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Evaluation Office
United Nations Development Programme

INDEPENDENT COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION PARAGUAY



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Foreword

It is my pleasure to present the second Independent Country Programme Evaluation of the UNDP in Paraguay, previously known as the “Assessment of Development Results”. This evaluation, which covers the 2015-2019 programme period, was conducted by the UNDP Independent Evaluation Office, in close collaboration with the UNDP Paraguay country office.

UNDP has been supporting the Government of Paraguay since 1977. Over the years, its programme has been shaped by the country’s evolving development priorities and challenges. The current 5-year programme responded to Paraguay’s National Development Plan 2030 and its vision of transforming the country into one of the most efficient food producers in the world, with thriving and innovative industries that create job opportunities, and with one of the highest social development indexes of South America.

The evaluation found that UNDP has sustained a close relationship with the Government of Paraguay, providing substantive institutional strengthening support for the implementation of environmental policies and social programmes. Improvements were seen in Paraguay’s legislative and institutional climate change and disaster risk reduction frameworks, and in targeting instruments and criteria for the selection of beneficiaries for social protection programmes. Similarly, significant contributions were made to the advancement of the implementation process for the Sustainable Development Goals, through technical support and advisory services for their effective integration and monitoring. During this time, UNDP has also played an important convening role, fostering partnerships and dialogue between the Government, private sector and civil society for consensus building.

The evaluation also identified several areas requiring attention to ensure that UNDP efforts contribute to longer-term results. In the next programme cycle, focus should be given to repositioning UNDP in the democratic governance area, ensuring adequate upstream engagement with government counterparts and active civil society participation to achieve the desired structural transformation. In addition, it is important that UNDP invests in strengthening subnational institutional and productive capacities; maximizes coordination and harmonization with other UN agencies and development partners; and reinforces the programme’s results-based management, including its theory of change and gender approach for enhanced gender equality and women’s empowerment.

I trust that this report will be of use to readers seeking to better understand the broad support provided by UNDP, including what has worked and what hasn’t, as well as the factors that have influenced UNDP performance and contribution to development in Paraguay. I hope that the results and recommendations of this report provide a valuable input to the formulation of the next UNDP country engagement strategy with Paraguay.



Indran A. Naidoo
Director, Independent Evaluation Office

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADR	Assessment of Development Results
CPD	Country Programme Document
CO	Country Office
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DIM	Direct implementation modality
DIPECHO	Disaster Preparedness Programme of the European Commission
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
FAPI	Federation for the Self-determination of Indigenous People
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	German Development Agency
GRES	Gender results effectiveness scale
HDI	Human Development Index
ICPE	Independent Country Programme Evaluation
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
INDERT	National Institute for Rural Development and Land
INFONA	National Forestry Institute
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MAG	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
NDP	National Development Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIM	National implementation modality
PAHO/WHO	Pan American Health Organization / World Health Organization
ROAR	Results Oriented Annual Report
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights
SAS	Social Action Secretariat
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAM	Environment Secretariat
SEN	National Emergency Secretariat
SFP	Civil Service Secretariat
SIRT	Land Tenure Information System
STP	Technical Secretariat for Economic and Social Development Planning
TSJE	Superior Court of Electoral Justice
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations country team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environmental Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNREDD	United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
UNWomen	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WFP	World Food Programme

Evaluation Brief: ICPE Paraguay

Over the last 15 years, Paraguay has experienced one of the fastest rates of economic and productivity growth in Latin America. The country has made important progress in reducing levels of poverty and inequality, and fostering greater prosperity for its people. As an upper middle-income country with a medium human development ranking, Paraguay faces the challenge of advancing structural transformations for sustained economic growth and poverty reduction.

In its 2015-2019 programme, UNDP committed to support Paraguay in the areas of inclusive sustainable development, democratic governance and disaster risk reduction. Major resource partners included the Government of Paraguay, the Global Environment Facility and the European Union. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an independent country programme evaluation that covered UNDP work in Paraguay from 2015 to 2018.

Findings and Conclusions

UNDP has sustained a solid relationship with the Government of Paraguay, positioning itself as a reliable partner for the provision of management support services to the Government, and an impartial and trusted convener and broker for the private sector and civil society organizations. Its

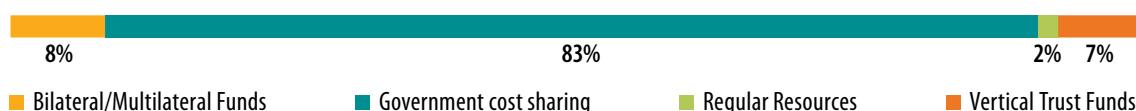
leadership and policy advisory role, particularly in the democratic governance area, declined during the evaluation period, limiting its effectiveness in some areas. A declining relationship and linkages with the donor community hampered the strategic positioning and visibility of UNDP.

UNDP demonstrated a strong capacity to respond and adapt to emerging needs, reflected in a shift in its programmatic focus. This was due to the programme's dependence on funding from the Government of Paraguay, and the Government's increasing demand for administrative support services.

The programme lacked a clear and coherent theory of change, a focus on strategic results rather than operational contributions, and the systematic monitoring of output and outcome level results. Significant contributions were found in the empowerment of a women's network for greater participation and influence in democratic processes, a result with the potential to become gender transformative, and in the integration of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at national level. UNDP was partially effective in improving citizen access to justice and had limited or no interventions focused on strengthening the Superior Court of Electoral Justice or Congress, or improving anticorruption measures across sectors.

Funding Sources, 2015-2017

TOTAL PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE, 2015-2017: \$83 MILLION



Programme Expenditure by Thematic Area, 2015-2017 (\$ Millions)



Support for the implementation of the SDGs in Paraguay, an area in which UNDP has a comparative advantage, has led to important advancements: the inclusion of the SDGs in the National Development Plan, the establishment of an Interinstitutional Commission, the adoption of the SIGOB and SIMORE Plus systems to monitor progress towards the SDGs, and increasing private sector pro-SDG engagement. These efforts, if continued, have a high potential for impact.

Through its environmental portfolio, UNDP has closely supported the Environment Secretariat (SEAM) in its institutional strengthening efforts. Continued support was provided for the development of a legislative and institutional climate change framework, important instruments to meet the country's international climate change commitments. Their dissemination and implementation at national and subnational levels remain a challenge, considering national institutional weaknesses.

UNDP played a catalytic role in promoting an institutional shift from emergency response to disaster risk reduction. There was an assertive strategy to focus its limited resources on strengthening the National Emergency Secretariat and the National System for Risk and Disaster Management. The scope of these contributions is limited due to resource constraints

and changes in the political environment. The systems and mechanisms set up with UNDP support have not managed to systematically reach community level, and the capacity of decentralized governments is still weak.

Through the establishment of tripartite dialogue platforms for Paraguay's main value chains, UNDP contributed to establishing a building block for effective agreements towards more environmentally sustainable and socially responsible production models. The private sector, Government and civil society organizations now converge in a neutral space of trust for dialogue. This pilot experience is being replicated in another region, though without validation of its effectiveness and impact.

Gender mainstreaming in the programme was weak. Projects reflect a low gender marker with no systematic integration of gender issues in their design and implementation. A gender equality strategy and action plan were still not in place to address this situation.

UNDP was not successful in working closely with development partners and donors in the country. Insufficient attention was given to the identification of synergies and the promotion of integration and coordination with other UN agencies.

Recommendations

- Reposition itself as a leading agency in democratic governance. Given its reduced core resources, UNDP should strategically focus its interventions on substantive upstream engagement and policy advisory support for the Government to achieve its desired structural transformation. Interventions should focus on fostering active civil society participation and engagement with the Government, particularly for the SDG implementation process.
- Continue to support SEAM and the institutions that compose the Social Protection System in their institutional strengthening efforts, offering tools and instruments that enhance the targeting, coverage and quality of social services and focusing the engagement with SEAM on consolidating ongoing capacity development efforts.
- Reinforce its disaster risk reduction programme to consolidate the paradigm shift; and support the Government in expanding the National System for Risk and Disaster Management at subnational level. Engagement and advocacy at a high political level should be strengthened to ensure the necessary political support and resources.
- Foster greater alliances and linkages within and across its different areas of intervention for more integrated approaches and solutions. South-South cooperation modalities should be increased to benefit Paraguay's development needs and results.
- Strengthen its gender mainstreaming capacity to improve the programme's gender-related results. The gender strategy and action plan should be finalized and implemented to ensure the systematic integration of gender issues and strategies in the programme.
- Improve its strategic planning and results-based management to enhance its contribution to development results, particularly in the SDG framework. A clear theory of change for the programme, and a consistent results framework with realistic indicators, should be developed.



CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

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1.1 Purpose, objective, and scope of the evaluation

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducts Independent Country Programme Evaluations (ICPEs) to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of UNDP contributions to development results at the country level, as well as the effectiveness of the UNDP strategy in facilitating and leveraging national efforts to achieve development results. The purpose of the ICPEs is to:

- Support the development of the next UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD);
- Strengthen the accountability of UNDP to national stakeholders and its Executive Board.

This is the second country level evaluation conducted by UNDP in Paraguay, after the Assessment of Development Results (ADR) carried out in 2010. The results from this ICPE, which aims to answer three main evaluation questions (see box 1), will serve as an input for the formulation of the UNDP CPD for 2020-2024.

The ICPE covers the current CPD 2015-2019 and examines UNDP performance in the country from 2015 to March 2018. All UNDP activities in the country, and interventions financed by all sources of funding including UNDP core resources, donor funds and government funds, were considered. The ICPE also covered non-project activities, such as coordination and advocacy, considered important for the country's political and social agenda.

1.2 Evaluation methodology

The evaluation was guided by three main evaluation questions and relied mostly on qualitative methods and tools. As a starting point, an evaluation matrix was developed identifying sub-questions, sources of information, and evaluative evidence or indicators for each of the main evaluation questions. To answer question 1, a portfolio analysis and desk review of project and programme documents was carried out, to better understand how and under what conditions UNDP interventions were expected to lead to: i) inclusive and sustainable growth and development; ii) improved democratic governance; and iii) reduced disaster risks and vulnerability to climate change. This assessment included a quantitative analysis of programme expenditures, execution rates and partners.

The effectiveness of the UNDP programme (question 2) and the factors influencing its performance (question 3) were assessed using a sample of 38 projects (N=59), selected through purposive sampling based on the following criteria: programme coverage (projects covering the various components, cross-cutting areas and gender¹); financial expenditure (projects of all sizes, both large and smaller pilot projects); geographic coverage (not only national level and urban projects, but also in different regions); maturity (covering both completed and active projects); programme cycle (coverage of projects/ activities from the previous and mainly the current cycles); and degree of "success" (coverage of successful projects, as well as projects reporting difficulties where lessons can

BOX 1. Main Evaluation Questions

1. What did the UNDP country programme intend to achieve during the period under review?
 2. To what extent has the programme achieved (or is likely to achieve) its intended objectives?
 3. What factors contributed to or hindered UNDP performance and the sustainability of results?
-

¹ The gender marker, a UNDP corporate tool, is assigned for all projects, using scores from 3 to 0. A score of 3 means the project has gender equality as the main objective; a 2 indicates that the intended outputs have gender equality as a significant objective; a 1 signifies outputs that will contribute in some way to gender equality, but not significantly, and a 0 refers to outputs that are not expected to contribute 'noticeably' to gender equality.

be learned). Consultations with the UNDP country office were held to finalize the selection of projects for in-depth review and field visits.

Data for the evaluation was obtained through primary and secondary sources such as a review of various documents, key informant interviews and group discussions prior to, during and after the evaluation mission. Among the documents reviewed (see annex 6) were programme documents, results-oriented annual reports (ROARs), project reports, workplans and past evaluations, and government strategies, studies and reports. In addition, a pre-mission questionnaire was administered to the country office to validate the available self-reported data and fill any data gaps during the mission.

A total of 107 key informants were interviewed (see annex 5) comprising UNDP Paraguay staff, government representatives, donors and development partners, programme and project beneficiaries, private sector actors, civil society organizations (CSOs) and other UN agencies. 44 percent of interviewees were women. Field visits to seven project sites in the East, South and North² of the country were carried out to meet with local partners and collect evidence on programmatic results, challenges and opportunities. The selection of project sites, which was done in consultation with the country office, was based on the relevance of the project results to the envisaged country programme outputs, geographical distribution, and accessibility considering the available time for the mission, among others.

Gender mainstreaming in UNDP's work was measured in two ways. First, in relation to the office business environment including institutional guidelines and frameworks, staff culture and available capacity³ to mainstream gender in the programme. Secondly, based on the effectiveness of gender

results, expressed in terms of programme and project design, specific field interventions targeting gender equality and women's empowerment (using the gender marker) and monitoring and evaluation activities. The gender results effectiveness scale (GRES), developed by the IEO, was used to categorize the identified gender results.

Data collected from multiple sources was triangulated to ensure its validity. For this, a matrix was prepared identifying common evidence for the different areas of analysis, including the CPD outputs identified in the results framework.

Process. Following the development of the terms of reference for the ICPE (see annex 1) in January 2018, the IEO recruited an international expert and a national expert to support the outcome assessments. A pre-mission questionnaire was sent to the country office in February 2018 as a self-assessment and reflection tool. A three-week data collection mission was carried out in the country by the IEO Lead Evaluator, Associate Evaluator, Deputy Director and the two experts between the 4th and 23rd March 2018. At the end of the mission, preliminary findings and results were shared with the country office for joint reflection and validation. Subsequently, the team drafted separate outcome reports which served as inputs to this final ICPE report.

