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UNDP IN BOTSWANA

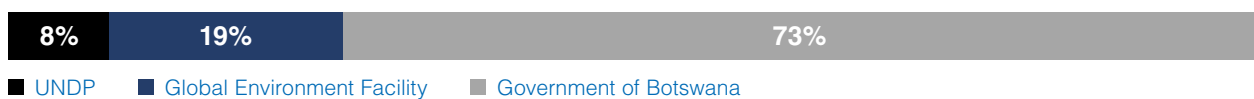
Botswana is well known for having one of the world's highest economic growth rates, but still needs to translate huge wealth from diamond resources into a sustainable level of poverty reduction. Significant challenges have come from HIV/AIDS, although the country made good progress on the Millennium Development Goals. It is widely considered to be one of the leading countries in Africa with regard to good governance, a reflection of its

generally high quality of institutions, independent legal system and relatively low level of corruption.

UNDP has provided support in the areas of poverty reduction, HIV/AIDS, governance, and energy and the environment. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered UNDP work from 2003 to 2008.

TOTAL PROGRAMME RESOURCES, 2004-2008: \$76.9 MILLION

FUNDING SOURCES, 2004-2008



PROGRAMME BUDGETED FUNDS BY THEMATIC AREA, 2004-2008 (\$ MILLIONS)



FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

UNDP-supported interventions in Botswana have generally been effective and responded well to national development needs, although impacts have often been limited to target groups with a fairly small number of people. The importance of UNDP support is highlighted by the fact that the organization is the only active development partner in most of its programme areas.

The most notable achievements on HIV/AIDS took place in strengthening institutional capacity. Key contributions included helping to establish umbrella HIV/AIDS organizations, strengthening the Ministry of Education's response to the epidemic and supporting subnational structures.

Governance programme achievements were promising but not entirely fulfilled. In poverty reduction and economic diversification, activities were pertinent and well-conceived, but limited in impact due to government capacity constraints and policy factors. The Multi-sectoral Committee on Poverty Reduction was felt to be taking the correct approach, for instance, but was highly dependent on a short-term international policy adviser and other external inputs.

UNDP support was instrumental and decisive in work on energy and the environment, assisting, for example, in the adoption of the Community-based Natural Resources Management Policy. But the high number of interventions brought challenges in terms of workload

and maintaining the focus of the programme.

Gender equality and mainstreaming have featured across interventions, and backed an increase in women's political participation and steps to respond to gender-based violence, among other achievements. There was a tendency for patchwork treatment of gender, however; an explicit strategy and specific human resources were needed.

Sustainability was a cross-cutting programmatic concern, but did not always lead to genuine national ownership. In community interventions, the need to respond to beneficiaries' immediate needs and priorities was a continuous challenge. In institutional projects, adequate capacity-strengthening activities, such as training events, took place, but not always within the framework of a comprehensive strategy. While some projects had a sustainability strategy, others did not.

UNDP had a prominent position in supporting key civil society organizations, yet some stakeholders felt that they should have greater and more meaningful involvement in the country programme.

Aid coordination was also an area in which the organization could have made a bigger contribution; there were signs that the Resident Coordinator was beginning to assume this role. Stronger focus on the principles of the Paris Declaration and aid effectiveness could enhance UNDP's delivery of development support.

Responsiveness to government needs stemmed from the fact that a large amount of programme funding came from the Government, although its share in the environment was smaller than in other practice areas, due to the high volume of Global Environment Facility funds. As a rule, all projects had a steering committee to include stakeholders in the decision-making process.

Despite an adequate match between national policies and country programme objectives, interventions did not always fully support the achievement of these objectives. The identification of core problems for projects and the definition of subsequent project purposes were not always clear. Institutional frameworks were not always successfully selected, which may explain the lack of buy-in by national counterparts in some projects.

Technical assistance absorbed a sizeable share of funding. It was generally appreciated for its good quality and relevant contributions, although some stakeholders commented that it was insufficient, a notion that may be based on a misunderstanding of roles and responsibilities.

Overall, its effect on strengthening national capacities and sustainability was questioned.

Competent and experienced human resources are a key asset of the country office, but UNDP's bureaucracy and procedural delays were criticized. Projects in all programme areas were reasonably efficient, when measured with disbursement rates, implementation of activities and production of outputs. Capacity constraints in the country office caused administrative delays, but most stakeholders did not consider these serious. To enhance efficiency, financial monitoring and reporting should be strengthened.

As a key development partner in Botswana, UNDP was visible and respected, in part due to the organization's participatory approach and strong relationship with the Government. Looking forward, there are several areas for intensifying UNDP support, such as capacity building and aid effectiveness. These need to be analysed in a holistic manner and a corporate strategy formulated.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The UNDP country programme should include a more realistic and adequate formulation of intended outcomes and respective indicators, and should be operationalized through annual action plans and accompanying budgets. Key programmes should sharpen their focus.
- A strategic review and possible revision of internal systems could cover areas such as the distribution of human resources between units, and the possibilities of stronger alignment of procedures with those of the Government. The policy for cost recovery should be revised so that it enables sustainable provision of services.
- UNDP should explore the possibilities of working more closely with civil society, including to play a watchdog role for service delivery.
- Financial monitoring and reporting should be strengthened. A specific monitoring and evaluation unit could be created, including to enhance alignment with government monitoring structures and mechanisms.
- All interventions supported by UNDP should be based on project documents that fulfil universally applied criteria of project cycle management. There should be an explicit strategy for sustainability in every project.
- All projects need to have clearly defined roles, responsibilities and decision-making structures, and these must be effectively communicated to all pertinent stakeholders.
- Future programme design should limit the number of cross-cutting issues to one or two, and have a clear strategy for ensuring that these are adequately addressed.
- UNDP should further strengthen gender equality and mainstreaming through assigning specific human resources. A clear strategy should be in place to ensure adequate attention to youth issues.
- Towards improved efficiency of the governance programme, UNDP could establish a senior-level management team that regularly reviews progress on implementation.
- The governance programme could benefit from regular reviews and documentation of good practices.
- Strengthening the linkages between National AIDS Coordinating Agency and subnational coordination structures is a potential area for UNDP work, drawing on experiences in other countries.

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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