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UNDP IN ANGOLA

Angola’s long period of conflict ended in 2002, and in 2010, a new Constitution was adopted. Now a middle-income country, with oil and diamond resources, Angola still scores low on the human development index, given a highly unequal distribution of wealth. Significant challenges include strengthening security, realizing constitutional rights and upholding the right to participate in decision-making.

As Angola moved from a postwar country to one focused more on medium- and long-term sustainable development, UNDP programmes shifted accordingly.

From 2005 to 2008, the organization addressed issues related to poverty reduction and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery, environmental conservation and protection, and the response to HIV and AIDS. The emphasis from 2009 to 2013 narrowed to three strategic objectives on poverty, the environment and sustainable development, and democratic governance. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered UNDP work from 2005 to 2011.

TOTAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE, 2005-2011: \$176.2 MILLION

FUNDING SOURCES, 2005-2011



PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE BY THEMATIC AREA, 2005-2011 (\$ MILLIONS)



FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

UNDP’s support was aligned to national priorities and the move to a development orientation as conflict wound down. Some of its best results came from introducing a debate on decentralization and negotiating related sensitivities. UNDP partnered with the Ministry of Territorial Administration on a pilot project in 15 municipalities in five provinces based on a national process of discussion and reflection. This culminated in 2007 in the approval of Law 2/07, through which the Government launched an administrative ‘deconcentration’ process aimed at future decentralization. UNDP’s intervention enabled greater civil society participation in the mechanisms of consultation and support for decision-making, established by law for municipal and provincial structures.

A number of UNDP initiatives were successful in helping to build capacities and advance legislation. In promoting gender equality, UNDP strengthened the Ministry of Family and the Promotion of Women, and supported the drafting of the National Gender Policy and the Domestic Violence Law, two very significant contributions. Assistance provided to the National Demining Institute (INAD) and to the National Intersectoral Commission for Demining and Humanitarian Assistance (CNIDAH) transferred knowledge and

gave continuity to demining work as it moved under the leadership of national institutions. Angola is now in compliance with Article 4 of the Ottawa Convention, which relates to mine destruction. Mine clearance has yielded significant results in terms of security as well as improved market access, communication, employment, community development and infrastructure.

Towards poverty reduction and the MDGs, UNDP participated in a multisectoral finance group that encouraged the creation of a microfinance unit in the National Bank of Angola. Expanded management capacity in the national HIV and AIDS programme was leveraged by resources, administered with UNDP assistance, under the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. In 2005, Angola had only one testing centre and five counselling centres; by 2012, the numbers had soared to 50 and 350, respectively, allowing universal access to treatment of an estimated 250,000 people with HIV, up from 600 in 2005.

Despite these achievements, the programme contributed less than expected in a number of areas, particularly poverty alleviation, where results were not evident. In shifting to a development focus, a broad dispersion of funds occurred, resulting in many small projects

that lacked appropriate strategic planning. Without a results-oriented approach to its programmes, with a clear theory of change, UNDP was unable to convey a vision for how it would achieve sustainable results or effectively demonstrate its added value. Outside the issue of decentralization, the Government did not consider UNDP's actions to be sufficiently proactive.

Stronger projects, such as on decentralization, benefited from positive relationships between UNDP and the Government. But for the most part, there was limited dialogue between UNDP and partners at the highest levels of decision-making and at various levels of implementation. Reasons included challenges in dealing with institutional hierarchy, low importance given to external aid and perceptions of UNDP's inefficient bureaucracy.

Efficiency was low across all programme areas, mainly due to unmet deadlines, the inefficient use of funds, and low implementation and achievement of targets. The lack of project management guidelines adjusted to the context and a more robust organizational structure, such as leaders for each of the projects or commissions for funding, contributed to delays and wasted resources, in some cases significantly jeopardizing project execution. The excessively restricted nature of certain pilot initiatives also led to low efficiency and effectiveness.

A lack of proper knowledge management limited chances for synergies across projects and the learning that can bolster human development results. Coordination with other UN agencies similarly fell short. While the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) was oriented to the attainment of common UN objectives, results are still scarce and hindered by the relatively small number of joint programmes, duplicated efforts, and low cost-efficiency and effectiveness. Some projects brought agencies together, but partnership was mainly apparent to the extent that participants distributed tasks to each other.

UNDP's strategic positioning over the period of the evaluation was demonstrated by its ability to foster debate on key development themes, which drove advances on a number of national policies. But overall, it did not use its influence well. It needs to evolve from scattered projects approach to greater specialization, particularly in decentralization, governance, human development and poverty reduction, all areas that demand a more coordinated and strategic approach. Also key will be more effective communication mechanisms so that the Government and other partners learn about and make use of UNDP's added value and comparative advantages.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA) should assist UNDP Angola to develop the next programme with clearer and logical theories of change for each agreed outcome.
- UNDP Angola needs to strengthen formal and informal means of proactive dialogue with Angolan partners at the level of decision-making, and with technical implementation staff.
- UNDP Angola should concentrate interventions in fewer and more strategic areas where it can add more value. It should avoid the necessity of managing projects with smaller budgets where UNDP's contribution cannot be sustained.
- UNDP Angola should improve knowledge management and better communicate the results already obtained. It should reinforce the exchange of knowledge and the use of UNDP's specialized networks to generate and promote learning that can strategically feed into timely and better informed decision-making.
- UNDP Angola needs to improve efficiency in operations and should invest in an added-value flow analysis of existing operations processes, which are not adequately understood by some staff in programme and operations.
- UNDP Angola needs to improve programme efficiency to avoid delays and promote better articulation and communication between operations and programme units and between UNDP and stakeholders.
- In coordination with the RBA, the country office should examine ways of improving interagency efforts, learning from what has worked well elsewhere in the region, to strengthen coordination of the United Nations System.

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.

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