The draft ICPE report was submitted to the IEO for internal review, as well as to an external expert (member of the IEO Evaluation Advisory Panel), then to the country office and UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America, and finally to the Government and other national partners for comment. A videoconference, held in November 2018, brought together key stakeholders and provided an additional opportunity to discuss results and recommendations, and obtain feedback and clarification on the ICPE report prior to finalization.

² East: Ciudad del Este, Naranjal (Alto Paraná), Caazapá, Tavai and San Juan Nepomuceno (Caazapá); South: Encarnación (Itapúa); North (Chaco Paraguayo): Teniente Irala Fernández (Presidente Hayes) and Filadelfia (Boquerón).

³ Refers to the demonstrated and perceived awareness and sensitivity of staff on gender issues during interviews, and the actual attention and focus given to gender issues during programme implementation measured through interviews and desk review.

Limitations: Interviews with some key informants, including the former UN Resident Coordinator, the Ministry of Women, the Ministry of Education and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) were not possible due to time constraints and the unavailability of these key informants during the data collection phase. Time constraints and the vast geographical location of some project sites also limited the evaluation field visits. This was mitigated through extensive desk review and the use of findings from past project evaluations. A quantitative analysis of progress towards results was not possible due to inaccuracies and weaknesses in the CPD results framework and monitoring.

1.3 Paraguay’s development context

The Republic of Paraguay is a landlocked country in South America, with an estimated population of 6,852,068 inhabitants in 2017⁴. It is bordered by Bolivia to the Northwest, Brazil to the East and Northeast, and Argentina to the South and Southwest.

With an income level of US\$4,060 per capita, Paraguay is categorized as an upper-middle income country⁵. In recent years, the country has experienced one of the fastest rates of economic and productivity growth in Latin America⁶. In the first quarter of 2017, Paraguay’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) registered a year-on-year growth of 6.6 percent⁷. During that same period, agriculture expanded by 3.7 percent year-on-year, whilst the livestock, forestry and fishing sectors grew by 4.6 percent⁸. Agriculture and livestock accounted for about 23 percent of GDP in 2016, making them the main drivers of economic growth in the country, with a combined indirect contribution to GDP of over 40 percent.

The average annual economic growth rate (3 to 4 percent) in recent years is not sufficient to reach the development levels of neighboring countries in the medium term (20 years). Social mobility is low, that is, if an individual is born in a poor family the probability of remaining poor is very high. The quality of basic public services in general is low, and of much lower quality or nonexistent in rural areas, and the learning ratios in basic subjects such as reading and math are, on average, below Brazil’s.

In recent years, poverty levels in Paraguay have declined, from 31.37 percent in 2012 to 26.40 percent in 2017. Inequality measured by the Gini coefficient also reduced, from 0.522 in 2014 to 0.497 in 2016⁹. Despite this progress, 1,809,053 Paraguayans are still considered poor. In absolute terms, poverty levels are higher in rural areas than in urban areas. While indigenous peoples account for only 2 percent of the country’s population, 71.8 percent of them live in poverty (2008), 39 percent are illiterate and their participation in the labour market is low, at 52 percent.

According to the 2015 Human Development Report, Paraguay is positioned in the medium human development category, ranking 110th out of 188 countries in the Human Development Index (HDI)¹⁰; lower than the Latin American average. On the Gender Inequality Index, Paraguay ranked 104 out of 159 countries. In Paraguay, poverty impacts women more than men. Female participation in the labour market is lower than that of males (58.1 percent of women compared to 84.5 percent of men) and in rural areas, women are more affected by the lack of employment opportunities and access to education than men.

⁴ Permanent Household Survey EPH (2018)

⁵ Classification according to the world bank data:

<https://datahelpdesk.worldbank.org/knowledgebase/articles/906519-world-bank-country-and-lending-groups>

⁶ Boosting Productivity and Inclusive Growth in Latin America, OECD (2016)

⁷ Informe Cuentas Nacionales Trimestrales, I Trimestre 2017, Banco Central de Paraguay (2017)

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Social Panorama of Latin America, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, ECLAC (2017)

¹⁰ UNDP, ‘Human Development Report: Briefing note for countries on the 2016 Human Development Report’, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/all/themes/hdr_theme/country-notes/PRY.pdf

A series of social reforms have led to progress in this area. By 2015, Paraguay had achieved Millennium Development Goal 7 Target 10 “Halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water” and accomplished free access to primary health care (MDGs 4, 5 and 6) and basic education (MDG 2)¹¹ for its population. According to the 2016 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), 95.3 percent of household members in Paraguay have access to drinking water and 80.3 percent to improved sanitation facilities. Moreover, the expansion of the conditional transfer programmes for vulnerable populations contributed to a decrease in extreme poverty (MDG1 target 1A) to 10.5 percent of the population, from 18.8 percent in 1998. Moving forward, Paraguay has committed to the achievement of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The progress made in this regard with UNDP’s support is presented in section 2.2 of this report.

1.4 UNDP Programme in Paraguay

The UNDP partnership with Paraguay began in 1977 with the signing of the Standard Basic Assistance Agreement by the Government of Paraguay. During the current evaluation period (2015-2018), the UNDP strategy in Paraguay has been guided by the Country Programme Document 2015-2019, aligned to the UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-2017 (specifically to 13 corporate outputs) and Paraguay’s United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2015-2019. The programme, as defined in the CPD, addresses three UNDAF outcomes and outlines UNDP’s contributions through different outputs (see table 1). Its overarching goal was to contribute to the Government’s poverty reduction efforts, improve the country’s democratic governance and reduce Paraguay’s risks to natural disasters and climate change through a series of mixed interventions, discussed in Chapter 2.

TABLE 1. UNDP’s Country Programme Outcomes and Outputs (2015 to 2019)

Country Programme / UNDAF Outcome	UNDP Country Programme Outputs	Expenditures (US\$)
PRY_OUT29/ UNDAF_OUT 2.1. Devolution and accountability: Paraguay will have reduced poverty levels, established decent work and guaranteed improvement of working population’s income	1.1 Options to promote inclusive and sustainable social protection, based on best practices and lessons learned at regional level 1.2 Mechanisms established to generate and broadly disseminate development knowledge solutions 1.3 National and subnational systems and institutions enabled to achieve structural transformation of productive capacities for inclusive and sustainable development 1.4 Climate change mitigation and adaption actions increased and implemented in all sectors based on strategic tools and multi-sectoral consensus 1.5 Inclusive and sustainable solutions provided to achieve energy efficiency and universal access to energy sources (particularly renewable energy), with emphasis on vulnerable populations	22,286,679

¹¹ Resolution 1,074 of the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare in 2009

TABLE 1 (cont'd)

Country Programme / UNDAF Outcome	UNDP Country Programme Outputs	Expenditures (US\$)
PRY_OUT30/ UNDAF_OUT 1.1. Paraguay will have progressed in protecting and guaranteeing the rights of all individuals, with emphasis on vulnerable and discriminated populations	<p>2.1 Increased management capacity and accountability of the judiciary in order to improve citizen access to justice</p> <p>2.2 Strengthened public institutions management and civil service capacities</p> <p>2.3 Strengthened technical, management and accountability capacities of the Congress and the Superior Court of Electoral Justice, creating conditions for increased democratic participation</p> <p>2.4 Institutions supported, and dialogue processes facilitated, for consensus building and effective civil society participation in national development</p> <p>2.5 Institutions and systems enabled to address awareness, prevention and enforcement of anticorruption measures across sectors and stakeholders</p>	58,247,528
PRY_OUT31/ UNDAF_OUT 3.1. Paraguay will have reduced its disaster risks and increased community resilience and responsiveness to emergencies and disasters	<p>3.1 System developed to assess natural and human-induced risks at national and subnational levels</p> <p>3.2 Effective institutional, legislative and policy frameworks for the improved implementation of disaster risk management measures at national and subnational levels</p> <p>3.3 Systems to efficiently meet and address the impacts of natural and human-induced disasters promoted at all government and community levels</p>	2,588,809

Source: UNDAF and CPD Paraguay 2015-2019, and UNDP systems for expenditures

During this time, UNDP implemented 59 projects¹², of which 30 were executed directly by the organization (Direct Implementation modality or DIM), 22 by the Government (national implementation modality or NIM), and 7 by the Government with UNDP's direct support (Support to NIM modality). According to the country office, in the case of NIM projects, the greatest challenge has been to develop the capacity of partners to ensure adequate implementation and achievement of expected results. In the case of DIM

projects, the challenge has been to set up adequate management units to ensure successful implementation and results.

Dependence on external funding. In terms of funding, between 2015-2017, UNDP received \$95,798,774 and disbursed \$83,123,017 (86.77 percent execution rate). Of the \$83 million in expenditure, only 1 percent came from UNDP core resources. Despite declining core funds over recent years and other

¹² 40 ongoing projects, 12 financially closed projects and 7 operationally closed projects

difficulties faced by the country office during this time (explained in chapters 2 and 3), UNDP managed to mobilize resources and increase programme expenditure by 25 percent, disbursing \$25 million in 2015 and \$31 million in 2017. As shown in figure 1, the democratic governance outcome had the highest expenditure and execution rate (70 percent of total expenditure with 92 percent execution rate), followed by the inclusive sustainable economic development outcome and the disaster risk reduction outcome, with 27 percent and 3 percent of total expenditure respectively. At the time of the evaluation, the country office employed 33 people, of which 21 were staff and 12 were contractors.

The programme was mostly funded by the Government of Paraguay (86 percent of expenditure), the Global Environment Facility (7 percent), UNDP and the European Union (2 percent each). Government cost sharing amounted to over \$69 million between 2015-2017, an increase of 5.95 percent from 2015-2016, and of 25.76 percent from 2016-2017. Other sources of funding, such as bilateral and multilateral funds and UNDP regular resources, decreased substantively during the period under evaluation. The country office adopted an efficient resource mobilization strategy with the Government to expand its partnerships and support to the country. While this contributed

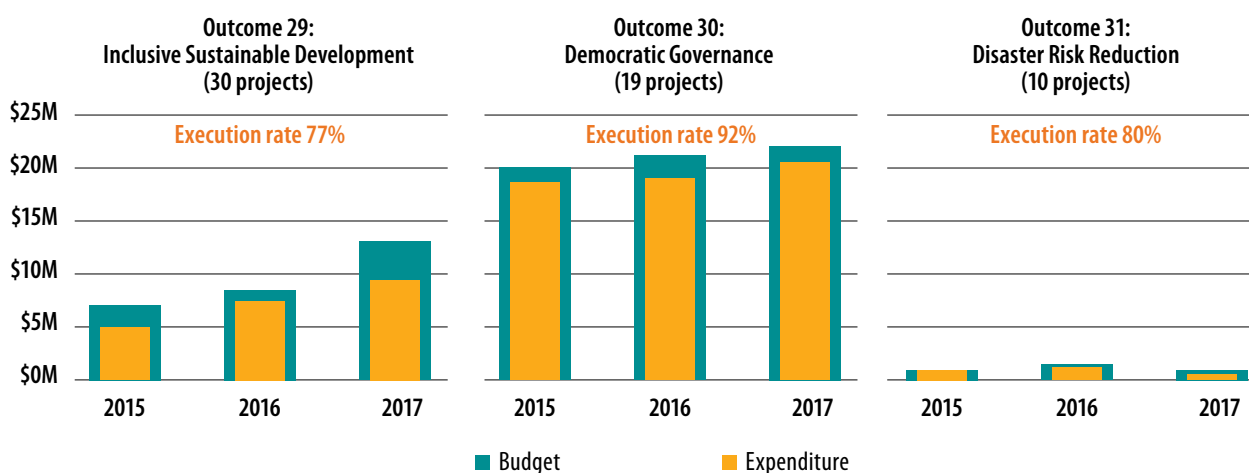
to sustaining the programme and office structure, it also influenced the direction of the programme.

A shift in programmatic focus. During the evaluation period, the UNDP Paraguay programme experienced a shift in programmatic focus due to several contextual and institutional factors. This change was mostly seen in two programmatic areas: inclusive sustainable development and democratic governance.

At the beginning of the programme cycle the country office faced difficulties in terms of financial sustainability and leveraging partnerships with the new Government. In 2015, UNDP core resources for country offices were reduced substantially, leading to increased dependence on external funding sources. In this challenging scenario, UNDP in Paraguay made substantive efforts to diversify its resource partners. Close partnerships were established with a wide array of government institutions that requested support for the implementation of their national programmes, leading to an increase in government funding during this period.

