



**EVALUATION OF UNDP'S SECOND
REGIONAL COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR**

AFRICA

2002 – 2006

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RCF for the Arab States 2002-2005, (2005)

RCF for Asia and the Pacific 2002-2006, (2007)

RCF for Latin America & the Caribbean 2002-2007, (2007)

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FOREWORD

This report presents the findings of the evaluation of the Second Regional Cooperation Framework for Africa. It is one of three evaluations of regional programmes carried out this year. The aim of the evaluation is to assess performance, and help identify successful approaches and lessons which would feed into the development of the third regional cooperation framework for Africa.

The particular aims of the RCF were support to good governance, globalization, peace building and disaster management, HIV/AIDS, and management of energy and environment for sustainable development. Managed by the Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA), it provided a framework for the implementation of regional projects and programmes and a provision of policy and advisory services.

The evaluation examined UNDP's regional programme and its contributions to regional development in terms of its relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. It found that the themes of the RCF were aligned well to regionally expressed priorities, and with UNDP's global programme, and that UNDP's presence and reputation throughout Africa gave it a natural and viable role to play in the areas of democratic governance, globalization and conflict resolution and peace building. The regional programme was found to be successful in implementing initiatives of a sensitive nature, in conducting policy analysis and advocacy, in handling trans-boundary issues and in enhancing capacity. It was successful in bringing partners from throughout Africa together to share best practices and lessons learned and to develop joint action plans to address trans-boundary issues. Opportunities were availed moreover for building relationships and confidence between groups, particularly among countries that otherwise had little access to official development assistance resources or had a long history of not interacting with one another. The programme was also found to be successful in mobilizing funds for the programme.

However the evaluation found that generally links between the regional programme and country programmes were absent; coordination and communication were weak as were gender mainstreaming and integration of environment concerns. The programme also lacked indicators, baseline and timeline data which limited attribution, and links between expected results, required resources and monitoring and evaluation needed improvement. The evaluation also found that the time horizon for capacity development initiatives were generally unrealistic and exit strategies were not developed during the design stage of an initiative.

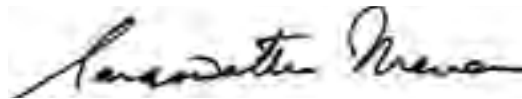
Some key lessons learned from UNDP's experience in implementing the regional programme in Africa include: first, maximum impact from relatively limited resources came from focusing on those areas where African priorities and UNDP strengths intersected (governance, conflict prevention and peace building). Second, building partnerships and capacities was easier when UNDP established a direct relationship with local institutions rather than working through an executing agency. And third, strong financial and management systems and performance measures must be in place for effective management, including an integrated system of reporting, monitoring and evaluation. It is expected that in the development of the third regional cooperation framework for Africa, these lessons will provide a useful basis for learning what worked well and what didn't work so well.

A number of people contributed to this evaluation, particularly the evaluation team composed of Richard Beattie, team leader, and Pamela Branch and Bjorn Johansson, team members. Ruth Abraham was the task manager of the evaluation at the Evaluation Office. We would also like to thank Kutisha Ebron, Thuy Hang To and Anish Pradhan of EO and Khadidiatou Sylla-Ba of UNOPS, who provided excellent administrative and technical support. We would also like to express our appreciation to Shreya Dhawan, Editor of this report.

The preparation of the evaluation was also thanks to the excellent collaboration of the Regional Bureau of Africa led by the Regional Director, Gilbert Houngbo, Martin Fianu, Chief of Staff, Lamin Manneh, Head of the Strategic Regional Initiatives Unit, and the support of many UNDP staff members in New York and in the field, especially, Illuminate Maerere, Jessie Byron and Habiba Ben Barka, New York, Aguerre Yilma and Hannah Gutema in Addis Ababa, Nardos Bekele-Thomas and Jacqueline Anyona in Nairobi, Isaac Chivore and Chris Opar in Pretoria, Kristan Schoulz and

Jonas Ottosen in Gaborone, Fatoumata Maiga in Bamako, Laba Toure and Seynabou Diop in Dakar and Eloi Laouroui in Geneva. This report would not have been possible without the interest and support of African government representatives, Advisory Board members, regional partners, donors, representatives of civil society, and executing agencies.

I hope that the findings and recommendations of this evaluation will assist in improving the effectiveness of UNDP's regional level assistance in Africa in the coming period, and contribute to the achievement of its development goals.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Saraswathi Menon', written in a cursive style.

Saraswathi Menon
Director, Evaluation Office

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acronyms and Abbreviations	vii
Executive Summary	ix
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Evaluation methodology.....	2
1.2 Limitations of the evaluation	3
2. Background	5
2.1 The African development context	5
2.2 Objectives of the Second Regional Cooperation Framework	7
2.3 Current status.....	8
2.4 Financial resources.....	8
2.5 Oversight and management arrangements.....	9
3. Analysis and Findings.....	11
3.1 Relevance.....	11
3.2 Effectiveness.....	14
3.3 Efficiency.....	29
3.4 Sustainability	32
4. Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations	34
4.1 Conclusions	34
4.2 Lesson learned.....	35
4.3 Recommendations for the future.....	35
ANNEXES	
Annex A. Terms of Reference	37
Annex B. List of people consulted.....	42
Annex C. Key documents consulted.....	51
ANNEXES AVAILABLE WITH ONLINE VERSION OF THE REPORT AT WWW.UNDP.ORG.EO	
Annex D. RCF Africa II Portfolio (June 2006)	
Annex E. Data Collection Instruments	
Annex F. Evaluation mission itinerary	
Annex G. Sample Performance Measurement Framework	
Annex H. Organization Chart of RBA/SRIU	

TABLES

Table 1. Progress of Sub-Saharan Africa on Selected MDG Targets	6
Table 2. RCF Africa Financial Resources 2002 – 2006	8
Table 3. GCF II and RCF Africa II	12
Table 4. RCF Africa II Analysis and Advocacy.....	13
Table 5. RCF Africa II and MDGs	15
Table 6. Indicators and Examples of Output Results Democracy and Governance Theme	19
Table 7. Indicators and Examples of Output Results Globalization Theme	21
Table 8. Indicators and Examples of Output Results Conflict and Peace Theme.....	23
Table 9. Indicators and Examples of Output Results HIV/AIDS Theme.....	24
Table 10. Indicators and Examples of Output Results “Other” Theme.....	26
Table 11. Indicators and Examples of Outcome Results	27

FIGURES

Figure 1. Portfolio Coverage by Outcome Evaluations	2
Figure 2. Portfolio Coverage by Sample.....	4
Figure 3. Budget by Theme.....	7
Figure 4. Site Executing Agencies and Management Sites.....	9

BOXES

Box 1. Partnership with NEPAD	12
Box 2. Coordination between RCF II and a Country Office	16
Box 3. Capacity Development Lessons Learned	18

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACP	African, Caribbean and Pacific States (Trade Agreement European Union)
AfDB	African Development Bank
AGOA	Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (of the United States)
AMSCO	African Management Services Company
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
BDP	Bureau for Development Policy (UNDP)
BRSP	Bureau for Resources and Strategic Partnerships (UNDP)
CCF	Country Cooperation Framework
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CO	Country Office (UNDP)
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DFID	Department for International Development (United Kingdom)
DBSA	Development Bank of South Africa
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa (also UNECA)
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOSAP	ECOWAS Small Arms Programme
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EO	Evaluation Office (UNDP)
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GCF	Global Cooperation Framework
GDI	Gender-related Development Index
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Fund
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HPI	Human Poverty Index
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDRC	International Development Research Centre (Canada)
IF	Integrated Framework
IFC	International Finance Corporation
ILO	International Labour Organization

IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITC	International Trade Centre
JITAP	Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis
MDG's	Millennium Development Goals
MYFF	Multi-Year Funding Framework
NEPAD	New Partnership for African Development
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OAS	Organization of African States
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OHADA	Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PCASED	Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development
PSI	Project Services International
RAF	Regional Africa (used for UNDP project identification)
RBA	Regional Bureau for Africa (UNDP)
RBM	Results-based management
RCF	Regional Cooperation Framework
RSAP-IWRM	Regional Strategic Action Plan on Integrated Water Resource Management
RSC	Regional Service Centre
SACI	Southern African Capacity Initiative
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SRIU	Strategic and Regional Initiatives Unit (RBA)
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TICAD	Tokyo International Conference on Africa's Development
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDESA	Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNV	United Nations Volunteers
US	United States (of America)
WD	Water Division
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization
WSCU	Water Sector Coordination Unit

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. INTRODUCTION

The present report provides a summary of the findings of the independent evaluation of the regional cooperation framework (RCF) for Africa which the Evaluation Office submits to the Executive Board. The evaluation of the second RCF for Africa (2002-2006) was carried out between September 2006 and January 2007. The second RCF was originally approved for the period 2002-2006, but was extended to 2007 so that it could be harmonized with the cycle of the multi-year funding framework (MYFF) 2004-2007.

The main objectives of the evaluation were to: (a) assess the achievement of the intended organizational goals and development results, highlighting key results of outputs and outcomes, lessons learned and good practices, both as they relate to the specified programme goals of UNDP and in relation to broader national strategies in the region; (b) assess performance of the RCF and specify the development results achieved in the area of policy advice, capacity development and knowledge management within the core results areas on which the regional programme has focused, as well as assessment of the scope and range of strategic partnerships formed; (c) based on the actual results, ascertain how the RCF has contributed to positioning UNDP strategically to establish its comparative advantage or niche as a major upstream global policy advisor for poverty reduction and sustainable human development and as a knowledge-based organization in the region; and (d) identify innovative approaches used within the RCF programme and project portfolio, their related outcomes and lessons learned within UNDP and in programme countries. The evaluation sought to address key questions in terms of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the regional programme.

The RCF evaluations were to be conducted as a 'meta-evaluation', drawing on the results and conclusions of independent outcome evaluations undertaken during the period of the RCF for each

of the regional programmes. The meta-evaluation methodology required a review and validation of findings and data from existing evaluations (such as a comprehensive desk review and analysis of outcome and project evaluations and other self-assessment reports); conducting selective spot checks (in-country project visits and consultations with RCF stakeholders on the ground, for example); and triangulation of the available data and information.

The outcome evaluations provided were found to be uneven in quality and inadequate in terms of their coverage of the second RCF for Africa. Nor did the evaluations capture programme-level results. As it was not possible to conduct the planned meta-evaluation, the results reported for a sample of projects were reviewed and the resulting outcomes assessed.

Key reports and reference documents for the RCF were reviewed, as were more than 100 other reports and related documents. RCF Africa II project documents were reviewed for 55 of the ongoing projects in the portfolio. Interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with a wide cross-section of stakeholders. These included representatives of African governments, regional and sub-regional organizations and NGOs; advisory board members, representatives of non-UNDP executing agencies, the UNDP regional service centre and sub-regional resource facilities (SURFs); UNDP staff in the field working on RCF initiatives, headquarters staff and in UNDP country office staff. Visits to these sites covered activities under the major thematic areas of the RCF – HIV/AIDS, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, gender and environment, governance and globalization. All projects valued over \$4 million were also visited. In addition to the selected countries, visits were made to donor partners in Brussels and London, and interviews were conducted in Canada with the Canadian International Development Agency.

II. MAIN FINDINGS

A. RELEVANCE

The evaluation found that the themes of the RCF Africa (2002-2006) are relevant to the needs and development priorities of the region and to the issues that African leaders have identified in the NEPAD as critical for the region's development – good governance, economic development, conflict prevention and peace building. The themes of the RCF also address problems with trans-boundary implications, in which joint action and greater regional integration and coordination can add value. It is also aligned with the strategic goals of the UNDP MYFF, 2004-2007, particularly in the areas of poverty reduction and democratic governance, but also in crisis prevention and gender mainstreaming and to a lesser extent in the environment. The evaluation also found that the thematic areas of support for the RCF are in line with the global programme principles and its practice areas. The second RCF for Africa is working in areas – democratic governance, globalization and conflict resolution/peace building – in which UNDP's presence throughout Africa, along with its reputation and stature, gives it a natural and viable role to play, and the RCF initiatives are having policy and advocacy impacts.

B. EFFECTIVENESS

The evaluation looked at the effectiveness of RCF in terms of organizational goals, institutional criteria and approaches, such as policy advice and advocacy, support to the MDGs, communication, coordination and building capacity, partnerships and synergies; and in terms of the developmental results of the themes: democratization and participatory governance, globalization, conflict prevention, peacebuilding and disaster preparedness, HIV/AIDS, and 'other', which includes the cross-cutting themes of gender and environment as well as energy and water resources.

Capitalizing on the reputation of UNDP as politically neutral, the RCF was successful in supporting dialogues and exchanges on sensitive issues and in a very timely fashion. In addition, the programme has supported analysis and advocacy-level activi-

ties through a variety of initiatives such as studies, regional workshops and conferences on various issues, including conflict management, public sector ethics, reinventing government in Africa, and human rights, as well as promoting improved human development reports. Those activities were very valuable in bringing partners from throughout Africa together to share best practices and lessons learned. The forums helped to build relationships and confidence between groups and permit the development of joint plans of action to address transboundary issues. This was particularly true for countries that otherwise have little access to official development assistance resources or have a long history of not interacting with one another. In some cases periodic follow-up meetings resulted in peer pressure to either participate or progress, and at times the events were catalysts for further action (such as the Regional Centre for Small Arms workshop for police, military and customs officers responsible for enforcing laws to prevent the proliferation and cross-border movement of small arms in the Great Lakes region).

The RCF identifies capacity development as the 'lens' through which African development issues are perceived, and measures to address them are formulated and implemented in the RCF. Although it endorses effective capacity development principles and practices, including the recognition that capacity development is a long-term process, the RCF has only a four- or five-year horizon, and many of its initiatives of short duration. The institutional development support to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), for example, was approved for a period of 14 months. Although that was extended for an additional year, this sort of short-term support is contrary to stated UNDP capacity development principles. In another case, the addition of small arms control to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), UNDP did not carry out a proper assessment of the capacity, mandate or priorities of the institution prior to implementation – another precondition to effective capacity development.

Through its support at the regional level, UNDP worked in partnership with over 15 regional organizations and entities, including inter-governmental bodies and civil society groups such as the Africa 2000 Network, the African

Futures Institute, the African Leadership Forum, ECOWAS, and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). They included some of the key African institutions and initiatives such as the African Union, NEPAD, and the African Peer Review Mechanism. UNDP worked with several international development partners, (including the Department for International Development, CIDA, Belgium, the European Union and Japan), and mobilized resources from a variety of development partners, raising \$74.1 million.

The evaluation team found that RBA operated on two parallel tracks, with very little coordination or communication between country programmes and regional programmes. The RCF and its individual projects were seen as emanating from UNDP headquarters, and neither the countries nor the country offices understood how to access regional programmes or resources in order to participate or conduct complementary activities. The lack of communication between the regional programme and country offices has made it difficult for country offices to coordinate the regional projects with their in-country programming. It has also limited the ability of UNDP to leverage its reputation and knowledge base in promoting development policy with other donors and with country governments.

The effectiveness of the RCF in attaining intended development results was mixed, and the level of the programme contribution to those results is impossible to assess with rigour due to the lack of indicators of achievement and the lack of baseline and timeline data. Without agreed indicators of programme achievements, reporting is not uniform, and meaningful aggregations at the programme level are impossible. There are clear indications that the initiatives supported by the RCF are contributing to the achievement of desired programme-level results in the 'strengthening democratic and participatory governance' thematic area. Overall, progress in Africa has been in the desired direction during the life of the RCF, with the African Peer Review Mechanism – among others – promoting improved accountability; capacity-building efforts with the African Union improving the effectiveness of democratic systems; and the African Governance Forum promoting more effective participation of civil society. However, it is difficult to discern the level of the RCF contribution. For example, while

more countries have democratically elected governments and the Forum of Former African Heads of State – which is supported under the RCF – is working to promote and consolidate democratic governance in Africa, it is not easy to establish a causal link between the two, since the Forum of Former African Heads of State constitutes only one influence on the progress toward greater democratic governance in Africa.

Objectives under the globalization theme included strengthening regional and subregional economic cooperation and integration in the areas of trade, market and enterprise development; and strengthening pro-poor economic governance and public finance management. As with that for democracy and governance, general progress is in the right direction, but again attribution to the RCF poses problems, since the improved economic performance of Africa over the past five years is the result of many influences. Nonetheless, the RCF was praised for the flexible and responsive support it provided to African ministers and African World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiators in Geneva preparing for WTO meetings, as well as for support to SADC and the Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa (creating an enabling environment for greater economic development in West and Central African states through training on regional and global trade regimes). The capacity development work with African partners in government, regional institutions and the civil and private sectors helped bring Africa into the world economy and lessen its marginalization, for example through supporting studies related to mobility of business persons, trade and investment, as well as policy development work with African government institutions.

In spite of ongoing and emerging challenges, the RCF is contributing directly to African efforts to prevent conflicts and build peace. There are good indications that RCF Africa II is on track to achieve the desired results at the outcome level, through support to ECOWAS and the Regional Centre on Small Arms Control, as well as by training faculty members in the region on conflict analysis, mediation, and negotiation. While the institutions supported by the RCF are also supported by others, several found RCF support important. For example, the Peace and Security Directorate of the African

Union found the funding of analysts, who are the focal points for providing up-to-date information and analysis on conflict situations to the African Union, and the funding of special envoys to ensure that African Union member states ratified the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union in July 2002, were critical in moving operations forward to the point where African Union peacekeepers could be fielded.

Several initiatives have been funded under the RCF, although the data available do not demonstrate any outcome level results as yet for some of them. It is also difficult to differentiate the results of the regional programme from those of the country offices and other specialized United Nations agencies, the World Health Organization and UNAIDS, as well as a plethora of projects and programmes addressing HIV/AIDS at all levels, funded by virtually every bilateral and multilateral organization. Following an evaluation that found that “there was no chance that the project would produce the outputs”, the Southern Africa Capacity Initiative – one of the key HIV/AIDS interventions under RCF Africa II – is now addressing government capacity-building more generally rather than solely for HIV/AIDS.

