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UNDP IN JAMAICA

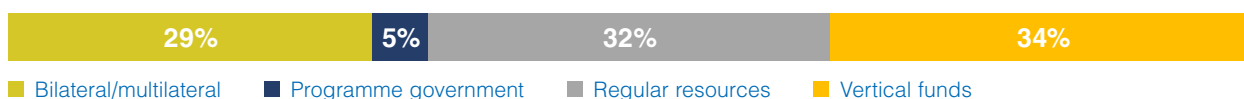
Jamaica is a small island developing state classified as an upper middle-income country. Its many development challenges include persistent budget deficits, high external debt, declining income, increasing poverty, environmental vulnerability, political instability and high levels of violence. In response to these challenges, the country embarked on its first long-term development plan, Vision 2030 Jamaica, with a view to transforming the country

from a middle-income developing country to a developed country by 2030.

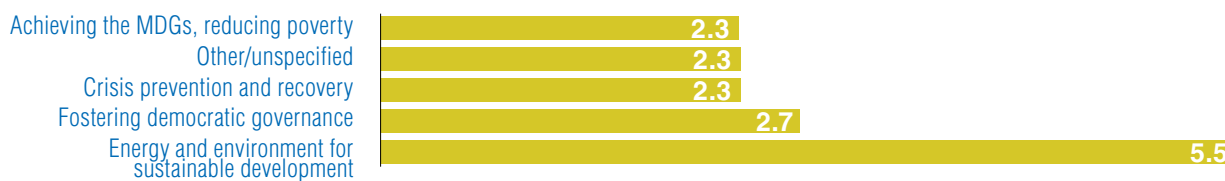
UNDP programme areas have comprised poverty reduction, HIV/AIDS, improved governance, environment and energy, and justice, peace and security. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered UNDP work from 2002 to 2011.

TOTAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE, 2004-2009: \$15.1 MILLION

FUNDING SOURCES, 2004-2009



PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE BY THEMATIC AREA, 2004-2009 (\$ MILLIONS)



FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

UNDP responded well to national priorities. Poverty reduction projects covered relevant issues of rural youth employment, support for public policy-making and assistance with the national statistical system. A project on responding to the economic crisis made a valuable contribution in enabling the Government to ease difficulties in servicing national debt repayments. The sustainability of results linked to the capacity for managing the economy, implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and formulating and monitoring social policy will depend on how well gains are maintained and enhanced by government management and fiscal resources, and the extent to which any increased funds are used for poverty reduction.

The programme in governance was substantive, particularly in responding to urgent issues in the areas of peace, security and justice, and delivered results despite limited resources. The organization was effectively positioned on human rights issues through a number of well-focused interventions, but a strategic position on gender mainstreaming was not achieved.

In environment and energy, UNDP supported capacity development and policymaking, partnership-building, awareness-raising and innovative pilot approaches. It helped Jamaica prepare for and meet a substantial set

of commitments made under international agreements, and has contributed to the development of a national energy policy. Several projects contributed to improved management of integrated land, coastal zones, and water and energy resources. The programme was not cohesive, however, covering a broad spectrum of small activities. UN inter-agency collaboration was low, with the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Coordination Unit, located in Kingston, not formally made aware of UNDP activities or vice versa.

Work on disaster response and risk reduction moved forward despite severe under-resourcing, both in terms of personnel and core funding. A school roof repair programme followed damage inflicted by Hurricane Dean, and UNDP worked with national bodies to conduct damage assessments and relief work, and prepare a recovery plan. In 2008, early recovery and damage assessment work were provided following Tropical Storm Gustav.

Disaster risk reduction concepts developed by these projects were an important input into new approaches to watershed management to reduce flood damage, particularly in urban areas such as the Hope River Catchment. The disaster management portfolio was described only in terms of disaster risk reduction, however, and needs to be more fully elaborated to assist with preparedness.

Project outcomes have in large part been delivered, but in many cases, initiatives were small given the scale of issues addressed, and of a pilot, demonstration or catalytic nature. Financial constraints mean the scope to expand operations was likely to remain limited. Government resources were also very constrained. Ultimately, the results of UNDP efforts will largely depend on the extent to which approaches it has helped to develop are taken forward by other stakeholders.

This situation underscores the importance of promoting the broadest possible awareness of how UNDP has contributed. Yet despite success in establishing strategic positions in its areas of activity, UNDP did not achieve broad awareness of the full range of its capacities, potential and activities among all relevant international development partners and government agencies, reducing opportunities for complementarity and joint working.

The planning processes for developing the UNDP country programme were disproportionately large and not decisive in shaping activities. High costs in senior management and staff time were not matched by gains in programme quality or coherence. Some important

areas, notably environment, energy and disaster management, featured inadequately in plans. Others that were included, such as HIV/AIDS, later disappeared during implementation. One of the main advantages of being a small player such as UNDP is the ability to respond flexibly to changing national circumstances, yet planning processes did not take account of this.

A related issue was a results framework with too many targets and indicators. Given the broad absence of baselines and the small scale of many UNDP inputs, most indicators would be extremely difficult to measure or interpret. The cost of any serious attempt to do so would be a substantial fraction of the overall programme budget.

A number of development partners noted an opportunity for UNDP to be even more responsive to national needs by adopting a strengthened role as coordinator of international support to address poverty. UNDP is well positioned within the UN system on this set of issues. Further, its relatively small financial inputs were seen as reducing the possibility of bias towards any particular approach.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish a flexible fund mechanism in the governance area. In the poverty portfolio, the Strategic Flexible Funding Facility has been invaluable in rapidly providing modest amounts of funds, which have enabled timely implementation of strategic activities, and have sometimes leveraged substantial follow-up. A similar facility for the governance area would enable it to further strengthen its development contribution, within the limited resources available to UNDP.
- Target young people through the media they use. The country office should explore the possible additional benefits of programmes using innovative approaches, such as harnessing the communication potential of texting and social networking sites, to engage young people in issues of governance and human rights.
- Raise the profile of poverty-related activities. There should be a particular focus on leading the coordination of support to Jamaica's efforts to meet its targets for poverty-focused MDGs.
- Raise the profile of environment and energy activities. Specific measures could include establishing clear and coherent priorities for country office activities in the sector, both from its Global Environment Facility support and through collaboration with potential new international partners.
- Make strenuous attempts to raise additional funds in the disaster management area. UNDP should take all possible measures to meet the challenges of severe under-resourcing. It should develop activities that target complementarity with broader environmental initiatives, building on results already achieved and addressing a broad range of disaster management needs.
- Ensure that gender issues are systematically and fully addressed. UNDP should clarify, support and enhance the role of the gender focal point, and map out an active role in support of national efforts to address MDG 3.
- Effectively disseminate information on UNDP activities and results.
- Develop and measure a limited set of progress indicators.
- Take measures to increase efficiency, particularly of procurement and recruitment.

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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