The shift in funding sources and the Government’s demand for administrative support, such as procurement and recruitment services, also influenced the focus of some projects, leading to an increased number of “management services projects” during

FIGURE 1. Budget and expenditure by outcome area, 2015-2017

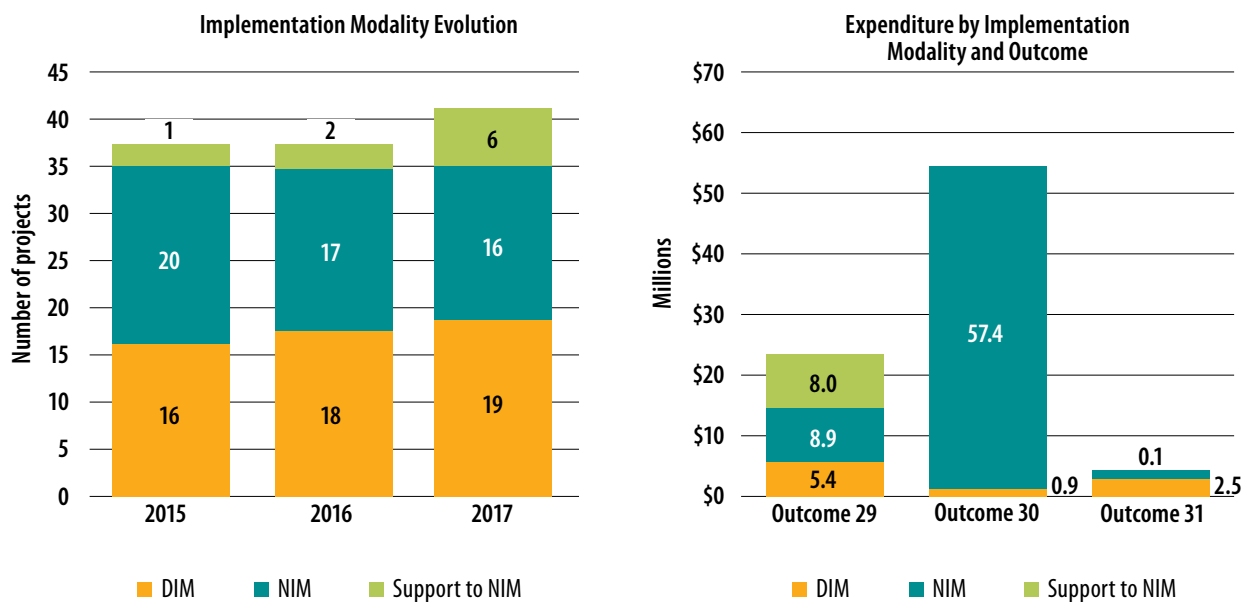


Source: Atlas validated with UNDP office

the current programme cycle. The 2010 country level evaluation led by IEO in Paraguay (referred to as ADR) found that between 2007-2011 “management project services were greatly reduced in favor of smaller-sized technical assistance projects”, creating additional challenges in terms of financing the UNDP structure. This trend was halted due to an increase in Government demand for administrative support services and a decrease in donor funds in the country, linked to the country’s middle-income status. At the same time, requests from the Government for upstream support for institutional and structural reforms, public policy design and monitoring, and the development of integral strategies reduced during this period.

The prevalence of management support service projects, implemented through NIM and Support to NIM modalities, was greater in the programmatic areas of inclusive sustainable development and democratic governance. The disaster risk reduction portfolio was mostly funded through bilateral funds. It is important to note that the UNDP role in these projects, which are implemented by the Government, focuses on the provision of administrative and operational services. The effects of this situation on the effectiveness of UNDP contributions to results is explained in subsequent sections.

FIGURE 2. Implementation modality, all projects, 2015-2017



Source: Atlas validated with UNDP office



CHAPTER 2

FINDINGS

DEVELOPMENT effectiveness COORDINATION efficiency PARTNERSHIP sustainability NATIONAL OWNERSHIP
sustainability MANAGING FOR RESULTS responsiveness COORDINATION AND DEVELOPMENT responsiveness
COORDINATION HUMAN effectiveness COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIP sustainability
COORDINATION relevance sustainability MANAGING FOR RESULTS responsiveness HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
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This chapter presents the results of the outcome analysis, and an assessment of cross-cutting issues. The main factors that influenced UNDP performance and contributions to results are also described in this section. The assessment was based on an analysis of the correlation between project results, their contribution to the expected outputs under each outcome, and consequently to the overall outcome objectives.

2.1 Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Development

● ● RELATED OUTCOME

Outcome 29: Devolution and accountability: Paraguay will have reduced poverty levels, established decent work and guaranteed improvement of working population's income (UNDAF Outcome 2.1)

Paraguay's National Development Plan (NDP) 2030 aims to transform Paraguay into a competitive country and one of the most efficient food producers in the world, with thriving and innovative industries that provide job opportunities for a skilled workforce. To achieve this, the NDP 2030 identifies 12 results that fall under three interconnected strategic areas and four transversal lines. The 12 results are categorized under the three main pillars of sustainable development - social, economic and environmental - as shown in table 2.

TABLE 2. Paraguay's National Development Plan 2030 – Key development results

Strategic Areas	Transversal Lines			
	<i>Equality of opportunities</i>	<i>Efficiency and transparency</i>	<i>Territorial development</i>	<i>Environmental sustainability</i>
<i>Poverty reduction & social dev.</i>	Full realization of all people	Quality social services	Participatory local development	Adequate and sustainable habitat
<i>Inclusive economic growth</i>	Employment & social protection for vulnerable groups	Competitiveness & innovation	Regionalization and productive diversification	Valorization of environmental capital
<i>Insertion of Paraguay in the world</i>	Equal opportunities in a globalized world	Country image, trade promotion and investment attraction	Regional economic integration	Sustainability of the global habitat

■ Social strategies ■ Economic strategies ■ Environmental strategies

Bold white text refers to strategies supported by UNDP.

Source: IEO creation adapted from Paraguay's National Development Plan 2030

According to the CPD, under this outcome UNDP aimed to support the Government's efforts to reduce extreme poverty and boost sustainable socioeconomic growth through five outputs, selected from the UNDP Strategic Plan 2014-17, and detailed in table 1.

With the aim of improving social protection systems, UNDP planned to implement pilot initiatives for public policy design, eventually scaling up to national level. To strengthen citizen's voice and promote active participation in development processes, UNDP would organize forums to discuss and present development solutions in response to citizens' and decision-makers' concerns, for dissemination through the Human Development Reports. UNDP also planned to support the participatory design of environmentally sustainable and socially responsible production models, by fostering partnerships and dialogue between public bodies, the private sector and civil society. On the environmental side, UNDP aimed to support the development of gender-sensitive climate change mitigation and adaptation policies, strategies and action plans through South-South cooperation, and to promote energy efficiency and access, with a focus on vulnerable populations, through partnerships with other UN agencies.

Despite not having an explicit theory of change, UNDP efforts under this outcome area have contributed both directly and indirectly to 7 of the 12 NDP 2030 results (highlighted in white in table 2). Projects had a stronger focus on the environmental and social pillars, with some specific actions targeting productive economic areas. Consequently, UNDP interventions in this area show strong alignment with national priorities and have responded to the Government's needs and requirements.

It is important to note that the projects which contribute to the environmental pillar (henceforth referred to as the environment portfolio contributing to CPD output 1.4) and the energy efficiency

projects under CPD output 1.5, were initially envisaged under a separate CPD outcome, linked to UNDAF result 3.2 *"Paraguay will have made significant progress in reducing deforestation and desertification, in improved conservation practices and sustainable use of biodiversity, and in mitigation and adaptation to climate change"*. With the removal of this outcome from the proposed CPD during design phase, the projects related to climate change, biodiversity conservation and deforestation were classified under this outcome area.

While theory indicates that there is a nexus between environmental sustainability, economic growth and poverty reduction, the direct contribution of these projects to *"reduced poverty levels, established decent work and guaranteed improvement of working population's income"* is not clear. This situation proved to be a challenge for the country office in terms of reporting on results. Based on the revised UNDP CPD Guidance 2017, to better reflect this workstream in the next CPD and ensure the adequate monitoring of UNDP contributions in this area, the country office has two options: i) if the typology of the country allows it, include this as a fourth outcome; or ii) include UNDP contributions to the environmental pillar as indicative outputs under the most relevant primary outcome (i.e. inclusive sustainable development or disaster risk reduction).

The overall budget for this outcome was around \$29 million, corresponding to 30 percent of total programme resources. Expenditure from 2015-2017 amounted to \$22 million, reaching a 77 percent execution rate¹³. The main resource partners for this outcome were the Government of Paraguay and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) for the environmental portfolio, providing 66 percent and 25 percent of expenditure respectively. Key national counterparts included the Environment Secretariat¹⁴ (SEAM) with 11 projects, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG) with four projects, the Ministry of Trade and Industry with three projects, and the Social Action Secretariat¹⁵ (SAS) with two projects.

¹³ Data on budget and expenditures are based on the UNDP financial system, Atlas.

¹⁴ Changed to the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development in July 2018.

¹⁵ Changed to the Ministry of Social Development in August 2018.

Most of the projects under this outcome (19, representing 56 percent of the outcome expenditure) were expected to contribute to gender in a limited way (GEN1), while only seven projects (representing 24 percent of expenditure) included gender equality as a significant objective (GEN2). The remaining four projects, which were providing administrative support to the Government, had no 'noticeable' contribution to gender equality outcomes (GEN0).

Finding 1. UNDP has closely supported the Environment Secretariat in its institutional strengthening efforts. Through its environmental portfolio, UNDP has continued to support the development of a legislative and institutional climate change framework, important instruments to meet the country's international commitment to the UN Convention on Climate Change. However, institutional weaknesses in the country remain a challenge to the effective dissemination and implementation of these strategies and action plans at both national and subnational levels.

The UNDP environmental portfolio has largely been funded by GEF and, to a lesser extent, by the Government of Paraguay, Germany, the European Commission and UNDP, among others. In this area, UNDP has continued its close collaboration with SEAM to enhance its climate change policy framework and develop the necessary action plans, strategies and reports to meet the country's commitments to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The partnership began in 2011, when UNDP helped SEAM develop its National Climate Change Policy¹⁶, and then continued through support for the development of Paraguay's National Climate Change Action Plan (2014)¹⁷ and its respective strategies, the National Climate Change Mitigation Strategy (2014)¹⁸ and National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (2015)¹⁹. UNDP also supported the development of

Paraguay's National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation (2016), and the National Gender and Climate Change Strategy (2017)²⁰. A summary of improvements to the country's normative framework for climate change is presented in figure 3.

Since 2011, UNDP, together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO) and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), has supported the Government to prepare the requirements for the UNREDD+ process to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation. This process has been delayed due to high staff turnover, difficulties in hiring specialized consultants and extended consensus-building processes amongst stakeholders. However, it has resulted in four main outputs: i) the establishment of a forestry and environmental remote monitoring system, ii) analysis of emissions reference levels, iii) the development of a first draft of a social and environmental safeguarding system, and iv) the national REDD+ strategy.

While these are all relevant documents and processes for Paraguay's climate change agenda, the structures and resources necessary for their adoption and implementation at subnational and local levels are not fully in place. The capacity of the environmental authorities to respond to this need remains limited due to insufficient financial and human resources, as identified in the previous ADR (pg. 43). SEAM, for example, is not present in all regions, and therefore relies on the environmental management units of local authorities, where these exist, to mainstream environmental issues into local development plans. Moreover, work still needs to be done to disseminate these strategies and action plans at subnational level and amongst civil society actors and citizens in general, to raise awareness of the negative effects of climate change and the

¹⁶ <http://www.py.undp.org/content/dam/paraguay/docs/Politica%20Nacional%20CC.pdf>

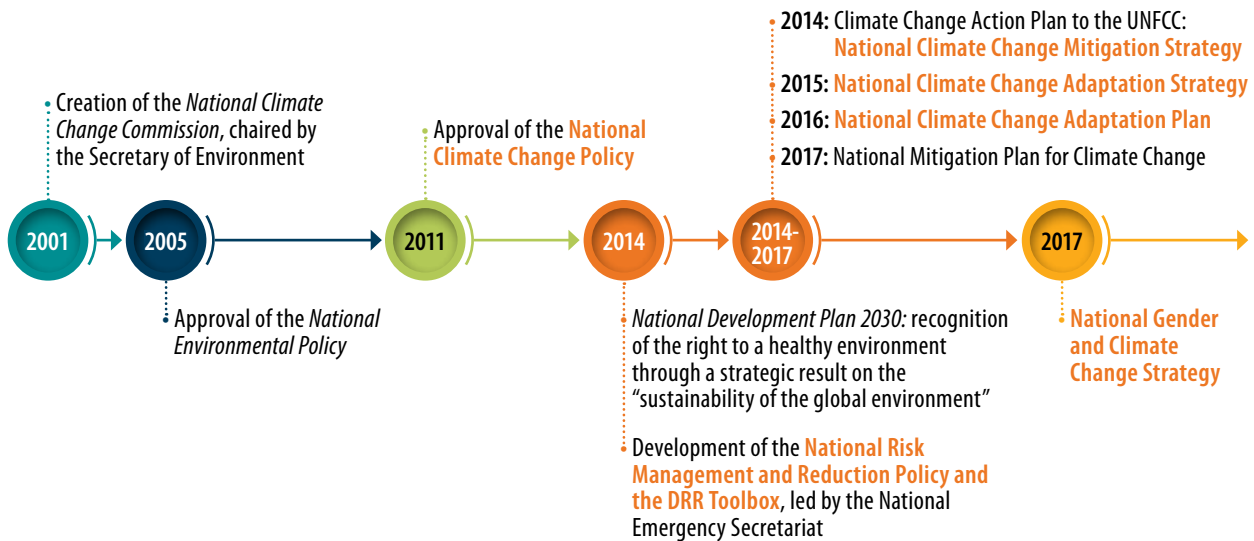
¹⁷ <http://www.seam.gov.py/sites/default/files/users/comunicacion/Estrategia%20de%20Mitigaci%C3%B3n%20-%20Fase%201.pdf>

¹⁸ <http://www.seam.gov.py/sites/default/files/users/comunicacion/Estrategia%20de%20Mitigaci%C3%B3n%202016.pdf>

¹⁹ <http://www.seam.gov.py/sites/default/files/users/comunicacion/Estrategia%20Nac.%20de%20Apataci%C3%B3n%20al%20CC%20-%202016.pdf>

²⁰ <http://www.seam.gov.py/sites/default/files/users/comunicacion/Estrategia%20de%20G%C3%A9nero%20y%20Cambio%20Climatico.pdf>

FIGURE 3. Evolution of Paraguay’s national climate change normative framework



Source: IEO. Orange text highlights UNDP contributions

importance of protecting the environment. The current systems for environmental certification and environmental services certification offer an opportunity to incentivize land owners and businesses to conserve forests and biodiversity, if implemented.