Most projects report giving consideration to gender balance in selecting project participants and/or beneficiaries but, in general, there is little analysis of gender concerns and challenges in project documents. There is no outline of the specific roles and responsibilities of men and women, boys and girls, nor any indication of how resources will be allocated to facilitate the participation of the various groups. In addition, while quite often noting that women’s participation will be supported, project documents rarely set specific targets or strategies to achieve this, and gender disaggregated data are rarely available. In those instances in which a regional activity is based in an existing institution, there is no indication of an assessment of the capacity of that institution to deliver a gender-focused programme or activity.

Integration of environmental concerns is weak. With the exception of the initial undertaking to mainstream environmental concerns, the documents reviewed appear to be more or less silent on

this issue. Energy and water resources were added during the reorientation of RCF Africa II in 2004. RCF has supported the development of an ECOWAS regional white paper on increasing access to energy for rural and peri-urban populations, which has been ratified by the member states. The document is being used to engage financing and donor interest and the member states have approved guidelines on the development of MDG-based energy access strategies and costing methodologies. These are being piloted, but it is too early to see outcomes as yet.

C. EFFICIENCY

Efficiency was measured by looking at programme oversight and governance, including resource mobilization, organizational strategy, execution and implementation modalities, and performance measurement. While funds mobilization was successful, oversight, management, coordination and communications were weak. Accountability and reporting lines and decision-making authorities were unclear. Links between expected results, required resources and monitoring and evaluation systems were missing or weak. Reporting was highly variable and did not seem to be used for management and control. Use of policy advisors, including the advisory board, was limited. The external advisory board, established at the beginning of RCF Africa II in order to provide policy guidance and ensure that the programme remained “closely grounded in African priorities and emerging realities”, met infrequently and was under-utilized. Members of the advisory board described their terms of reference as vague, and the board did not meet until after the parameters of RCF Africa II were finalized.

While overall resource mobilization was effective, financial management has not been. Financial information was not available to field managers on a timely basis, and the budget fluctuated, dropping by 25 per cent during the approval of the MYFF in 2004, and then increasing again in 2006, when the end date of the programme was extended. The uncertainties in financing created some implementation difficulties for initiatives on the ground, as budgets that had been approved were cut and later reinstated. Those uncertainties, compounded by the lack of timely financial information, made planning and results achievement difficult for the individual

RCF Africa II initiatives. In addition, the evaluators were told that difficulties in obtaining financial and other information has led some bilateral donors to raise questions about the capacity of UNDP to be accountable and manage resources in an effective and timely fashion.

The RCF has a complex organization, with the Strategic and Regional Initiatives Unit (SRIU) of the Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA) acting as the key planner and manager of the programme. The programme is executed by 10 different organizations in partnership with over 15 African organizations, from project management sites in North America, Europe and 14 African countries. This may help to explain some of the difficulties in coordination and communication. Operating out of New York, SRIU carries out central management of the regional programme and makes essential decisions regarding project funding and operations. The regional projects and programmes are implemented by different implementing agencies. Roles and responsibilities are not completely clear: some project managers reported not being sure which decisions they could take themselves and which required approval from New York. Some reporting lines are also difficult to understand; for example, the Assistant Resident Representative/Representation to the African Union and Liaison Office with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) – both key partners – reports to the UNDP Resident Representative in Addis Ababa, who has no direct reporting relationship to SRIU. The Senior Regional Coordinator/Regional Support for NEPAD, also based in Addis Ababa and the liaison with another important partner, on the other hand, reports directly to SRIU in New York.

Most regional programme coordinators state that although SURFs/regional service centres have provided and can continue to provide good technical advice, especially at the project planning stage, they rarely call upon them. This may be a function of the centralization of programme planning and management decision-making in New York. However, the Bureau for Development Policy also reports that SRIU does not consult them, including on key issues such as integrating gender and environment. Many key programme management functions, financial management, procurement, and administrative support are provided by UNOPS,

which is the executing agency for most RCF initiatives. Field managers reported delays as long as six months in getting financial information from UNOPS, which UNOPS attributed to difficulties in implementing the Atlas system. In addition, the UNOPS chart of accounts is not particularly well set up for producing institutional-level financial management information and does not link well with those financial management information systems. This is not efficient, and several partners reported running duplicate systems in an attempt to ascertain their current financial position, or to link their RCF funding to their institutional financial management system.

While SRIU had created a results-oriented tracking system, performance measurement, review and reporting functions were found to be inadequate. At the time of this evaluation, there were multiple objectives for each theme but results were not usually measurable and indicators of achievement had not been developed. Without clear indicators of achievements, the reports generally provided activities and outputs against key results statements, but provided little information on outcomes or programme level results. The evaluation team noted a general absence of poverty and gender objectives in project documentation and, in line with the general absence of results-formulation and monitoring processes, did not find any established means to determine the extent and nature of the RCF contribution to poverty reduction or gender equality. No attempt was made to compare, compile or roll up the information in these reports to either the thematic or the programme level. As most individual project reporting and monitoring to date has focused on output rather than outcome achievements, it is not surprising that most project evaluations conducted to date have restricted themselves to evaluating project outputs, thereby limiting their usefulness for meta-evaluation purposes.

D. SUSTAINABILITY

While the RCF has been successful in enhancing the capacity of many of the African organizations with which it works, the long-term sustainability of results for several initiatives is doubtful. In the case of the African Union and the Regional Centre on Small Arms, the availability of funds is central to sustaining the institutions and their regional

programmes. In both cases, although the participating governments are making contributions to help support the institutions, those contributions are rarely sufficient to pay for capacity development and to allow the institutions to fulfil their regional mandate.

In some cases UNDP has created implementing partner institutions whose ability to continue to produce regional benefits once donor funding ends is questionable. For example, the Africa 2000 Network, a regional initiative, was transformed into a linked group of nationally registered NGOs, some of which have been successful in mobilizing funds from UNDP country offices and other donors, while others have not. The coordinating body for Africa 2000 is completely dependent on funds from the RCF, which end in 2007, and that coordinating body is responsible for sharing lessons learned, conducting field visits, and collecting success stories. It is difficult to see how the regional links will be maintained following the end of RCF funding. The Africa 2000 coordinating body has been linked to Capacity 2015, another UNDP-funded initiative, in order to continue its activities, but this continued dependence is still not a sustainability or an exit strategy. In general, sustainability and exit strategies are missing from RCF initiatives.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

A. CONCLUSIONS

Outcome-level results are indicative rather than exhaustive, due to the lack of data and the somewhat short time-frame. While progress has been made toward all the objectives for RCF Africa II since its inception in 2002, projects within each development theme are dispersed geographically, chronologically and by executing agency. Consultations and anecdotal evidence indicate that the regional programme has contributed to key results within each thematic area; however, it is difficult to detect synergies or complementarities among them or to measure the aggregate development outcome for that theme objectively. However, in some cases there have been subsequent project phases that have built up to an outcome level result, such as ‘capacity-building for

trade and development’. In others, more than one initiative may have promoted a particular outcome, such as ‘addressing small arms in the Great Lakes’ and ‘support to Peacebuilding in the Great Lakes’.

Working with and through regional institutions as partners has been a good model for producing synergies between partners and countries in the region. However, the short-term nature of the support provided by the RCF may not be appropriate for capacity development programming with young and fragile institutions that will require concentrated assistance for several years.

The performance of the RCF portfolio is stronger in the thematic areas that build on the core mandate of UNDP and its recognized strengths in policy, governance and conflict resolution, and less so in areas such as globalization, HIV/AIDS, and energy and water supply. Other United Nations agencies such as WHO and UNAIDS have better technical capacity on HIV/AIDS; the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development, WTO and the International Trade Centre have a better defined comparative advantage, technical skills and mandates than UNDP in globalization and trade capacity development; and the United Nations Capital Development Fund has skills in economic development programmes to reach the poor. Given scarce resources, including person hours and skills, greater focus of resources on areas where UNDP has a strong comparative advantage may result in a higher level of development impact.

Poor attention to internal monitoring and reporting on results undermines the ability of UNDP to leverage its reputation and knowledge base in promoting development policy with other donors and country governments. Weak monitoring and evaluation systems hamper the ability to assess the level of impact, including in relation to financial and other inputs.

The comparative advantage of the UNDP field presence is undermined by inadequate coordination between the regional programme (managed from New York) and the decentralized country offices, and also between RCF Africa and the RCF for Arab States, which would be required to implement truly pan-African initiatives.

While flexibility is needed in order to continue to respond to emerging needs, a greater focus on selecting and working in partnership with key African institutions would enhance the performance and sustainability of results.

B. LESSONS LEARNED

Focus. RCF Africa II had a stronger impact, both developmentally and on institutional criteria like policy and advocacy, when it responded to the priorities of African stakeholders and built on the comparative strengths and advantages of UNDP. Maximum impact from relatively limited resources comes from focusing on the areas where African priorities and UNDP strengths intersect, such as in governance, conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Partnerships are difficult to develop; dependencies are not. Building a partnership is easier by establishing a direct relationship with local institutions than by working through an executing agency. Capacity development requires a clear assessment of needs, followed by a plan to address those needs. Capacity-building takes time and a long-term commitment. Young and fragile institutions do not have the capacity to manage and mitigate the impact of fluctuating budget and development priorities, and will only develop that capacity through self-management, not by being managed by others.

What gets measured gets done. Responsibility for management cannot be delegated without strong financial and management systems and measures of performance, including an integrated system of reporting, monitoring and evaluation that fills both internal management and external reporting requirements. As initiatives were not required to develop and report on quantitative and qualitative gender-sensitive indicators of performance, integration of gender mainstreaming received only lip service. This is also true for environment, the other cross-cutting dimension.

Weak monitoring and reporting: weak evaluation base. An ex-post evaluation cannot fill the data gaps left by inadequate internal monitoring and reporting. Evaluations build on indicators of achievement, baseline data and continuous monitoring and measurement of progress. Meta-evaluations are only possible if existing evaluations are sufficient in number, coverage and quality.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the recommendations set out below are presented for consideration by RBA.

(a) Maximize African ownership of the regional programme. Greater use of the advisory board should be made, to ensure that the RCF has the capacity to identify and respond to evolving African development challenges and remains firmly anchored in African realities. This would help ensure that institutional and capacity development targets are being achieved. RBA should revise the terms of reference for the advisory board to ensure regular board meetings, and board members should be provided with regular reports on the progress of the framework against agreed gender-sensitive, quantitative and qualitative indicators and changes in the environment. Moreover, this flexibility must take place within the context of, rather than as a substitute for, a long-term strategic plan.

(b) Streamline the focus of the next RCF to a maximum of three clearly defined themes, with fewer outputs and outcomes under each theme. It should continue to focus on the regional priorities of strengthening democratic and participatory governance, conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and disaster management. In addition, RCF resources should be concentrated on capacity-building for a smaller number of larger interventions, linked to existing regional African institutions. Many of the current programmes and activities should be phased out prior to the end of the second RCF. Decisions to allow current projects to be carried over into the next RCF implementation period need to be based on clear, consistent criteria, with a cap of project funding allowed for carry-over – suggested at 25 per cent of RCF total funding.

(c) Improve coordination between regional and country programmes in Africa. This can be achieved by decentralizing two regional Bureau Deputy Directors, with joint responsibility both for the RCF and UNDP country programmes, to locations in Africa. The regional programme in Africa needs to develop the capacity of regional and pan-African institutions to deliver their mandates. Partner institutions need to be provided with financial planning and management tools and training. Maximum responsibility should be transferred to them as a component of overall capacity development and institutional strengthening.

(d) Enhance pan-African synergies through improved information sharing and enhanced cooperation between RBA and the Regional Bureau for the Arab States. Establish a joint UNDP-Africa and Arab States representative office in Addis Ababa for respective accreditation to pan-African institutions such as the African Union and ECA. This would facilitate the participation of North African countries in pan-African activities.

(e) Incorporate gender equality and environment across all interventions. Both should be required in the planning and formulation of future initiatives. Sufficient financial resources for gender mainstreaming and environmental sustainability (in every project) should be allocated for all future projects if gender and environment are to be integrated as cross-cutting themes.

(f) Clarify roles, responsibilities, accountability and reporting structures to implement results-based management effectively. The RCF should adopt an enhanced results-based performance management, measurement and reporting system. Similar performance measurement frameworks, including clear programme-level indicators of achievement, should be developed at the thematic and RCF levels. Project-level reports should be rolled up into thematic and regional programme-level reports, at a minimum annually, for presentation to the advisory board.

(g) Include in project budgets funds explicitly earmarked for monitoring systems, including development of indicators, baseline data, data sources and collection methods, as well as responsibility and timing of collection for the outcomes and impact levels.

Chapter 1

Introduction

In 2004, the Associate Administrator committed UNDP to conduct forward-looking evaluations of the Regional Cooperation Framework (RCF) prior to drafting and submitting a new RCF for the Board's approval. UNDP's Evaluation Office (EO) therefore conducted the evaluation of the second RCF for Africa (RCF Africa II) in September 2006. The terms of reference of this evaluation are provided in Annex A of this report.

A review of the first RCF (1997-2001) for Africa noted that it was making important contributions to developing the capacity of institutions and human resources in the region, and had established partnerships with many government, non-government and private sector organizations as well as with bilateral and multilateral donors. However, it also noted several shortcomings. Key among these was a failure to mobilize the resources required; conceptual and implementation deficiencies, including poorly defined 'areas of concentration'; and a need to improve initiatives to build the capacity of African partners. It recommended that in future the programme should "...serve as a platform for operationalization of the United Nations global mandates..." and be focused on "... a selected number of high priority African regional objectives...", which are more clearly defined in thematic areas with shared outputs, outcomes and indicators in order to promote synergies.¹

In its first regular session of 2002, the Executive Board of UNDP approved RCF Africa II, a US \$171 million programme running from 2002 to 2006. In 2004, during the approval of UNDP's Second Multi Year Funding Framework (MYFF) for 2004-2007, the RCF Africa II budget was dropped to US \$128 million. Subsequently, in 2006, the end date for RCF Africa II was extended to 2007 to align it with the MYFF and the budget was increased by US \$8 million.

The main objectives of this evaluation are to: (a) assess the achievement of the intended organizational goals and development results, highlighting key results of outputs and outcomes, lessons learned and good practices both as they relate to UNDP's specified programme goals and in relation to broader national strategies in the region; (b) assess performance of the RCF and specify the development results achieved in the area of policy advice, capacity development and knowledge management within the core results areas that the regional programme has focused on and also assess the scope and range of strategic partnerships formed; (c) based on actual results, ascertain how the RCF has contributed to strategically positioning UNDP to establish its comparative advantage or niche as a major upstream global policy advisor for poverty reduction and sustainable human development and as a knowledge-based organization in the region; and (d) identify innovative approaches used within the RCF programmed project portfolio, their related outcomes and lessons learned within UNDP and in programme countries.

The key questions addressed by the evaluation related to relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability:

- **Relevance:** Is the strategic focus of RCF support relevant to regional development issues and priorities, as well as to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)?
- **Effectiveness:** To what extent has the RCF attained its intended organizational and development results?
- **Efficiency:** How efficient are the institutional and management arrangements for programming, managing, monitoring and evaluating the regional programmes?
- **Sustainability:** Will benefits continue after major development assistance has been completed?

1. Review of the RCF for Africa, 1997-2001, DP/RRR/RBA/1, 24 July 2000.

The key audiences for this report are the regional programme's 'stakeholders', which include:

- UNDP – including Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA), EO, UNDP country offices, and Bureau of Development Policy (BDP);
- African partners from the public, private and civil society sectors in participating countries;
- regional and sub-regional organizations;
- donors; and
- executing and implementing agencies.²

1.1 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

As stated in the Terms of Reference (see Annex A), EO designed this evaluation to be conducted as a 'meta-evaluation', drawing on the results and conclusions of independent outcome evaluations undertaken during the period of the RCF for each of the regional programmes, and thus largely based on secondary data. The meta-evaluation methodology required the team to review and validate findings and data from existing evaluations (i.e. comprehensive desk review and analysis of outcome and project evaluations and other self assessment reports); conduct selective spot checks, i.e. in-country project visits and consultations with RCF stakeholders on the ground; and triangulate the available data and information.

Following a review of the existing evaluations, the team and the EO agreed that these evaluations did not allow for a proper meta-evaluation as they were uneven in quality and did not represent a fair and

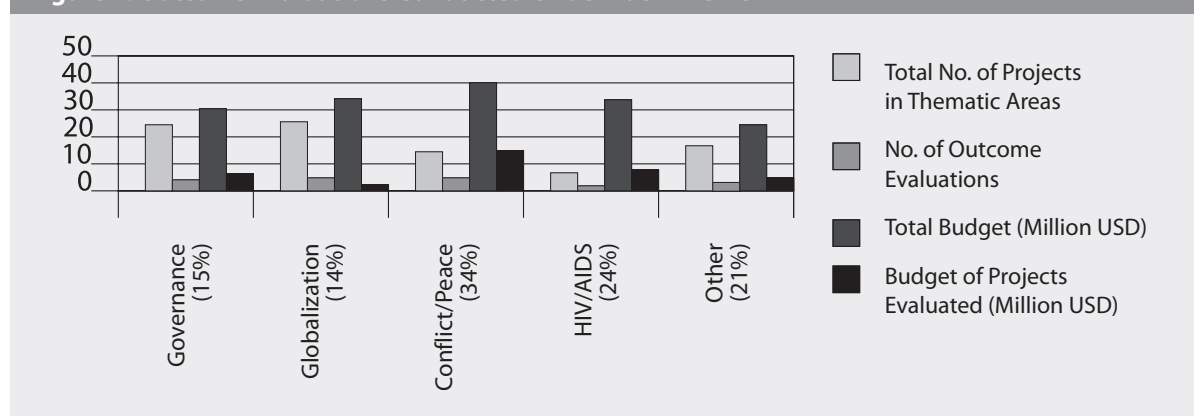
complete picture of either the overall programme or of each theme within the programme. As Figure 1 shows, the outcome evaluations provided are inadequate in terms of their coverage of RCF Africa II – only 13 percent of the number of initiatives and 18 percent of the portfolio value were evaluated. Also, the evaluations were not adequately representative of the thematic areas, covering only 4 percent of globalization initiatives. Six of the projects evaluated were carried over from RCF I and two of the evaluations pre-date the start of the RCF Africa II. Nor did the evaluations capture programme-level results.

