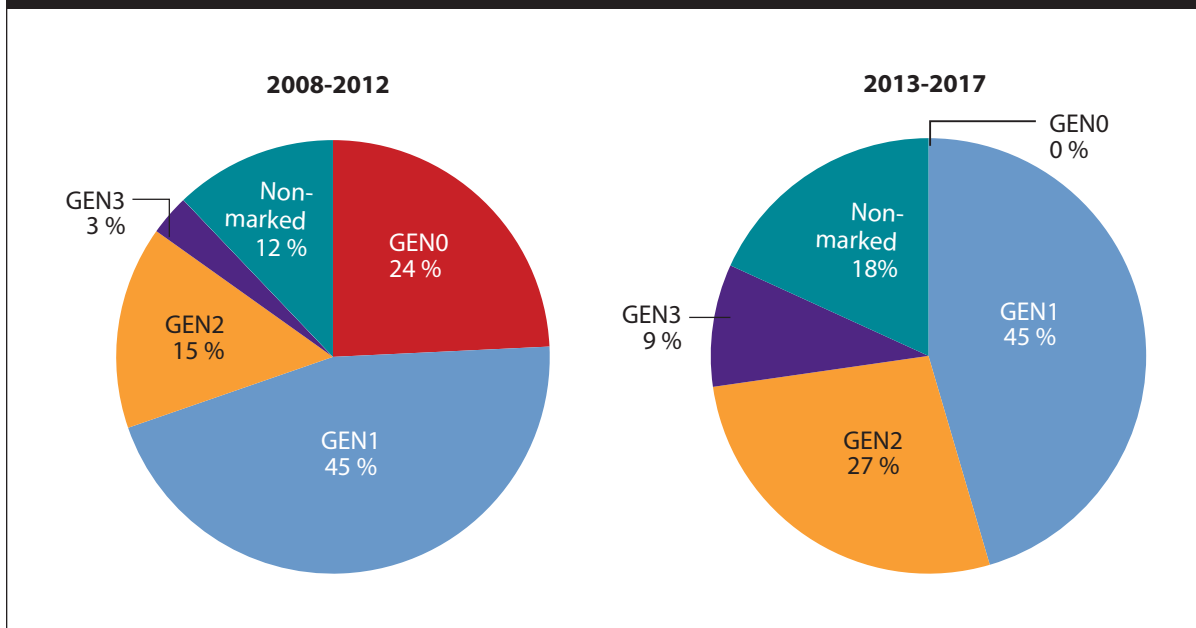
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87 CPAP 2008-2012, p.6.

88 CPAP 2013-2017, para 4.10, p.13.

89 The gender marker, a UNDP institutional tool, grades from 3 to 0. A score of 3 means that the UNDP country office considers that gender equality is the primary objective of the output. A score of 2 indicates that gender equality is a significant objective of the output. A score of 1 means that the output will contribute a little to gender equality but not significantly. A score of 0 means that no observable contribution is expected from the output in terms of gender equality.

**Figure 10. Gender marker: percentage of projects per category**



Source: Atlas; see also Annex 4, available online.

gender-specific (meaning that particular attention is paid to the number of men and women involved in the project). Several outputs, such as strategies in the environment portfolio, provision of technical equipment and the improvement of pilot public services, are neutral (the results do not take into account this dimension). In certain cases, this is associated with the very nature of the product. In other cases, it is an example of a missed opportunity for integrating gender equality. The diagnostic studies are considered to be gender-sensitive, although they are intermediate outputs and not results that benefit populations. The quality standard for public services, which addresses the differentiated needs of vulnerable people, constitutes another example of a gender-sensitive output. A gender-transformative result has been observed in the case of support for the electoral system: the number of women representatives rose from 13 percent for the 2009-2012 legislature to 31 percent in the 2013-2017 legislature, progress which is partly a result of the support and advocacy carried out jointly by

UNDP and UN Women to boost the presence of women in electoral mandates (see Annex 7, available online, for more details on the analysis of results relating to gender equality).

With regard to the reduction of other forms of inequality and exclusion, people with disabilities are clearly mentioned in UNDP<sup>90</sup> documents as a specific vulnerable group. A number of analyses (such as the council level organizational analyses and the feasibility studies for the CEOCA) took into account the specific challenges of this category of people (although they are often grouped together with women and young people). The quality standard for public services takes the needs of people with disabilities into account. The evaluation team noted that many interviewees spontaneously mentioned people with disabilities as a vulnerable group, although this could not be directly linked to the advocacy work of UNDP. During field visits, the lack of specific facilities for people with disabilities in the layout of the CEOCA was noted (access ramps, size

90 The 2013-2017 CPAP mentions people with disabilities more systematically than the previous CPAP.

of doors and layout of toilets and offices).<sup>91</sup> The UNDP country office itself is not accessible to people in wheelchairs.

