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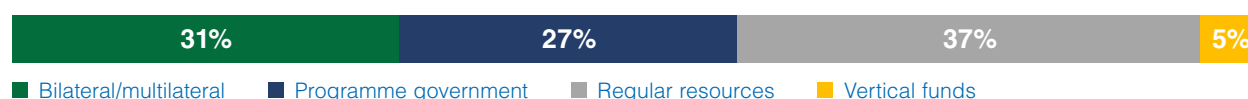
## UNDP IN ALGERIA

After the ‘dark decade’ of the 1990s, marked by political instability and economic stagnation, Algeria began a process of rapid recovery. A state of emergency was lifted in February 2011 and a vast programme of institutional, political and socioeconomic reforms launched. Today, living standards have improved, and Algeria has the second-largest economy in the Middle East and North Africa, although youth unemployment remains high.

Key UNDP programme areas have comprised governance, economic and social development, and protection of the environment. A serious interruption of support occurred in 2007, when UNDP headquarters in Algiers suffered a terrorist attack. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered UNDP assistance from 2009 to 2013.

### TOTAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE, 2009-2013: \$10 MILLION

#### FUNDING SOURCES, 2009-2013:



#### PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE BY THEMATIC AREA, 2009-2013 (\$ MILLIONS)



## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

UNDP’s activities were generally very relevant in terms of their goals, and can be credited with some conclusive results. Support to the justice sector helped it modernize working methods, including through new technologies for integrated judicial case management. UNDP built on earlier initiatives on seismic and industrial risk prevention with a project that contributed to a major new risk prevention and management policy in line with national legislation.

The organization has been recognized for projects implemented in remote regions where it is often the only international party, and for innovation. The Integrated Management Plan for Guerbès-Sanhadja project, for instance, is a flagship initiative in the Mediterranean basin for the introduction of innovative concepts in spatial and temporal dynamics of ecosystems, vulnerabilities of natural resources, payment for environmental services and returns on investment in wetland conservation.

The spread of UNDP interventions was broad, however, without an overall strategic theme, and effectiveness was moderate. Programmes did not generate large-scale or sustainable transformation; expected results were mostly not achieved in full. In large part this was due to activities being modified or early project closure. In some field projects, the quality of outputs was compromised by efforts to reach a larger number of beneficiaries without sufficient adjustments to human and financial

resources. Steering and monitoring mechanisms did not last beyond the lifetime of the projects, making assessment of sustainability and transformative results difficult.

Programme approaches were not consistently relevant. Capacity-building, for example, was mainly carried out at an individual level, and even where it was institutional, significant changes in institutional functioning generally did not result. One exception was the significant decline in anti-personnel mine accidents following the introduction of new mine clearance techniques to the Army.

UNDP’s contribution in the area of women’s empowerment and gender equality was moderate. An approach centred on integrating women in development did not focus sufficiently on questions of equality and the removal of discriminatory barriers. Through a joint UN programme on gender equality, UNDP did support a series of studies and assessments on specific aspects of the status of Algerian women that contributed to greater awareness in key institutions, including the Ministry of National Solidarity, Family and Women’s Affairs. It can play a unifying role in national efforts towards gender equality and the empowerment of women.

While UNDP successfully built partnerships, results varied. Intersectoral partnerships were often not adequately institutionalized, and the commitment of civil society and the private sector remained weak. In some cases, UNDP was successful in brokering partnerships

among central and local institutions that were not used to working together. The mine action project encouraged partnerships between local authorities, local associations and the population, for instance, backed by advocacy around the benefits of coordination. One result was local associations working with the Ministry of National Solidarity to second state psychologists for victim assistance.

UNDP showed an adequate capacity to adapt to emerging priorities, although more so in a strategic sense than in projects on the ground. At the Government's request, it worked on themes that do not traditionally fall within its areas of expertise, such as the financial market and an industrial strategy. It introduced new training courses for members of Parliament, particularly women, following the 2012 elections when a record number of women were elected.

In many cases, however, UNDP is still considered primarily a source of technical support or a simple service provider. While tangible efforts have been made to promote South-South cooperation, these have not yet

produced convincing results. UNDP focused primarily on supporting government programmes and policies, without bringing any substantial added value on important themes such as governance and human rights.

Performance and the sustainability were negatively affected by a range of factors, including the consequences of the 2007 terrorist attack. Other constraints were poor internal capacity in results-based management, administrative complexities and delays in implementation; the absence of an exit strategy to sustain results; and inadequate communication and visibility. Even when taking into account the interruption of at least two years as a result of the terrorist attack, projects have run far behind schedule (by one to six years).

After the 2007 attack, restarting activities was an achievement in itself for UNDP. While UNDP has contributed to some progress since then, changes need to be more sustainable. UNDP can capitalize on lessons learned to improve its position, and demonstrate greater leadership, neutrality and independence.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Focus UNDP activities on a limited number of themes within a strategic vision adapted to the specific features of the country. These themes should be identified in a participatory manner on the basis of criteria including, in particular, the comparative advantages and added value of UNDP for Algeria.
- The Country Office should be a force for innovative proposals, focusing on transversal themes and promoting intersectoral working, alongside pilot projects in the field. This can be done by strengthening and reorganizing existing skills or by drawing on others, particularly in the area of policy advice.
- Put the neutrality and independence of UNDP to good use, bringing in partners who until now have been little involved (notably universities, research centres, civil society, the private sector), and acting as interface and coordinator for public institutions.
- Integrate inclusive approaches (to reach disadvantaged, disabled or vulnerable people) in the planning of all activities. Furthermore, the Country Office and partners need to strengthen their capacity to integrate a gender perspective in all phases of forthcoming projects, including in their terms of reference.
- Strengthen the sustainability of UNDP's results by systematically preparing exit plans and takeover or scale-up strategies, identifying alternative sources of funding from other donors or the Algerian Government.
- Close old projects more quickly and develop and implement new activities aligned to the new Country Office strategy.
- Strengthen the national appropriation of activities by more carefully defining the needs of stakeholders and implementing the National Execution of projects.
- Ensure greater visibility of the results achieved by UNDP activities, including a budget line for communication in each project. The communication efforts adopted by the new Country Office management team must continue, to publicize results and also to help to identify synergies with partners in future programming.
- Results-based management should be institutionalized further within the Country Office and partner institutions.
- Improve operations within the Country Office in order to lessen the impact of bureaucracy and reduce response times for recruitment, payments, preparing terms of reference, etc.

## ABOUT THE ICPEs

Independent country programme evaluations (ICPEs) are the backbone of the work of the Independent Evaluation Office. They capture evidence of UNDP's contributions to development results and the effectiveness of strategies supporting national development. They enable continued improvement in UNDP programmes, contribute to strengthened national ownership and evaluation capacity, and underpin accountability to national stakeholders and UNDP's Executive Board. To date, over 100 ICPEs have been conducted worldwide.

See the full reports at the Evaluation Resource Centre, [erc.undp.org](http://erc.undp.org)