Thus, the agreed Evaluation Work Plan, prepared following a preliminary review of key documents and a consultative meeting between the Evaluation Team and UNDP/EO in New York, outlined an alternative approach that relied more heavily on project documents and interviews than was originally intended. As a meta-evaluation was impossible, the evaluators were forced to identify and assess the outputs produced in RCF Africa II practice areas by reviewing the results reported under each of the 55 randomly selected sample projects and then assessing what outcomes resulted from them.³

DOCUMENTATION REVIEW

The EO identified and assembled key reports and reference documents for RCF Africa II and provided the evaluation team with access to project files and documents. In addition, the team received and reviewed numerous other reports and related documents. Annex B contains the most important

Figure 1: Outcome Evaluations Conducted Under Each Theme



2. These stakeholders are itemized in Chapter 2.

3. The Evaluation of UNDP's Regional Cooperation Framework for Arab States (2002-2005) followed a similar approach for the same reasons, see pp. 10 -11. However, given the higher number and variety of initiatives contained in RCF Africa II, it was not possible to use case studies to illustrate programme outcomes.

of the more than 100 documents reviewed by the evaluation team. RCF Africa II project documents were reviewed for 55 of the on-going projects in the RCF Africa II portfolio listed at Annex D.

INTERVIEW OF KEY RESPONDENTS

Additional data to support the analysis was provided by structured and semi-structured interviews and consultations with the list of persons attached as Annex C using the data collection instruments listed in Annex E.

The evaluators interviewed and had focus group discussions with over 150 people including 67 representative of RCF Africa II's beneficiaries (40 representatives of African governments, 19 representatives of regional and sub-regional organizations and 9 representatives of non-governmental organizations – NGOs), six members of the Advisory Board, 15 representatives of non-UNDP executing agencies (UNOPS, UNAIDS, International Finance Corporation, and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development – UNCTAD), five representatives of the Regional Service Centre/SURF, 12 UNDP staff in the field working on RCF Africa II initiatives, members of RBA in New York, 16 persons from HQ, and 32 UNDP country office staff. In addition, 15 representatives of other donors, including the Belgian Development Corporation, Canadian International Development Agency, the European Union and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, were interviewed.

UNDP was responsible for identifying and contacting stakeholders in the countries visited and arranging an interview itinerary for the evaluators. The evaluation team developed semi-structured interview questionnaires that encouraged discussions between the interviewees and the interviewer (see Annex E). The main questionnaire was shortened and targeted for meetings with Trade Ambassadors in Geneva, and the questionnaire was produced in English and French.

SAMPLE SELECTION

During the preliminary phase of the evaluation, a sample of seven countries in Africa and three countries in Europe – Southern Africa, Senegal, Ethiopia, Mali, Kenya, Uganda, Botswana, United

Kingdom, Belgium and Switzerland – was selected by EO in consultation with RBA. Swaziland was added during the mission. (See Annex F for the itinerary of visits.) As shown in Figure 2, these countries are the sites of the project offices for almost 60 percent of the portfolio, by value. In addition, 41 initiatives (50 percent of the portfolio) had activities in the African countries selected. By theme, visits to these sites covered all of the HIV/AIDS initiatives, 67 percent of the conflict prevention and peace-building initiatives, 65 percent of the 'Other' initiatives, 45 percent of the governance initiatives and 26 percent of the globalization initiatives by number of projects, and all of the projects with budgets of more than US \$4 million. The visits also covered five of the executing agencies and all agencies managing more than one project.

In addition to the selected countries, the evaluators visited Brussels and London to meet with donor partners; conducted interviews in Canada with representatives of the Canadian International Development Agency; and were invited to attend a regional strategic conference for the Southern Africa Capacity Initiative (SACI) Project in Swaziland, which allowed them to interact with numerous representatives of programme country governments and UNDP representatives from countries in Southern Africa.

1.2 LIMITATIONS OF THE EVALUATION

While the evaluators are satisfied that the methodology adopted and the data collection exercise conducted are sufficient to support the findings and recommendations laid out in this report, there were several challenges. Establishing a frame of reference for evaluating performance proved difficult. The 'universe of projects to be considered' (see Annex D) was derived from multiple source documents. As noted above, the objectives and budget of RCF Africa II changed in 2004, along with the definition of the 'Other' theme. In addition, many of the organizations involved in oversight and management were restructured during the period covered by the evaluation including the Regional Service Centre/SURFs.

Despite very intensive schedules and great volumes of information collected, the team would have benefited from more time in each country to verify

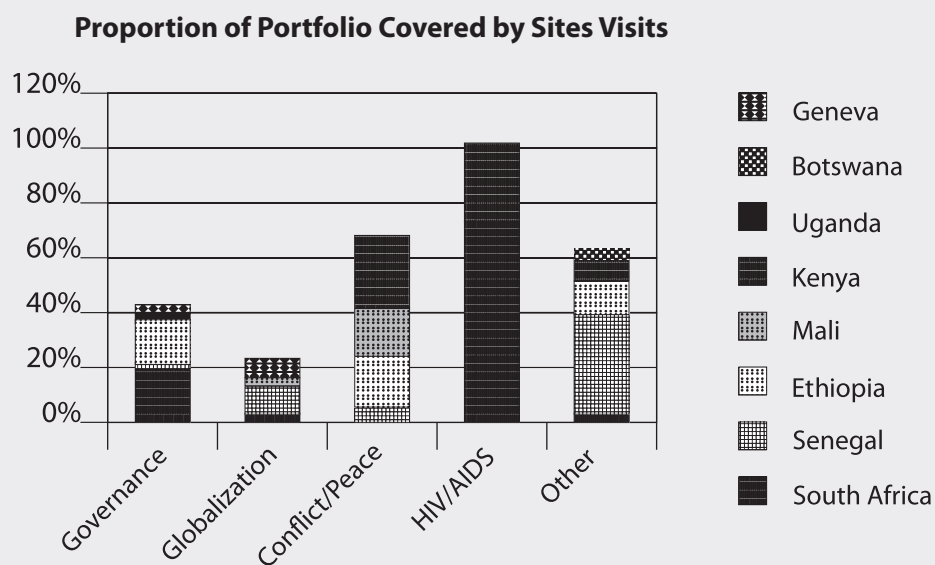
documentary evidence and conduct more extensive triangulating interviews. The evaluation team conducted telephone interviews to compensate.

The RCF Africa II document does not identify the criteria or indicators to be used in measuring programme results. The individual initiatives note their expected contribution to RCF but statements are not consistent. The initiatives also lack defined indicators of how results will be measured, and do not have baseline data. Although RBA introduced a results-oriented tracking system early in the implementation of RCF Africa II, it did not develop consistent results statements or clear and consistent indicators of achievement. As a result, these reports usually cover activities and short-term achievements and are impossible to aggregate in a meaningful fashion at the RCF level. The varied data sources used also make meaningful aggregations difficult.

When those interviewed could not ascertain that the support they received was that provided under RCF Africa II, the results reported could not be attributed to the programme without substantiation, which was often difficult to find. Broad national indicators show progress, but attributing this to UNDP programmes is a problem, as in most cases support from RCF Africa II was not the only influence on events. While triangulation was used to verify and validate findings, naturally there is an element of judgement involved in attributing results at the outcome level without clear documentation of causality.

Following this chapter, Chapter 2 outlines the development context and provides a general factual description of RCF Africa II. Chapter 3 presents the evaluation's findings, and is followed by conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations for the future in Chapter 4.

Figure 2: Portfolio Coverage by Sample Sites



Chapter 2

Background

This chapter describes the development context for UNDP's work in Sub-Saharan Africa, and highlights the progress made on MDG targets. The objectives, financial allocations and current status of RCF Africa II are presented, as well as oversight and management arrangements for the regional programme.

2.1 THE AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

More than two-thirds of Sub-Saharan African countries have had democratic elections since 2000 and *"Most African economies are now better run: inflation, averaging 8 percent a year, is at historic lows in many countries. Last year [2005], Africa's economy grew by almost 5 percent, and is expected to do even better this year and next. There have been welcome advances on debt relief, as well as encouraging initiatives on aid and investment. The world has also recognized HIV/AIDS as a major challenge and a brake on development, and begun to confront it."*⁴

However, Sub-Saharan Africa remains the least developed region of the world and presents the greatest challenge for poverty reduction and sustainable human development. In spite of abundant natural and human resources, between 1975 and 1999, the average gross domestic product per capita in Africa declined by 1 percent annually. Although the last few years have seen an improvement in most countries, many are still below their 1975 levels and current rates for growth are not sufficient to have a significant impact on poverty.⁵

The human development index 2006 shows that out of 177 countries, the bottom 23 countries are all in Sub-Saharan Africa, as are 35 of the 40 countries

with the lowest rankings on the human poverty index. "Since the mid-1970s almost all regions have been progressively increasing their HDI score. ... The major exception is Sub-Saharan Africa. Since 1990 it has stagnated, partly because of economic reversal but principally because of the catastrophic effects of HIV/AIDS on life expectancy. ... Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole has lower life expectancies today than three decades ago."⁶ Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest life expectancies on the planet – 46.1 years, compared to the world average of 67.1. Sub-Saharan Africa has just over 10 percent of the world's population, but is home to 64 percent of the world's HIV positive people. The UNAIDS 2006 Report on the global AIDS epidemic estimated that there were 38.6 million people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide and 24.5 million living in Sub-Saharan Africa, of whom 13.2 million (59 percent) were women aged 15 to 49. The high AIDS-related mortality in Africa is responsible for the estimated 12 million AIDS orphans in Africa compared to 15 million globally.

Sub-Saharan Africa continues to suffer from a 'capacity gap' in the public, private and civil society sectors, making it difficult to manage the increasingly complex and interrelated challenges of social, economic, environmental and political development. Governance issues in all these areas continue to be at the forefront of African development challenges at both the national and regional levels. Progress in creating the strong regional institutions needed to address Africa's problems has been slow, although the launching of the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) are steps in the right direction.⁷

4. Former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's address at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C, October 2006.

5. This is an overview of the region: there are very significant differences between the individual countries.

6. Human Development Report 2006, United Nations Development Programme.

7. The NEPAD strategic framework document arises from a mandate given to the five initiating Heads of State (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and Southern Africa) by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) to develop an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa, which was formally adopted at the 37th Summit of the OAU in July 2001. See Section 3.1.

Uniquely, Sub-Saharan Africa is the only region in the world that is not expected to reach any of its 18 MDG targets according to UN MDG Report 2006. Furthermore, in 11 of the 18 categories the region is classified as showing “...no progress

or a deterioration or reversal.” The following table shows, for selected targets, the baseline for Sub-Saharan Africa from 1990 or 1990/91 compared to the figures from the 2006 Report, which usually date from 2003 or 2003/04.

Table 1: Progress of Sub-Saharan Africa on selected MDG targets ⁸			
Goal	Target	Sub-Saharan Africa	
		Baseline	2006 Report
Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger	Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1 per day	44.6%	44.0%
	Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger	33%	31%
Achieve universal primary education	Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary education (school age children in school)	53%	64%
Promote gender equality and empower women	Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015 (% of girls of primary school age out of school compared to boys)	N/A	42% girls compared to 38% boys
Reduce child mortality	Reduce by two-thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under five mortality rate	185/1000 live births	168/1000 live births
Improve maternal health	Reduce by three-quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality rate	42% assisted deliveries	46% assisted deliveries
Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS (decline in prevalence rates – those infected by HIV/AIDS – as a % of adults aged 15 to 49)	About 2%	About 6%
	Number of new TB cases per 100,000 of population, excluding people who are HIV positive	148	281
Ensure environmental sustainability	Halve by 2015 the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation (% using improved sanitation)	32%	37%
Develop a global partnership for development	In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth (% youth unemployment)	18%	18.3%

8. Indicative excerpts from Progress Charts in the Millennium Development Goal Report 2006, UNDP.

2.2 OBJECTIVES OF RCF AFRICA II

RCF Africa II is designed to eradicate poverty and bring Africa into the mainstream of world development. Its goal is to “...support the consolidation of democracy in Africa, and assist Africans in their struggle for lasting peace, poverty eradication, and sustainable development, thereby bringing Africa into the mainstream of the world economy.”⁹ More specifically, as laid out in UNDP’s MYFF for 2004–2007, the goal is to reduce human poverty and achieve the MDGs. The purpose of RCF Africa II is to:

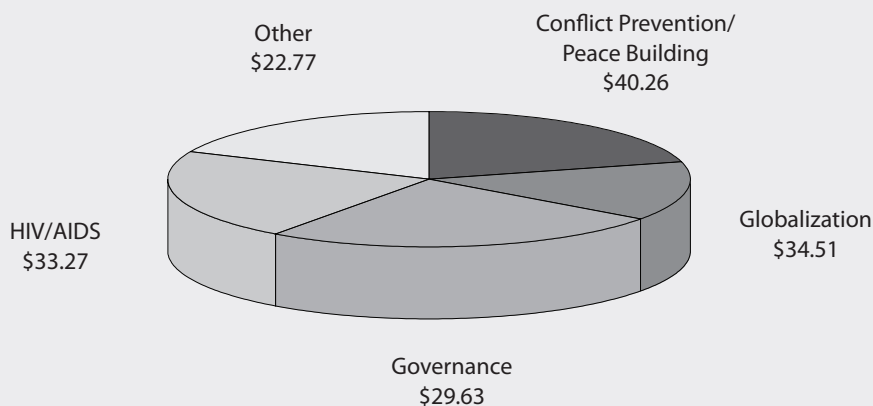
- strengthen democratic and participatory governance;
- make globalization work for Africa;
- prevent conflict, build peace and manage disasters;
- reduce the threat and impact of HIV/AIDS on Africa; and

- manage energy and environment for sustainable development (added in 2004 as part of the MYFF).

Gender equality and addressing environmental concerns are cross-cutting themes that are integrated into all programming according to RCF Africa documents. Figure 3 shows the budget by theme.

RCF Africa II (2002–2006), which was submitted to the UNDP Executive Board in November 2001, states the overall objectives and the outcomes expected from each practice area or ‘theme’, but does not outline what criteria or indicators will be used to measure the achievement of these results.¹⁰ The expected and achieved results of each of the four themes – Democracy and Governance; Globalization; Conflict Prevention, Peace Building and Disaster Management; HIV/AIDS and Other/ Emerging Issues – at the output and outcome levels are discussed in Chapter 3. In 2004, the ‘Other’ theme was redefined to focus on the third strategic goal of the MYFF, “managing energy and environment for sustainable development.”¹¹

Figure 3. RCF Africa Budget by Theme in \$US millions



9. Second Regional Cooperation Framework for Africa (2002–2006), United Nations, DP/RCF/RBA/2, 01-65643 (E) 041201

10. RCF Africa II documents refer to themes, pillars, development dimensions, areas of focus, strategic support areas, etc. The Global Cooperation Framework refers to practice areas. A standard lexicon would be useful.

11. Second MYFF, 2004–2007, United Nations, DP/2003/32, 03-46923 (E) 260803

2.3 CURRENT STATUS

Within RCF Africa II, UNDP has carried forward 28 initiatives from RCF Africa I (of which 16 were closed as of 30 June 2006 and three were to be closed by the end of 2006) and approved support of 53 additional initiatives (of which six were closed and another 10 were to be closed) for a total of 81 initiatives, of which 46 are ongoing in 2007 (see Annex D). These initiatives are in one of five thematic areas:

- strengthening democratic and participatory governance;
- making globalization work for Africa;
- conflict prevention, peace-building and disaster management;
- reducing the threat and impact of HIV/AIDS on Africa; and
- 'other', including energy, water, environment and gender.¹²

Annex D contains a complete list of all the initiatives in the RCF Africa II portfolio, including

data on budgets, amount spent, thematic area, site, status (on-going, closed, to be closed), and executing agency.

2.4 FINANCIAL RESOURCES

At the time it was approved by the Board, the total value of RCF Africa II was estimated at US \$171 million – US \$101 million (59 percent) from UNDP core resources and US \$70 million (41 percent) from government cost sharing, third party cost sharing, trust funds and other sources. Of this amount, as of 30 June 2006, a total of US \$160.4 million (94 percent of the estimated budget) had been committed and US \$97.7 million (61 percent of committed funds) had been spent, leaving a balance of US \$63 million (39 percent of committed funds), as shown in Table 2. UNDP provided US \$86.3 million (53 percent) of the financial resources.¹³

Cost sharing provided US \$32.3 million (20 percent) of funds and other financial contributors to RCF Africa II provided US \$41.8 million (26 percent).¹⁴

Table 2. RCF Africa II Financial Resources 2002-2006

Theme/ Practice Area	No. Of Proj- ects	UNDP TRAC US \$	Cost Sharing US \$	Other US \$	Total Budget US\$	% of total	Spent US \$	% of budget
Gover- nance	23	23,741,654	5,890,013	--	29,631,667	18%	17,537,618	59%
Globaliza- tion	23	18,031,211	7,872,215	8,604,414	34,507,840	21%	23,804,646	69%
Conflict/ Peace	12	17,533,814	8,263,240	14,461,108	40,258,162	25%	26,207,928	65%
HIV/AIDS	6	16,378,553	--	16,892,769	33,271,322	21%	14,590,863	44%
Other	17	10,636,128	10,227,530	1,856,548	22,770,206	14%	15,533,509	67%
Total	81	86,321,360	32,302,998	41,814,839	160,439,197	100%	97,674,564	61%

12. This counts RAF/99/022 and RAF/U22, RAF/01/005 and RAF/01/B05, which are two phases of a project, as one initiative, the three numbered RAF/03/015 as one initiative, and all four initiatives numbered RAF/05/024 as part of one initiative.

13. Source: Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP; figures represent cumulative figures to 30 June 2006, the most recent period for which figures were available. RBA more recently provided some amendments to some of the figures, which are reflected in Annex D. While the evaluators corrected addition errors in the spreadsheet provided by RBA (which should total US\$160,439,197 not US\$160,739,178 as reported) they were unable to verify each number provided. Project briefing documents, for example, often have different budget figures than those provided in the spreadsheet. We have used the figures reported by RBA in the spreadsheet, although one RCF Africa II project, RAF/01/005, was not included in this spreadsheet.