The unemployment rate of young people is a social concern, including in the north of the country where the security crisis and the border closures have had a considerable impact on the local economy, particularly on the informal activities often carried out by young people, who then become easy prey for extremists. Since the 2008-2012 cycle, the UNDP country programme has included activities targeting young people, particularly in the area of human rights where, with the support of UNDP, the National Commission on Human Rights and Freedoms intervened in the education sector. UNDP and the UNV programme supported the preparation of the national volunteer strategy in 2014, which, among other things, seeks to create a framework and the conditions for leveraging the experience of young people as well as that of senior citizens. In general, UNDP's approach to youth can be likened to the 'gender-targeted' approach, where the number of youth involved is emphasized, rather than transformational change. For example, the programmes supporting SMEs and income-generating activities mention young people as a target group, but the data collected does not indicate whether this group received specific attention (indeed, according to the 2015 annual report, out of 496 people who had been made aware of the support available from the CEOCA, only 15 percent were young people). It should be noted that the new programme for the prevention of radicalization and the strengthening of rapid recovery places a particular emphasis on the development of the livelihoods of young people and the reintegration of radicalized young people in their communities. In addition, the SPRPB II included in its work plan for 2016 increased efforts to create jobs for young people.

### **Despite the insecurity caused by the armed attacks of Boko Haram in the Far North region,**

### **UNDP interventions have been able to continue, with modifications. UNDP responded to the crisis by strengthening its own capacities, developing new programmes and adapting its existing programmes.**

Given the change in context since the 2013-2017 country programme was prepared, particularly with the armed attacks by Boko Haram, the evaluation team looked to evaluate the impact of the crises on the expected results of the programme. It proved to be very difficult to estimate the true impact of the conflict and this section of the report simply includes observations. In general, the programmes supported by UNDP continued their work in the Far North, adapting to the conditions. Some interventions in some municipalities were delayed or had to be postponed. A number of activities had to be organized in Maroua, the capital of the Far North region, rather than carrying them out in the target municipalities, which reduced their effectiveness and their efficiency. The security situation limited the movement of staff and certain sites are not easily accessible by UNDP staff. This limits capacity to monitor activities, which was already inadequate (see section 3.2.1).

As previously mentioned, the country office responded to the crisis situation by drawing up new programmes. In addition, in 2016 the ongoing programmes were adjusted to better address the needs of vulnerable populations facing conflict, for example by planning the implementation of two new CEOCA in the municipalities close to the border with Nigeria, which plays host to refugees and internally displaced people. The PRINCES programme plans to focus on activities targeting vulnerable groups in the Far North, as well as stopping certain activities scheduled to take place in the cities of Yaoundé and Douala. The PAAQSU included additional initiatives seeking to develop strategies for limiting the enrolment of young people (girls and boys) in extremist groups. The annual work plans had not been signed at

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91 A standard plan for forthcoming CEOCAs, made public after the end of the ADR data collection process, provides for specific adaptations, such as ramps for wheelchair access.

the time of the evaluation so it was not possible to evaluate the results of these new orientations. However, it is possible to ask whether these modifications will suffice to guarantee the relevance of these programmes for the populations affected by conflict (to give just one example, an activity included in the PRINCES project to raise awareness among vulnerable target populations about their rights, responsibilities and advantages relating to their participation in the decision-making process, will not necessarily respond to the most urgent priorities of these populations).

The UNDP country office has strengthened its capacities in order to meet the new challenges. With the support of the Regional Bureau for Africa it recruited a peace and development adviser as well as a rapid recovery specialist. With the emergency funds made available by headquarters, the country office was able to undertake an assessment of the situation and the needs for early recovery in the Far North. UNDP was then able to mobilize additional funding from the Government of Japan to launch new interventions in the north and east of the country. However, the staff of the UNDP country office have not received any specific training on conflict-sensitive development approaches or the principles of “do no harm”.

With regard to the Government, the security situation in the country requires more and more

funding to address the terrorist threat, removing available resources from programmed activities. For example, UNDP facilitated the completion of a study on indigenous populations in the South region, but the budget for the next stage of the activities programmed by MINREX has been cancelled.<sup>92</sup>

The UNDP partnership with the UNV is limited. The manager of the UNV programme contributed to the development of a national volunteer strategy and the integration of volunteers into the work on preparing responses to natural disasters. UNDP has not engaged UNVs in its development projects but received UNV support in the country office (procurement, monitoring and evaluation). In addition, the UNV programme officer contributed to the development of a national volunteer strategy as part of the REPECC programme, as well as the promotion of the recruitment of volunteers in the work on preparing for and responding to crises in the Far North. With the support of the UNV programme, the Ministry for Youth and Civic Education also mapped stakeholders. In addition, the UNV programme officer acted as gender focal point for UNDP and carried out advocacy work for the systematic integration of women and young people in the programmes. She also took on the role of facilitator for the thematic working group on youth of the United Nations system.

