

Terms of Reference

CONTEXT AND PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION

The Human Development Report (HDR) was first launched in 1990 with the single goal of putting people back at the centre of the development process in terms of economic debate, policy and advocacy. The goal was both massive and simple, with far-ranging implications—going beyond income to assess the level of people’s long-term well-being. Bringing about development of the people, by the people, and for the people, and emphasizing that the goals of development are choices and freedoms. — Human Development Report website

Human Development Reports (HDRs) advanced the view that human development is about broadening people’s choices. Thereby, HDRs have shifted the development focus away from a growth-centred approach to a broader notion of development by addressing the multidimensional needs of people and empowering them to act in pursuit of fulfilling these capabilities. National human development reports (NHDR) took this global message to the national context.

Ever since their inception in 1992, NHDRs have been the main channel of UNDP dialogue with stakeholders in programme countries, particularly decision makers at the national/regional level and civil society organizations. Over 470 reports have been produced at the regional, national and subnational levels.

Yet to this date, there has not been any systematic evaluation of the strategic relevance of the NHDRs, either corporately or at the country level. Consequently, through a consultative process with Headquarters units, initiated by a request from the *Human Development Report Office*

(HDRO), this evaluation was included in UNDP’s evaluation agenda.

This is a strategic, forward-looking assessment that is expected to provide valuable lessons for UNDP Headquarters, country offices and NHDR teams for improving the influence of future NHDRs in promoting human development approaches.

SCOPE

To understand and assess the influence of NHDRs, it is necessary to look at NHDRs since their *inception* as the conditions under which they were produced, the practices involved, etc., have evolved over time. Moreover, NHDRs should be viewed as a system, rather than as a collection of individual reports. At the country level, this system involves the networks/partnerships established in the course of production and dissemination of reports to state organizations, academics, civil society organizations, donors, etc.

The **production processes** covered by the assessment will include selection of themes and the writing team, peer review mechanisms, consultation processes with civil society, relevant government line ministries and statistical bodies.

The **dissemination processes** that the assessment focuses on will begin with the launch of the report and cover ongoing activities to promote the key messages.

The **outputs and outcomes** considered will be in the realms of changes in development policies, practices and priorities; innovative policy proposals; enhancing democratic space to advance development alternatives; strengthening networks of human development activists; raising awareness of human

development approaches; influencing civil society thinking and capacity to advocate human development approaches; engendering other human development instruments; and strengthening the statistical capacity of the country to track human poverty.

At the corporate level, the assessment will cover the framework under which the reports are conceived and produced, including the incentives, guidance and capacity to support the effort. The assessment will also focus on the influence of NHDRs on UNDP's policies and programming.

KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS

To assess the strategic relevance and importance of the NHDR system to UNDP, this evaluation will be guided by three sets of questions:

1. How strategically relevant and necessary is the system of NHDRs to UNDP?
2. What differences have the NHDRs made (in terms of results and processes) at the corporate and at the country level? Are these consistent with human development approaches and are these changes sustainable?
3. What are the (corporate and country-level) enabling conditions for NHDRs to contribute towards development effectiveness of programme countries? In other words, how effective are the corporate policies, priorities, incentives, guidance, etc. in supporting NHDRs?

EVALUATION CRITERIA

As outlined in the methodological framework, the performance of the NHDR system will be assessed in terms of:

- Relevance—in terms of the human development needs of the country
- Effectiveness—in terms of influencing the policy framework and intellectual approaches to human development, enhancing government and civil society

capacity to formulate human development strategies, improving statistical capacity of the country, etc.

- Sustainability—in terms of promoting lasting changes
- Efficiency—in terms of catalytic impact and mobilizing partnerships
- Creativity and innovation—in terms of generating new ideas and instruments to advance the ideals of human development.

APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

The terms of reference for the evaluation was prepared in consultation with a focus group at Headquarters, regional centres and human development activists worldwide that are part of the Human Development Network. The team leader then developed a conceptual framework in close collaboration with an expert panel. This framework was discussed by the team members via email. Following this, an inception/methodology meeting was held, where the team members were briefed by the Evaluation Office and other Headquarters units. The team developed a detailed methodological framework and a work plan.

The assessment will begin with a preparatory phase to take stock of available information, followed by a pilot phase to fine-tune the proposed methodology. This will be followed by country missions to conduct in-depth country studies in each region, and an assessment of the mutual influence between NHDRs and Headquarters programming and policies.

Preparatory phase and desk review

With the help of the Evaluation Office, the team will carry out a scoping exercise to 'map' the NHDR system of reports in terms of their historical interventions, their reported influence in the programme countries, and reviews by partners, including civil society organizations. To this end, the team will undertake the following:

- desk reviews of NHDRs and scrutiny of relevant discussions in the HDR networks¹¹
- analysis of NHDR evaluations conducted thus far
- surveys to gather primary information (country offices and selected Headquarters units).

A background document will be prepared based on this study. The evaluation team will utilize this report in addition to material collected during the country visits.

Framework for evaluation methodology

A framework for methodology is to be conducted in three stages. An international expert panel in collaboration with the team leader and task manager developed a preliminary conceptual framework for the evaluation. This was discussed by the evaluation team in a workshop and received inputs from UNDP Headquarters units, which helped develop a methodological framework (see Inception Report, which is available through the online version of this report at www.undp.org/eo). The pilot studies will operationalize this framework and lessons from pilot exercises will help refine the methodology further.