14. They include the United Kingdom's Department for International Development, Belgium, Canadian International Development Agency, Denmark, the European Union, France, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, the Swedish International Development Agency, Switzerland, the International Labour Organization, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations Agency for AIDS, United Nations Capital Development Fund, and United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, according to RBA project documents. The amounts provided by other UN agencies are usually very small.

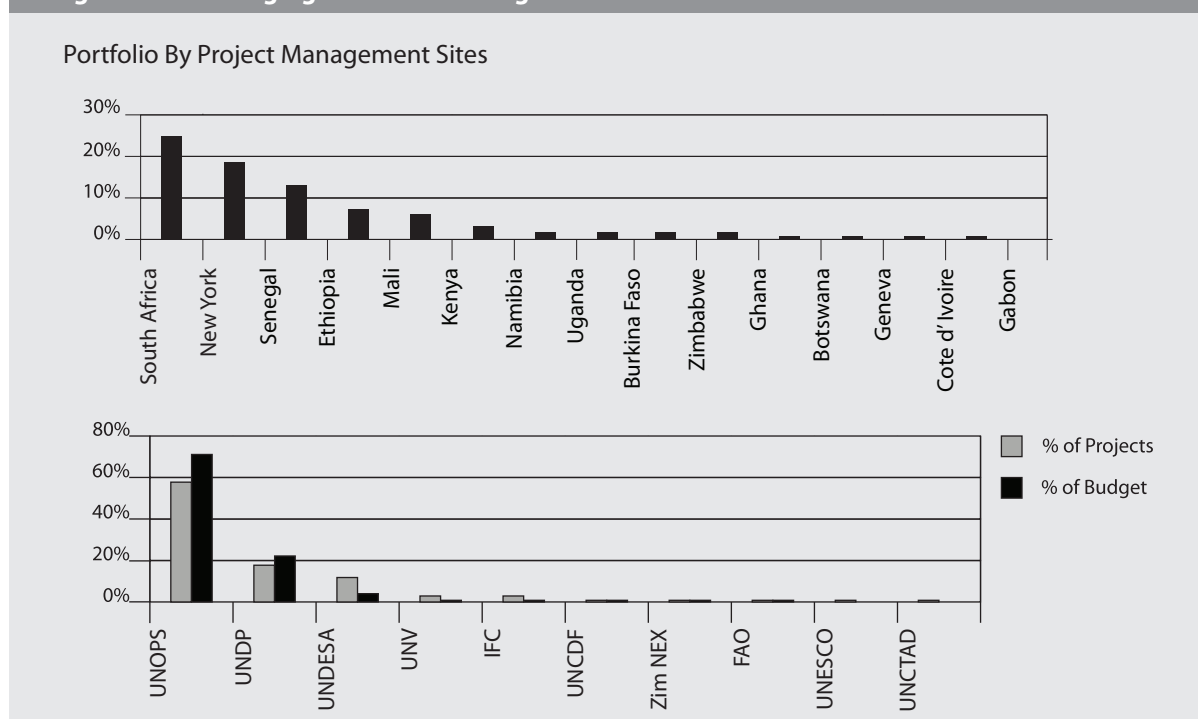
2.5 OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

RCF Africa II is intended to reach all Sub-Saharan Africa countries and has conducted activities in 45 countries; management is complex, with 10 executing agencies and 17 project management sites. RCF Africa II worked in partnership with more than 15 regional organizations including: the Africa 2000 Network, African Futures Institute, African Governance Institute, African Leadership Forum, African Management Services Company, African Millennium Villages Initiative, African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), AU/Organization of African States, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), NEPAD, the Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa, the Regional Centre on Small Arms (Great Lakes) and the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). Figure 4 shows the distribution of initiatives by executing agencies and management sites.

The detailed implementation strategy for RCF Africa II was designed to involve African partners from the public, private and civil society sectors to ensure African ownership, enhance cooperation, and strengthen African institutions in the focus areas. Joint decision-making and mutual accountability were to be ensured by giving all partners clearly defined roles and responsibilities at all stages of the project cycle. The main vehicle for ensuring this participation was a high level Advisory Board of eminent Africans, both men and women, that was established at the beginning of RCF Africa II to provide regular policy guidance and to act as an oversight body intended to help strengthen the relevance and ownership of the activities.

Management of RCF Africa II initiatives was predominately centred in New York with the Strategic and Regional Initiatives Unit (SRIU) within the RBA. The implementation strategy for RCF Africa II called for "...a strategic alliance with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and other United Nations organizations with regard to the execution of programmes under the RCF..."¹⁵ UNOPS was the executing agency for most RCF

Figure 4. Executing Agencies and Management Sites



15. Second Regional Cooperation Framework for Africa (2002-2006), United Nations, DP/RCF/RBA/2, 01-65643 (E) 041201

Africa II initiatives (58 percent of projects and 71 percent of budget), but management was dispersed, with projects being executed by UNOPS, UNDP, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the International Finance Corporation, United Nations Capital Development Fund, UNCTAD, United Nations Volunteers, the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and the UNDP country

office in Zimbabwe. Project offices were based in New York, Washington, Geneva and 14 different African countries.¹⁶

Technical support for RCF Africa II programmes was provided by BDP and the Regional Service Centre in Johannesburg, which was formed through the amalgamation of the former Sub-Regional Facilities (SURFs) in Addis Ababa and Johannesburg, as well as by the SURF in Dakar.

16. The spreadsheet provided by RBA shows that 49 out of the 85 entries are UNOPS executed, or 58%. These initiatives are worth US \$114,128,796 out of a total of US \$160,439,197, or 71%.

Chapter 3

Analysis and Findings

This chapter analyses the key results and outcomes of the regional programme and its contributions to the five themes presented in chapter 1 – democratic and participatory governance; globalization; conflict/prevention, building peace and managing disasters; HIV/AIDS; and energy, gender and environment, and presents major findings. This chapter also presents an assessment of the RCF’s performance against UNDP’s overall programming goals; it examines the RCF’s contribution to strategically positioning UNDP in the region and achieving its institutional objectives of being a global leader in development through advocacy and innovation. Findings on the programme’s relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of results are also presented. Three boxes provide examples of a partnership, coordination with a country office, and capacity development, and a summary by theme of indicative achievements is also presented.

3.1 RELEVANCE

Poverty reduction and sustainable human development are at the heart of RCF Africa II. It is primarily designed to strengthen capacity in Africa to address African problems, including the high-priority challenges of good governance, globalization, peace-building and HIV/AIDS. RCF Africa II aims to add value to, complement and inspire national-level programming under the various country cooperation frameworks. In addition, initiatives under RCF Africa II aim to: 1) meet the programming criteria of the RCF and the Global Cooperation Framework (GCF); 2) respond to the needs and priorities of Africa, as identified by Africa’s leaders in NEPAD (see Box 1); and 3) address the priorities identified in the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs. The relevance of RCF Africa II was reviewed against these three criteria.

RCF Africa II is aligned with the strategic goals of UNDP’s MYFF 2004–2007, particularly in the areas of poverty reduction and democratic governance, but also in crisis prevention and gender mainstreaming and, to a lesser extent, in energy and the environment. In terms of UNDP’s GCF – which allows UNDP global programmes and policy support to be integrated through closer vertical integration and linking of country, regional and global programmes to reinforce major policy shifts¹⁷ – the evaluation of the second GCF found that the thematic areas of support for RCF Africa II are in line with GCF principles and its practice areas, as shown in Table 3 below. However, as discussed below under partnerships and synergies, coordination with country programmes was more problematic.

SUPPORTING NEPAD

The evaluation found that RCF Africa II is also well aligned to regional development priorities and to the issues that African leaders have identified in NEPAD as critical for the region’s development. In addition to being well aligned to the African priorities of good governance, economic development, conflict prevention and peace-building, the themes of the RCF address problems with trans-boundary implications, in which joint action and greater regional integration and coordination can add value.

NEPAD’s objectives include eradicating poverty, which is the overall objective of RCF Africa II; and “...to place African countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development and to halt the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process and enhance its full and beneficial integration into the global economy...”, which corresponds to the objectives of the ‘Globalization’ theme of RCF Africa II.

17. Evaluation of the Second Global Cooperation Framework of UNDP, UNDP Evaluation Office, 2004.

NEPAD's principles include "Good governance as a basic requirement for peace, security and sustainable political and socio-economic development...", which corresponds with several themes in RCF Africa II, namely democratic governance, and conflict prevention and peace-building. RCF

Africa II can also contribute to the "Acceleration of regional and continental integration..." and to "...ensuring that all partnerships with NEPAD are linked to the Millennium Development Goals and other agreed development goals and targets."¹⁹

Table 3. GCF II and RCF Africa9II¹⁸

GCF II	RCF II Africa
Analysis and Advocacy	
Global advocacy and analysis	Advocacy
Policy advice and support	Policy advice and support
Knowledge networking	Networking for building on shared experience, knowledge and best practice
GCF II	RCF II Africa
Practice and Cross-Cutting Areas	
Poverty	Poverty reduction and sustainable development
Energy and environment	Managing energy and the environment
Democratic governance	Strengthening democratic and participatory governance
HIV/AIDS	Reducing the threat and impact of HIV/AIDS
Gender	Integrating gender as a cross-cutting issue
Information and communication technology	Not stated as an objective of RCF Africa II but addressed by RAF/97/021 Internet Initiative for Africa, RAF/01/003 African IT Initiative
Capacity development	Strengthening and enhancing capacities

Box 1. Partnership with NEPAD

NEPAD is an integrated socio-economic development framework for Africa that was developed and adopted by the Organization of African Unity in July 2001. In late 2002, RCF Africa II approved support to establish the NEPAD Secretariat, develop a five-year strategic plan for NEPAD's operations, and support outreach activities including the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). The support period, February 2003-April 2004, was later extended for another year and the total funding was US \$3.5 million, with US \$1.9 million from UNDP. UNOPS was the Executing Agency and the Development Bank of Southern Africa was the local implementing agency.

In the view of a 2005 evaluation, while the project achieved full beneficiary buy-in, the lack of any effective role for UNOPS/UNDP and the donors in the management decisions and oversight of the project prevented a meaningful partnership. The evaluation noted that the impact of the project was not properly defined and project management was weak; there were no formal written project reports or planning documents and financial figures were delivered so late that they served only to confirm the past. The evaluation stated that while many activities created desired outputs, these were not utilized, were incomplete or were not sufficiently coordinated to produce the expected outcomes.

However, the APRM component took off more quickly than expected; many donors diverted their attention to it and the project devoted a larger amount of resources to the establishment of a separate APRM Secretariat and Trust Fund.

Following a change in Chief Executive Officer in August 2005, NEPAD has tried to re-establish and re-confirm its inter-agency links to the ECA and AU. The operational links between ECA and NEPAD were formalized in a Memorandum of Understanding in the fall of 2006. Discussions are on-going with UNDP's regional programme regarding a follow-up project that will likely involve technical assistance for capacity development purposes.

18. Ibid, p. 7, and Second Regional Cooperation Framework for Africa (2002-2006), United Nations, DP/RCF/RBA/2, 01-65643 (E) 041201, p. 5, Objectives, strategic areas of support and expected results

19. <http://www.nepad.org/2005/files/>

ADDRESSING THE MDGs

UNDP promotes and incorporates MDGs in all programming. At the time RCF Africa II was conceived, MDGs had not been fully formulated and adopted. In 2004/05 however, during the second MYFF 2004-2007, RCF Africa II was reoriented to better align its expected outcomes with MDGs.

There is a clear conceptual link between the initiatives supported by RCF Africa II and MDGs, through support to governance, equitable distribution of the benefits of globalization, and conflict resolution. RCF Africa II initiatives help foster an environment in which MDGs can be more readily realized, as shown in Table 4.

In addition, RCF II has supported training for Sub-Saharan African governments on pro-poor economic policies and on integrating the MDGs into planning and reporting. According to RBA, "...largely as a result of interventions under RCF II, at least 40 of the 44 RBA countries have put in place MDG-based processes by December 31st 2006."²⁰

However, the further we move along the results chain toward MDGs, the longer it takes to have an impact, and the more difficult attribution becomes. RCF Africa II spends on average US \$21.7 million per year in Sub-Saharan Africa. By comparison, the average annual expenditures of UNDP in Sub-Saharan Africa during the period totalled US \$510.8 million and annual Official Development Assistance (ODA) flows to Sub-Saharan Africa were around US \$22.5 billion.²¹ As most ODA is now aligned around MDGs, it is promoting generally the same objectives as RCF Africa II.²²

Relatively speaking, RCF Africa II's contribution to achieving these objectives is very modest in monetary terms. Nonetheless, RCF Africa II is most likely contributing to the achievement of MDGs. However, it is too early to see an impact at this level as MDGs were incorporated as objectives only in 2004. In addition, although the programme documents now link RCF Africa II outcomes to MDGs, currently RCF Africa II reports focus on project results at the output level, and only in some instances at the outcome level, without much effort to monitor and link these results to the objectives of the thematic area, RCF Africa II, MYFF or MDGs.

Table 4: RCF Africa II and the MDGs	
MDGs	Goals of RCF Africa II
Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger	Poverty reduction and sustainable development
Achievement of universal primary education	
Promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women	Integration of gender as a cross-cutting issue
Reduction of child mortality	
Improvement in maternal health	
Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases	Reducing the threat and impact of HIV/AIDS
Ensuring environmental sustainability	Managing energy and the environment
Developing a global partnership for development	Making globalization work for Africa

20. RBA, March 2007. Note, however, that the World Bank Group, among others, also works with countries to integrate the MDGs into national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers.

21. UNDP, RBA and Human Development Report 2006.

22. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Ownership, Harmonization, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability, March 2005, which follows up on the Rome Declaration on Harmonization (2003), Marrakech Roundtable on Managing for Development Results (2003) and the Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development (2002). All confirm the convergence of key donor countries and organizations (including the United Nations Development Programme) along with developing countries, to harmonizing ODA around the achievement of MDGs.

3.2 EFFECTIVENESS

The evaluation reviewed the effectiveness of RCF Africa II in achieving both its organizational and developmental objectives. The organizational or institutional criteria include: policy advice and advocacy, partnerships and synergies, coordination with other initiatives and capacity development. Effectiveness in achieving organizational objectives is discussed in the next section, followed by a discussion of development results under each of the thematic areas.

POLICY ADVICE AND ADVOCACY

RCF Africa II funded meetings, workshops, conferences or forums on various issues including conflict management, public sector ethics, reinventing government in Africa, and human rights. Capitalizing on UNDP's reputation for political neutrality, RCF Africa II was successful in supporting workshops or conferences on sensitive issues in a very timely fashion. The ability to respond to emerging needs is one of the strengths of the programme, but may impose high transaction costs in terms of the time and effort required to organize activities such as multinational seminars and workshops. This makes strategic selection of partners and initiatives critical in order to maximize policy and advocacy influence.

Policy advocacy can be sensitive at the national level, and thus addressing issues regionally helps move the discussion away from national sensitivities. In addition, a regional programme can be very valuable in bringing partners from throughout Africa together in forums that allow them to share best practices and lessons learned. These forums build relationships and confidence between groups and permit the development of joint plans of action to address trans-boundary issues.

This is particularly important for countries that otherwise have little access to ODA resources or have a long history of not interacting with each other.

In some cases periodic follow-up meetings have resulted in peer pressure to either participate or progress. As one government representative said: "No minister wants to be the only one with nothing to report." At times the events are catalysts for further action. For example, the Regional Centre on Small Arms has coordinated training workshops for the police, military and customs officers responsible for enforcing laws to prevent the proliferation and cross-border movement of small arms in the Great Lakes region. These workshops allowed key line staff to get to know each other and develop friendships and trust, and they now call their counterparts in other countries to discuss and take joint action on problems.

UNDP is seen as politically neutral, has a presence throughout Africa even in the so-called 'fragile' states, and has a unique 'convening authority' at both a country and regional level, all of which create for it a position of influence and leverage. RCF Africa II is working in areas – democratic governance, globalization and conflict resolution/peace-building – in which UNDP's presence throughout Africa, along with its reputation and stature, gives it a natural and viable role to play, and RCF Africa II's initiatives are having policy and advocacy impacts. In addition, the programme has supported analysis and advocacy-level activities through a variety of initiatives such as studies, regional workshops and conferences, and promoting improved human development reports. Table 5 below shows specific initiatives supported by RCF Africa II that were designed to support UNDP's global analysis and advocacy objectives.²³

23. Note that workshops on the cross-cutting gender theme were conducted under the Gender Mainstreaming project and are discussed below.

Table 5. RCF Africa II Analysis and Advocacy Initiatives		
Analysis and Advocacy Areas	RCF II Africa Initiatives	June 2006 US \$ Spent
Programme preparation/review	RAF/95/015 Programme preparation and review	\$408,183
	RAF/03/001 Trade and Investment Promotion SPPD for Project RAF/04/006	\$152,517
Conferences, workshops and forums	RAF/97/001 SADC Round Table on Water Resources	\$284,707
	RAF/03/010 Conflict Management	\$229,897
	RAF/03/017 Public Sector Ethics	\$173,315
	RAF/04/010 Support to Round Table Conferences	\$131,267
	RAF/05/022 Forum Reinventing Government in Africa	\$93,324
	RAF/05/014 Bamako Symposium	\$125,000
	RAF/05/017 Sixth African Governance Forum	
	RAF/05/022 Global Forum on Reinventing Government Trust	\$0
Studies	RAF/97/021 National Long Term Studies	\$1,097,064
	RAF/01/001 National Long Term Studies War Torn Countries	\$583,527
	RAF/02/016 National Long Term Studies Transition Phase	\$1,936,393
	RAF/02/020 Higher Quality National Human Development Reports	\$498,082
	RAF/04/003 African Governance Inventory	\$242,239

PARTNERSHIPS AND SYNERGIES

Partnerships with African organizations including “...public, private and civil society sectors ... and interregional institutions”, was seen to be a strategy for “...optimizing African ownership...”²⁴ In addition, the approach would create synergy by capitalizing on the joint efforts and resources of UNDP and other organizations addressing the same development problems.