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92 Mid-term review of PRINCES, p.7.



# CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

## 5.1 CONCLUSIONS

**Conclusion 1. UNDP interventions within the framework of the 2008-2012 and 2013-2017 country programmes are in line with Cameroon's development priorities. UNDP contributed innovative ideas and helped to develop knowledge by supporting diagnoses and analyses at both the strategic and local level. However, despite sharpening the focus of the country programme from 2013, UNDP's efforts suffer from poor capitalization of lessons learned and, at the time of the evaluation, few lasting or profound changes had occurred as a result of the programme.**

By working on the subjects of inclusion, governance, poverty alleviation, resilience and sustainable development, as well as more recently on a rapid response to the crisis caused by Boko Haram, UNDP has positioned itself with respect to major challenges facing the country. From a strategic perspective, UNDP has contributed to the development of national strategies and plans in various areas as well as tools for analysis, planning and monitoring, and new knowledge. At the local level, thanks to support from UNDP, certain groups have been able to increase their income and strengthen their resilience to erratic climate conditions. The CEOCA is a promising model.

Over the period under review, UNDP made efforts to improve the focus of its programme. The 2008-2012 CPD and CPAP identified seven expected outcomes, whereas the 2013-2017 CPAP narrowed its scope to four outcomes. In addition, the thematic approach of the second programme has been accompanied by a geographic concentration in the field, in the Far North. During the implementation of the 2013-2017 programme, with the escalation of the security and humanitarian crisis, UNDP's actions

have been further redirected to strengthen their work in the Far North.

Nevertheless, most of the results of UNDP support are relatively intangible. Over the period under evaluation, progress in terms of the political participation of social groups in situations of vulnerability and the integration of their needs as well as gender or cross-cutting problems (the environment, HIV/AIDS) in plans, policies and sectoral strategies remained marginal. Implementation of the national anti-corruption strategy is still a challenge. The results of the rapid-results initiatives launched within the framework of the anti-corruption programme have not been sustained. The programme to improve public services supported the development and validation of a quality standard for public services; this is an important step, but one which has not yet been disseminated. The programme for poverty reduction at the grassroots (SPRPB) has not fully implemented its strategy of structuring profitable commodity chains, as outlined in the programme document. Disaster response plans ('ORSEC' plans) have been drawn up in a participatory manner, but only in two municipalities, and simulation exercises still have to be organized. Certain agro-sylvo-pastoral practices have been introduced into pilot communities but have yet to be disseminated more widely. The time allotted for the implementation of the CPAP (until the end of 2017) is unlikely to be sufficient to allow all planned activities to be implemented and evaluated, to distil lessons learned and disseminate this learning to a critical mass, in order to generate significant change. Pilot projects risk becoming a goal in and of themselves, whereas in the programme logic they represent just one stage, the purpose being to promote their results in order to secure development on a larger scale.

**Conclusion 2. The strategic positioning of UNDP with regard to its development partners could be considerably improved. Many partners currently see UNDP as just another donor, meaning that it tends to be judged on the amount of funding it makes available to the country. During the refocusing of its programme in 2012, UNDP was timid in its choices in the area of governance.**

UNDP is perceived as defending values relating to gender equality and the needs of vulnerable groups. This is an added value that is recognized by most of those interviewed. At the same time, UNDP is generally seen as just another donor, meaning it tends to be judged on the amount of funding it makes available to the country. As UNDP has been unable to counter this perception and has not adequately cultivated its image, the organization lacks visibility in the development landscape of Cameroon.

At the end of the first programme (2008-2012), UNDP analysed the lessons learned from that period of cooperation, and recognized that going forward it had to focus on some key results, taking into account national priorities, available resources and its comparative advantages. Thus, for a number of subjects addressed during the first programme cycle in the area of governance (promoting human rights, the electoral process, fighting corruption), the analysis showed there was a certain withdrawal by UNDP. Choosing to focus on improving public services can be considered relevant when evaluated in terms of management considerations and the efficiency of the action. However, if it is evaluated in terms of UNDP's strategic positioning, the thematic areas of the global UNDP Strategic Plan and those of the GESP, namely improving governance and strategic State management, this choice can be considered to be lacking boldness.