A persistent challenge which has affected the efficient implementation of public policies in Paraguay has been weak coordination between institutions at different levels (central, regional and local). UNDP has played an important role in promoting intersectoral coordination and synergy between government institutions and raising awareness of the connections between environmental issues, multidimensional poverty and economic development. As a result, SAS has taken the initiative of integrating environmental issues into all of its social programmes, including Tekoporã and Tenonderã which aim at reducing poverty by helping families to become self-sufficient. Moreover, SAS has relaunched its Environmental Management System to facilitate ISO 14:001 environmental certification for some producer organizations.

As an example of promoting intersectoral coordination, the "UNREDD+" project established a governance committee comprised of the

Environment Secretariat, the National Forestry Institute (INFONA) and the Federation for the Self-determination of Indigenous People (FAPI), a civil society organization that advocates for indigenous people’s rights. FAPI’s involvement in this committee has equipped them with valuable knowledge on indigenous people’s rights in relation to forest management, and this has, in turn, strengthened their ownership of REDD objectives. This could be beneficial in the event of staff turnover in participating public bodies, where FAPI could provide the institutional memory to continue the process.

Similarly, the "Poverty-Environment Initiative" encouraged dialogue and some joint activities between SAS and MAG at local level, and with SEAM at central level. However, the continuation of these coordination efforts is not guaranteed after the programme ends, given the lack of formal intersectoral coordination mechanisms.

Finding 2. UNDP has successfully facilitated processes to raise awareness of the link between poverty reduction, sustainable production and the environment. Through the establishment of tripartite dialogue platforms for Paraguay’s main value chains (soy and beef), UNDP helped to establish a

building block for effective agreements towards more environmentally sustainable and socially responsible production models. The private sector, Government and civil society organizations now converge in a neutral space of trust for dialogue on sensitive issues. This pilot experience is now being replicated in another area, though the effectiveness and impact has not yet been validated.

Through its “Green Commodity” pilot project, UNDP has contributed to the improvement of Paraguay’s governance framework for environmentally sustainable production. By establishing two regional multi-stakeholder dialogue platforms, aimed at strengthening the sustainability of Paraguay’s top two value chains (soy bean and beef), UNDP brought together relevant government agencies, the private sector and CSOs in a neutral space. This process has built trust among participating actors, a necessary precondition to reach consensus on sensitive issues affecting the sustainability of these productive sectors. Also, through this project, UNDP supported South-South cooperation between project participants in Costa Rica and Paraguay, something which was highly valued by stakeholders.

Despite the progress made, operational agreements on sustainable production approaches and minimum environmental standards have not been achieved, as initially envisaged. While the platforms have served as a useful dialogue and coordination mechanism, the process of setting them up, convening stakeholders to identify the key issues to be tackled, and developing a common action plan took longer than expected. Moreover, for the platforms to be effective, there needs to be the political will and interest for the actors to regularly convene and follow through with the agreements, which has been insufficient so far. With only one more year of implementation remaining, there were also concerns that there wouldn’t be enough time to set up the national platform and implement its action plan.

This experience is now being replicated and tested in the El Chaco region through two UNDP projects. While this provides an opportunity to expand the national dialogue platform, to be established this

year, it also carries some risks. The model being replicated was not operational for long enough in the Paraguay context to test and validate its effectiveness as a tool to develop agreed sustainable solutions for the value chain actors. Furthermore, with limited resources available (approximately \$94,000), and in such a complex and remote region as El Chaco, the achievement of sustainable results will require the building of alliances with other actors in the region and at national level.

Finding 3. UNDP made relevant contributions to the improvement of targeting instruments and standardized criteria for social protection programmes. While it has effectively provided management services and tools to measure and target the poor, sustainable improvements to the outreach and services of the Government’s social programmes did not materialize during this programme cycle.

In the social area, UNDP supported the Government by: a) improving access to drinkable water through sanitation projects for indigenous communities in El Chaco; b) enhancing the targeting of national poverty reduction policies; and c) accelerating the implementation of its social programmes through the provision of procurement and other management services.

The project “Drinkable Water for El Chaco”, implemented by MAG with administrative support from UNDP, provided access to drinking water to 1,144 people in four indigenous communities in El Chaco over a period of two years. This project, though a relevant and worthy cause, did not have an exit strategy to ensure the sustainability of results. It did not draw on the knowledge and experience of local Mennonite settlements on water provision, for example. In addition, local arrangements were not made to ensure proper maintenance of the water treatment and distribution units installed, which use complex technology and have high maintenance costs. While currently operational, in the long run the functioning of these units is insecure, as the communities do not have the resources or capacity to provide the necessary maintenance.

UNDP has made several important initial contributions to enhance the targeting of national poverty reduction policies. One example is UNDP's support to the Government's efforts to develop its Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), a signature solution of Oxford University and UNDP since 2010. The Human Development Report, the flagship UNDP publication, has been a tool to monitor and report on global MPI estimates. Unlike conventional measures of poverty which only consider income, the MPI considers three dimensions of deprivation suffered by individuals: health, education and standard of living. In Paraguay, UNDP developed a study and proposal for SAS on the concept and methodology to define and measure Paraguay's MPI, considering the relationship between poverty and the environment. So far, the Government has established a technical committee which will lead the process and work on developing an integrated poverty measurement tool.

Similarly, UNDP supported the integration of environmental factors into the index of livelihood conditions, used by SAS in their social profiling to select families to benefit from public cash-transfer programmes; and in 2012 developed an index of quality of employment as a proxy for decent work, yet to be adopted by the Ministry of Labour. UNDP reported that this indicator had been included in the new Government's draft plan, released in August 2018, though the evaluation team could not validate this information. The prospects of government adoption seem promising considering the priority given to the Labour Policy by the newly-elected Government in its initial proposals.²¹

The Government recognized UNDP as a trusted partner for its contributions to accelerating the implementation of its social programmes. Under this outcome, UNDP carried out 11 management and support services projects, of which six were in support of social protection programmes, including the MAG "Food Production and Family Farming" programmes, and the flagship programme for

the elderly "Adulto Mayor", led by the Technical Secretariat for Economic and Social Development Planning (STP) and the Ministry of Finance.

While pertinent and effective, this support did not always lead to improved social services. In the case of the "Adulto Mayor" programme, for which UNDP provided administrative services (i.e. the recruitment of people to conduct surveys using the social cards), the participating institutions are still to reach consensus on the targeting instruments or the selection criteria to improve benefits and services to the target population. As for the "Family Farming" programme, for which UNDP facilitated the provision of technical assistance, equipment and inputs for 10,232 families²², the coverage was limited considering the total target population of such programmes (i.e. over 241,956 productive units estimated per 20ha of land²³).

Finding 4. No interventions to promote inclusive and sustainable energy efficiency solutions and universal access to energy sources were implemented during the evaluation period. Due to high staff workload and programme implementation demands, no resources were mobilized for this purpose.

In its CPD, UNDP envisaged the implementation of energy efficiency and diversification programmes with different sectors, with the aim of improving the living conditions of the most vulnerable populations (output 1.5). Between 2015-2017, no such projects were designed, or resources mobilized for the implementation of projects in this area. This was partly due to high UNDP staff workload and demands linked to the implementation of the ongoing programme.

There were, however, small actions related to energy efficiency. UNDP supported the construction of eco-stoves and was in the process of developing the Human Development Report on energy and human development, to be launched in 2018 once the new Government was in place. According to

²¹ <https://maritoabdo.com/propuestas/#1520885340989-e0673277-cdf6>

²² According to ROAR 2017, agricultural inputs for 34,903 families were provided to MAG and 2,824 farmers were trained on good agricultural practices.

²³ National Agrarian Census, 2008, MAG

UNDP staff, this report advocates for the design and implementation of a universal access to energy plan, considering that 50,000 Paraguayans do not have access to electric power.

2.2 Democratic Governance

RELATED OUTCOME

Outcome 30: Paraguay will have progressed in protecting and guaranteeing the rights of all individuals, with emphasis on vulnerable and discriminated populations (UNDAF outcome 1.1)

Strengthening democratic governance has been one of the Government of Paraguay's priorities over the last two decades. During this time, the Government has focused on strengthening its public institutions and their capacity to guarantee the rights and wellbeing of its citizens. To promote greater access to justice, the Supreme Court has expanded the judiciary through the construction of 40 courthouses, the establishment of training facilities for staff and the promotion of new information systems. Amid these efforts, the capacity of public institutions remains weak and civic participation in policy processes is still low. Indicators show insufficient corruption control and rule of law (-0.7 in 2016 for both cases) and low government effectiveness (-0.8 in 2016)²⁴.

Five main challenges remain to ensure inclusive and participatory democratic governance in Paraguay: i) structural reform of the State to increase the independence of the different powers and control mechanisms; ii) reform of the executive power and the civil service to increase the effectiveness and accountability of public institutions; iii) reform of the justice system to ensure adequate and timely access to justice; iv) strengthening the capacity of local governments (departments and municipalities) to

guarantee the wellbeing of their populations; and v) enhancing civil society participation and dialogue between the public sector and other actors, in particular women's participation in political processes and public roles. According to the Global Gender Gap Report, in Paraguay only 15 percent of parliamentary seats and 8 percent of ministerial positions were held by women in 2016.

In response, in its CPD, UNDP identified five main contributions (outputs) for the democratic governance area: i) improving citizens' access to justice by increasing the management capacity and accountability of the judiciary; ii) strengthening civil service capacity and management of public institutions; iii) creating the conditions for increased democratic participation by strengthening the technical, management and accountability capacity of Congress and the Superior Court of Electoral Justice; iv) effective civil society participation and consensus building in national development processes through dialogue processes; and v) enabling institutions and systems to address awareness, prevention and enforcement of anticorruption measures across sectors and stakeholders.

In its design, the expected outputs respond to four of the five main challenges faced by the Government in this area, showing clear alignment with national priorities. The current CPD continued the work carried out in the previous programme cycle (2007-2014), with the aim of achieving long-term results in terms of much needed state reform and modernization, institutional strengthening for effective policy formulation and implementation, and increased civil society participation in political dialogue.

The democratic governance portfolio consisted of 19 projects, with a budget of \$63 million (66 percent of total programme resources) and expenditure of \$58 million, reaching a 70 percent execution rate. The outcome mostly relied on three administrative support projects for the Government (construction of courthouses, dengue prevention and land tenure information system), which together represented 94 percent of the outcome expenditure. In terms

²⁴ World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators; indicators from -0.25 to 0.25.

of resource distribution between the five outputs, there was a budgetary imbalance: two outputs covered 2.4 percent of the budget, whereas 97.6 percent of the budget fell under the improved access to justice output and projects not associated to any output, as shown in table 3 below.

Four main events led to changes in the programme implementation approach and the budgetary imbalance in the democratic governance portfolio. These include:

- i) Government approval of, and commitment to fulfil, the SDGs, leading to the development of an SDG support strategy by UNDP, with a project for the development of SDG indicators and another supporting the establishment of the Government’s Interinstitutional Commission for the SDGs. None of these have a direct link to the expected outputs under this outcome but contribute to the overall CPD goal;
- ii) decreasing funding within UNDP and from international donors, affecting the approval and implementation of projects in two of the five expected outputs, and leading to a high reliance on government funding;

- iii) increasing government demand for administrative support services and decreasing requirements for upstream advisory support on institutional and structural reforms, public policy design and monitoring, and the development of integral strategies in this area; and
- iv) the perception, based on triangulated interviews, that UNDP staff turnover affected the coordination of the democratic governance area and limited the capacity of the country office to proactively manage this portfolio and sustain political dialogue and advocacy.

The main resource partner in this area was the Government of Paraguay, funding over 95 percent of expenditure, followed by other UN agencies and the Global Compact, a private sector partner. A diverse range of national counterparts were supported by UNDP including the Supreme Court, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2 projects each), as well as the National Rural Development and Land Institute, the Paraguayan Indigenous Institute, the Ministry for Women, the Ministry of Public Health and Social Wellbeing, the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security, the Civil Service Secretariat (SFP), the Women’s Secretariat of the Presidency and the Technical Planning Secretariat, among others.

TABLE 3. Democratic governance – Distribution of projects by outputs

Output description	No. of projects	Budget (Thousands of US\$)	Percentage
Output 1. Improved access to justice	2	41,950	66
Output 2. Civil service	2	534	0.8
Output 3. Congress and Supreme Electoral Court	0	0	0
Output 4. Active citizen participation	5	996	1.6
Output 5. Anticorruption	0	0	0
No output	10	20,116	31.6
Total	19	63,596	100%

Source: IEO own creation, with Atlas budget figures

Regarding gender, only two projects (1 percent of outcome expenditure) had gender equality as their main objective (GEN3), 11 projects (75 percent of outcome expenditure) were expected to contribute in some way to gender equality (GEN1), and six projects (24 percent of outcome expenditure) did not intend any 'noticeable' contributions to gender equality.

Finding 5. UNDP made significant contributions to one of the five expected outputs of the democratic governance portfolio: increasing civil society participation and influence in democratic processes, particularly by women, and facilitating consensus building through sustainable tripartite dialogue platforms. It was partly effective in improving citizens' access to justice and had limited or no interventions focused on strengthening the Superior Court of Electoral Justice or Congress or improving anticorruption measures across sectors.

UNDP successfully implemented several interventions that led to important changes in the promotion of effective civil society participation in national development processes. One example is the work carried out with UNWomen, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and some non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to strengthen the Women's Network of the South, a civil society organization established in 2015 to advocate for women's rights. Both UNWomen and UNDP supported the overall development of the network, strengthening their advocacy and political engagement capacity through communication materials and advocacy trainings. Furthermore, the two agencies accompanied the network in its advocacy campaign which contributed to the approval of the Democratic Parity Law in March 2018 by the Senate. Between April and August 2018, the proposed law was first modified by the Chamber of Deputies bringing the process to a halt, and later returned to its original version and approved by the Senate. Work still needs to be done to ensure the final approval of the original proposed law by Congress, the last step for it to become effective.