RCF Africa II supports some of the most important African initiatives and institutions, including AU, NEPAD (see Box 1), and APRM.²⁵ By partnering with and providing capacity development for key

African institutions, UNDP is supporting NEPAD’s vision that African leaders will be at the forefront of new efforts to address the challenges facing the African continent. RCF Africa II has worked with 15 main regional partners (see list in section 2.5), all of which are also being funded by other donors. In some cases the partnerships have encountered difficulties, as shown in Box 1.

In addition to selecting key African partners (as discussed below) RCF Africa II was successful in mobilizing resources from a variety of development partners (see list in section 2.5).

24. Submission to the UNDP Executive Board, November 2001, Second Regional Cooperation Framework for Africa, 2002-2006, pp. 7-8.

25. The APRM is a collective self-monitoring mechanism acceded to by the member states of the AU to ensure that the policies and practices of participating states conform to agreed political, economic and corporate governance values, codes and standards.

COORDINATION WITH OTHER INITIATIVES

RCF Africa II was also to coordinate its efforts with UNDP country offices and with other donors in order to leverage the efforts and resources of UNDP. RCF Africa II was successful in mobilizing resources from other donors (see section 3.3), raising US \$74.1 million. Unfortunately, this strategic advantage is being undermined by several problems:

- lack of coordination between UNDP regional and country programmes;
- lack of coordination between regional programming in North Africa, which is under the RCF for Arab States, and Sub-Saharan Africa, which is under the RCF for Africa;²⁶ and
- lack of field-level representation for the regional programme resulting in poor linkages with other donor harmonization efforts.

Some bilateral partners expressed increasing frustration with UNDP's lack of attention to internal monitoring and reporting on results, and felt that

UNDP tends to operate independently of established donor coordination processes and structures. In addition, weak liaison with UNDP country offices is also a problem, as illustrated in Box 2.

The evaluation team found, as did the team responsible for the evaluation of UNDP's Regional Cooperation Framework for Arab States (2002-2005), that the regional bureau clearly "...operates on two parallel tracks, with very little coordination or communication between the country programmes and regional programmes."²⁷

Many country office staff members and programme country government officials whom the evaluation team met stated that they were not consulted or involved in either the design of RCF Africa II or of its individual initiatives. RCF Africa II and its individual projects were seen as emanating from UNDP Headquarters, and neither the countries nor the country offices understood how to access RCF Africa II programmes or resources in order to participate or conduct complementary activities. Country offices noted that it was difficult for them

Box 2. Coordination Between RCF Africa II and a Country Office

In 1997, RCF I approved support to the SADC Water Sector Secretariat, which focused on building capacity to enable the SADC Water Sector Coordination Unit (WSCU) to effectively manage the five-year Regional Strategic Action Plan on Integrated Water Resources Management (RSAP-IWRM) 1999-2004. Continued support was approved under RCF Africa II (RAF 02/008) and UNOPS was asked to manage US \$600,000 largely to contract a Water Management Specialist to be attached to WSCU from June 2003 till the end of May 2006. In the first half of 2003, WSCU was relocated to the SADC head office in Gaborone (Botswana) and reconstituted as the Water Division (WD).

The RCF-funded Water Management Specialist assumed, on behalf of the regional programme, the role of Regional Water Sector Donor Coordinator. This role included helping to formulate elements of the new RSAP-IWRM 2005-2010, which has engaged 22 donors (including UNDP/GEF and UNEP) and accumulated pledges of about US \$98 million. However, both the Water Management Specialist and RCF management grew impatient with SADC's unfulfilled promises to staff the required number of indeterminate positions in the WD, and in light of reluctance to commit to a project extension, the Water Management Specialist resigned from his position in December 2005.

The UNDP country office in Botswana was then forced by circumstances to assume the role of interim Regional Water Sector Donor Coordinator on behalf of the regional programme. The country office expressed concern that it was not conversant with the situation and had not been assigned a formal management and supervisory function. Eventually, the country office relinquished donor coordination to Germany (GTZ) following the termination of the RCF project. GTZ has more recently initiated staffing and job classification studies that will hopefully lead to measures to stem the negative trend in staff retention experienced since the move to Gaborone in 2003.

26. The AU is the most important of the partners covering the whole of Africa - North African as well as Sub-Saharan Countries - and the division of African countries within UNDP between Africa and Arab States creates problems in integrating programmes of support within two uncoordinated RCFs.

27. Evaluation of UNDP's Regional Cooperation Framework for the Arab States (2002 - 2005), pp.42, 43.

to support activities in their respective countries that came out of regional conferences, seminars etc. if they only learned of these activities when they were asked to find participants for them and to organize logistics.

RBA/SRIU (see organization chart in Annex H) expressed similar frustrations with country offices, noting that the latter did not understand the parameters of the regional programme and tried to get funding for inappropriate activities. The lack of communication between the regional programme and country offices has made it difficult for the latter to coordinate regional projects with their in-country programming. It has also created problems in cases (for example, support to the SADC Water Sector) where regional activities require support at the country level. In addition, it has resulted in missed opportunities for leverage, for example, UNDP country office staff working on peace-building in northern Uganda could have been usefully linked to lessons learned and best practices emerging from the support to peace-building programme in the Great Lakes.

Given the lack of communication between the regional programme and the country offices, and the lack of designated representation or decision-making authority on RCF programming at the country office level, coordination among donors in the field for RCF Africa II has been limited. And typically, much of donor coordination effectively takes place in the field. Although UNDP has a strong field presence in most African countries through country offices, there is no 'voice' for the regional programme in most countries and therefore no channel to communicate the content, results and lessons learned from the regional programme within the respective donor community. This undermines UNDP's credibility as a coordinator of regional activities among donors and limits RCF Africa II's channels for sharing knowledge and experiences with other donors. The lack of communication and coordination between the country

and regional programmes also limits the ability of UNDP to leverage its reputation and knowledge base in promoting development policy with other donors and with country governments. The fact that most regional activities receive central directions from SRIU in New York does not help to overcome these coordination problems.²⁸

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

In line with both GCF and evolving UNDP policy and programming, capacity development is the underpinning of RCF Africa II interventions. By virtue of the regional level of its interventions, while RCF Africa II's main partners for capacity development are regional institutions, RCF Africa II capacity development targets both regional institutions (like the AU), and government officials from individual Sub-Saharan African countries (for example, the trade ambassadors in Geneva). UNDP endorses effective capacity development principles and practices and recognizes that capacity development is a long process that "...eludes delivery pressures, quick fixes and the search for short-term results."²⁹ However, RCF Africa II has only a four or five year horizon, and many of its initiatives are approved for a short duration – the institutional development support to NEPAD, for example, was approved for a period of 14 months. Although this was extended for an additional year, and extensions are fairly common, this sort of short-term support is contrary to UNDP's capacity development principles.

RCF Africa II's capacity development efforts face the additional challenges of: assessing institutional capacities; establishing and monitoring institutional capacity milestones; evaluating achievement of institutional capacity development efforts; designing and following realistic implementation strategies including appropriate exit strategies; and reinforcing local and institutional ownership to create the basis for sustainability.³⁰

28. The lack of coordination is being addressed by the UNDP and United Nations reform processes: "UNDP has to be an integrating organization, a strategic organization that helps integrate the activities of the United Nations Funds, Programmes, and specialized agencies at the county-level." Kemal Dervis, to the Executive Board, January 2007.

29. UNDP and Earthscan, 'Ownership, Leadership and Transformation: Can We Do Better for Capacity Development? 2003

30. The International Development Research Centre (IDRC), for example, has created a framework for institutional assessment that can be used to create baseline and timeline information on institutions that allows comparisons and benchmarking, 'Organizational Assessment: A Framework of Improving Performance', IDRC with IADB, 2002.

In some cases, such as the addition of small arms control to ECOWAS, it is not clear that UNDP properly assessed the capacity, mandate or priorities of the institution prior to implementation (see Box 3).

DEVELOPMENTAL RESULTS

RCF Africa II is a complex programme comprising 81 initiatives in five thematic areas. With that number and variety of programmes, it proved impossible to follow the example of the evaluation of the RCF for Arab States, which used seven representative case studies to illustrate development results. Results at the output and outcome levels have been defined for each of the thematic areas, and although indicators of achievement were neither defined nor tracked, the evaluators used project documents, supplemented with interviews in New York and the field, to identify achievements for each of these results statements. In the absence of clear and consistent data, these results are not

exhaustive but are a series of brief snapshots that are indicative of the progress of RCF Africa II toward its intended development results.

DEMOCRATIC AND PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE

Overall, progress has been in the desired direction during the life of RCF Africa II. There are clear indications that the initiatives supported by RCF Africa II are contributing to the achievement of the desired programme-level results in the ‘strengthening democratic and participatory governance’ thematic area. Table 6 shows that for each of the target outputs of the democracy and governance theme – improved accountability, improved effectiveness of parliamentary systems, rule of law, participation of civil society, sustainable development, and enhanced gender equity – the initiatives that have been designed and implemented are producing relevant results.

Box 3. Capacity Development Lessons Learned

The Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED) was initiated in 1999 under RCF I and terminated at the end of 2004 under RCF Africa II. PCASED was established to “Assist Member States of ECOWAS in their collective efforts to address the security and development problems associated with the proliferation and widespread availability of small arms and light weapons in the sub-region.” RCF supported PCASED through the ECOWAS Secretariat in Abuja and a project management unit was set up in Bamako under the arm’s length supervision of the ECOWAS Secretariat. The Secretariat was at that time a fledgling organization with limited capacity to carry out its mandate of economic coordination in West Africa and without the resources to take on coordinating a small arms programme. PCASED made no provision for building the capacity of the Secretariat to rectify this situation.

The PCASED management unit established in Bamako had near total autonomy in most of its functions including recruiting and remuneration packages. PCASED was so geographically and structurally remote from the Secretariat that some states in West Africa thought that PCASED was a Malian programme for combating small arms proliferation. This limited PCASED’s credibility as a source of capacity development for the member states. UNDP offices in the countries concerned were not in a position to offer support due to limited consultation among the offices. All these elements hindered the development of the Secretariat’s long-term capacity to manage a small arms control programme and militated against a possible eventual transition to the Secretariat.

In 2004, PCASED was terminated and in 2005, it was replaced by the ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme, which incorporated lessons learned that led to several changes including:

- provision for capacity-building of ECOWAS and of the national arms control commissions;
- definition of the roles and responsibilities of the actors;
- delegation of the responsibility for human resources management in line with ECOWAS terms and conditions of employment; and
- a clear transition plan to hand over management of the small arms programme to the Secretariat.

Table 6. Indicators and Examples of Output Results – Democratic Governance Theme	
Target Outputs	Indicative Achievements to Date
Improved accountability of public administration systems	<p>RAF/02/17 African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) base documents, including objectives, standards, criteria, indicators, organization, process guidelines and Memorandum of Understanding.</p> <p>RAF/05/017 High level stakeholders workshop, national consultations, national reports on challenges and opportunities, Steering Committee, Governance Forum, sharing of experiences and information.</p> <p>RAF/05/018 Preparation of Country Background Papers, participation in Country Support and Country Review Missions, Country Reports.</p> <p>RAF/04/004 Sixteen countries that have acceded to APRM are to be supported in implementation.</p>
Improved effectiveness of parliamentary systems and their ability to interact with other branches of government and civil society	<p>RAF/02/002 and RAF/05/021 are developing capacity in AU, which has led to the adoption of an AU Strategic Plan for 2004-07.</p> <p>RAF/99/002 and RAF/05/022 Twenty-four national electronic databases on governance programmes and projects in Africa contain over 1000 initiatives; an Africa Governance Portal provides information; guidelines, training, etc. on database management and information are being developed.</p> <p>RAF/03/017 Public Service Ethics Study and African Charter for the Public Service disseminated and promoted to senior government officials.</p> <p>RAF/04/001 Stocktaking of leadership training initiatives and lessons learned in Nigeria, and others in progress.</p>
Rule of law upheld by creating efficient legal and judicial sectors capable of protecting and promoting human rights and development	<p>RAF/02/021 Training and workshops held to promote greater understanding and awareness of international human rights standards (e.g. CEDAW) for government, civil society and United Nations field staff; Swaziland incorporates human rights standards in its new constitution; regional website created.</p> <p>RAF/05/004 has increased the ratification of human rights instruments by African States and has increased the awareness and capacity of government and civil society.</p>
More effective participation of civil society organizations starting with decentralized local communities as building blocks of development planning and management	RAF/96/012 African Governance Forum provides a platform for governments, civil society, NGOs and external partners to discuss and build consensus around pivotal issues for the advancement of good governance.
Better gender balance	RAF/02/012 African Women's Governance and Peace Forum recommended that an Observatory for Women's Rights be set up by AU and ECA.
Sustainable development frameworks in place in most countries and cross-boundary water and energy resources managed more effectively	RAF/03/013 ECOWAS White Paper on increasing access to energy services approved by ECOWAS Heads of State and is being used to engage financing and donors; Member States approve guidelines on the development of MDG-based energy access strategies; costing

These initiatives are also producing higher level results, although attribution at this level becomes more difficult. For example, while more countries have democratically elected governments and the Forum of Former African Heads of State, which is supported by RCF Africa II, is working to promote and consolidate democratic governance in Africa, it is not easy to establish a causal link between the two as the Forum of Former African Heads of State is only one influence on the progress toward greater democratic governance in Africa.

Support to the APRM has led to the development of an organization and a process that has enabled peer reviews to be conducted for a few countries. The governments of Kenya and Ghana have received their APRM findings, and the Government of Ghana has taken action by setting up a Ministry to address the problem of weak gender equity noted by their peer review. While this result is highly desirable, and a direct link can be made between the results and APRM, RCF Africa II is not the only supporter of APRM and it is difficult to know how much of the desired outcome is due to RCF Africa II's support.³¹

GLOBALIZATION

With the globalization theme, as with democracy and governance, general progress is in the right direction, but attribution to RCF Africa II poses problems. Africa's improved economic performance over the last five years owes a great deal to the expansion of global demand. Improved economic policies and enabling environments, including RCF Africa II support for trade policy formulation, have assisted many African countries, as have higher levels of foreign direct investment in Africa and debt relief. Although growth needs to be much higher in most countries to achieve MDGs, inflation is low and increased oil prices have not devastated oil importers.³²

As Table 7 on the opposite page shows, there are RCF Africa II initiatives working and producing outputs for each of the objectives set for the globalization theme.³³ However, there are many factors influencing the improved economic performance of Sub-Saharan Africa in the world economy; evidence showed that RCF Africa II programming has assisted in this improvement, but it is not clear how much can be attributed to the programme. Analysis and studies along with capacity development efforts for governments have supported improvements in enabling environments, policies and negotiating positions.³⁴

31. A comprehensive review of legislative and regulatory changes effected in each of the Sub-Saharan Africa countries was outside the scope of this evaluation, but where RCF Africa II may have influenced national policies, such as in Nigeria, Swaziland, Kenya and Ghana, these are noted.

32. Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, 1: 2004 "Ending Africa's Poverty Track," Jeffrey Sachs, et al.

33. With the exception of the two projects targeting ICT: RAF/97/021 and RAF/01/003.

34. Other multi-lateral initiatives working on bringing Africa into the mainstream of the world economy include the Integrated Framework for Least-Developed Countries, Trade Development supported by the International Monetary Fund, ITC, UNCTAD, UNDP, World Bank and the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Joint Integrated Trade Assistance Programme, which mobilizes the expertise and support of the WTO, UNCTAD and the ITC to help African country partners benefit from the new Multilateral Trading System, and the Tokyo International Conference on African Development, which receives some support from RCF Africa II.

Table 7. Indicators and Examples of Output Results - Globalization Theme	
Target Outputs	Indicative Achievements to Date
Established network of national and sub-regional trainers and institutions knowledgeable in regional and global trade rules and their implications	RAF/97/029 Training activities and studies funded by RCF and other donors as well as funding of staff salaries are assisting the Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa (OHADA) to create an enabling environment for greater economic development in the West and Central African OHADA member states.
Increased capacity for trade negotiations based on regional or sub-regional negotiating platforms	RAF/04/006 created research/studies and common positions in African sub-regional economic groupings, a commodity institutional framework, and enhanced capacity of government and private sector to benefit trade; developed and got agreement/commitment to the Tunis Roadmap and work plan for post-July 2004 negotiations, the Cairo Roadmap embodying the African position on the Doha Work Programme, the Arusha Declaration and Plan of Action on African Commodities, the Arusha Development Benchmarks for the 6th WTO Ministerial Meeting.
Improved capacity of national governments and inter-governmental organizations to formulate effective trade and investment strategies and policies	RAF/02/015 has conducted a sub-regional meeting related to the mobility of business persons (including the gendered aspects) and studies related to trade and investment opportunities in the Central African States. RAF/99/006 and RAF/03/003 have built the capacity of African corporations (management, corporate governance), allowing them to grow and attract capital, including, hopefully, direct foreign investment.
Methodologies and tracking indicators tested and developed for better integration of poverty reduction and equity into economic policy formulation	RAF/02/004 Diagnosis of information systems and institutional arrangements, and design and dissemination of standardized data collection undertaken; analysis and reporting instruments have been completed and technical assistance has been provided to the national statistical services of participating Francophone countries to enable them to integrate poverty reduction and equity, including gender equity, into economic policy formulation.
Increased capacity of national information and communication technology (ICT) policy formulation and rural connectivity initiated through selected pilot programmes	RAF/97/021 Internet Initiative for Africa and RAF/01/003 African IT Initiative are addressing ICT issues, but the evaluators were unable to assess impact on ICT policy formulation or rural connectivity.
Higher levels of women's participation in programmes and positive impact on women living in poverty	RAF/01/005 supported an increase of 128,403 in the number of microfinance clients in the region, 80% of whom are women. RAF/02/012 convened a Round Table on Economic Empowerment of African Women Through Poles of Convergence and developed a subsequent implementation plan.
Environmental concerns effectively addressed in programmes	RAF/99/021 has conducted research on sustainable development of products such as mushrooms and seaweed and promoted their production, consumption and export for income generation (mainly for women).
Regional capacities to sustain action on immediate objectives strengthened	RAF/02/006 programmes implemented in 17 countries and over 4000 enterprises assisted; 360 new entrepreneurs trained; export and investment development assistance provided to 4 countries; 40 SMEs' capacity developed to access new markets.