**Conclusion 3. UNDP is responsive to changes in context. Focusing its work since 2013 on the poorest regions in the north of the country and the introduction of early recovery programmes in 2014 are judicious choices. However, this**

**refocusing of the programme has not been accompanied by an increased presence in the region, and UNDP strategic planning procedures limit its capacity to adapt quickly in an unstable context.**

UNDP has responded to the emerging crisis in the Far North with new rapid-response programmes, adapting its ongoing programmes in order to work in the communities most affected by the conflict and strengthening its own human resources. At the time of the evaluation, it was too early to assess the effectiveness of the new actions, but the stakeholders interviewed appreciated the early recovery approach as well as the commitment to the most vulnerable communities. However, this refocusing of the programme has not been accompanied by an increased presence in the region, with the exception of the staff of the rapid-response projects, who are not authorized to carry out any monitoring or coordination outside of these projects. The other UNDP staff and the technical advisers for the main programmes are based in the capital. The lack of clarity on the procedures for revising the country programme in order to better respond to the new context and the requests from the Government generated delays in the planning and designing of annual work plans in 2016.

**Conclusion 4. The lack of resources and the inefficiency of the country programme have had consequences on results.**

UNDP is strongly dependent on a limited number of sources of funding. By far its most important financial partner since 2011 is Japan: between 2011 and 2015, 46 percent of total expenditure came from UNDP core resources with Japanese funding providing 37 percent. A number of constraints relating to the mobilization of resources were identified during the evaluation (the general environment for development aid, global economic crises, the fact that as a middle-income country, Cameroon is not a priority for traditional donor countries). In 2013, UNDP developed a resource mobilization strategy, which has yet to show any notable results.



The Government of Cameroon, the second largest financial partner of the country programme, provided 10 percent of total programme resources between 2008 and 2012, but less than 1 percent between 2013 and 2015, and this despite the fact that the 2013–2017 CPAP envisaged a government contribution of approximately one-third of total expected resources. Even when taking the form of Government ‘counterpart’ funding (allocated to interventions supported by UNDP but not paid directly into UNDP’s bank account), this sum was weakly mobilized (other than for the SPRPB). Thus, a number of planned activities were not implemented. UNDP did not adapt its strategy in light of the uncertainties weighing on its mobilization of resources.

UNDP did not use its limited resources in an efficient manner. Despite the refocusing of its programme for the 2013–2017 period, with a reduction in the number of outcomes and greater geographic concentration, the programme was characterized by very long preparation phases, delays in signing off annual work plans and disproportionate programme management costs. Operating expenses for the main interventions since 2013 represent almost half of total spending. The national implementation modality (NIM) as applied in Cameroon, where UNDP does not advance funds to the Government, means that UNDP programme managers spend a disproportionate amount of their time on management tasks, rather than on substantive work and the development of strategic partnerships.

**Conclusion 5. UNDP focuses on women and vulnerable groups in all its programme documents, and ensures their participation in the activities it supports. While some of its work seeks to achieve transformative changes, the approach tends to be ‘gender targeted’, or focused on the ratio of men to women, rather than on addressing men’s and women’s differential needs throughout its interventions, or by seeking to bring about in-depth changes in the norms or the structures of power.**

UNDP is implementing a specific programme seeking to improve integration of the needs of women and other vulnerable groups in its development plans, policies and strategies, which in time could produce transformative results. In addition, it ensures that the gender dimension and other types of vulnerability are integrated into almost all programme documents, project documents and the terms of reference for specific activities or outcomes. During the diagnoses and baseline evaluations, women and members of other vulnerable groups were consulted. However, subsequent stages did not always take into account the specific needs of women or other groups. For example, during the development of the communication strategy for climate change adaptation, women were consulted but the strategy that was adopted did not include reference to the communication channels that they use, nor a method for formulating messages in order to increase their participation. Within the context of the ongoing programme, the funding of micro-enterprises or income-generating activities has not reached as many women as men. The construction of livestock markets has particularly benefited livestock farmers, most of whom are men.

**Conclusion 6. During the period covered by the evaluation, UNDP made a great deal of progress in monitoring and evaluation, but monitoring is mainly focused on implementation and the use of budgets, and not on progress towards outcomes. Monitoring in the field remains inadequate, particularly in a context of armed conflict and uncertainty.**

The country office has made great progress in the area of monitoring and reporting, particularly since the start of the current programme. Monitoring in the Atlas management system is detailed, with regular updates covering risks and problems and the application of quality criteria. The country office regularly organizes monitoring meetings. However, this monitoring focuses on technical and financial execution, rather than on an overall analysis and the relationship between actual and expected outcomes. The indicators mainly concentrate on the former

and provide little information on the latter. Field visits, other than visits by the Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative and those of the rapid recovery team (based in the Far North), are rare. The context of the area where the interventions take place is very different to that of the capital and is in constant evolution as a result of the conflicts, which means that careful monitoring is also necessary in order to ensure that the interventions encourage inclusion and do not inadvertently contribute to exclusion.

