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## UNDP IN BURKINA FASO

Burkina Faso has been in a period of stability and social calm since 1991, which has allowed it to enter into a process of democratization and structural reforms. Set in a less than buoyant international and subregional context, the country's economic activity has remained fairly dynamic. Yet poverty is increasing particularly in rural areas, where nearly 50 percent of the population lives under the poverty line.

The UNDP programme in Burkina Faso was organized around the fight against poverty and the sustainable management of natural resources, support for good governance and support for the fight against HIV/AIDS. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered UNDP work from 2002 to 2008.

### TOTAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE, 2004-2008: \$78.6 MILLION

#### FUNDING SOURCES, 2004-2010



#### PROGRAMME BUDGET BY OUTCOME AREA, 2006-2010 (\$ MILLIONS)



## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation found that certain activities were widely recognized as comparative UNDP strengths. These included programmes in the areas of good governance, support for Parliament and support for the decentralization process initiated by the Government. UNDP advocacy effectively assisted the parliamentary gender caucus, backing the approval of a new law to ensure that 30 percent of electoral candidates are women.

On addressing HIV/AIDS, the programme for supporting groups and communities (PAMAC) remains an essential part of the national strategy. PAMAC is managed as a coordinated multidonor common basket fund, and supports several groups carrying out HIV screenings, community care for victims and prevention through information. The Coalition of Burkinabe Groups and Networks Fighting against AIDS (CORAB), a new national network, has capacity for becoming a coordination instrument carrying out certain PAMAC functions.

Linking poverty and natural resource management interventions recognized that natural resources support the livelihoods of two-thirds of the population. Innovative programmes included introducing multifunctional platforms, the production and commercialization of non-wood forest products, and supporting national access to the carbon market under the Kyoto Protocol. UNDP has made noticeable progress in gender mainstreaming in the past two years, particularly through a systematic review

of all current projects and strengthening capacities at all levels to include gender in interventions.

In general, there was a good balance between downstream and upstream activities. UNDP took on too many activities, however, given its limited resources. This perception harms its image. There are at least two examples of activities—the project to support local police and the project to support employment and professional training—that were considered nearly outside UNDP's mandate and skills. UNDP could benefit from a more efficient concentration of financial and human resources in key areas where the advantages of the institution are recognized. More rigour could be applied in bringing activities in line with management capacities and human resources, as the organization may otherwise face important losses in terms of impact and resources.

While certain interventions should continue upstream, centrally and nationally, a greater geographical concentration of downstream activities could create new synergies between projects, creating economies of scale and allowing for improved monitoring. Targeting socioeconomic categories is fundamental. Among UNDP programmes a number of initiatives were intended to bring assistance to the most deprived strata of society. But certain projects were not well conceived to achieve this goal. The microfinance project, for example, had credit conditions that might exclude the poorest groups.

The Government has taken an aid management approach based on the principles of the Paris Declaration. While UNDP subscribes to these principles, operating methods and procedures are not yet in line with them. An important step was taken when the UNDP Executive Board instituted a pilot period for prudent participation in “common baskets” or “common funds.” The largest share of aid in the country is still spent on projects, however. Numerous parallel implementation units exist, and UNDP generally requires reports in line with its own procedures and timetable. The rigid and cumbersome nature of institutional procedures continues to hamper efforts to explore new operating methods.

There are numerous coordination mechanisms in Burkina Faso, some of which are redundant. UN thematic groups have their equivalent within consultation frameworks bringing together all partners. This is also the case with sectoral dialogue frameworks implemented by the Government. There is room for rationalization,

and for financial and human resource savings. Similarly, UNDP strategic documents largely repeat certain elements of the Government’s UN strategic frameworks, warranting a review for added value.

One significant contribution made by UNDP was to develop innovative strategies. The multifunctional platforms and PAMAC, for example, have served as models for a number of other interventions, and have attracted significant financing. These successes may mean that UNDP, over the long term, will become a marginal actor in larger scale implementation, but they do underline UNDP’s potential as a catalyst for innovation.

With public aid to development increasingly dispensed as direct budgetary assistance, financial resources given to international organizations may decline. This reality calls upon UNDP to support national development by making more judicious use of its resources, and by reinforcing activities in the areas of advice, support and advocacy.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- UNDP should accelerate alignment with the principles of the Paris Declaration at a central, institutional level.
- The programme in Burkina Faso has demonstrated its capacity for innovation and for catalysing significant institutional change; it could become a testing ground for such changes within UNDP as a whole.
- UNDP should place a high priority on supporting Government efforts to strengthen aid management capacities.
- UNDP should continue to actively contribute towards the “Common Country Assistance Strategy.”
- The participation of UNDP in UN thematic groups should be reassessed to avoid duplication.
- At the central, institutional level, UNDP should recognize the common strategic documents jointly established by technical and financial partners as a basis to elaborate Country Programme documents.
- The next country programme should be more selective on interventions, taking into account the comparative advantages of UNDP, its mandate, and its financial and human resources.
- UNDP should adopt the principle of geographical concentration of activities on the ground.
- Strengthened advisory functions and advocacy should be principal means of influencing development choices.
- UNDP should continue to emphasize innovative activities that have potential for attracting additional financing.
- On HIV/AIDS, UNDP should continue supporting the PAMAC, but also strengthen CORAB’s capabilities.
- On energy and poverty, the introduction of a new generation of multifunctional platforms could aim to improve profitability, adopt greener production methods and clarify ownership questions.
- UNDP should take a number of actions on gender, including to create a task force for monitoring systematic integration of gender in its activities, and to strengthen its collaboration with civil society.
- UNDP should advocate a legislative framework on the prevention of and response to natural disasters.
- Project design should be improved, especially in terms of the definition of results, monitoring and evaluation, and the systematic identification of exit strategies and strategies for the sustainability of results.
- Activities related to capacity development should be analysed in depth to ensure proper correspondence to global institutional practices and a more coherent approach across all programmes
- UNDP should be more involved with direct monitoring of projects and should make more regular field visits.
- Increased partnership with universities and other recognized experts could contribute to reaffirming intellectual leadership in the area of development.

## 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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