The network has become a powerful voice in national political processes, and an example of a regional collective model which fosters bottom-up policy influence. This success story, which was possible due to the strategic alliances and concerted efforts of different partners, should be replicated in other regions to maximize civil society participation in democratic processes. At the time of the evaluation, however, UNDP had no plans to further engage in this process as UNWomen had taken the lead with funding support from the European Union.

Another noteworthy UNDP contribution was the enhancement of social dialogue platforms, through support to set up a permanent tripartite dialogue model between the Government (Ministry of Labour), the private sector and workers' associations to resolve labour-related issues. As part of these efforts, ten roundtables were created with UNDP administrative support, resulting in the recognition of workers' rights, legal advancements for workers and entrepreneurs, and the resolution of potential conflicts in the productive sector. This model could be replicated in other sectors and exported to other countries through South-South cooperation if adequately documented and disseminated, something that had not yet happened nor been identified as an opportunity by UNDP.

Similarly, UNDP provided administrative support to the National Institute for Rural Development and Land (INDERT) to set up their Land Tenure Information System (SIRT); a collaboration that began during the previous CPD and had good results but no relation to the expected outputs in this outcome area. The SIRT, which meets high international standards, facilitates the regularization of land ownership by occupants who meet legal criteria, including smallholder families. By design, the system also promotes women's economic empowerment as it allows land titling for both household heads when they live in the family property, or to whomever remains in the property when they are separated. According to INDERT figures, 21,147 land allocations²⁵ were provided to smallholder families from the establishment of the SIRT in 2014 until 2017.

²⁵ <http://www.indert.gov.py/indert/indert2018.pdf>

The sustainability of SIRT will depend on political will and support, and the visibility achieved in the coming year. There are some risks that could jeopardize the continuation of this work as, by nature, land regularization processes affect the interests of distinct groups in the country. To mitigate these risks, adequate support needs to be guaranteed at all levels. UNDP has the opportunity to revamp its engagement, currently purely administrative, by responding to the national counterpart's requests for additional technical and outreach support, which were not addressed during this programme cycle. In view of the new Government in place, UNDP should explore opportunities for scaling up this system and offering the model to other countries through facilitation of South-South cooperation.

Some UNDP interventions that could influence the country's governance and development had less impact than expected. UNDP support to SFP efforts to enhance the professionalization, modernization and transparency of Paraguay's civil service, provided in the previous programme cycle, is one such example. While some progress was made in terms of improving the SFP institutional framework and the tender process for selection of civil servants through the establishment of a virtual platform to publish vacancies²⁶, this has not led to transformational change. Some bottlenecks for the achievement of sustainable results in this area include a lack of coordination between state institutions, limited support from the executive branch, particularly the oversight bodies, and a lack of partnership and coordination with development partners such as the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Interamerican Bank, who work in the same area. UNDP could have leveraged its convening power and impartiality more strategically to bring these actors together in support of SFP advocacy efforts to change the mindset, requirements and selection process for civil servants.

Over the last 20 years, UNDP has established itself as a key partner to the court of justice in support of its initiative to improve citizens' access to justice. The UNDP contribution throughout this time, in response to the court's requests, has mainly focused on the efficient provision of management support services, such as managing the recruitment of staff and the procurement process for the acquisition of materials for the construction of decentralized courthouses, a necessary but not sufficient aspect of improved access to justice for citizens.

The added value lies in UNDP's capacity to ensure the transparency and credibility of the process and the quality of the courthouses, while keeping the construction costs down. To complement this, UNDP implemented some capacity development activities for the judicial system which consisted of piloting the judicial information system, JUDISOFT, and training 133 government staff. These activities were implemented with delays due to internal government approval processes and, at the same time, had a marginal impact on the improvement of the overall performance and efficacy of the judicial system. As a follow up, the Supreme Court developed a project proposal that was submitted to the highest authorities for approval and was under review at the time of the evaluation.

Two areas in which UNDP made little or no progress were: the work envisaged with Congress, the National Anticorruption Secretariat and the Superior Court of Electoral Justice (TSJE) to create the conditions for increased democratic participation; and enabling institutions to enforce anticorruption measures. In the first two cases, despite a few advocacy efforts carried out by UNDP, no concrete collaboration was achieved. As for the TSJE, the only reported intervention was a set of workshops held in October 2017 to strengthen civil servant capacity to promote inclusive electoral processes²⁷.

²⁶ <https://www.paraguayconcurso.gov.py/sicca/Portal.seam?logic=and>

²⁷ <https://www.idea.int/es/news-media/news/es/talleres-bridge-en-paraguay-sobre-g%C3%A9nero-planificaci%C3%B3n-estrat%C3%A9gica-y-acceso>

Finding 6. The support provided for the implementation of the SDGs in Paraguay, an area in which UNDP has a comparative advantage, has led to important advancements: the inclusion of the SDGs in the National Development Plan; the establishment of an interinstitutional commission for the SDGs; the adoption of the SIGOB and SIMORE Plus systems to monitor progress towards the SDG goals; and increasing private sector pro-SDG engagement. These efforts, if continued, have a high potential for impact.

UNDP has a unique global role to support the achievement of the SDGs, by leveraging their experience, networks and capabilities in this area. In Paraguay, UNDP has been very active in the promotion of the 2030 agenda, implementing two projects in support of government efforts and carrying out parallel advocacy work with different actors in the country. As a result, in 2016 the Government established an interinstitutional commission responsible for overseeing and coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the SDGs in the country, led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 2017, the Government carried out a study showing a 92 per cent alignment between its National Development Plan 2030 and the SDGs.

In addition, the Government has adopted two monitoring systems: SIMORE Plus²⁸, an online system promoted by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UNDP to monitor progress towards the implementation of international human rights recommendations and the SDG goals; and SIGOB, an online platform promoted by UNDP that links government initiatives and public sector investment on SDGs and allows disaggregation of data by region. With UNDP's brokering support, Paraguay is currently offering South-South cooperation to other countries such as Chile, Uruguay, Dominican Republic and Honduras

on SDG monitoring using the SIMORE Plus system. Another valuable contribution has been the assistance provided to the Interinstitutional Commission for the SDGs in the development of Paraguay's first National Voluntary Review²⁹, presented in July 2018.

Besides working with the Government, UNDP also supported the Global Compact, a private sector network promoted by the UN that now works independently, in its establishment, functioning and active participation in SDG discussions. This collaboration has led to increasing private sector commitment and participation in national development processes.

A fundamental challenge for the next programme cycle will be to link SDG promotion and monitoring strategies with policies and projects focused on structural change that accelerate the effective fulfillment of the objectives. The new Government and development partners will have to make significant efforts to mainstream the SDG goals and respective indicators into national ministerial plans, ensuring that national institutions have adequate resources to effectively identify and monitor their contributions to the SDGs in terms of social, economic and environmental development. Similarly, coordination and partnership between the different government institutions will be crucial to avoid duplication of effort and ensure complementarity in the implementation of national policies at local level. Translating the SDGs into practical and tangible results for the population will be important to ensure their active participation in, and commitment to these efforts. UNDP, alongside other UN agencies, can play a pivotal convening and facilitating role in support of the Interinstitutional Commission in this regard.

²⁸ <http://www.mre.gov.py/simoreplus>

²⁹ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/19406Paraguay_IVN_ODS_Paraguay_2018_VFINAL_Spanish.pdf

2.3 Disaster Risk Reduction for Resilience-building

RELATED OUTCOME

Outcome 31: Paraguay will have reduced its disaster risk and increased community resilience and responsiveness to emergencies and disasters (UNDAF Outcome 3.1)

Paraguay is prone to a variety of natural hazards, particularly cyclical floods and annual droughts. Widespread flooding resulting from heavy rains displaced more than 130,000 people in 2015 and 300,000 people in 2016. The dependence of Paraguay's economy on its primary production sector makes it highly vulnerable to climate change (ECLAC, 2014). According to a study by the Government and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), rising temperatures in coming years will negatively impact Paraguay's main sectors in different ways and levels, affecting the country's biodiversity, subsistence farming and commercial agriculture the most. In addition, the growing agriculture sector threatens forest cover and increases emissions through land use changes, accounting for 95 percent of the country's total CO² emissions. Compared to the Latin American average, the forest loss rate in Paraguay has doubled in recent years.

With the ratification of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1993), the Kyoto Protocol (1999), the Paris Agreement and the Convention on Climate Change (2016), Paraguay assumed a series of obligations with respect to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Similarly, Paraguay made a commitment to integrate disaster risk reduction considerations into their public policies through the ratification of the Hyogo framework for Action in 2005. Since then, a series of steps

have been taken by the Government to improve the governance mechanisms and normative framework required to achieve Paraguay's national climate change goals and commitments (see figure 1). This normative framework has also served as the backbone to develop national disaster risk reduction strategies, supported by UNDP in the current programme cycle.

In line with these government efforts, UNDP focused its interventions under the disaster risk reduction outcome on strengthening the Government's institutional frameworks and capacity, at all levels, to effectively monitor, prepare for and respond to emergencies. As stated in its CPD, UNDP was to contribute through three main outputs: i) the establishment of effective institutional, legislative and policy frameworks for the improved implementation of disaster risk management measures at national and subnational levels; ii) the development of systems to assess natural and human-induced risks at national and subnational levels; and iii) the promotion of systems to efficiently meet and address the impacts of natural and human-induced disasters at all government and community levels.

With an approximate budget of \$3.2 million and a total execution of \$2.5 million (80 percent execution rate), the disaster risk reduction portfolio was the smallest outcome in the CPD. In total, 10 projects were implemented, six of which were to contribute in some way to gender (GEN1), three included gender equality as a significant objective (GEN2), and only one had no 'noticeable' contributions to gender equality outcomes (GEN0). No significant gender results were identified in this outcome area.

The interventions were mostly funded through the European Commission's Humanitarian and Disaster Preparedness funds - DIPECHO (51 percent of total outcome expenditure), the UN Trust Fund for Human Security (25 percent), and the UNDP-managed Crisis Prevention and Early Recovery Trust Funds (15 percent). UNDP worked with the National Emergency Secretariat (SEN), the Municipality of Asunción and the Emergency and Disasters Council.

At subnational level, UNDP supported the Itapúa province, and the municipalities of Encarnación and Filadelfia, among others.

Finding 7. UNDP has continued to effectively promote an institutional shift from emergency response to disaster risk reduction. There was an assertive strategy to focus its limited resources on strengthening the National Emergency Secretariat and the National System for Risk and Disaster Management. The scope of these contributions is limited, due to resource constraints and changes in the political environment. The systems and mechanisms set up with UNDP support have not managed to systematically reach the community level, and the capacity of decentralized governments is still insufficient.

Significant progress has been made with respect to Paraguay's legal and institutional framework for disaster risk reduction since the creation of the National Emergency Secretariat in 2005. UNDP has been one of the Government's main supporters in this regard, with notable contributions to the establishment of the National Disaster Risk Reduction Platform in 2010, the review of the 2005 law constituting the National Emergency Secretariat in 2013, and the development of the National Risk Management and Reduction Policy in 2014, which sets the guiding principles for the development of disaster risk reduction and management strategies, programmes and projects in the country.

During the current evaluation period (2015-2018), UNDP interventions continued past work, providing technical assistance to further strengthen SEN and enhance Paraguay's disaster risk reduction framework. In terms of disaster risk preparedness, UNDP, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, the Italian International Cooperation Agency and the World Food Programme (WFP) helped SEN to set up the National System for Risk and Disaster Management, now functioning in five of the 254 municipalities in Paraguay with varying degrees of success. UNDP also provided technical assistance to develop the "Disaster Risk Reduction

Toolbox", which serves as a guidance and operational instrument to enhance local disaster risk reduction governance.

At decentralized level, UNDP worked closely with the Itapúa province and the municipality of Encarnación to strengthen their organizational structures and technical capacity for emergency response and disaster risk reduction. This involved establishing a risk management division in 2015, and in 2016, the Centre for Emergency Response and the Regional Centre for Hydro Meteorological Monitoring and Alert, which now hosts the only early warning system in the country.

In the Northern region, UNDP, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) /World Health Organization (WHO) and WFP implemented a joint programme aimed at improving human security in four municipalities in El Chaco region. This initiative contributed to the institutional strengthening of local authorities, the development of resilience strategies to protect local vulnerable communities and, to a lesser extent, the development of an intersectoral, holistic and replicable model for El Chaco region. During a visit to El Chaco, the evaluation team found that results at the local level were less evident, with no major impact at community level as initially envisaged. Project implementation was challenged by bureaucratic approval processes that caused delays, and weak coordination and communication between agencies on the ground, due in part to the nature of the funding agreement which disbursed funds to agencies separately and at different times. These efforts could have had greater impact with a more participatory and integral approach in their design and implementation, and by establishing partnerships with local CSOs with a continuous presence in the region and greater capacity for local implementation.

In parallel to the institutional strengthening process, UNDP worked with SEN at national level, and at subnational level with local governments in the five pilot municipalities, to raise awareness of the importance of balancing emergency response with

disaster risk reduction approaches, thus initiating a process of change in approach and paradigm that still needs to be carried through.

Overall, the sustainability of these institutional arrangements, including the systems and mechanisms now in place, remains weak and highly dependent on the availability of further resources and political support at higher levels. The results achieved in the Itapúa province and the five municipalities are still in pilot phase, with limited and dispersed impact in most cases, or small transformations that have not been replicated or upscaled. The ownership of the solutions proposed through UNDP's interventions is varied, with more synergistic and auspicious results in those municipalities and organizations that already had installed capacity and a clear idea of their priorities. Conversely, the results were less tangible in those institutions where disaster risk reduction was a relatively new topic that did not have adequate structures and resources.