## 5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1. UNDP should concentrate more on results, strengthen its strategic positioning and cultivate its image. To achieve this, it should identify a limited number of areas where, given its mandate or its experience, it has comparative advantages. It should then define ambitious yet realistic outcomes and design and implement interventions, while at the same time achieving a good balance between targeted actions that are likely to rapidly produce concrete results, and interventions that address deeper problems. It must communicate on its positioning and its role.**

UNDP must draw on the values of the United Nations, its institutional assets, its experience and its capacities to make strategic choices for its new country programme. Given its very limited resources, UNDP should limit its efforts to a few areas of intervention where it can really make a difference or where it has a clear comparative advantage. It should seek to capitalize on the lessons and results of past experiences, but without hesitating to change direction when previous actions have not produced real changes.

Once the areas of intervention have been identified, UNDP should find a balance between those that can produce fast and visible results, and the longer-term work needed to ensure the sustainability of their outcomes. In parallel, UNDP should design its programme so as to be able to implement its interventions from start-to-end and obtain real results within the initial

budget, independently of any eventual additional resources which may allow existing efforts to be developed or completed or other initiatives to be implemented. While recognizing the importance of an in-depth analysis, UNDP should focus on the essential knowledge needed to guide its interventions, and then should concentrate on actions, experimentation, obtaining and disseminating outcomes as well as on advocacy work. In an uncertain context, UNDP should be agile and responsive while remaining attentive to progress towards outcomes, and continuing its advocacy so that its efforts lead to outcome-level change.

Once the main themes of the new programmes have been clearly outlined, UNDP should actively communicate its positioning. UNDP will never have an advantage in terms of resources, which is why it must adopt another position and clearly communicate it. It must cultivate its specificity and distinguish itself from other technical and financial partners. It must promote its role as an institution working for the universal values of peace, the rule of law, national cohesion and sustainable development. It must remain focused on reducing poverty and inequality and communicate about these efforts. By focusing on rapid results, it can then publicize these results and the lessons learned, in order to highlight its role, which is to act as a catalyst, a facilitator and a guide, and not as a donor or an implementing agency. Once this has been achieved, this role can develop into one of observation, advocacy, and national capacity-building, facilitating development cooperation between the country and donors and with other countries (South-South cooperation). Lastly, UNDP must strengthen its coordinating role, in the capital as well as in the Far North region.

**Recommendation 2. UNDP must consider reinvesting in the subjects that have been identified as the greatest challenges facing the country and where, as a result of its neutrality as well as its experience internationally and in Cameroon, it has a comparative advantage: strengthening democratic processes and the rule of law.**

During its discussions on the strategic orientations of the new country programme, UNDP must think very carefully about its role, its experience in the area of democratic governance as well as possible linkages to sustainable development and resilience, within the new global framework of the SDGs and notably SDG 16 (peace, justice and efficient institutions) and its specific experience in Cameroon. It must strive to capitalize on the results achieved in the areas of promoting the rule of law, the fight against corruption, strengthening the democratic process (electoral process, role of Parliament and other counterweight institutions, strengthening civil society), support for strategic State management (planning and monitoring at the global, sectoral, regional and local level) as well as crisis prevention and response.

UNDP's capacity to work in an interdisciplinary manner and its experience in the areas of environment management and resilience to climate change and conflicts (interrelated challenges which mutually exacerbate each other in the northernmost regions of the country) also give it a comparative advantage, on which it can draw when developing its new programme.

**Recommendation 3. UNDP should continue to concentrate its efforts on the poorest and most vulnerable municipalities in the country, while striking a balance between upstream interventions (of a political or strategic nature) and downstream work (with target populations). It should avoid becoming confined to the role of an implementing agency for rapid recovery projects.**

It is an appropriate choice for the current programme to concentrate on the Far North, which is by far the poorest and most vulnerable region in the country, in that it allows the work of UNDP to have a greater impact on the reduction of inequalities and to benefit the most disadvantaged. In addition, this choice allows UNDP to address the question of youth from this region who are turning towards radicalization and terrorism, a phenomenon that is in the process of

becoming one of the greatest challenges for the country and the wider region. Geographical concentration also enhances efficiency, synergies and the visibility of results. This choice should be maintained in the next country programme.

UNDP can also play a more important role in the coordination of interventions in the Far North region. It should ensure that its forthcoming interventions and those of other partners can capitalize on the learning that has already been acquired, in part by disseminating studies and analyses performed as part of the current country programme.

