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## UNDP IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

The 1995 Dayton Peace Accords ended the ethnic conflict in Bosnia, and set up the political and governing structure for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Despite policy reforms and trends showing an increase in the gross domestic product, challenges continue to confront the country, including tackling poverty. The State of Bosnia and Herzegovina also faces a broad range of requirements for European Union (EU) accession.

UNDP programmes have covered poverty reduction, governance, crisis prevention and recovery, and energy and the environment. In 2001, the programme shifted from a local to a national emphasis aimed at policy formulation and the national development agenda. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered UNDP work from 2001 to 2008.

### TOTAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE, 2004-2009: \$114.5 MILLION

#### FUNDING SOURCES, 2004-2009



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



## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

UNDP, together with other international agencies in Bosnia and Herzegovina, played an important role in dialogue concerning rationalization of state-entity competencies; in seeking to reduce ethnic divisions by encouraging greater understanding and reconciliation; in facilitating freedom of movement, especially for returnees; and in supporting reforms required for EU accession.

Among the most critical areas of intervention was the strengthening of local government institutions where the legal framework is weak and service delivery unstructured. UNDP supported municipal planning and development through bolstering capacity for sustainable development, post-war reconstruction and inclusive resettlement of those affected during the war. A participatory approach based on human rights informed municipal development strategies and shifted the emphasis of municipal management.

Interventions targeting displaced persons looked at the larger context in which returnees move. Support to returnee housing, rehabilitation of necessary infrastructure and services, and sustainable livelihoods have been increasingly linked to the wider community. Although UNDP has tried to encourage social inclusiveness in reconstruction, success has largely depended on the political environment of concerned municipalities.

Support for the creation of the BiH Mine Action

Centre represented a successful effort to promote a state mine action system with the required management and technical capacities to operate on its own. There has also been significant progress in demining civilian areas. UNDP has helped reinforce the technical capacities necessary to reduce small arms and light weapons and provided equipment for speedier and safer disposal.

UNDP was not regarded as a key player in public administration reforms, which are led by the European Commission. The organization contributed to specific areas of reform, however, including the establishment of the Federation of BiH Civil Service Agency, and civil service training systems for state and Federation of BiH civil servants. It also supported the establishment of the BiH Gender Agency. To address a weak judicial system, UNDP and other donors aided in setting up a War Crimes Chamber within the Court of BiH, strengthening the capacities of the Prosecutor's Office and organizing an outreach campaign to inform the public about the Chamber's role.

Partnerships with national government agencies have been effective in some areas, but strategic partnership around policy, advocacy, networking and providing expertise was not evident in most cases. Much of the programme was implemented almost entirely by UNDP. At all levels, UNDP can increase accountability for devel-

opment results by involving government partners more actively in planning and executing programmes.

Further, UNDP should move on from being an implementer of donor projects to developing synergies with the international community. In particular, attention should be directed towards clarifying a partnership with the European Commission so that UNDP can support, complement and reinforce the accession process.

In the challenging political environment of the country, which includes constitutional power-sharing, UNDP planned for ambitious outcomes, particularly those envisioned for the strengthened capacity of state institutions to drive the development process. However, it had neither the strategic positioning nor sufficient resources to realistically hope for their timely and successful achievement.

While the considerable range of UNDP programme activities was relevant, it was less certain that UNDP could provide meaningful contributions to development results in all these areas. Moreover, transforming lessons into appropriate policy advice for relevant entity- and state-level bodies would require far greater resources for

analysis and preparation of information. While some interventions were strong and focused, others seem to have been taken up mostly due to funding availability. UNDP needs to focus its priorities strategically, taking into account its own resources in terms of experience and financing as well as the activities of other donors. In light of the EU accession process, for example, UNDP could have an important role in complementing and supporting EU leadership of public administration reform efforts by providing a perspective on development priorities and contributing to strategic direction.

Today, Bosnia and Herzegovina is a middle-income country, a status to which UNDP has contributed. It is primarily the responsibility of the European Commission to guide and support accession. The question is not whether UNDP can continue to mobilize donor support for a country programme; undoubtedly it can. The real question is whether it should. At present, UNDP has not formulated an exit strategy. It should look to a date when it can complete its support and devise an exit strategy in accordance with goals to address during that period.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop a strategy to transfer ongoing projects from direct to national implementation modalities so that counterparts are able and willing to carry work forward without UNDP by the time of its departure. Increased efforts are required to strengthen the capacity of counterparts to assume ownership of projects. This will require the rethinking of partnerships and developing the capacity of specific counterpart organizations. A modified form of DIM should provide the basis for an agreement with the concerned counterpart agency for each project. This should establish stages through which UNDP can transfer responsibility to the counterpart(s) within a specified time frame. Counterpart organizations must agree to integrate the main principles and systems of the project in their ongoing work, over the long term. This policy should be adopted as soon as possible, and should be reflected in the next country programme document and action plan.
- UNDP should develop a strategy for exiting the country, which would include defined phases and steps to be fulfilled in order to allow for closure of development assistance activities by a fixed date—probably 2014, in view of current commitments. The phases should already be reflected within the next country programme action plan. A strong emphasis should be placed on capacity development, together with advocacy and political dialogue, to ensure that national ownership is achieved.
- UNDP needs to rethink where its efforts can have the most effect, bearing in mind its specific competencies, and ensure that its activities are aligned accordingly. Narrowing the range of activities included in its projects would require developing appropriate partnerships with other organizations that can assume responsibility for complementary activities that are no longer priorities for UNDP. UNDP should strengthen linkages between policy initiatives at the state level and operational interventions at the entity and municipality levels. There should be more emphasis on expanding existing interventions that are successful, and future short-term projects should build on these. The strategic focus should be aimed at advancing the sustainable human development agenda, facilitating progress in administrative reform, and supporting the country's progress towards EU membership, which includes addressing existing barriers through an analysis of entity-level perspectives.

## 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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