Due to financial constraints, the decentralized governments are also having difficulty sustaining the technical staff that produce the meteorological newsletters and alerts and developing the capacity of other municipalities to mainstream disaster risk reduction in their local plans and improve community resilience. During a visit to Encarnación, the evaluation team found that the early warning system lacked meteorological stations to accurately monitor the weather conditions in the whole Itapúa region; with only one station available in the municipality. Similarly, support is still needed to set up and strengthen local risk management and reduction committees in the region, as part of local governance mechanisms.

In this sense, further advocacy at all levels of government is needed to guarantee the required political support and resources to consolidate the paradigm shift and ensure the effective functioning of the National System for Risk Management and Disasters. UNDP could play a key role by mobilizing resources from external actors, supporting the advocacy of SEN with other ministries, and

promoting a focus of UN contributions to disaster risk reduction on the SDGs, fostering complementarity between interventions.

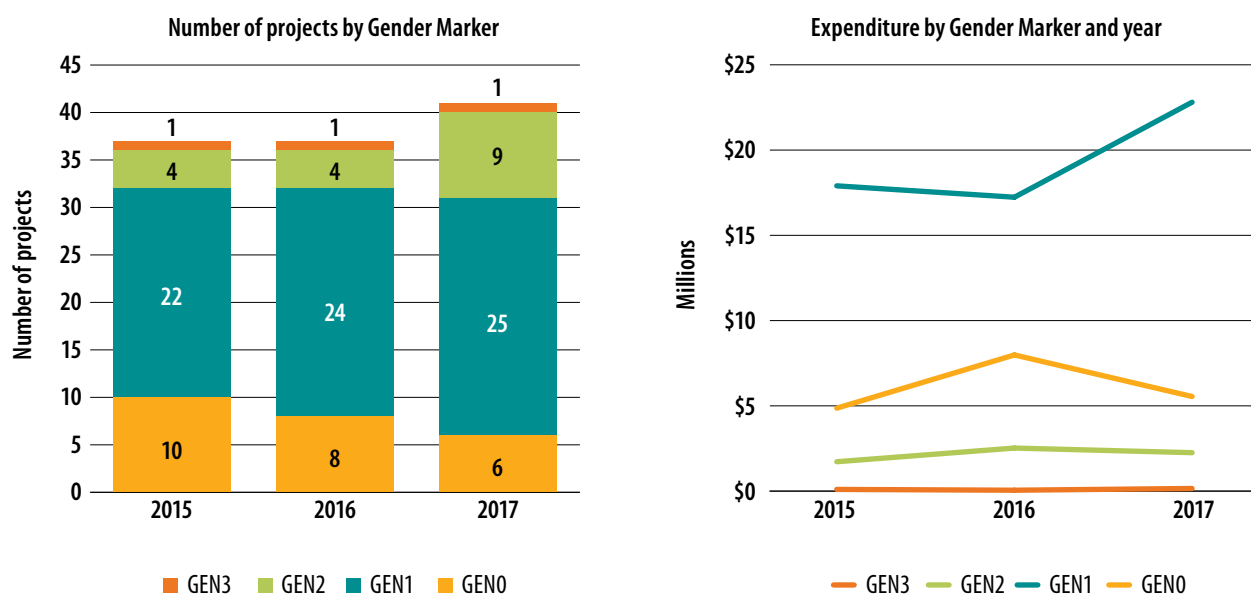
2.4 Cross-cutting areas

2.4.1 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Finding 8. Gender mainstreaming in the UNDP Paraguay programme has been weak due to resource constraints and insufficient efforts allocated for this purpose. Projects reflect a low gender marker with no systematic integration of gender issues in their design and implementation. A gender equality strategy and action plan are still not in place to address this situation.

Gender equality was reflected in the CPD and country programme action plan as a cross-cutting issue under the three outcome areas. An analysis of the projects' gender markers revealed that most UNDP interventions had a low expected contribution to gender equality, with 92 percent of programme expenditure allocated to projects with limited contributions (GEN1) or no noticeable contributions to gender equality outcomes (GEN0). Conversely, only two projects had gender equality as their main objective (GEN3) and 10 included gender equality as a significant objective (GEN2). One of the reasons behind the low gender marker was the prevalence of projects with an operational focus, in which UNDP contributions are limited to the provision of administrative support for the implementation of national government programmes. In these cases, the UNDP contribution to gender equality is indirect and difficult to measure since the interventions curtail facilitating the implementation of social programmes, with little margin to influence the gender strategies or approach of participating institutions. Moreover, resource constraints (financial and human), and the increasing workload of staff linked to the growing programme, have also affected gender mainstreaming during the evaluation period.

FIGURE 4. Gender markers, all projects, 2015-2017



In terms of the corporate environment, despite having gender-sensitive staff, systematic gender mainstreaming in the programme had not taken place. In general, project documents and reports had no gender perspective, much less a strategy or areas of work to address gender issues. At the same time, monitoring of gender-related activities was weak, and there was no gender equality strategy and action plan or gender focal team in place during this period.

To improve gender mainstreaming, the country office has set the goal of obtaining the Gender Equality Seal - a corporate certification process that recognizes the good performance of UNDP country offices/ units in delivering transformational gender equality results³⁰. As part of this process, several internal measures have been taken. Staff have participated in gender-related trainings, gender knowledge was incorporated as a criterion for recruitment processes, and a part-time gender focal point was designated, devoting 15 percent of her time to supporting gender mainstreaming. More

recently, during the drafting phase of this report, the country office established a gender focal team, composed of 10 staff, and developed an initial action plan for the gender seal implementation process.

Moving forward, the country office should leverage existing inhouse knowledge, exchanging with other country offices that have been through the Gender Equality Seal certification process and liaising with regional gender officers to ensure the necessary guidance and support is provided. Similarly, systematic monitoring of gender-related activities should be included in project and programme monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities.

Finding 9. Despite weak gender mainstreaming, UNDP made a notable contribution to the promotion of women’s empowerment and participation in political decision-making processes, a result with the potential of becoming gender transformative. Indirect contributions to increasing women’s access to social benefits and productive opportunities were also found.

³⁰ The Gender Equality Seal helps country offices/ units establish a baseline, fine tune strategies, identify and address gaps and challenges, document innovations and evaluate their impact to improve organizational efficiency and delivery of gender results.

Despite the low gender marker and mainstreaming results, UNDP has made noteworthy contributions in terms of increasing women's political participation and integrating gender into national social programmes. In the framework of the "Strengthening Capacities for the Political Participation of Women" project, implemented by the Ministry of Women, the Superior Court of Electoral Justice, UNWomen and UNDP, important milestones were achieved. At the forefront, a successful advocacy campaign known as "Candidates for Better Democracy" and political training workshops for women from political parties, CSOs and community leaders, raised the awareness of political party activists and the public of the importance of increasing women's participation in political spaces. These efforts led to the approval of the Democratic Parity Law by the Senate in March 2018 and the empowerment of a women's CSO. Based on the GRES scale, this result is gender responsive and could become gender transformative in the future. In addition, UNDP has successfully advocated for the integration of gender criteria in the Tekoporã and Tenonderã social programmes, led by SAS, and in the "Disaster Risk Reduction Toolbox", prepared by SEN with UNDP support, indirectly improving women's access to social programmes.

2.4.2 Programme design, M&E and Knowledge management

Finding 10. The UNDP programme responds to Paraguay's National Development Plan 2030 and its priorities. In its implementation, the programme lacked a clear theory of change and consistent results framework, both crucial to ensure a programmatic approach. Similarly, M&E and knowledge management were weak, and the logical framework lacked well-defined and realistic outputs and outcome level indicators.

In its design, the UNDP programme was consistent with Paraguay's national priorities and strategic areas, as explained in previous sections. The portfolio of interventions responded to specific demands and requests from the Government and

national actors. In practice, the programme did not reflect a programmatic approach, partly due to the absence of an explicit theory of change. Instead, the CPD briefly described what UNDP intended to do under each outcome area and with which partners. In its ROAR 2017, the country office reported two main approaches as part of their strategy: i) direct activities with the population; and ii) institutional strengthening and public policy support interventions.

It is important to note that, as per corporate guidelines on theories of change which came into effect in 2015 when the CPD was under implementation, the development of a theory of change is encouraged but not mandatory. That said, the fact of having inherited ongoing projects from the previous programme cycle did not make it easier for the country office to develop a consistent theory of change as, in some cases, these ongoing projects did not have a direct link to the new CPD outputs. Despite these challenges, the country office could have made more effort to develop a clear programmatic strategy reflecting the desired impact of the UNDP programme, and the pathway to change.

The evaluation team found other weaknesses in programme design and monitoring that limited the country office's capacity for results-based management. In general, several inconsistencies were identified in the results framework. For example, the link between outcome indicators and outputs was not always clear, some indicators lacked baseline information or updated data for their effective follow up, and no quantitative goals or means of verification were established for the different indicators.

Without a consistent results framework and strategy describing how the identified UNDP outputs (goods and services delivered by UNDP) would lead or contribute to selected UNDAF outcomes (changes resulting from the use made by key stakeholders of UNDP outputs), performance tracking was affected. Monitoring was done periodically for projects but not at the programme level. Apart from the ROAR exercises at the end the year, no

systematic monitoring exercises were carried out to measure whether the programme was on track to achieve the expected outputs and outcomes, and address bottlenecks. In this sense, the country office faced several challenges for effective results-based management and M&E. Programme staff, including the M&E focal point, devote a significant amount of their time to comply with corporate reporting requirements, which require the input of information into multiple systems which are not integrated. Similarly, significant time is invested in solving implementation issues, thus reducing the time available for strategic monitoring and reflection on programme results.

The above issues, together with the departure of the programme coordinator in 2016, also limited coordination, knowledge management and the capitalization of lessons learned at the programme level, which was mostly ad-hoc and varied from outcome to outcome. In the democratic governance area, most interventions were not replicated or scaled up, remaining as isolated projects. In the sustainable economic development and disaster risk reduction areas, a few interventions were reproduced in other regions or used to continue some lines of work. For instance, the IAP Chaco pilot project expanded the regional soya and beef platforms established under the “Green Commodity” project; and the three DIPECHO projects strategically served to provide longstanding support to strengthen the institutional framework and national system for disaster risk reduction.

Apart from these cases, the evaluation team found no systematic organization of project documents, development of replicable models, systematization of lessons learned or documented scale-up and exit strategies. This represents a missed opportunity, in view of the valuable processes supported by UNDP that could be replicated in other regions and offered to other countries through South-South cooperation, a modality that has been underutilized by the country office. Some examples include the social dialogue platforms for consensus building in the labour area, the land regularization system, and women’s empowerment in democratic processes.

2.4.3 Partnerships and Coordination

Finding 11. UNDP successfully cooperated with the Government of Paraguay, positioning itself as a reliable and credible provider of development support services. A close relationship was also established with private sector actors, who valued the UNDP role as an impartial and respected broker and convener. On the other hand, association with civil society organizations and academia was limited.

UNDP has established alliances with a wide array of stakeholders, mainly the Government, at central and subnational levels, for the implementation of projects. To ensure longer term financing and programme sustainability, the country office diversified its partnerships with different government counterparts, something which proved to be a challenge at the beginning of the programme cycle. Since 2013, when the new Government came into power, UNDP strategically built alliances with 10 new government agencies, including the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Public Works and Communication, and the Ministry of Education, among others. At subnational level, UNDP’s worked closely with the provinces and municipalities where projects were being implemented, supporting their local development plans and institutional development.

National authorities appreciated UNDP’s contributions to strengthening national institutions, as well as its flexibility and efficiency in the provision of management services. Despite its close relationship with the Government, UNDP was not able to influence some high-level policy decisions required to maximize implementation efficacy and results.

Positive partnerships were also forged with the private sector in the framework of the Global Compact Initiative and the Green Commodity Project. In the first case, UNDP partnered with several private sector companies to set up the Global Compact network, which is now running independently in the country. UNDP’s support focused on raising the awareness of private sector actors of their

important role and contribution to the national policy debate and the SDGs. At the same time, UNDP played an important role in facilitating relationships with the Government. In the framework of the Green Commodity Project, UNDP collaborated with the Archer Daniels Midland Company, one of the biggest soy producers in Paraguay, to establish regional soy commodity platforms, aimed at institutionalizing longer term sustainability of agricultural commodities. These efforts led to increased private sector engagement, collaboration and coordination with the Government, something which should be sustained with the new Government. Other private sector conglomerates have also expressed interest in cooperating with UNDP to strengthen their policy advocacy skills and roles as agents of change. For the private sector, UNDP represents a respected, credible and impartial actor that brings them closer to the Government.

UNDP's collaboration with civil society actors was less evident. There were some partnerships with NGOs as implementing partners (i.e. A Todo Pulmón) and others as beneficiaries. The most salient case is the work carried out with the Women's Network of the South, a group that has influenced policy decisions on women's democratic participation thanks to the support provided by the Ministry of Women, UNWomen and UNDP, among others. Similarly, UNDP partnered with FAPI, an indigenous NGO that has shown ownership of the UNREDD+ process due to its participation in the governance committee with SEAM and INFONA.

Partnerships with other civil society actors at local level (communities and cooperatives) were less effective. Strategic alliances were not established with some relevant local actors, thus limiting the sustainability of programme results, particularly, in El Chaco region. Some interviewees considered that UNDP was distant from civil society and, on some occasions, too focused on the Government. It is important that UNDP strengthens its engagement with CSOs in the future, which has been based thus far on specific collaborations. As for academia, there was only one collaboration

with the National University of the East for the establishment of a postgraduate programme on environmental governance.