However, and particularly if it proves to be easier to mobilize resources for crisis-response projects rather than for other types of work, UNDP must ensure that it does not become confined to a role of an implementing agency for rapid-response projects. It must maintain a presence in the Far North, in order to act and understand, but also to learn and advocate with the national authorities and partners.

In addition, it must recognize that choosing to focus its actions on the poorest regions may not be optimal for the development of scaled-up models at a national level, because the most advanced models may not be adapted to the most disadvantaged regions. Resources permitting, and in order to continue to position itself as an actor working to reduce inequalities while being at the vanguard of innovative experiments, UNDP could, in certain cases, consider working in two regions with different profiles: one very poor region and another region where the poverty level was lower, in order to gather learning for advocacy and scaling-up.

**Recommendation 4. UNDP should continue to work to reduce gender inequalities and promote the empowerment of women, as well as the reduction of other forms of inequality and exclusion. The participation of vulnerable groups and consideration of their needs must be integrated into all programmes. A separate programme addressing cross-cutting issues is**

**not recommended. The country office must strengthen its gender expertise and strive to satisfy the Gender Equality Seal benchmarks.**

UNDP must continue to focus on reducing inequalities and exclusion, by drawing on the framework of the SDGs and the global commitment that there will be “no one left behind”. However, in light of the experience of the PRINCES programme and the lack of concrete results, UNDP should ensure that gender and other cross-cutting issues are included in all interventions, so that they play their part in strengthening the participation of the most vulnerable and reducing gender inequalities. UNDP efforts must go beyond consultations with women and representatives of vulnerable groups during analyses and baseline studies. Activities and interventions must address the specific needs of these groups. The country office must strengthen its internal expertise. If it is not possible to employ a specialist in this area, the country office must look for other solutions. It could envisage contracting a consultant on a long-term agreement to provide support to fill in gaps over time, but working part-time and only at key periods. The office should seek to comply with the UNDP Gender Equality Seal benchmarks.

**Recommendation 5. UNDP should update its partnership and resource mobilization strategy. It should also strengthen its advocacy with the Government in order to increase the national contribution to the country programme, reminding the Government that the 2013–2017 CPAP envisaged a contribution matching that of UNDP; if this is not possible, UNDP should clearly outline what it can and cannot finance. At the same time, UNDP should take measures to improve its efficiency and direct its resources towards priority programme activities.**

In collaboration with the Government, UNDP must explore new financing opportunities and

partnerships, such as the new climate funds. It can facilitate consultations in the form of round tables with donors on the reconstruction of the Far North. An initiative like this could be taken at the level of the country itself or within a cross-border approach bringing together the affected regions in Nigeria, Chad and Niger.

UNDP must also work closely with the Government to mobilize a national contribution to the country programme, drawing on the notion that the “government cost-sharing ... strengthens national ownership as well as contributes to the achievement of country programmes”.<sup>93</sup> UNDP could experiment with a ‘sliding’ planning schedule, where the planning of activities for a given year takes place in the second half of the previous year, in order to allow enough time for advocacy with the authorities and to take these activities into account in budget decisions. With regard to its own resources, UNDP should clearly determine what it can or cannot finance, limiting its investments to the most relevant interventions that are the most likely to contribute to achieving the expected outcomes detailed in the Country Programme Document.

UNDP should rationalize programme management costs as far as possible, for example by limiting the number of chief technical advisers. It should also look for innovative solutions to reduce the administrative tasks of programme managers so that they can dedicate more of their time to core matters.

**Recommendation 6. UNDP should strengthen its monitoring and evaluation activities, placing the accent on the changes brought about by these activities, as well as on the progress made in achieving the intended outcomes. UNDP should also structure its office according to the geographic concentration of its programming, allocating more staff to the Far North to strengthen coordination and monitoring.**

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<sup>93</sup> Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, and the United Nations Office for Project Services, Report by the Executive Board on its work in 2015 E/2015/35, p. 117/126.

UNDP should pursue its positive trajectory of improving the monitoring and evaluation of its programme. Monitoring should not be limited to the use of budgets and the implementation of work plans, but should continually evaluate the relevance of interventions and the probability that they will generate tangible results. UNDP must develop and include relevant indicators in its programme documents, but must also recognize their limits, and ensure real monitoring of changes resulting from the outputs produced. Indicators must also be gender-sensitive. UNDP must not hesitate to evaluate the effectiveness of its models in order to improve them or change its approach if necessary.