Clearly, the trend is in the desired direction, but establishing clear links between RCF Africa II and overall positive economic outcomes proved very difficult. For example, RCF Africa II was praised for the flexible and responsive support provided to African ministers and African WTO negotiators in Geneva preparing for WTO meetings, and for support to institutions like the Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa and SADC. It is likely that the capacity development work with African partners in government, regional institutions and the civil and private sectors helped bring Africa into the world economy and decrease its marginalization. However, data to demonstrate the extent of RCF Africa II influence and to support attribution to RCF Africa II are lacking. In addition, some donors stated that the interesting and compelling aspect of the trade project was that RCF Africa II made an effort to link the trade agenda to poverty alleviation and the MDGs. However, these donors also expressed disappointment with the actual implementation, which followed a traditional approach of focusing on macro aspects of central trade negotiations and made virtually no progress on addressing the issue of how to link trade to the micro aspects of poverty alleviation and achieving MDGs.

CONFLICT PREVENTION, PEACE-BUILDING AND DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

In spite of ongoing and emerging challenges, RCF Africa II is contributing directly to African efforts to prevent conflicts and build peace, and several initiatives under RCF Africa II are working to produce the results to “...reduce the incidence and recurrence of conflict...” and “...increase the effectiveness of peace-building and recovery efforts...”. Work with ECOWAS and the Regional Centre on Small Arms Control (for the Great Lakes) has been critical in getting national commissions established in the 13 ECOWAS countries and legally binding protocols on small arms proliferation signed by all 12 Great Lakes countries. In Uganda and Kenya, national plans have been approved to implement the signed protocol. The Peace and Security Directorate of the AU is a key partner, and capacity development efforts with this directorate, including providing analysts, has been critical in allowing it to function. Again, however, these high profile institutions enjoy support from several other donors.

RCF Africa II initiatives are producing results for each of the desired outputs under conflict prevention, peace-building and disaster preparedness, as shown in Table 8 on the opposite page.

Table 8. Indicators and Examples of Output Results-Conflict Prevention and Peace-Building Theme	
Target Outputs	Indicative Achievements to Date
A reduction in the incidence and recurrence of conflict	<p>RAF/05/007 produced a convention on the import, export and production of light weapons which was adopted by ECOWAS countries.</p> <p>RAF/02/001 produced a legally binding protocol on small arms proliferation that has been ratified by all countries; best practice guidelines have been created and disseminated; and Uganda and Kenya have national plans to implement the protocol.</p>
Increased effectiveness of regional peace-building and recovery processes	<p>RAF/04/002 has built the capacity of ECOWAS in conflict prevention and peace-building.</p> <p>RAF/05/016 An international conference on the Great Lakes led to an agreement on a Pact on Security, Stability and Development.</p> <p>RAF/98/006 followed up on the Declaration on the Moratorium on Import, Export and Manufacture of Light Weapons by assisting in the establishment and training of National Commissions in 13 ECOWAS countries, and training of border and security forces to strengthen border controls; a harmonized text for national legislation was also produced.</p> <p>RAF/01/002 supported research and dissemination through workshops and forums on sustainable peace and good governance for Africa, and projects to implement sustainable peace and good governance in both ECOWAS and SADC regions have been formulated. A declaration on peace-building has been signed by civil society organizations.</p>
Vulnerable countries with improved disaster preparedness and management capacities	<p>RAF/03/010 has trained 26 faculty members from 14 universities and management development institutes on the practical application of conflict analysis, mediation, negotiations, etc. for onward transmission. A peace-building web portal containing 2000 organizations working in conflict prevention and peace-building has been developed.</p> <p>RAF/99/014 Supported the development and management of a data base and analysis for SADC to help improve food security in the region.</p>
Environmental dimensions of conflicts and disasters effectively addressed	RAF/01/001 National Long Term Perspective Studies produced for Sierra Leone and Mozambique included small sections on environment.
High level of women's participation in programmes at all stages and gender balance in programme impacts	RAF/02/012 Facilitated the Mano River Women's Peace Networks in partnership with Femmes Africa Solidarité and conducted workshops on the gendered impact of conflicts in Africa.
Regional capacities strengthened where needed for sustained action	RAF/97/028 and RAF/02/018 developed the capacity of the Peace and Security Directorate of the AU, including funding analysts who are designated focal points for conflict situations and provide up to date information and analysis to AU. Special Envoys ensure that AU member states ratify the Peace and Security Protocol.

There are good indications that RCF Africa II is on track to achieve the desired results at the outcome level. Following ratification of the AU Peace and Security Protocol by member states, support to the Security Directorate of the AU has led to the development of an AU Continental Early Warning System and an African Standby Force. A Common African Defence and Security Policy was prepared and adopted, and the AU Peace and Security Council

was launched. The AU has peacekeeping forces in Darfur. Though RCF Africa II is not the only supporter of the Peace and Security Directorate, it is one of the most important ones. While attribution in the case of a regional agreement like the Peace and Security Protocol is complex, as there are always multiple factors weighing on the signatories, it is likely that RCF Africa II played an important role in this achievement.

Table 9. Indicators and Examples of Output Results – HIV/AIDS Theme

Target Outputs	Indicative Achievements to Date
National strategic plans adopted and implemented in at least five countries	This result has been achieved, and National AIDS Committees/Councils say that UNDP support was an important factor, but the input of RCF Africa II (as opposed to UNDP country programmes and UNAIDS) to this result is not clear.
Common methodologies and approaches for assessing the impact of HIV/AIDS on development elaborated and adopted	RAF/99/022 has helped to create strategic partnerships around national policy dialogues on responding to HIV/AIDS. It has also developed a typology of national planning systems and their links to HIV as well as increased understanding of the relationships between the spread of HIV and human development efforts and trends.
Inter-country strategies adopted and implemented for managing the cross-border spread of HIV/AIDS	RAF/03/015 Gender is incorporated in all the national AIDS strategies and plans reviewed.
Regional and sub-regional development agenda that integrates HIV/AIDS management strategies implemented by major sub-regional groups (e.g. ECOWAS, SADC)	RAF/99/022 Mid-term review concluded that there was no chance that the project would produce this output.
Increased awareness of the male responsibilities in preventing HIV/AIDS infection and decreased vulnerability of women and girls	No direct programming activities on male responsibilities or decreasing the vulnerability of women and girls.
Increased recognition and protection of the human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS	No direct programming activities on HIV/AIDS and human rights.
Decreased vulnerability to infection of people living in poverty	RAF/06/001 activities have just started, results are not yet clear, but the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS and poverty will be key points to be addressed.

HIV/AIDS

RCF Africa II identified the reduction of the HIV/AIDS threat in Africa as one of its priority themes, and has funded six initiatives working to produce the target outputs (outlined in Table 9, above) in most areas, although the data available do not demonstrate any results as yet for four out of the seven desired results.

The effect of RCF Africa II interventions on HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa is limited. Following a mid-term review of RAF/99/022 (HIV/AIDS and Development) in December 2003, which recommended “an adjustment”, the HIV/AIDS project presented a proposal to transform itself into the Southern Africa Capacity Initiative (SACI). This was approved and many of the staff moved in 2003 to the new project. SACI has assisted the nine SADC countries in addressing the triple threat of

food insecurity, weakened capacity for governance, and AIDS by fielding United Nations Volunteers in the areas of human resources, agriculture, health, integrated decentralized planning, education, disaster management and HIV/AIDS. However, it is more generally concerned with capacity building of government. As stated in the evaluation report of UNDP’s Role and Contributions in the HIV/AIDS Response in Southern Africa and Ethiopia “SACI endeavours to respond to the threats to African capacity from HIV/AIDS. However, the project is too new for this evaluation to be able to report outcomes.”³⁵

It is difficult to differentiate the results of the regional programme from those of the country programmes and other specialized United Nations agencies, the World Health Organization, UNAIDS (of which UNDP is one of 10 co-sponsors) and a plethora of

35. HIV/AIDS: Evaluation of UNDP’s Role and Contributions in the HIV/AIDS Response in Southern Africa and Ethiopia, UNDP, Evaluation Office, May 2006.

projects and programmes addressing HIV/AIDS at all levels, which are funded by a multitude of bilateral and multilateral agencies.³⁶ Beneficiaries noted that United Nations support was important in many areas but were unable to pinpoint the UNDP programme that provided the support; in the view of beneficiaries, the United Nations is one organization. Some of those interviewed raised questions about UNDP's ability to add value in the area of HIV/AIDS, given the panoply of other national, regional and continental initiatives. Others, however, pointed out that some aspects of HIV/AIDS related to governance and public sector management of responses to HIV/AIDS, human rights and gender, were within UNDP's mandate and institutional strengths.

EMERGING ISSUES AND CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

RCF Africa II documents recognize that gender equality and environmental management are of such importance that they must be mainstreamed in all programming. In practice, SRIU financial reports include initiatives involving the cross-cutting issues in the 'Other' theme or pillar. As shown in the tables above, much of the gender analysis work has been conducted under one project, RAF/97/034 Gender Mainstreaming, which is actually categorized under the 'Other' theme. The 'Other' pillar was defined in the RCF Africa II document as a flexible programming category to meet 'emerging needs' but it was reoriented during the MYFF process to cover environmental sustainability, African energy needs, and water resources. Table 10 below provides the indicators and examples of achievements in this theme.

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Most projects report giving consideration to gender balance in selecting project participants and/or beneficiaries; several, when asked about gender analysis, referred to work done by the Gender Mainstreaming project (RAF/97/034). This project has coordinated interesting workshops on a variety of topics, and has produced reports with useful suggestions on how to ensure more effective gender mainstreaming. However, as noted by the 2005 Gender Mainstreaming Audit of 16 regional projects, while there is "...awareness of and a commitment to incorporating gender concerns and considerations into programmes/projects and operational structures and practices, there is also significant scope for enhancing gender mainstreaming and promoting the advancement of women."³⁷

In general, there is little analysis of gender concerns and challenges in project documents. There is also no outline of the specific roles and responsibilities of men and women, boys and girls, or an indication of how resources will be allocated to facilitate the participation of the various groups. In addition, while often noting that women's participation will be supported, project documents rarely set specific targets or strategies to achieve this. Gender disaggregated data are rarely available, although the database currently being developed by the African Management Services Company under the African Training and Management Services Project (RAF/03/003) will incorporate the tracking of gender dimensions for project support provided to enterprises. In those instances in which a regional activity is based in an existing institution, there is no indication of an assessment of the institution's capacity to deliver a gender-focused programme or activity.

36. The Evaluation of UNDP's Role and Contributions in the HIV/AIDS Response in Southern Africa and Ethiopia compared UNDP's total spending in the case study countries (US \$21 million) with the total spending of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (US \$312 million), and concluded that "UNDP is becoming a smaller player on the HIV/AIDS scene than it was in the 1990s."

37. Rogers, Veronica, Gender Mainstreaming Audit of Regional Projects, RBA/UNDP New York, November-December 2005

ENVIRONMENT

Integration of environmental concerns is also weak. With the exception of the initial undertaking to mainstream environmental concerns, the documents reviewed appear to be more or less silent on this issue. There are two projects under RCF Africa II that address environmental issues: RAF/99/023 Sustainable Livelihoods in Artisanal Mining and RAF/02/008 SADC Water. Potentially, RAF/97/032, Management of Farm Animal Resources in SADC, which is closed, might have had environmental considerations. It should be noted that as most of the interventions funded under RCF Africa II do not involve construction or modification of infrastructure, they are unlikely to give rise directly to environmental concerns. However, the potential environmental dimensions of energy and water projects are very large and it is expected that these initiatives would integrate environmental considerations, including conducting environmental impact screening if needed and ensuring inclusion of environment considerations in policies.

ENERGY AND WATER RESOURCES

Since the reorientation of RCF Africa II in 2004, a new initiative on energy has been approved, but no additional water resources initiatives have been added to those supporting water resources management in the ECOWAS and SADC regions. There are initiatives being implemented under RCF Africa II to address each of the targeted results; however, as noted above, the integration of environment and gender in each initiative has been weak.

The documented achievements at the outcome level by RCF Africa II in other themes are limited. It should be noted that energy only became a focus area in 2004, and therefore results at the outcome level are not yet expected. The ECOWAS member states, which are starting to implement MDG-based energy access strategies and are piloting the costing methodologies, should produce outcomes in the near future. The performance in integrating gender and environment, which were part of the original RCF Africa II document, is disappointing.

Table 10. Indicators and Examples of Output Results – Gender and Environment

Target Outputs	Indicative Achievements to Date
Programming on emerging issues critical for bringing Africa into the mainstream of world development	<p>RAF/97/001 Support SADC Round Table Conference on water resources.</p> <p>RAF/02/008 SADC Water supported secretariat and coordination unit.</p> <p>RAF/03/013 supported the development of the ECOWAS Regional White Paper on Increasing Access to Energy of rural and peri-urban populations, which was ratified by the member states.</p> <p>RAF/05/024 is codifying knowledge on energy access, and is assisting with the formulation of MDG-based energy investment strategies, knowledge management for energy in Africa, and an Energy Access Strategy for the East African Community.</p>
Integration of environmentally sustainable development practices	RAF/02/004 supports environmentally sustainable rural/community lively hoods.
Integration of gender equality	RAF/02/012 – Gender Mainstreaming has conducted workshops and developed partnerships on integrating gender into government, economic development, conflict, and HIV/AIDS areas, yet the integration of gender issues in most initiatives remains weak. Gender disaggregated data is not available for most projects and programmes and few (AMSCO, Gender Mainstreaming) have gender-sensitive indicators of achievement. Most believe that gender equality means employment equity or equal numbers of women and men beneficiaries, but few have thought through the gender differentiated impact of, for example, conflict, and what this might imply for their programme. When asked, the usual response is that they think the gender mainstreaming project is doing something on this issue.

OUTCOME-LEVEL RESULTS

It should be noted that outcome-level results are indicative rather than exhaustive, due to the lack of data at the RCF level and the difficulties with attribution at this level. In addition to the lack of data at the outcome level, results for initiatives involving advocacy, support to policy, or capacity development, are difficult to measure quantitatively, and are often characterized by 'process results'. For example, APRM is expected to improve the accountability of public administration systems in the long run, but the intermediate or enabling result consists of putting the process or mechanism in place. With regard to attribution, it is worth repeating that RCF Africa II is only one of several actors in these areas, and other key actors include bilateral donors, the International Finance Institutions, UNDP country offices as well as other United Nations agencies (e.g. UNAIDS, WTO, UNCTAD) and other multilateral agencies.

Within each theme, projects are dispersed geographically, chronologically and by executing agency. For this reason, in addition to the constraints outlined

in previous sections, it is difficult to detect synergies or complementarities among them and to objectively measure the aggregate development outcome for that theme. However, in some cases there have been subsequent project phases that have built up to an outcome-level result, for example, RAF/96/001 and RAF/04/006 Capacity Building for Trade and Development. In others, more than one initiative may have promoted a particular outcome, for example, RAF/02/001 Addressing Small Arms in the Great Lakes and RAF/02/011 Support to Peace Building in the Great Lakes.

Nonetheless, UNDP's interventions under RCF Africa II contributed to the achievement of the desired results according to the subjective assessment of staff, government and other stakeholders. Table 11 below shows the status of the RCF portfolio against the targeted outcomes at the time of this evaluation; although RCF Africa II likely contributed to this status, it is not possible to assess the level of that contribution.

Table 11. Indicators and Examples of Outcome Results Under RCF Africa II		
	Target Outputs	Indicative Achievements to Date
Democratic Governance	Democratic and participatory governance is strengthened (in Sub-Saharan Africa)	Although not all countries have acceded to APRM, more are joining as the process becomes clearer; changes have been made in countries that have gone through the process, which incorporates the participation of all players – government, civil society, the press, etc. Examples of government action on APRM findings include the admission by the President of Kenya that corruption was a problem and the introduction of a ministry for women in Ghana.
	Democracy is consolidated	Promotion and consolidation of democracy is being actively pursued through the Forum of Former African Heads of State and Government. More African governments have been elected, including in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. More than two-thirds of Sub-Saharan Africa countries have had democratic elections since 2000 and power has changed hands in several nations, including Senegal, Tanzania, Ghana, Zambia and Nigeria.

Table 11. Indicators and Examples of Outcome Results Under RCF Africa II *(continued)*

	Target Outputs	Indicative Achievements to Date
Making Globalization Work for Africa	Africa is brought into the mainstream of the world economy	Many countries have increased exports by more than 8% a year since the late 1990s despite falling prices in some commodities (e.g. agricultural products). Export successes show that Africa is capable of diversifying and building a constructive relationship with global markets. ³⁸
	The marginalization of Africa in the globalization process is halted	In 2006, the World Bank reported that "GDP in Sub-Saharan Africa, bolstered by strong world demand and rising commodity prices, increased 5.2 percent in 2005, marking the second year in a row that regional growth exceeded 5 percent ... Growth in the region also benefited from increased official development assistance (ODA) [which], excluding debt relief, topped \$24 billion in 2004 (the last year for which data are available). It rose by 1 or more percent of GDP in a number of countries, helping to fund domestic investment projects and providing much needed foreign currency. Debt relief also increased significantly, reaching \$5 billion in 2004, up from \$1.2 billion in 2000. Exports from Africa grew from an average of 4.2% annually in 1991 to 2000 to 6% in 2005." ³⁹
Conflict Prevention/Peace-Building/Disaster Management	Conflicts prevented	Compared to a decade ago, there are fewer inter-state conflicts and many civil wars have ended. However, about half the world's armed conflicts, and some three quarters of the United Nations' peacekeepers, are still in Africa.
	Peace is built	In Burundi, the peaceful and democratic conclusion of the transitional process was a milestone for that country and, hopefully, for the Great Lakes region. Wars have stopped in Angola, Congo, Ethiopia-Eritrea, Liberia, Mozambique, Sierra Leone and southern Sudan. Guinea-Bissau, Togo and Madagascar have all been through peaceful restoration of constitutional order.
	Disasters managed	The AU Continental Early Warning System has been developed.
	Crisis prevention and recovery are supported	The African Standby Force has been developed, a Common African Defence and Security Policy prepared and adopted, and the AU Peace and Security Council has been launched. Activities are ongoing, at the AU for example, but it is still too early to see results. Institutions must first be built.
	Africans are assisted in their struggle for lasting peace	AU peacekeeping forces are on the ground in Darfur.
HIV/AIDS	The threat and impact of HIV/AIDS on Africa is reduced	While prevalence rates have dropped in some countries, the threat and impact of HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa overall has not (see Table 1).
Other	Energy and environment are managed for sustainable development	Activities and advocacy efforts are ongoing, for example under the ECOWAS energy White Paper, but no outcome-level results reported as yet as the initiatives only started in 2004.
	African countries, individually and collectively, are on the path to sustainable growth and development	Activities are ongoing, as outlined above, but level of RCF Africa II contribution is not known due to weak data.
	Improved gender balance	Commitment to employment equity means that gender balances are improving in institutions supported by RCF, including the AU; however, gender mainstreaming remains weak.