Finding 12. Coordination between UN agencies has yet to be improved. Insufficient attention has been given to achieving synergy and integration with other UN agencies. There is an opportunity to take stock of joint initiatives with successful collaboration experiences and use those lessons to improve coordination within the UN.

UNDP collaboration with other UN agencies has been mixed, with some cases more successful than others. In terms of projects, three joint programmes were implemented between 2015 and 2018: one with UNWomen which was effective in increasing women's democratic participation; another with WFP and PAHO/WHO, which had limited results and encountered delays due to coordination and operational issues; and the UNREDD+ project with FAO and UNEP, which also experienced significant delays and is now in its second phase to finalize pending work. At the same time, UNDP successfully partnered with OHCHR to integrate the SDGs in SIMORE Plus, a system promoted by the UN and adopted by the Government to monitor international human rights recommendations.

These partnerships, however, have been insufficient to reflect a united UN system. The UNDAF midterm review, conducted at the end of 2017, found that the UN is seen by its partners as a group of individual agencies without unified coordination and with atomized actions - a situation which negatively affects its capacity to channel support in a coordinated and integrated manner. This finding was validated by the evaluation team through its interviews with national partners, who perceived the UN to be uncoordinated. While coordination of the UN country team (UNCT) is the responsibility of the UN Resident Coordinator, each agency can proactively seek opportunities for complementarity and synergy. In the case of UNDP, there were some interventions which were not framed as joint programmes but in which partnerships could have

been established with other agencies with expertise or knowledge in the subject matter (i.e. projects implemented with MAG and SAS). At the same time, actively fostering partnerships with other UN agencies could serve to bring partners together and bridge coordination gaps amongst state agencies, something which remains a challenge for the Government.

Finding 13. UNDP has not been successful in coordinating and working closely with development cooperation partners and donors. Conversely, its relationship and links with the donor community have declined over the years, hampering its strategic position and visibility, particularly in the area of democratic governance.

Coordination with the donor community has diminished over recent years, including UNDP participation in thematic roundtables with development partners. For instance, UNDP is not part of the Rural and Agrarian Development Cooperators Roundtable convened by MAG, in which agencies such as FAO, the InterAmerican Development Bank, the German Development Agency (GIZ), the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), among others, participate. Several donors recalled the active role that UNDP played in the past to convene international cooperation partners in the country, something that ceased after an explicit request from the Government who expressed plans to assume this role. This situation, coupled with internal staff turnover and changes in the office's strategy, weakened UNDP relationships and leadership in the democratic governance area.

Coordination with donors at subnational level was also modest, with some missed opportunities for local governance and rural development. For example, greater coordination could have been sought with GIZ which works closely with MAG and SAS

on sustainable production models, and with the USAID "Alliance for Sustainable Development" programme on sustainable beef and soy production, both value chains supported by the UNDP/GEF "Green Commodity" project. With the aim of fostering complementarity and building synergy, it is important that UNDP reestablishes its communication channels and links with international cooperation partners, more so in the framework of the SDGs where UNDP has a clear comparative advantage and mandate.

2.4.4 Sustainability

Finding 14. The sustainability of UNDP contributions to results is moderate; some initiatives have been nationally owned and are therefore sustainable, while others have not been integrated into national policies or programmes. Most of the projects did not have clearly articulated exit strategies or sufficient time and resources to install the necessary capacities to ensure continuity.

The sustainability of UNDP contributions to results varies across the different programmatic areas and interventions. In terms of democratic governance, the evaluation team found three initiatives with high sustainability. These include the 10 tripartite roundtables for consensus between the Government, private sector and workers which are institutionalized under the Ministry of Labour; the Women's Network of the South which has the necessary leadership skills and social cohesion to continue their advocacy work; and the work carried out with respect to the SDGs which is spearheaded by the SDG Commission. In all of these cases, national ownership of the processes by participating actors has been key to ensuring the sustainability of results. At the same time, there are initiatives which risk being discontinued. For example, the land regularization system based at INDERT which, despite being an exemplary system with great potential, has questionable sustainability due to insufficient outreach and political support.

In terms of disaster risk reduction mainstreaming at subnational level, as already mentioned in section 2.3, the appropriation of proposed solutions, and therefore their potential sustainability, was modest. This depends greatly on the availability of resources to continue institutional strengthening processes with decentralized government institutions, and the commitment and leadership of the provinces and municipalities to continue enhancing the capacity of local risk management and reduction committees.

As for its contribution to the social protection system, in most cases the sustainability remains fragile and highly dependent on the will and capacity of national institutions to continue the work, for example in the case of the interventions implemented with MAG (family farming and drinkable water), STP (Adulto Mayor) and the Ministry of Labour (labour index). Nonetheless, a few solutions and proposals have been adopted by the Government. These include the integration of the index on livelihood conditions into the social profiling cards used by SAS to target beneficiaries of the Tekoporã programme, the mainstreaming of environmental sustainability considerations in SAS social programmes focused on improving productive capacities, and the proposal to measure Paraguay's MPI, which has good potential for sustainability given the existing political interest.

The sustainability of results depends on the structures, policies and processes in place, which are not always conducive, or under UNDP control. Establishing the necessary conditions to maintain benefits once interventions or support end, therefore, becomes an important element to ensure their sustainability. Given the institutional weaknesses and limited resources of UNDP, it is important to develop strategies and partnerships that maximize the achievement of long-term results. In this respect, the evaluation identified actions that UNDP could have taken to strengthen sustainability. Clear exit strategies at the programme and project level, such as knowledge transfer and scale up of plans for institutional strengthening interventions and establishing connections between projects for the capitalization of good practices and experiences. In some cases, such as the human security joint programme in El Chaco, the Paraguay Gran Chaco project and the "Drinking Water for El Chaco" project, sustainability of results was limited by the establishment of ambitious targets without consideration of the challenges of operating in the region, and the failure to develop a strategy to mitigate risks related to the political environment.



CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

DEVELOPMENT effectiveness COORDINATION efficiency PARTNERSHIP sustainability NATIONAL OWNERSHIP
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3.1 Conclusions

- **Conclusion 1.** UNDP has sustained a solid relationship with the Government of Paraguay, positioning itself as a reliable partner for the provision of management support services to the Government, and as an impartial and trusted convener and broker for the private sector and CSOs. Conversely, UNDP's leadership and policy advisory role, particularly in the democratic governance area, declined during the evaluation period, limiting its effectiveness in some areas. The UNDP value proposition for the Government of Paraguay lies in its ability to facilitate the implementation of national programmes, while ensuring transparency and credibility, and its capacity to bring actors with diverse interests together in a neutral space of trust. National partners, particularly the private sector and CSOs, recognized the convening power of UNDP and its role as an impartial facilitator and knowledge broker. National government agencies, on the other hand, recognized the comparative strength of UNDP in providing effective, credible and transparent management support services for the implementation of national programmes.

Despite close relationships with these partners, the ability of UNDP to influence policy decisions differed across sectors. While important policy contributions were made in the environmental and disaster risk reduction sectors, leadership and influencing power in the democratic governance area diminished. The latter was due to: the prevalence of management support service projects funded by the Government, in which UNDP continued to have limited leverage capacity; a reduction in core resources which hindered its negotiating power; internal staffing gaps - already addressed through the recruitment of a new programme officer - which weakened the analytical capacity and participation of UNDP in cooperating partners' coordinating mechanisms such as the governance roundtable; and a lack of political will in some areas.

- **Conclusion 2.** The most significant contributions of UNDP to democratic governance were in the empowerment of a women's network for active participation in democratic processes, and the integration of the SDGs at national level. More efforts will be required in the next programme cycle to build strategic alliances with the legislative and judicial branches and further strengthen the participation of civil society actors in national development processes to achieve required democratic changes. Despite weakened positioning in the democratic governance area, UNDP generated considerable value through its work with the Women's Network of the South, and its close partnerships with the Government to promote the SDGs at national level. The SDGs represent a unique opportunity to improve coordination efforts and mechanisms within the Government, and across international cooperation partners. In this programme cycle, partnerships with Congress, the Supreme Electoral Court and anticorruption institutions were not established, thus limiting results in three of the five outputs related to democratic governance. Looking forward, it will be important to strategically engage with these actors to ensure long term results and significant change for more effective governance in Paraguay.
- **Conclusion 3.** UNDP has played a catalytic role in strengthening climate change and disaster risk reduction governance mechanisms and institutions, with significant contributions at policy level. Impact at subnational level, however, has been constrained by weak institutional structures. Much of the work is still at an early stage, with questions as to likely long-term outcomes due to limited resources and local capacity. UNDP has become a close partner to the Environment Secretariat and the National Emergency Secretariat. The support provided to these institutions focused on strengthening their capacity to meet their institutional mandates. The most significant contributions were seen at policy level, through the improvement of legislative and institutional climate change frameworks,

the establishment and piloting of the National System for Risk and Disaster Management and promotion of an initial paradigm shift from emergency to disaster risk reduction. At the same time, UNDP successfully promoted the integration of environmental issues into national social programmes. The sustainability of these results, however, is uncertain and their consolidation depends on future political commitment and allocation of resources. UNDP contributions to the structural transformation of productive capacities for inclusive and sustainable development, through enabling institutions, are still at early stages. More effort is required to consolidate the establishment of national dialogue platforms for the soy and beef value chains, and to continue raising awareness at all levels of the importance of environmental sustainability. Similarly, additional support is required to implement the National Risk and Disaster Management System at national level, drawing from the lessons of the pilot experience in Encarnación.

- **Conclusion 4. Despite the valuable contributions made to empower one regional women's network in the country, UNDP had limited success promoting gender equality across its programme. Important work needs to be done to develop a more conducive corporate environment for better gender mainstreaming and improved gender results.** Overall, a commitment to systematically integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into programme design and implementation was not seen. The country office faced difficulties due to financial constraints and the increasing workload of staff linked to programme implementation, which diverted focus from gender mainstreaming. The most significant contribution was in the empowerment of the Women's Network of the South, a CSO which has become an agent of change in the promotion of women's active participation in democratic processes. This experience demonstrates the influence that grassroots organizations can have at policy level, if adequately supported and strategically linked with the right

government counterparts. UNDP's engagement in this initiative, however, concluded without a follow up or replication strategy at national level. Considering the limited resources available, important challenges remain in terms of developing and implementing a gender equality strategy and setting up an effective gender focal team to facilitate gender mainstreaming at all levels.

- **Conclusion 5. The UNDP country programme is well harmonized with Paraguay's national development priorities and strategies. UNDP demonstrated a strong capacity to respond and adapt to emerging needs, reflected in its shift in programmatic focus. Contributions to development results would have benefited from a clear and coherent programmatic theory of change, a stronger focus on strategic results and the systematic monitoring of output and outcome level results.** UNDP implemented a programme which addressed and responded to the country's development needs and national priorities, as stated in its National Development Plan 2030 and related sectoral strategies. However, the programme lacked an explicit theory of change, as this was not mandatory at the CPD formulation stage, and a consistent results framework showing a clear connection between outcomes and outputs, realistic quantifiable indicators, and adequate monitoring systems to measure progress towards results. All these factors limited UNDP's effectiveness. To a certain extent, the programme had an increasing tendency to focus on operational results rather than translating these contributions into strategic results.
- **Conclusion 6. Coordination with UN agencies and other international cooperation partners presents several weaknesses that need to be addressed. There is significant space to improve the effectiveness of engagement with other UN agencies and international cooperation partners by enhancing communication and coordination efforts and building strategic partnerships to increase synergy and complementarity. The SDGs could serve as a framework to enhance coordination with these partners.**

The degree of success in the implementation of joint programmes and initiatives with other UN agencies varied. Fruitful collaborations were seen with UNWomen and OHCHR, while significant difficulties were experienced in the implementation of joint programmes with PAHO/WHO, FAO and WFP. Substantial efforts need to be made to reverse the perception of a fragmented and sometimes competing UN by national counterparts. In this sense, the Resident Coordinator office, in its

role of coordinating the UN country team as well as the different agencies, will have a significant role to play. Partnerships with the donor community were also affected once UNDP stopped convening and coordinating efforts with international cooperation partners, following a request from the Government. This situation hampered communication and the opportunities to harmonize approaches.

3.2 Recommendations and Management Response

Recommendation 1.



UNDP should reposition itself as a leading agency in democratic governance. For this, given its reduced core resources, UNDP should strategically focus its interventions on substantive upstream engagement and policy advisory support for the Government to achieve its desired structural transformation. Similarly, interventions should focus on fostering active civil society participation and engagement with the Government, particularly for the SDG implementation process.

UNDP has been globally recognized for its thought leadership and expertise on democratic governance. In Paraguay, this leadership has diminished in recent years. In view of the new Government, and Paraguay's upper middle-income status, UNDP should adopt a more proactive role in policy support for effective governance, working closely with the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean and in synergy with the UNCT, and engaging in high-level policy dialogues with Parliament and ministers.

Internally, UNDP should explore ways of reducing the administrative burden on programme officers so that they can focus on strategically guiding portfolio implementation towards the expected results. The new corporate guidelines on the Memorandum for the Provision of Management Services, for instance, offer potential to reduce, to a certain extent, the administrative burden on programme staff during project formulation for this type of intervention. Engagement and coordination with development partners and donors working in the same thematic areas should be enhanced, through active participation in meetings to share strategies, plans and lessons learned.

Significant changes in governance and democratic development, as well as progress on the SDGs, require broad mobilization of multiple actors. The political will of state authorities and UN action are not sufficient to achieve changes to institutional structures and political practices. Advocacy support and citizen engagement are also necessary. The evaluation found valuable capacity for citizen mobilization and a great interest from the private sector to be involved in national development processes, particularly for the implementation of the SDGs. It is therefore recommended that all interventions related to governance

include actions focused on promoting active citizen engagement with the Government. They also need to promote, as far as possible and in accordance with national priorities, reform of the executive branch and judicial system to improve their efficacy, transparency and accountability; and the decentralization of power so that the regions have the autonomy and capacity needed to propose and combine top-down strategies with bottom-up approaches.

