



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.

## UNDP IN GHANA

The first country in sub-Saharan Africa to achieve independence, Ghana has made progress in the area of governance over the past 15 years. But it faces challenges from local conflicts and the proliferation of small arms, as well as the need for continued public sector reforms. Considered a country at a medium stage of human development, Ghana has made significant progress in the reduction of the share of people in extreme poverty,

and on other elements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but gaps on some goals as well as large regional disparities persist.

UNDP has provided support on governance, poverty reduction and Millennium Development Goal (MDG) achievement, and environment and energy. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered

### TOTAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE, 2004-2009: \$70.4 MILLION

#### FUNDING SOURCES, 2004-2009



#### PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE BY THEMATIC AREA, 2006-2009 (\$ MILLIONS)



## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

UNDP has made a substantial contribution towards Ghana’s development, and is highly valued as a partner willing to walk alongside the Government to achieve national development ambitions. Interventions targeted major challenges, including wealth creation and poverty reduction. Awareness of the concentration of problems in marginalized communities, by gender, and among vulnerable groups and deprived areas—in particular, Ghana’s North-South divide—contributed to political action in favour of decentralization and equitable development. One important achievement was the mainstreaming of the MDGs into the national planning system. Continuous advocacy coupled with downstream interventions contributed to this milestone.

UNDP helped establish new institutions and strengthen existing ones, notably the National Peace Council and the Ghana National Commission on Small Arms. Support was instrumental in devising national environment and energy policy frameworks and mainstreaming environmental issues into planning, backed by a consistent focus on developing capacity for implementing policies and plans. Work at the policy level was complemented by a valuable portfolio of activities at the grass-roots on issues such as sustainable land management, alternative energy and sustainable livelihoods.

Despite a sound track record upstream and downstream, UNDP faced a gap at the middle level in support to decentralization and local economic governance. Capacity development for local governments has not, so far, been central to the programme, although new initiatives are planned. Following the pilot preparation of three district Human Development Reports, it was not clear that these will provide a solid basis for planning or institutional strengthening at the district level.

UNDP has a strong partnership with the Government and is recognized for substantive policy contributions, but has not leveraged this privileged position sufficiently to enhance national ownership of the development agenda by a broader range of stakeholders. Partnership with civil society has changed over time. While a number of civil society organizations are involved in UNDP projects, the policy dialogue and advocacy once characteristic of UNDP’s engagement is no longer evident.

Partnerships with the private sector primarily involve international companies; UNDP does not engage them in policy discussions. Assistance helped the Private Enterprise Foundation in a dialogue with the Government on the Private Sector Development Strategy and the business regulatory environment, but the foundation has limited membership and representation.

A number of pilot initiatives, particularly in rural livelihoods and energy and a sustainable environment, proved promising. New spaces to test innovative solutions to development challenges included the Multi-Media Incubator Centre. The ambitious agenda of community-based interventions such as the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Programme and the Millennium Village Project provided scope for testing alternative approaches to development in the most deprived areas of the country.

But these pilot initiatives mostly reached a limited number of people for a relatively short time. Without an explicit strategy that includes measures for national ownership, capacity-building and lessons learned from pilot activities, the Government and other partners will not be able to expand and sustain these. Involvement of local governments may be a key element in addressing some issues of sustainability and coverage. Some project design flaws also need to be tackled, such as the limited or belated focus on income generation, cost recovery, micro- and small business growth, and access to markets.

Inefficient and ineffective business processes could undermine the achievements of UNDP in Ghana. The quality of planning is one area of concern. The office

has made some improvements in administrative issues, but has deferred implementation of substantive initiatives.

Knowledge and information management are not effective, even though they are as much assets as funds, and must work well for UNDP to perform its functions. Weaknesses in M&E reflect capacity constraints at UNDP as well as among national partners. The quality of reporting from national partners is in many instances inadequate, but the country office lacks scope to provide the necessary support and guidance.

UNDP's good relationship with the Government is essential for its effectiveness and must be preserved. High responsiveness, however, has resulted in interventions becoming more vulnerable to shifting government backing and changes in political priorities. For instance, an agreement to support the newly established Constitutional Review Commission meant a reduction in support to other projects in the governance portfolio. While in some cases the organization needs to be more agile in responding to strategic shifts or emerging issues, it must also avoid the risk that in regularly reacting to ad hoc demands, it defers strategic support.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- UNDP should bolster its advisory capacity to support Ghana's transition to middle-income status. It should ensure that its portfolio reflects the dynamic environment in Ghana as the country continues its journey of building an inclusive society and prosperous nation. Central to this is UNDP's continued advocacy for a human development approach to Ghana's growth and development agenda.
- UNDP should continue its efforts to strengthen democratic governance, focusing on providing advice to strengthen the knowledge and skills base of national partners. It should also continue to advocate for appropriate resourcing of governance institutions that are essential for maintaining the positive trajectory for democratic governance in Ghana.
- UNDP should focus its efforts on strengthening the capacity of the government to respond to climate change in the national, regional and global arena.
- UNDP should support building national capacity for monitoring and evaluation in Ghana. This should be done in partnership with other United Nations organizations.
- UNDP should improve its dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders, in particular, civil society and the private sector, to enhance partnerships and foster national ownership of UNDP's interventions.
- UNDP should transform itself into a knowledge-based advisory organization. UNDP needs to improve its knowledge and information management in all areas of its work, strengthen its internal monitoring and evaluation systems and improve its communication.
- UNDP should expedite implementation of improvements to its business processes and operational capacity, and align these with the new strategic direction of the country office.
- As part of transitioning to a restructured portfolio, UNDP should develop sustainability plans and exit strategies in key programme areas. This should be done in agreement with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, implementing partners and responsible parties, and other critical development partners.

## 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)