

Evaluation Brief: ICPE Angola

In the last decade, Angola has maintained political stability and experienced rapid economic growth that has outpaced its human development. Oil-driven economic growth has enabled Angola to transition from a least developed to a middle-income country. Yet the poverty rate reflects the disparities in national wealth distribution. Angola has an average age of 16 years which, coupled with high unemployment and economic disparity, could lead to social tensions and impede further development. The country is also vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change, particularly floods and droughts.

UNDP's programme outcomes comprised inclusive sustainable growth, including health; democratic governance, including human rights, justice and women's empowerment; and environmental sustainability and disaster risk reduction, including natural resources management and biodiversity. The major contributors to non-core resources have been the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; the Global Environment Facility (GEF); and the European Union. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered the organization's work in Angola from 2015 to 2018.

Findings and Conclusions

UNDP has strategically positioned itself in Angola by advising on the country's graduation process from LDC status, promoting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and supporting elections. Considering the national context and UNDP's funding challenges, significant progress has been achieved, nevertheless, UNDP's results have fallen short of its ambitious targets.

UNDP support was crucial to sustaining and increasing antiretroviral treatments and to the national response to HIV/AIDS. It has made important contributions to the Ministry of Women's Affairs in implementing gender policies at national and local levels and in improving capacities to collect, analyse and report on gender data. It has successfully helped Angola to improve human rights awareness and the capacity of justice and rule of law institutions and systems. The country office has contributed to strengthening the Ombudsman function in Angola, strategically positioning UNDP in a new and relevant area of anti-corruption work. However, UNDP has had limited success in improving service delivery to the poorest and most marginalized.

FIGURE 1. Funding Sources, 2015-2017

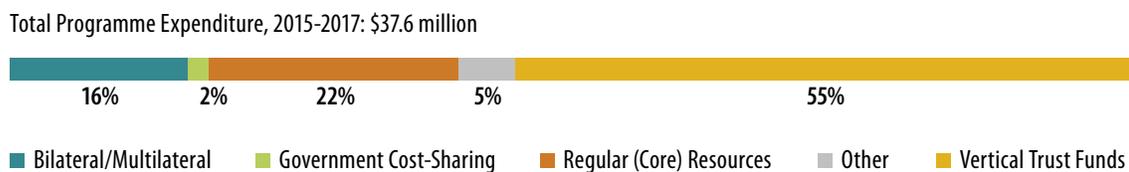


FIGURE 2. Programme Expenditure by Thematic Area, 2015-2017 (\$ Million)



UNDP has provided effective support to Angola in accessing environmental funding and increasing national awareness on environmental issues. UNDP has made important contributions to expanding protected areas and has strategically positioned itself as a key partner in building a legal framework and policies for the environment as well as the capacity to integrate the environment into national development plans and programmes. However, growing dependency on GEF funding has limited UNDP's flexibility in exploring other sources of funding.

UNDP contribution has been successful in increasing government awareness on disaster risk reduction (DRR), particularly in such cases as the recurrent El Niño drought. It helped national and provincial DRR institutions to implement the national contingency plan and supported the preparation of DRR plans in eight provinces. However, the sustainability of results is uncertain, since the budgeting process has yet to consider DRR in a way that would ensure adequate resource allocation. UNDP faces key challenges in contributing more strategically to environmental sustainability and DRR with improved partnerships, gender mainstreaming, efficiency, programmatic integration and leveraging synergies with other areas.

UNDP has not always been able to leverage its comparative advantages, diminishing its visibility and

relevance in areas it was once recognized for, such as poverty reduction, inclusive sustainable growth and democratic governance. It has progressed insufficiently on mobilizing the private sector on corporate social responsibility and facilitating inclusive and sustainable social protection aiming at livelihoods, professional training and local development, due to lack of resources and a proper partnership strategy. UNDP has not contributed to needed reform in the extractive industries as envisaged, because the sector's practices and management capacity were not among the Government's priorities during the programme cycle.

Limited integration and synergies among thematic areas and strategic partners have constrained the achievement and sustainability of results. Most projects have been implemented in isolation, focusing on a specific initiative or programme outcome. South-South and triangular cooperation remained mostly limited. Overall mainstreaming of gender in thematic areas has been limited to the inclusion of women as participants in initiatives. Programmes have not systematically addressed the needs of the genders and particular groups, such as youth. Theories of change are inadequate to better integrate the contributions of the different areas with proper systems thinking to ensure sustainable transformational advances, national ownership and learning for improved effectiveness.

Recommendations

- As the country progresses to middle-income status, UNDP should renew its visibility and relevance and better leverage its comparative advantage as a broker and an integrator of efforts in Angola to implement the 2030 Agenda. UNDP has the challenge and the opportunity to better capitalize on its strategic position and make more significant and sustainable contributions to Angola's development.
- UNDP should develop a long-term vision and clear theories of change ensuring integration among thematic areas, to better build synergies, avoid piecemeal initiatives and ensure more significant and sustainable results. UNDP should be less ambitious, more realistic and focused given its limited resources, looking for synergies across thematic areas and strategic partnerships.
- UNDP should develop staffing capacities to focus more on upstream interventions where UNDP may have a clearer added value given it decreasing core regular resources. Downstream interventions should be limited to innovative pilot projects with adequate risk mitigation and exit strategies aligned with committed national partnerships to improve sustainability.
- UNDP should develop a human resources strategy to better address the needs and challenges of the programme and agencies services and reassess the office's resource mobilization strategy to diversify sources of funds more effectively. Given its decreasing core regular resources and dependence on vertical funds, UNDP needs to augment its staffing and capacities to better engage with the private sector, international financial institutions and government cost-sharing as a source of co-financing.
- UNDP should improve staff capacities and incentives to adequately integrate gender with proper strategic thinking on ways of promoting equality and women's empowerment. Better analytical capabilities are needed to identify and address the specific needs of the genders and particular groups such as youth, which should be integrated across all outcome.