38. Anyidoho, E. and Iumba, N., Draft Mid-Term Evaluation Report 'UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa Project for Trade Capacity Development and Poverty Reduction in Sub-Saharan Africa', October 2006

39. The World Bank, Prospects for the Global Economy, May 2006.

3.3 EFFICIENCY

Efficiency was measured by looking at programme oversight and governance, including resource mobilization, organizational strategy, execution and implementation modalities, and performance measurement.

PROGRAMME OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNANCE

RBA identifies, approves and funds the initiatives (projects and programmes) under RCF Africa II. RBA states that this was done through a “highly participatory” process entailing “...broad consultations with major partners and stakeholders and in-house partners...” but it is difficult to find partners and stakeholders who feel they were consulted. RBA entrusts implementation to a variety of agencies, including United Nations agencies, governments, intergovernmental organizations or NGOs, some of which have been created specifically for that purpose (for example Africa 2000 and the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED)/ECOWAS Small Arms Programme coordinating offices). However, as discussed in Chapter 2, most RCF Africa II initiatives are managed by SRIU and executed by UNOPS. While UNDP and UNOPS recover management service fees on the initiatives they implement, the team noted capacity constraints in monitoring and evaluation, reporting, financial management and human resource management.

An external Advisory Board was established at the beginning of RCF Africa II to provide policy guidance and to ensure that the RCF would remain “...closely grounded in African priorities and emerging realities...”. In a sense, the Board was to act as an overall programme accountability mechanism. In practice, this excellent concept has not been as effective as anticipated and the Advisory Board as a group has been under-utilized. The initial terms of reference, unavailable to the evaluation team, have been described by Board Members as vague and general. The Board members were decided upon and the Board became operational after the parameters of RCF Africa II had been finalized so it was unable to contribute to these stages. Meetings have been irregular – so far only three have taken place – and members of

the Board have not been consistently provided with the “...results-oriented annual reports and field intelligence...” that were to form the basis of their oversight role. The members of the Board interviewed were, however, strongly supportive of the regional programming concept, although less positive about several implementation aspects, including the high degree of centralization of decision-making.

RESOURCES AND COST EFFECTIVENESS

RCF Africa II was successful in mobilizing resources, with 94 percent (US \$160.4 million) of the original budget (US \$171 million) committed. Of this amount, UNDP provided 85 percent (US \$86.3 million) of its approved budget of US \$101 million, while others made up the balance, providing US \$74.1 million of the US \$70 million budgeted for them (105 percent). This is in part due to UNDP’s fund-raising efforts coinciding with enhanced donor efforts to harmonize and coordinate support following the Monterrey Conference in 2002, as well as an increased emphasis on Africa. It is also due to UNDP’s strong field presence, which laid the foundation for the organization assuming the role of donor coordinator in many countries and with many RCF Africa II strategic partners.

While overall resource mobilization was effective, financial management has not been as effective. Partners repeatedly complained of lack of access to timely financial information and UNOPS confirmed this was a problem due to difficulties in migrating data to the new ATLAS system. The budget fluctuated, dropping by 25 percent during the approval of the MYFF in 2004, and then increasing again in 2006 when the end date of the programme was extended. The uncertainties in financing created some implementation difficulties for initiatives on the ground as budgets that had been approved were cut, and then later reinstated. These uncertainties, compounded by the lack of timely financial information, make planning and results achievement difficult for the individual RCF Africa II initiatives. It also creates problems for evaluation, as evaluators must decide whether to focus the evaluation on the extent to which the initiative met its objectives under the eventually established project budget, or to focus on the extent to which the project has been able to mobilize sufficient resources to fulfil original (and often very ambitious) objectives.

In theory, RCF Africa II should be able to exploit economies of scale that can be achieved by addressing similar issues in an integrated fashion. For example, holding workshops or training sessions on trade issues or on women in conflict situations on a regional basis is more cost effective than training countries one at a time. However, it is difficult to make a clear cost-benefit analysis at the programme level when resources and expectations change, when the actual results achieved are not clearly demonstrated or quantified, and when there are few benchmarks for comparison. For example, engineers have benchmarks of how much it costs to build a certain number of miles of road, and can compare project costs to the average for the same sort of work. But there are no benchmarks of how much it costs to build an effective African institution to address RCF Africa II priorities. While a comparison could be made, for example, between RCF Africa II support to the Small Arms Centre in Nairobi (US \$100,000) and PCASED (US \$5 million), the two initiatives are so different that it would be like comparing mangos and used clothing. There is no reasonable way to aggregate the numbers meaningfully at the RCF Africa II level and make an assessment of cost effectiveness.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY, EXECUTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

RCF Africa II has a complex organization. SRIU of RBA acts as the key planner and manager of the programme, which is executed by 10 different organizations in partnership with over 15 African organizations, from project management sites in North America, Europe and 14 African countries. Operating out of New York, SRIU carries out central management of RCF Africa II, ensuring coherence among individual projects and activities and making essential decisions regarding project funding and operations. RBA is also responsible for initiating or facilitating discussions on possible resource contributions with donors whose regional programmes, like those of UNDP, are managed from their respective capitals.

The regional projects and programmes are implemented by an implementing agency such as the Peace and Security Division of the African Union Commission, where a United Nations Project Manager acts as the Chief Technical Advisor to

the Director. Financial management rests with UNOPS, located in Nairobi, which is the executing agency, and all of them report to RBA in New York. According to those interviewed in the field, this complex and centralized management structure has caused delays in key project-related decisions; it creates difficulties for implementers/managers on the ground, as they often do not have timely access to financial information, and has tended to undermine the accountability and capacity of partner institutions. In general, this dispersed structure also makes accountability for results hard to assign. In addition, the current modality, where regional entities or organizations implement projects with RCF Africa II financial support provided via a separate executing agency, often obscures UNDP's role from the ultimate beneficiaries. This may prevent RCF Africa II or UNDP from being given appropriate recognition for the results achieved.

Roles and responsibilities are also not completely clear: some project managers reported not being sure which decisions they could take themselves and which required approval from New York. Reporting lines are also difficult to understand; for example, the Assistant Resident Representative/Representation to the African Union and Liaison Office with ECA (both key partners for RCF Africa II) reports to the UNDP Country Resident Representative in Addis Ababa, who has no direct reporting relationship to SRIU, the manager of the regional programme. The Senior Regional Coordinator/Regional Support for NEPAD, also based in Addis Ababa and the liaison with another important RCF Africa II partner, reports directly to SRIU in New York.

Policy and technical support is provided by BDP and the SURFs/Regional Service Centres, but the extent to which this backstopping has been useful is debatable. According to BDP, the use and involvement of gender advisors in New York during the formulation of the RCF and of economists located in SURFs/Regional Service Centres has been less than optimal and project managers in the field concur. Most regional programme coordinators state that although SURFs/Regional Service Centres can and have provided technical advice, especially at the project planning stage, they rarely call upon them. Yet it is clear that RCF Africa II initiatives need better coaching on improving the integration of gender and environment, which could be pro-

vided using the resources available from BDP and the SURF/Regional Centre. This may be a function of the centralization of programme planning and management decision-making in New York.

In cases like globalization and especially trade-related capacity building, technical capacity may be better sourced from specialized agencies within the United Nations such as UNCTAD on trade and the United Nations Capital Development Fund on microfinance, both of which are RCF Africa II implementing partners.

Many key programme management functions, financial management, procurement, and administrative support are provided by UNOPS, which is the executing agency for most RCF Africa II initiatives. Several interviewees expressed dissatisfaction with the level of service provided by UNOPS, including access to timely financial information, and stated that UNOPS' fees were too high. Others noted that UNOPS project management fees were no higher, and in some cases lower, than other agencies. Many also noted that when UNDP used the direct executing agency or national executing agency approach, the administrative capacity of RBA/SRIU to provide funding and timely essential information and decisions was severely strained.

Some of the problems seem to be related to the introduction of the new ATLAS system and financial management system and a subsequent backlog of entries and corrections; however, this problem has existed for sometime. UNOPS' chart of accounts is not particularly well set up for producing institutional-level financial management information and does not link well with these financial management information systems. This is not efficient, and several partners reported running duplicate systems in an attempt to ascertain their current financial position, or to link their RCF Africa II funding to their institutional financial management system.

PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

In addition to weaknesses in financial management, the evaluation team found that performance measurement, review and reporting functions were inadequate. One of the key recommendations of the review of RCF Africa I was the need for the 'themes' to be well defined with clear objectives and indicators of achievement. In addition, the MYFF

2004-2007 calls for optimizing and streamlining results-based management within UNDP, based on four pillars:

1. the definition of strategic goals that provide a focus for action;
2. the specification of expected and measurable results that contribute to these goals and align programmes, partnerships and resources behind them;
3. ongoing monitoring and assessment of performance, and integrating lessons learned into future planning; and
4. improved accountability, based on continuous feedback to improve performance.

At the time of this evaluation, there were multiple objectives for each theme but results were not usually measurable and indicators of achievement had not been developed.

Although RBA introduced a results-oriented reporting system early in the implementation of RCF Africa II, it did not clearly and consistently link individual initiatives to programme-level results. Nor did it define indicators of achievement that all initiatives were required to report against. Thus, most 'key results' reported are actually activities intended to produce results in the future, and it is impossible to aggregate the results reported in a meaningful fashion to assess outcomes at the level of RCF Africa. Project reporting and monitoring do not usually provide data on project-level outcomes. Even more limited is the information on project contributions to the objectives of RCF Africa II. For example, although poverty reduction is cited as the overarching goal of RCF Africa II and gender equality is to be mainstreamed, it is not clear how this is to be achieved. The evaluation team noted a general absence of poverty and gender objectives in project documentation and, in line with the general absence of results-formulation and monitoring processes, did not find any established means to determine the extent and nature of RCF Africa II's contribution to poverty reduction or gender equality.

Reports seem to be provided on a semi-annual basis, but are inconsistent in quality and are focused on activities and outputs. No attempt is made to compare, compile or roll-up the information in these

reports to either the thematic or the programme (RCF Africa II) level. As most individual project reporting and monitoring to date has focused on output rather than outcome achievements, it is not surprising that most project evaluations conducted to date have restricted themselves to evaluating project outputs. There is a scarcity of quantifiable and clearly documented evidence of achievement of results at the outcome level. Even financial information to assess trends with any degree of confidence is difficult to obtain. The use of independent monitoring and evaluation as a key management tool to improve the performance of programmes does not seem to be generally embraced or applied.

3.4. SUSTAINABILITY

While RCF Africa II has been successful in enhancing the capacity of many of the African organizations with which it works, in some cases the long-term sustainability of results in this area is doubtful. The reasons are many but chief among them are inadequate institutional capacity assessments in the planning stage, a lack of focused institutional capacity development plans guiding the intervention during the implementation phase, and a lack of clearly thought out exit strategies from the project or programme in question and the sustainability plans for the period following UNDP's withdrawal.⁴⁰

In cases like support to the AU (RAF/05/021), a sustainability strategy must look at the long-term ability of the institution to continue to operate effectively and autonomously. For smaller one-off initiatives, for example, Support to SADC Round Table Conference on Water Resources (RAF/97/001), the intention is that the conference serves as a catalyst for sustainable action. As RCF Africa II is strongly focused on capacity development, and specifically on developing capacity in the regional institutions that are its key partners, this section focuses on institutional sustainability.

In the case of the AU and the Regional Centre on Small Arms, the availability of funds is key to sustaining the institutions and their regional programmes.⁴¹ In both cases, although the participating governments are making contributions to help support the institutions, these contributions are usually insufficient to pay for capacity development and to allow the institutions to fulfil their regional mandate. Given the tax base and level of demand on government coffers – for investment in infrastructure, education, health, etc. – in most Sub-Saharan African countries, governments have limited ability to absorb the full costs of running regional programmes. Certainly, hiring local staff under United Nations terms and conditions, rather than on the basis of local government or institutional terms and conditions, is not the best way to ensure that African governments will sustain the initiative, as PCASED (RAF/98/006) demonstrated. While funding by African governments may be desirable as it demonstrates a strong level of ownership, it will often be difficult for them to cover both the core operating costs as well as the costs of programming. Ongoing operations may thus require continued support from UNDP, regionally and at the country level, or perhaps in combination with other donors.

In some cases UNDP has created implementing partner institutions whose ability to continue to produce regional benefits once donor funding ends is questionable. For example, with the Africa 2000 Network (RAF/04/008), the regional initiative was transformed into a linked group of nationally registered NGOs, some of which have been successful in mobilizing funds from UNDP country offices and other donors, while others have not. However, the coordinating body of the Africa 2000 Network – which is essential to ensure that it continues to work regionally and does not disintegrate into a series of unconnected individual country activities – is still completely reliant on RCF Africa II funds and all its financial management continues to be done by UNOPS.⁴²

40. Sustainability is defined in a variety of ways, some looking at economic, social and environmental considerations, some only at the environment. The OECD DAC working party on Evaluation definition is «Sustainability: The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed; the probability of continued long-term benefits; the resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.»

41. The AU, like several other key regional partners, is a young institution which will need assistance well beyond the end of the current initiative. Without financial support, not only will benefits not be sustained but it is possible that the institution may fail to thrive leading to the possibility of a negative development impact.

42. Africa 2000 started under RCF Africa I and has been carried forward under the second regional cooperation framework. While the individual initiatives promoted by Africa 2000 at the community level might continue to operate due to fund raising noted above, funding for the coordinating unit in Kampala will end in 2007. This unit is responsible for the website which documents and disseminates information, success stories and lessons learned in the region. The current plan is to link the coordinating unit with Capacity 2015, another UNDP-sponsored initiative, but without continuing UNDP support it is difficult to see how this will be sustainable.

To attract external funding, the institution must have well-developed management systems, including financial management systems that allow donors to feel comfortable that the institution has the capacity to, and a track record of, managing funds with probity and prudence. In some cases, RCF Africa II has continued to operate parallel financial management systems even when other donors are funding the institution directly and where the institution has better capacity than UNOPS to produce timely financial reports (for example, AU Peace and Security Directorate). Under these circumstances, relationships have a tendency to develop into a long-term dependency rather than a partnership, as seems to have happened with the Africa 2000 Network.⁴³

Having funds managed by UNOPS is not the best way to build financial management capacity and track records at the partner institutions. Partner institutions must themselves develop the capacity to mobilize funds and coordinate donor support. Not only is there a conflict of interest in UNDP and/or UNOPS handing over these functions to partners, (since the management of donor funds provides revenue to both UNDP and UNOPS as management fees), but at stake is the continued viability or sustainability of this modality in the long run. On the other hand, UNDP needs to have strong relationships with successful initiatives, including well-managed African institutions, to demonstrate the effectiveness of capacity development/institutional strengthening efforts, and to maintain its position and influence.

43. Partnership recognizes that each party is bringing something of worth to the relationship and allows both parties an equal say in decisions.

Conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations

This chapter presents conclusions and lessons learned from the evaluation, and sets out recommendations for action by the UNDP/RBA.

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

As one of the three programming options – global, regional, country – making up the UNDP’s ‘suite’ of programming approaches, the regional one can add value if the following conditions are satisfied:

- projects and programmes are firmly ‘anchored’ in existing Africa-led institutions;
- the themes or subject areas selected are readily and appropriately ‘regional’ or trans-boundary;
- there is a high degree of coordination between the regional and country programmes;
- interventions subsumed under a regional programme are designed to maximize overall capacity development efforts at a national and institutional level;
- an effective ‘reality check’ or programme oversight mechanism is in place to ensure that the programme continues to recognize and accommodate evolving African realities; and
- appropriate management tools are in place to enable decisions to be made and programmes and projects to be managed as close as possible to the locus of programme activities.

The extent to which RCF Africa II incorporates these elements and thus adds value to UNDP’s overall programming in Africa is the reference point for the following conclusions.

1. Working with and through regional institutions as partners has been a good model for producing synergies between partners and countries in the region. However, the short-term nature of support provided by RCF Africa II may not be appropriate for capacity development

programming with young and fragile institutions that will require concentrated assistance for several years.

2. The performance of the RCF portfolio is stronger in those thematic areas that build on UNDP’s core mandate and recognized strengths such as governance and conflict resolution, and is less so in areas like globalization, HIV/AIDS, and energy and water supply. So far the trade project has shown limited progress on the innovative aspect of linking trade development to poverty alleviation and achieving MDGs. A traditional trade project with a focus on the macro aspects of central trade negotiations could equally well be coordinated and executed by organizations with more established trade negotiation experience, such as UNCTAD or WTO. Other United Nations agencies like WHO and UNAIDS have better technical capacity on HIV/AIDS, and the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the International Trade Center have a better defined comparative advantage, technical skills and mandates than UNDP in small and medium enterprise development and microfinance.
3. Poor attention to internal monitoring and reporting on results undermines UNDP’s ability to leverage its reputation and knowledge base in promoting development policy with other donors and country governments. Weak monitoring and evaluation systems hamper the ability to assess the level of impact, including in relation to financial and other inputs.
4. The comparative advantage of UNDP’s field presence is undermined by inadequate coordination between the regional programme, managed from New York, and the decentralized country offices, and also between RCF Africa and the RCF for Arab States, when this is required to implement truly pan-African initiatives.

5. While flexibility is needed in order to continue to respond to emerging needs, a greater focus on selecting and working in partnership with key African institutions would enhance the performance and sustainability of RCF Africa II results.