UNDP should strengthen its presence in the regions where its activities are concentrated, particularly in the Far North, in order to ensure close monitoring of its work, to consolidate potential synergies, to facilitate coordination and complementarity of its own interventions and those of other partners, to encourage local ownership, efficiency and to strengthen its credibility. Monitoring in the field must be peace and conflict sensitive, taking into account the impact of armed conflict on programmes. It should also ensure that its programmes ‘do no harm’. This enhanced monitoring will be even more important when UNDP’s actions become less focused on analysis and stock-taking and more on concrete actions and achievements.

## 5.3 MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

### OVERALL COMMENTS

The Cameroon Country Office welcomes this Assessment of Development Results (ADR) and expresses its appreciation to the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office (IEO), the Government of Cameroon, civil society and its technical and financial partners for their assistance during this exercise.

The timing of this ADR has been particularly opportune, allowing its contribution to be included in the formulation of the new country programme for Cameroon (2018-2020). The relevant conclusions and recommendations have been taken into account by the country office during this strategic planning exercise. In particular, these include strengthening thematic and geographic focuses to ensure greater impact on vulnerable beneficiary groups, an improved consideration of gender issues, potential support for the electoral process and the fight against corruption. In addition, as was also recommended, UNDP will strive to strengthen its visibility and its strategic position, as well as improving its monitoring and evaluation measures during the implementation of interventions during the next cooperation cycle.

The country office takes note of the recommendations of the ADR and has formulated the following responses:

#### Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 1.

**UNDP should concentrate more on results, strengthen its strategic positioning and cultivate its image. To achieve this, it should identify a limited number of areas where, given its mandate or its experience, it has comparative advantages. It should then define ambitious yet realistic outcomes and design and implement interventions, while at the same time achieving a good balance between targeted actions that are likely to rapidly produce concrete results, and interventions that address deeper problems. It must communicate on its positioning and its role.**

#### Management Response:

UNDP recognizes the relevance of this recommendation and had already taken action, notably through the revision of the results framework of the current cooperation cycle (2013-2017) and the formulation of the 2018-2020 CPD. This allowed the programme to be structured and geographically refocused, with the planning of objectives and concrete and realistic outcomes taking into account the trend for a reduction in regular resources.

In addition, UNDP intends to carry out specific communications actions to improve the visibility of its results and interventions.

(continued)

(continued)

Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
1.1 Strengthen targeting by theme, location and beneficiary, based on lessons learned and government priorities during the formulation of the 2018-2020 CPD.	August 2016 – February 2017	DRR ARR-G/ARR-DD M&E		
1.2 Target concrete interventions with a strong potential impact during the preparation of the 2018-2020 CPD implementation strategy and the formulation of joint programmes with UNDAF for 2018-2020.	March 2017 – December 2018	DRR ARR-G/ARR-DD M&E		
1.3 Develop a communication strategy and strengthen the technical capacities of the office to improve the visibility and positioning of UNDP.	May 2017 – December 2017	DRR ARR-G/ARR-DD M&E		

**Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 2.**

**UNDP must consider reinvesting in the subjects that have been identified as the greatest challenges facing the country and where, as a result of its neutrality as well as its experience internationally and in Cameroon, it has a comparative advantage: strengthening democratic processes and the rule of law.**

**Management Response:**

UNDP accepts this recommendation and will undertake discussions internally, with the Government and with its key partners in the areas of governance and the rule of law.

Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
2.1 Evaluate the potential support for the electoral process and the fight against corruption following the request from the Government.	February 2017 – September 2017	DRR ARR-G		
2.2 Ask the BPPS for support in identifying niche areas in governance and the rule of law.	May 2017 – July 2017	DRR ARR-G		
2.3 Carry out consultations with the Government on the basis of the recommendations of the support mission.	July 2017 – September 2017	DRR ARR-G		
2.4 Assess the interest of donors on themes relating to governance and the rule of law.	August 2017 – December 2017	DRR ARR-G		

(continued)

(continued)

<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 3.</b>				
<b>UNDP should continue to concentrate its efforts on the poorest and most vulnerable municipalities in the country, while striking a balance between upstream interventions (of a political or strategic nature) and downstream work (with target populations). It should avoid becoming confined to the role of an implementing agency for rapid recovery projects.</b>				
<b>Management Response:</b> UNDP accepts this recommendation and will ensure that there is a balance between the downstream concerns of the most vulnerable whilst maintaining its advisory role towards the Government on the strategic plan at the central level.				
Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
3.1 Maintain the high-level dialogue with the Government, notably via regular meetings with the ministries active in the areas of intervention of UNDP in order to monitor its strategic contributions to development.	Continuous	RR DRR EA ARR-G/ARR-DD		
3.2 Provide quality strategic advice to the Government concerning the implementation of the SDGs: contextualization, integration, development strategies and policies and monitoring of implementation.	Continuous	DRR EA ARR-G/ARR-DD		
3.3 Produce the National Human Development Report at regular intervals and disseminate its findings.	Continuous	DRR EA ARR-G/ARR-DD		
3.4 Support the Government in drawing up its policies and strategies (PRSP, Sectoral Policies).	Continuous	DRR EA ARR-G/ARR-DD M&E		

