

## UNDP IN RWANDA

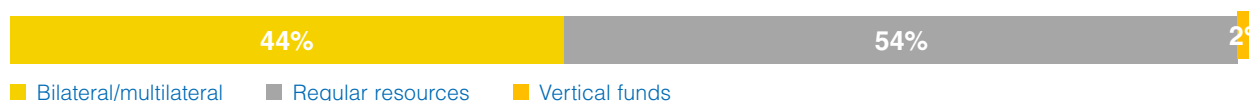
The political, social and economic context of Rwanda is profoundly affected by the civil war of the early 1990s and genocide of 1994. Whether considering demographic trends, issues of land ownership or penal-code reform, the background of devastation and horror impinges on the consciousness of all concerned. There is an unspoken assumption often underlying discussions of the nation's future to the effect that Rwanda cannot be considered

an ordinary country.

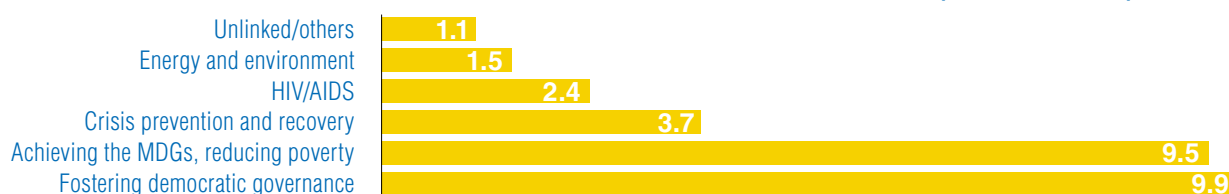
UNDP support had five areas of focus: the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and poverty reduction, democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery, responding to HIV/AIDS, and environment and energy. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered UNDP work from 2000 to 2006.

### TOTAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE, 2004-2006: \$28 MILLION

#### FUNDING SOURCES, 2004-2006



#### PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE BY PRACTICE AREA, 2004-2006 (\$ MILLIONS)



## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

UNDP had effective working relationships with the Government of Rwanda, which considered contributions to be very relevant. These were sometimes delivered with less than optimal efficiency, however, particularly in governance and environment programmes. The main problems were shortcomings in programme administration, management and financing.

In terms of the MDGs and poverty reduction, UNDP's project portfolio in general moved 'upstream', towards supporting central and regional government institutions. Field-level UNDP interventions lacked data on results, but available information suggested these were relevant, if limited in impact.

Support to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning was one of the largest UNDP interventions. Efforts to develop capacity in this ministry were fairly successful, and some UNDP initiatives, such as a project to transfer knowledge through ex-patriots, were innovative. UNDP support to the Ministry of Infrastructure to formulate a National Information and Communications Infrastructure Plan and e-Government Programme constituted important groundwork, though impacts were difficult to assess.

UNDP prepared the MDG Status Report of 2003 together with the Government. Its publication generated

much publicity and helped raise national awareness of the MDGs. Since then, the MDGs have been present in the development dialogue, but not always in a systematic and organized manner. Key government documents still concentrate primarily on economic factors.

Disparate contributions in democratic governance were well targeted, and government stakeholders considered them particularly relevant. UNDP helped improve capacities of the justice system on multiple levels and move forward decentralization. It played an instrumental part in two successful national elections. It should continue to help the Government address ongoing challenges related to the promotion and protection of human rights, and could bolster existing support for the National Unity and Reconciliation Council by involving and empowering more young people as peace makers.

Despite a substantial portion of core resources devoted to HIV/AIDS, there was a lack of reliable data on UNDP results. Its comparative advantage vis-à-vis other UN organizations should be clearly elaborated.

UNDP made modest contributions to progress on environment and energy, backing the elaboration of strategies, but without contributing to their adoption or implementation. The Poverty Environment Initiative helped ensure that the Government's emerging Eco-

conomic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy would centre on sustainable development. The initiative also provided environmental inputs into frameworks being developed for the strategy in agriculture, health, water and sanitation, justice, private sector development, social protection, environment, gender, social protection and HIV/AIDS. While this cross-sectoral analysis offered guidance for orienting these sectors, it was too early to assess development results.

Some impressive results occurred in areas where the Government of Rwanda was also relatively strong: aid coordination and gender mainstreaming. In the former, UNDP helped develop an aid coordination system, including by managing a basket fund for an Aid Coordination Unit. While gender-specific projects had an impact, however, there was little direct evidence that gender issues are systematically taken into account in other UNDP projects. A recent gender audit could help correct this anomaly.

Many UNDP contributions to helping government partners develop capacities were cited during the evaluation,

but there was no systematic approach to capacity development or to measuring progress. UNDP's decision to support the emerging National Integrated Skills Development Policy and a national capacity development strategy to be closely linked to the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy was promising.

Overall, UNDP made progress towards a more sustainable long-term development approach, but several UNDP projects still played gap-filling roles. The dispersion of programmes across many small projects in multiple thematic areas impeded efforts to improve the quality of programme administration and technical expertise.

External factors that will greatly shape UNDP's strategic environment in coming years are the new architecture of aid, including the 'One UN' approach piloted in Rwanda. Participation will place greater pressure on the organization to improve its performance and address areas of chronic weakness, such as human resource management, administrative and technical services, and monitoring and evaluation. Partners in and outside the UN system expect more clarity from UNDP on its role.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- If environment is to be retained as one of two areas of focus for UNDP, then the country office needs to enhance its capacity to provide strong technical and policy support.
- UNDP should launch a dialogue with the Government of Rwanda with the aim of expanding UNDP partnerships with Rwandan civil society organizations.
- Project designs need to be based on initial analyses of problems and clear objectives defined together with stakeholders. The role of steering committees in project design should be clarified and strengthened towards enhancing national ownership and sustainability.
- UNDP needs to establish a robust, functional monitoring and evaluation system that systematically generates 'lessons learned' and ensures these are reflected in programme management and design decisions.
- National ownership and the sustainability of results should be strengthened by ensuring that on-the-job training and skills transfer activities figure prominently in all technical assistance. Autonomous project implementation should be replaced, where possible, with technical assistance that works directly within government institutions.
- The results of the gender audit should be used to raise the profile on gender in UNDP's portfolio from an 'incidental' to a core issue. This should build on successful support to women politicians in Rwanda.
- UNDP should sharpen the focus of its programme, concentrating on areas where UNDP can bring the most value added while strengthening corresponding in-house capacities.
- UNDP should help the Government foster harmonization and alignment among development partners still pursuing the project approach. UNDP should explore the option of facilitating pooling of technical assistance.
- UNDP should focus on roles where it can achieve maximum coherence and synergies with the programmes of partner agencies.
- UNDP can help the Government enhance national and regional stability. For example, it should consider options for strengthening cross-border programming links that might help stabilize the Kivu region.
- UNDP should continue its support for strengthening the rule of law and decentralization. Enhanced ties with civil society organizations are needed to improve UNDP capacities in these areas.

## 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)