Management Response:
Accepted.



Democratic governance is one of the main thematic areas for UNDP globally. In Paraguay, the country office (CO) is closely monitoring emerging needs in this area at both national and local levels, chiefly through discussions with the new Government and the upcoming strategic programme planning exercises, both interagency (UNDAF) and UNDP-specific (CPD). Progress in this line of work will depend on the Government's needs and availability of funds. As to SDG implementation, it is worth highlighting that:

- Since 2016, the CO has assisted the national SDG Interinstitutional Commission in fulfilling its mandate of coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda (see <http://comisionods.mre.gov.py/>). It is foreseen that this assistance will continue and will be embedded in the new CPD. Additionally, the CO will continue to support the Commission Secretariat, its learning programme and the alignment between UNDP CO Paraguay projects and the 2030 Agenda.
- UNDP has worked directly with the government transition team to determine the top priorities and initiatives of the new Government and align them with the SDGs.
- UNDP has already taken actions to widely disseminate information on the SDGs, promoting open dialogue with all stakeholders.

Key Action(s)	Responsible Unit(s)	Timeframe
Actively participate in the UNDAF process.	CO	Sep 2019
Guarantee the participation of government counterparts in the CPD design process.	CO	Jan 2020
Explore with counterparts the opportunities for UNDP support in democratic governance, building upon existing and new partnerships.	CO, with SIGOB / Regional Bureau / BPPS	Jan 2020
Guarantee the participation of civil society in the CPD design process.	CO	Jan 2020
Guarantee support to the SDG Commission in fulfilling its mandate.	CO	Dec 2024

Recommendation 2.



UNDP should continue to support the Environment Secretariat and the institutions that compose the Social Protection System in their institutional strengthening efforts. A strategy outlining the capacity development needs of the different institutions and areas of support to be provided by UNDP should be developed under this framework. Building from its global knowledge and networks, UNDP should continue to offer tools and instruments that enhance the targeting, coverage and quality of social services, and should focus engagement with SEAM on consolidating ongoing capacity development efforts, institutionalizing practices and ensuring adequate transfer of knowledge.

The reform and expansion of the Social Protection System in Paraguay are central to the country's inclusive social development. In the next programme cycle, UNDP should focus its efforts on providing strategic technical support to relevant government institutions that make up the Social Protection System, with the aim of strengthening their capacity and developing solid tools and instruments that improve the efficacy of social protection programmes. In terms of institutional strengthening, UNDP should develop and implement a well-defined capacity development strategy, describing the specific needs of the different institutions to be addressed by UNDP's interventions, the capacity development approach to be used and the exit strategy and knowledge transfer plan. As part of this engagement, UNDP should also leverage its partnerships to enhance collaboration and coordination between participating institutions; and carry out advocacy actions with Parliament and relevant institutions to ensure adequate budget allocation at national level.

Management Response: Accepted.



UNDP, at the request of the new Government that took office in August, will continue to provide assistance on environmental and social protection issues. These thematic areas will be included in the new CPD, which is planned to be completed by December 2019/January 2020. UNDP CO Paraguay will also continue to support the Paraguayan State to access international funding pools for new projects in the environmental area. The strategy mentioned in the recommendation will be designed within the CPD framework. The innovations offered by UNDP, within the wider UN system reform, will be at the service of government counterparts in these thematic areas, as well as all areas agreed upon with the Paraguayan State, with the perspective of offering useful and efficient services, oriented towards achieving the SDGs in the country.

Recommendation 2 (cont'd)

Key Action(s)	Responsible Unit(s)	Timeframe
Guarantee the participation of the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development and of other institutions that are part of the Social Protection System in the CPD design process.	CO	Jan 2020
Provide counterparts with information on UNDP assistance opportunities in social services issues.	CO	Dec 2024
Support to Paraguayan State facilitating access to funding opportunities for projects of the environmental area with donors like GEF, FCPF and others.	CO	Dec 2024

Recommendation 3.



UNDP should reinforce its disaster risk reduction programme to consolidate the paradigm shift from emergency response to disaster risk reduction; and support the Government in expanding the National System for Risk and Disaster Management at subnational level. To ensure the necessary political support and resources, UNDP should strengthen its engagement and advocacy strategy to raise awareness at a high political level and pursue additional funding from GEF, the European Union and the Green Climate Fund.

In close collaboration with the National Emergency Secretariat, UNDP should continue its institutional strengthening support to the National System for Risk and Disaster Management, in accordance with the Sendai Framework principles and targets. To finalize the shift towards prevention, it is crucial that UNDP increases its advocacy on the links between climate change and disaster risk reduction with high-level political actors, technical government representatives at national and subnational levels, and civil society actors at community level. For this, UNDP will need to tap into additional funding within UNDP and from donors such as GEF, the European Union and the Green Climate Fund, or build strategic alliances with agencies such as JICA and FAO that work in the same area. Considering its relationship with different sectoral ministries, and the nexus between climate change, the environment, disaster risk reduction and poverty reduction, UNDP should seek synergies and complementarities at programme level within its climate change, environment, and disaster risk reduction portfolios, and collaboration with relevant government actors and development agencies. The capitalization of experiences and integration of local adaptation and resilience practices into programme design should also be strengthened to maximize the sustainability of UNDP's contributions in these areas.

Management Response:
Partially accepted.



Paraguay's CO maintains a good relationship with the National Emergency Secretariat, national rector for disaster and risk reduction. Likewise, together with humanitarian partners, this thematic area is constantly present in the CO's work, in response to emerging needs. As mentioned earlier, the CPD design process will be the adequate stage where local and national needs will be registered, as well as UNDP's commitments in each area. The CO is expecting to adapt and update its resource mobilization strategy once its 2020-2025 CPD is approved, so that the strategy is closely linked with the plan developed with the Paraguayan State and aligned with corporate mechanisms. This recommendation will be taken into consideration during the design process.

Key Action(s)	Responsible Unit(s)	Timeframe
Guarantee the participation of the National Emergency Secretariat and other risk reduction institutions in the CPD design process.	CO	Jan 2020
Consider the recommendation made when designing the resource mobilization strategy.	CO	Jan 2020

Recommendation 4.



Given its proximity to a wide range of partners, UNDP should foster greater alliances and linkages within and across its different areas of intervention for more integrated approaches and solutions. It should also expand the use of South-South cooperation modalities to benefit Paraguay's development needs and results.

The evaluation identified several engagement and coordination opportunities with diverse partners that would maximize the attainment of development results. UNDP's support to SFP for the professionalization of the civil service under outcome 30 could be linked to institutional strengthening efforts with SEAM and SAS under outcome 29, and with SEN under outcome 31. The lessons emerging from the experience of promoting women's participation under outcome 30 could also be used to enhance CSO participation in other outcome areas. In its work with the Supreme Court, UNDP should explore the possibility of providing advisory services and technical support to improve judges' capacity to enforce environmental laws and increase transparency in these processes. Similarly, UNDP should forge greater linkages and coordination between its environmental climate change portfolio with SEAM and its disaster risk reduction portfolio with SEN and subnational governments. The use of South-South cooperation should also be maximized, identifying opportunities where the Government of Paraguay could offer its experience (i.e. SDGs, land regularization system, tripartite dialogue platforms among others), and bring in experiences from other countries that are relevant to Paraguay's development context.

Recommendation 4 (cont'd)

Management Response:
Accepted.



Building upon and strengthening partnerships will be a recurrent theme in the next cycle of programming, within the context of the wider UN system reform that acknowledges the need for integration and collaboration to achieve sustainable solutions. We believe we can improve in terms of recording and giving visibility to our partnership initiatives, including South-South cooperation and other impact initiatives.

Key Action(s)	Responsible Unit(s)	Timeframe
Seek to adopt a more multidimensional approach between governance, poverty reduction and resilience.	CO	Dec 2024
Increase partnership initiatives and their visibility, including South-South cooperation and others, through social networks and other means.	CO	Dec 2024

Recommendation 5.



UNDP should strengthen its gender mainstreaming capacity to improve the programme's gender-related results. As part of these efforts, the gender strategy and action plan should be finalized and implemented, allocating sufficient time and resources to ensure the systematic integration of gender issues and strategies into programme design and implementation.

In its next programme cycle, UNDP should make a concerted effort to achieve the institutional gender equality seal and systematically mainstream gender equality and women's empowerment in its programme. With the new gender focal team in place, focus should be given to the finalization of the gender strategy and related workplan, identifying a range of gender-related actions to be implemented in the different programmatic areas and projects. As far as possible, all interventions should explicitly integrate a component on women's inclusion and empowerment in different development processes. Building from the successful experience of promoting women's participation in democratic processes, UNDP should continue this support in collaboration with the Ministry of Women and UNWomen, with emphasis on upscaling it to other regions of the country.

Management Response:
Accepted.



UNDP Paraguay has already taken action with regard to this recommendation, chiefly at the institutional level, as evidenced by the creation of the Gender Working Group and progress made towards achieving the Gender Seal. At the national level, the planning processes (UNDAF, CPD) will allow the CO to seek the integration of a gender perspective systematically into its programme; simultaneously, the office will design its Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan, always taking into account national needs and expectations.

Recommendation 5 (cont'd)

Key Action(s)	Responsible Unit(s)	Timeframe
Obtain the Gender Seal.	CO	Dec 2019
Establish gender results and indicators in the CPD.	CO	Jan 2020

Recommendation 6.



UNDP should improve its strategic planning and results-based management to enhance its contribution to development results, particularly in the SDG framework. For this, a clear theory of change for the overall programme and each programmatic area, and a consistent results framework with realistic indicators, should be developed. It is fundamental that UNDP improves its strategic planning process and results-based management to enhance programme effectiveness. As a starting point, the next programme design should be based on a well-defined theory of change for the overall programme and for each outcome area, that outlines how UNDP's contributions (programme outputs) are expected to lead to immediate and intermediate outcomes and long-term impact. This instrument should serve to identify where UNDP should focus its efforts to trigger long term change processes that could lead to the structural transformations required to meet the country's SDG commitments. A robust M&E framework should also be developed, with clear and realistic outputs and outcome indicators, as this is crucial to improve internal oversight, monitoring of progress towards strategic results and capitalization of experiences and lessons for adequate upscaling and replication.

Management Response: Accepted.



As part of the programme and project management reform, UNDP has taken important steps to clarify the definition of concepts and the adoption of instruments linked to the programme design process. The CO expects to benefit from this reform context and will involve the entire local team in the elaboration of the CPD, a process that now requires a theory of change. With respect to the programme areas and their respective theories of change, the CO depends on the UNDAF design process, considering that it will take the effects stipulated in this instrument as verbatim. Since it is in the CO's utmost interest to have a final instrument that facilitates accountability vis-à-vis stakeholders, it is guaranteed that this recommendation will be fully addressed.

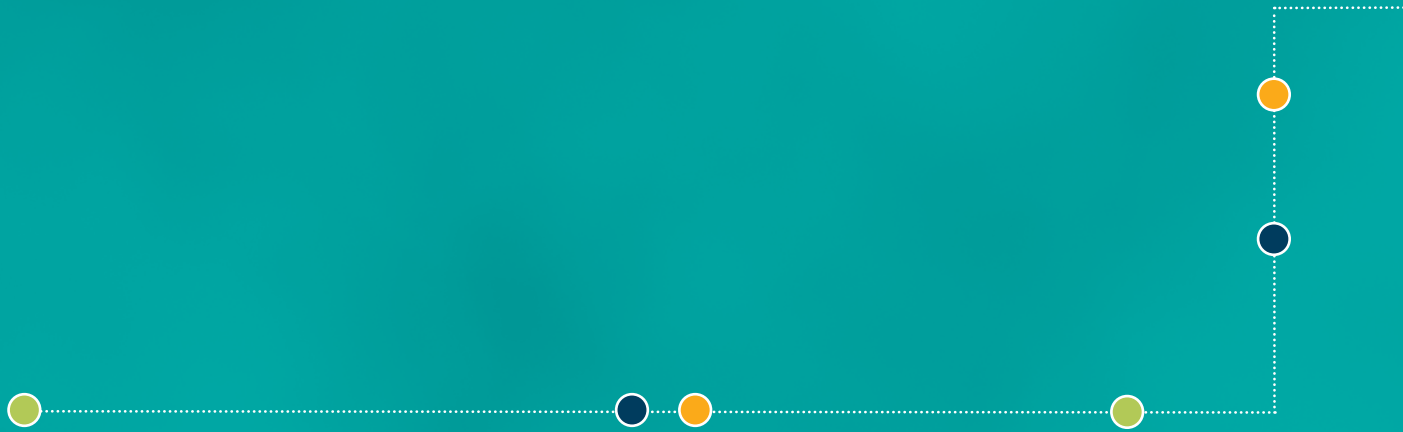
Key Action(s)	Responsible Unit(s)	Timeframe
Guarantee that the CPD is based on a theory of change.	CO	Jan 2020
Guarantee that the CPD has impact measurement instruments that are sufficiently adequate and defined.	CO	Jan 2020
Guarantee the fulfillment of the CPD's monitoring and evaluation plan.	CO	Dec 2024

Annexes



Annexes to the report (listed below) are available on the website of the Independent Evaluation Office at: <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/detail/9402>.

- Annex 1.** Terms of Reference
- Annex 2.** Country at a Glance
- Annex 3.** Country Office at a Glance
- Annex 4.** List of Projects
- Annex 5.** People Consulted
- Annex 6.** Documents Consulted
- Annex 7.** Summary of CPD indicators and status as reported by country office



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