<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 4.</b>				
UNDP should continue to work to reduce gender inequalities and promote the empowerment of women, as well as the reduction of other forms of inequality and exclusion. The participation of vulnerable groups and consideration of their needs must be integrated into all programmes. A separate programme addressing cross-cutting issues is not recommended. The country office must strengthen its gender expertise and strive to satisfy the Gender Equality Seal benchmarks.				
<b>Management Response:</b> UNDP recognizes the relevance of this recommendation and has already placed emphasis on the systematic incorporation of gender issues and other cross-cutting concerns in order to reduce gender inequalities during the revision of the results framework for the current cooperation cycle (2012-2017) and the formulation of the 2018-2020 CPD.				
Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
4.1 Strengthen the capacities of the office in order to develop and implement a gender strategy within the country office.	May 2017 – December 2018	DRR M&E		
4.2 Ensure that gender issues and the concerns of groups are taken into account in all the programmes and projects of the new 2018-2020 CPD and the joint programmes contributing to the 2018-2020 UNDAF.	March 2017 – December 2019	DRR ARR M&E		
4.3 Carry out the Gender Seal exercise within the country office.	September 2017 – March 2018	DRR M&E Gender Expert		
4.4 Monitor the implementation of the recommendations of the Gender Seal	Continuous	DRR M&E		

(continued)

(continued)

<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 5.</b>				
<p><b>UNDP should update its partnership and resource mobilization strategy. It should also strengthen its advocacy with the Government in order to increase the national contribution to the country programme, reminding the Government that the 2013-2017 CPAP envisaged a contribution matching that of UNDP; if this is not possible, UNDP should clearly outline what it can and cannot finance. At the same time, UNDP should take measures to improve its efficiency and direct its resources towards priority programme activities.</b></p>				
<p><b>Management Response:</b> UNDP takes note of this recommendation and actions have already been carried out, notably the updating of the partnership and resource mobilization for 2017. In addition, the office is continuing to lobby for the mobilization and transfer of contributions from the Government for the implementation of cooperation programmes.</p>				
Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
5.1 Regularly update the partnership and resource mobilization (PRM) strategy in order to ensure access to the funds needed for the implementation of the 2018-2020 CPD.	February 2017 – June 2020	DRR EA ARR-G/ARR-DD		
5.2 Update and implement the action plan for operationalizing the PRM strategy.	February 2017 – December 2020	DRR EA ARR-G/ARR-DD M&E		
5.3 Continue discussions with the government in the area of mobilization of financial contributions.	January 2017 – December 2017	DRR ARR-G/ARR-D M&E		

<b>Evaluation Recommendation or Issue 6.</b>				
<p><b>UNDP should strengthen its monitoring and evaluation activities, placing the accent on the changes brought about by these activities, as well as on the progress made in achieving the intended outcomes. UNDP should also structure its office according to the geographic concentration of its programming, allocating more staff to the Far North to strengthen coordination and monitoring.</b></p>				
<p><b>Management Response:</b> Within the framework of the 2018-2020 cooperation programme, UNDP undertakes to strengthen its presence in the Far North, while taking into account the downward trend in regular resources.</p>				
Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Comments	Status
6.1 Identify sustainable sources of financing to strengthen the team in the Far North.	May 2017 – December 2019	DRR ARR-G/ARR-DD		
6.2 Draw up an integrated monitoring and evaluation programme of the 2018-2020 CPD, linked to the 2018-2020 UNDAF M&E programme.	June 2017 – March 2018	DRR M&E		
6.3 Strengthen the M&E mechanism of the operational plans of the 2018-2020 CPD, placing the emphasis on monitoring outcome indicators in relation with the outcomes of the UNDP strategic plan.	February 2018 – December 2020	M&E DRR		
6.4 Increase supervision missions in the field and take the necessary monitoring measures.	April 2017 – December 2020	DRR ARR-G/ARR-DD M&E PMSU		



# ANNEXES (available online)

The following annexes are available from the IEO website at: <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/detail/8283>

- Annex 1 Terms of Reference
- Annex 2 Country Overview
- Annex 3 Country Office Overview
- Annex 4 List of Projects
- Annex 5 Framework of Outcomes and Indicators
- Annex 6 Analysis of Expenditure for Main Programmes between 2013 and 2015
- Annex 7 Analysis Using the Gender Results Effectiveness Scale
- Annex 8 List of Persons Consulted
- Annex 9 Main Documents Consulted







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