4.2 LESSON LEARNED

In the following section, the lessons learned reflect on past performance and the recommendations suggest areas for improvement in the future.

The main lessons learned concern design and relevance, partnerships and synergies, capacity development, and programme management.

- **Focus.** RCF Africa II had a stronger impact, both developmentally and on institutional criteria like policy and advocacy, when it responded to the priorities of African stakeholders and built on UNDP's comparative strengths and advantages. Maximum impact from relatively limited resources comes from focusing on the areas where African priorities and UNDP strengths intersect, for example the areas of governance, conflict prevention and peace-building.
- **Partnerships are difficult to develop, dependencies are not.** Building a partnership is easier by establishing a direct relationship with local institutions than by working through an executing agency. Capacity development requires a clear assessment of needs, followed by a plan to address those needs. Capacity building takes time and a long-term commitment. Young and fragile institutions do not have the capacity to manage and mitigate the impact of fluctuating budget and development priorities but will only develop this capacity through self-management, and not by being managed by others.
- **What gets measured gets done.** Responsibility for management cannot be delegated without strong financial and management systems and measures of performance, including an integrated system of reporting, monitoring and evaluation that fills both internal management and external reporting

requirements. As initiatives were not required to develop and report on quantitative and qualitative gender sensitive indicators of performance, integration of gender mainstreaming received only lip service. This is also true for environment, the other cross-cutting dimension.

- **Weak monitoring and reporting: weak evaluation base.** An ex-post evaluation cannot fill the data gaps left by inadequate internal monitoring and reporting. Evaluations build on the individual initiative's indicators of achievement, baseline data and continuous monitoring and measurement of progress. Meta-evaluations are only possible if existing evaluations are sufficient in number, coverage and quality. Evaluation schedules should allow sufficient time for coordination with country offices, identification of stakeholders to be interviewed, and for interviewees to be properly briefed on the scope, context and objectives of the evaluation.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Based on the findings of the evaluation, the following recommendations are presented for consideration by the RBA. Selection of thematic areas should be based on the following criteria:

- UNDP has a comparative advantage;
- African priorities as identified by key regional institutions like AU, NEPAD, APRM;
- links to UNDP's mandate and objectives including MDGs, the Strategic Plan/MYFF and UNDP's global and country programmes; and
- issues have trans-border or international dimensions or are more likely to progress if removed from the domestic context.⁴⁴

1. Maximize African ownership of the regional programme. Greater use of the Advisory Board should be made in order to ensure that RCF has the capacity to identify and respond to evolving African development challenges and remains firmly anchored in African realities. This would help ensure that institutional and capacity develop-

44. See also, Evaluation of UNDP's Regional Cooperation Framework for Arab States (2002-2005) p. 51.

ment targets are being achieved. RBA should revise the terms of reference for the Advisory Board to ensure regular Board meetings; the Board should be provided with regular reports on the progress of the framework against agreed gender sensitive, quantitative and qualitative indicators and changes in the environment. However, this flexibility must take place within the context of, rather than replacing, a long-term strategic plan.

2. Streamline the focus of the next RCF to a maximum of three clearly defined themes, with fewer outputs and outcomes under each theme. RCF should continue to focus on the regional priorities of strengthening democratic and participatory governance, conflict prevention, peace-building and disaster management. In addition, RCF resources should be concentrated on capacity building for a smaller number of larger interventions, linked to existing regional African institutions. Many of the current programmes and activities should be phased out prior to the end of RCF Africa II. Decisions to allow current projects to be carried over into the next RCF implementation period should be based on clear and consistent criteria, with a cap of project funding allowed for carry-over – suggested at 25 percent of RCF total funding.

3. Improve coordination between regional and country programmes in Africa. This can be achieved by decentralizing two regional Bureau Deputy Directors, with joint responsibility both for the regional programme and country programmes, to locations in Africa.⁴⁵ The regional programme in Africa should develop the capacity of regional and pan-African institutions to deliver their mandates. Partner institutions need to be provided with financial planning and management tools and training. Maximum responsibility consistent with UNDP's overall financial management policies and regulations should be transferred to partner institutions as a component of overall capacity development/institutional strengthening.

4. Enhance pan-African synergies through improved information sharing and enhanced cooperation between the regional bureaux of Africa and the Arab States. Establish a joint UNDP Africa and Arab States representative office in Addis Ababa for respective accreditation to pan-African institutions, such as AU and ECA. This would facilitate the participation of North African countries in pan-African activities.

5. Incorporate gender equality and environment across all interventions. Both should be required in the planning and formulation of initiatives for the future. Sufficient financial resources for gender mainstreaming and environmental sustainability (in each and every project) should be allocated for all future projects if gender and environment are to be integrated as cross-cutting themes.

6. Clarify roles, responsibilities, accountability and reporting structures to effectively implement results based management. The RCF should adopt an enhanced results based performance management, measurement and reporting system. Similar performance measurement frameworks, including clear programme-level indicators of achievement, should be developed at the thematic and the RCF level. Project-level reports should be rolled up into thematic and regional programme-level reports at a minimum annually for presentation to the Advisory Board.

7. Include in project budgets funds explicitly ear-marked for monitoring systems, including the development of indicators, baseline data, data sources and collection methods as well as responsibility and timing of collection for the outcomes and impact levels.

45. This was proposed as part of the reforms of RBA's management structure in the Strategy and Management Review (New York, May 2006).

Terms of Reference

PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE SECOND REGIONAL COOPERATION FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA 2002-2006

I. BACKGROUND

In January 2002 the Executive Board of UNDP approved the Second Regional Cooperation Framework for Africa (RCF Africa II) (2002-2006). RCF was developed in response to the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and within the context of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) with its vision of bringing Africa into the mainstream of world development. The objective of RCF is poverty reduction and sustainable human development, an objective that is shared with NEPAD, and it focuses on four inter-related strategic support areas:

- i) **strengthening democratic and participatory governance;**
- ii) **making globalization work for Africa;**
- iii) **conflict prevention, peace-building and disaster management; and**
- iv) **reducing the HIV/AIDS threat to and impact on Africa.**

These focus areas were selected through broad-based and wide ranging consultations within the region, as well as from the results of the mid-term review of the first RCF, evaluations of several regional programmes, and lessons learned in other inter-country programmes. The intent of RCF Africa II was to complement the global cooperation framework (GCF), particularly in supporting regional initiatives in basically the same areas as the GCF (participation, governance and crises), but enabling greater focus on African priority issues.

Through RCF, UNDP Africa aims to help develop coalitions of action among African partners, as well as partnerships within the United Nations system, and with the private sector both in Africa and in developed countries. This would in turn help UNDP Africa articulate and implement regional programmes and projects that address issues in the four strategic areas. This includes support to the transition from the Organization of African Unity to the African Union (AU), and to the operationalization of NEPAD.

Each of the substantive development dimensions (governance, globalization, conflict prevention, peace-building and disaster management, and HIV/AIDS) of the RCF has several key regional interventions:

1. under **globalization** – strengthening micro-finance institutions and Enterprise Africa; pro-poor economic policies and the trade negotiation project;
2. under **governance** – Africa Governance Forum, NLTPS, transition to the African Union, NEPAD programme, African Peer Review mechanism;
3. under **HIV/AIDS** – HIV/AIDS and development; Southern Africa Capacity Initiative; and
4. under **conflict prevention** – peace-building initiative, and the Peace and Security Agenda for the AU.

RCF also includes a regional project on Gender Mainstreaming. (See Annex I for list of regional projects).⁴⁶

46. List of projects in UNDP Regional Programme for Africa 2002-2006

RCF is managed centrally at UNDP Headquarters by the Regional Bureau of Africa (RBA) and through designated Resident Representatives (for selected projects) and SURFs/Regional Centres. In July 2003, UNDP's Strategic Management Team decided to integrate its corporate regional programming with that of the global SURF/Regional Centres, managed by UNDP's Bureau of Development Policy (BDP). Regional programming within this integrated framework is seen as a key to accelerating the application of knowledge management techniques, and the development of communities of practice.

RCF Africa II (2002-2006) estimated the allocation of US \$101 million from UNDP core resources and US \$70 million from non-core (government cost-sharing, third-party cost-sharing, trust funds and other resources) resources – i.e. a total of US \$171 million – for the entire programme cycle.

II. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

At the annual session of the Executive Board in June 2004, the Associate Administrator indicated that UNDP would undertake forward looking evaluations prior to drafting and submitting new RCFs to assess the effectiveness of the overall approach of the RCF in each of the four regional programmes. Since the RCF for RBA ends in 2006, actions have already begun to conduct individual outcome evaluations by the regional programme. Six outcome/programme evaluations are envisaged for RCF, most of which are now complete (see Annex II). UNDP's Evaluation Office (EO) has been requested to conduct an independent evaluation of RCF, bringing together evidence from the completed individual programme/outcome evaluations, and report to the Executive Board on development results achieved by the RCF⁴⁷. It was felt that such an evaluation was necessary to ascertain – with statistics, indicators, as well as examples, narratives and success and non-success stories – if the methods used were the 'best' ways to use scarce resources. This evaluation is being carried out within this context.

The evaluation will assess the overall programme performance and outcomes of RCF Africa II (2002-2006) covering its scope and range, policy advisory services and knowledge management. Findings of the evaluation will provide inputs into the next RCF for the region. Specific objectives of the planned independent evaluation of the RCF are as follows:

1. Assess the achievement of the intended organizational goals and development results, highlighting key results of outputs and outcomes, lessons learned and good practices both as they relate to UNDP's specified programme goals and in relation to broader national strategies in the region.
2. Assess performance of RCF and specify the development results achieved in the area of policy advice, capacity development and knowledge management within the core results areas that the regional programme has focused on, and assess the scope and range of strategic partnerships formed.
3. Based on the actual results, ascertain how RCF has helped strategically position UNDP to establish its comparative advantage or niche as a major upstream global policy advisor for poverty reduction and sustainable human development and as a knowledge-based organization in the region.
4. Identify innovative approaches used within the RCF programme project portfolio, their related outcomes and lessons learned within UNDP and in programme countries.

III. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation will be conducted as a meta-evaluation, drawing on the conclusion of outcome evaluations undertaken during the period of the RCF for each of the regional programmes, and will be largely based on secondary data. The evaluation will assess the contributions of UNDP through the RCF to development results. This assessment is expected to strengthen the formulation of the next regional programme. The evaluation will undertake a thorough assessment of all outcome/programme evalua-

47. Statement by Associate Administrator to the Executive Board, 17 June 2004, Item 5: Country Programmes and related matters, Executive Board of the UNDP and the UNFPA, 14-25 June 2004, Geneva.

tions undertaken in the region during the period of the RCF. In assessing the strategic importance, relevance, and development effectiveness of the RCF, the evaluation will cover five key areas, inter alia:

1. programme performance of RCF programme portfolio and development results achieved;
2. organizational strategy and modality/mechanisms (including linkages to the Multi-Year Funding Framework or MYFF) of delivering service lines and their effectiveness;
3. overall institutional results;
4. resource mobilization results; and
5. lessons learned and future directions.

In addition, the evaluation will examine the following:

1. The extent to which RCF has addressed the four development dimensions and the attainment of immediate objectives.
2. Strategic focus of RCF support and its relevance to country and regional priorities, including relevance to MDGs.
3. Synergic relationships between various components of RCF (for example, linkages between the four development dimensions and human development issues).
4. Synergies and alignment of RCF support with other initiatives and partnerships, including United Nations Development Assistance Framework/country programmes, GCF, as well as cross-cutting or cross-practice linkages (for example, gender and women's empowerment). Such an assessment may also include an examination of how RCF leveraged its resources and those of others towards achievement of results, and the respective contributions of advocacy, analytical work and networking of RCF to the achievement of MDGs.
5. The relevance and quality of SURF support to RCF programmes and projects, and value added as well as cost effectiveness of the SURF mechanism in delivering RCF products.
6. Institutional and management arrangements of RBA and the regional centre in Southern Africa for programming, managing, monitoring and evaluating the regional programmes.

7. Institutional arrangements by BDP for programming, delivery and monitoring of implementation of the RCF at Headquarters level, at the sub-regional level (SURFs) and at the country level.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation will utilize the methodology for meta-evaluation of UNDP's RCFs developed by the EO (see Annex IV). The meta-evaluation will review and validate findings and data from existing evaluations (i.e. comprehensive desk review and analysis of outcome and project evaluations and other self assessment reports); conduct selective spot checks, i.e. in-country project visits and consultations with RCF stakeholders on the ground (a sample of three to four countries/locations); triangulate sources of available data and information; and use triangulated in-depth interviews and/or focus group discussions with a variety of stakeholders.

Triangulation of information and data sources will constitute the primary methodology for the assessment. The concept of triangulation refers to empirical evidence gathered through three major sources of information: perception, validation and documentation. Validation of the information and findings will be achieved through cross-referencing of sources. This means that document reviews will be supplemented by interviews and focus group discussions with key informants and/or stakeholders at both UNDP Headquarters and the country offices that will be visited. If necessary, a rapid questionnaire and/or informal snap survey would be used to provide quick information on the programme. The evaluation team will consult with Headquarters-based specialists and UNDP's key partner agencies and institutions in the region in order to obtain a broad range of views. More details of the analytical and evaluation techniques to be used are given below:

Desk reviews: The evaluation team will review the RCF, its constituent projects and other related initiatives and key documents to extract information and identify key trends and issues. This will then be used to develop key questions and criteria – including a survey – for analysis, and to compile relevant data during the preparatory phase of the evaluation. Prior to country visits, the team will analyse all outcome/programme evaluations under-

taken by UNDP during the RCF period. The team will also undertake additional desk reviews based on interactions with country and regional offices and other focal points for RCF activities during and after country visits.

Review and analysis by evaluation team: The overall evaluation methodology, approach and programme of work will be agreed between EO and the evaluation team leader before the start of the evaluation. The evaluation team will assemble in New York in mid-September 2006 for orientation and briefing. The team will then work both on their own and together. The team leader (and possibly one other team member) will come to UNDP New York in early November 2006 for deliberation on the emerging findings, lessons, recommendations and good practices; and to prepare an initial report before moving on to the final stages of the evaluation.

Survey: RCF's work is meant to influence and impact the work of country offices, countries, donors, other development partners and constituencies in the region. To the extent possible, the evaluation team will review and analyse data collected by the ongoing corporate and partnership surveys being conducted by UNDP to ascertain the effectiveness of RCF's work particularly in relation to policy advice, knowledge management and networking, and its integration into UNDP's work. This data will also help the team obtain the perceptions of key partners and clients on the outcomes and effectiveness of the RCF approach.

Visits to a sample of country offices and regional centres: Based on consultations with Headquarters Units, a sample of at least six representative countries and five partner institutions in each of these countries will be visited by the international team to validate the findings of the desk reviews and the information and views gleaned from the interviews.

Country visits will also be used to identify good practices and lessons for the future at both the country and corporate levels. In consultation with BDP and RBX, EO will select the sample countries on the basis of the following factors:

balance of programme and project portfolio, geographical locations of programmes and projects, and lessons learning potential.

The international team members will each spend a total of three to five days per country and if necessary, will be supported by a locally recruited consultant⁴⁸. The main purpose of the field visits will be to: (a) obtain on-site knowledge of how RCF work links to country-level priorities and vertical integration; (b) obtain the views of government, national stakeholders and the United Nations country team; (c) bring some level of specificity and context to the assessment; and (d) come up with contextual findings and recommendations that can complement the desk-based analyses.

Finalization of report: The last stage of the assessment will be devoted to report writing and further triangulation of country-specific data and findings with Headquarters' sources. The draft final report will be made available to EO by early November 2006, and will also be submitted to RBA for review. The evaluation team leader will travel to New York in early December 2006 to present the final draft evaluation report. The team leader will finalize the evaluation report after the Headquarters consultation/validation process and will make it available to EO by early January 2007 at the latest.

V. TEAM COMPOSITION

An international consultancy firm (or international team of consultants) will undertake the assessment. A team leader will be appointed by EO. Consultants will undertake selected country visits. The team will also include a designated task manager from EO to support the team at Headquarters and during country visits.

The composition of the evaluation team should reflect the independent and substantive results-focus of the exercise. Team composition should also reflect cross-cultural experience in development and in evaluation including expertise in poverty, governance, peace-building and conflict prevention, HIV/AIDS and gender. The team leader must have a demonstrative capacity in strategic thinking and policy advice

48. A standard format will be prepared by the team leader for country-level data collection.

and in the evaluation and management of complex programmes. In general, team members must possess educational qualifications in the Social Sciences or related disciplines. The team is also expected to be familiar with UNDP modus operandi and to have extensive knowledge of organizational and institutional changes, and of management and modalities of impacting changes through advisory services and advocacy, etc.

VI. DURATION AND COSTS

Section IX below provides the proposed timeline for this evaluation. All costs of this evaluation will be borne by RBA.

VII. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The final evaluation report should be a 25-30 paged analytical report, excluding annexes, detailing key findings, good practices and clear recommendations for the next RCF for RBA, taking into account UNDP's corporate priorities reflected in UNDP's Multi-year Funding Framework and MDGs.

VIII. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

EO will manage the evaluation process, provide backstopping support and ensure the coordination and liaison with concerned agencies at the Headquarters level as well as at the country level. EO will be responsible for the production of the evaluation report and presentation of the same to the Executive Board.

IX. TIMELINE FOR EVALUATION OF RCF AFRICA II

Key tasks responsibility July-December 2006

- Call for proposals from interested institutions with costs detailing methodology, sample survey format, country level data collection format etc.
- Identify and recruit team leader and evaluators or institution based in Africa (EO)
- Launch evaluation
- Evaluation team to review findings of UNDP corporate surveys/evaluations
- Evaluation team to conduct select country visits and data collection (as needed)
- Submit draft initial report (Team Leader - TL)
- Debrief UNDP stakeholders in consultations with Headquarters/regional units (EO)
- Submit final report by January 2007 (TL)

List of People Consulted

UNDP REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR AFRICA ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Hakim Ben Hammouda, Director, TRID, UNECA, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Mary Chinery Hesse, Vice-Chairman of the National Development Planning Commission, Ghana
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H.E. Mrs. Najat Al-Hajjaji, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to UNOG

H.E. Samuel Amehou, Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Benin
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