Headquarters study

To analyse UNDP policies and practices towards NHDRs and the influence of NHDRs on UNDP's policies and programming, the evaluation team will conduct desk studies and a series of interviews at Headquarters. Relevant Headquarters stakeholders (from the regional bureaus, Bureau for Development Policy, HDRO and the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery) will be interviewed using a semi-structured approach in an effort to track the policies, incentives, guidance, etc. of Headquarters units towards NHDRs since their inception. A comprehensive desk review of relevant documents (including policy documents in the Bureau for Development Policy, Multi-Year Funding Framework reports,

various evaluation reports, Reports of the Administrator, etc.) will be conducted. Results from the Headquarters study will inform the country missions and other in-depth studies of country case studies.

Preliminary assessments at the country level

Prior to pilot and country missions, a brief report will be prepared to operationalize the methodological framework (see Inception Report) to the country context. To this end, desk research will be conducted that documents the key issues discussed in the framework that includes, but is not restricted to, the following i) country context as analysed in the Country Cooperation Framework/UN Development Assistance Framework and in terms of receptiveness to human development approaches, civil society mobilization and participation, state of public debates of development agenda, etc.; ii) history of NHDRs; iii) processes followed in authoring the report and dissemination practices within UNDP; iv) mapping of outcomes in the policy arena, intellectual thinking, government and civil society capacity, and statistical capacity; and v) possible evaluation instruments and indicators. In order to contextualize the NHDRs within the activities of UNDP, the report should familiarize readers with the relevant UNDP/UN documents such as the Country Programme Documents, Project Documents, etc.

This report will provide the basis for the activities of the country mission.

In-depth studies: pilot phase

The pilot countries as well as countries for in-depth study were selected based on the preparatory work and consultations with Headquarters units and regional centres. Brazil and India were chosen as the pilot country studies. Lessons learned from the pilot phase will be shared with the entire evaluation team and will help refine the methodology. Brazil has been chosen as a pilot country based on the influence of NHDRs at national, regional and local levels

11 HDR Network and HDR Statistics Network.

in resource allocation, and for its innovative use of human development instruments.

In-depth country case studies

Detailed country case studies will be carried out with logistical support from the Evaluation Office. Country visits, field studies and desk research will be used to operationalize the methodologies and to assess the influence of NHDRs at the country level.

Based on consultations at Headquarters and the regional centre, five to eight countries will be selected for in-depth study through country missions and 12 to 13 countries for in-depth desk research. These studies will also be used to identify best practices and lessons learned.

At least one week prior to the country visit, mission leaders shall submit the work-plan/terms of reference for the intended activities in the country. This brief note shall map out a strategy to operationalize the evaluation terms of reference in the context of the country studied. To this end, the report shall identify the key evaluation instruments and indicators, as well as a preliminary map of stakeholders, beneficiaries and informants.

Each country mission will take no more than 10 days and will be supported by a national consultant, if needed. In each country, the team will meet with key beneficiaries and stakeholders—government, NGOs, civil society organizations, UNDP staff and the country team that produced the NHDR.

Each country-level study should provide the means to assess the questions posed in the methodological framework (see Inception Report).

Peer review process

The methodological framework will be subjected to review by an expert advisory panel. Recommendations will be incorporated into the pilot exercises. Upon completion of pilot exercises there will be an advisory panel review of the interim report.

EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team shall be composed of a team leader, principal consultant and other consultants. All members will work in close collaboration with each other and the task manager. Each member will perform in-depth country analyses for countries assigned to him/her. The final report will be prepared by the team leader and the principal consultant in close collaboration with other team members and in consultation with the task manager.

TASKS

The tasks of the team will include: i) developing a methodological framework for the exercise; ii) conducting a Headquarters study to document and assess the mutual influence between the NHDRs and the corporate policies and practices of UNDP (the framework shall be developed and operationalized by developing instruments to conduct the study, such as semi-structured interviews, and through analysis of pertinent documentation); iii) conducting country missions (including pilot study) and desk reviews and preparing reports that present context, findings, lessons learned and recommendations; iv) preparing regional reports based on country assessments; and v) preparing a global assessment report based on the regional experiences.

OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

1. Methodology for the assessment of NHDR

The evaluation team shall develop an appropriate methodology in collaboration with the task manager. To operationalize the methodology, the evaluation team shall develop appropriate indicators and surveys:

- **Indicators for performance assessment.** A set of country specific indicators will be developed by the evaluation team. This analysis will be supplemented and validated by targeted surveys.
- **Design and implementation of surveys.** Surveys will be conducted to obtain viewpoints regarding the

influence of NHDRs from UNDP officials, the country team that produced the NHDRs, decision makers, line-agency officials, local officials, participating civil society organizations and academics in the programme country or region. Web-based discussions will also take place during this time. Specific questions related to the evaluation will be posted on selected networks to gather data and input from UNDP country offices and staff globally. With assistance from the Evaluation Office, the evaluation team will manage and collate data from the surveys and web-based discussions.

2. Report on the Headquarters-based study

This study has two distinct purposes. The first is to map the universe of NHDR processes and outcomes in all countries that produced NHDRs. The second is to assess the mutual influence, if any, between NHDRs and policies and practices of UNDP. With support from the evaluation team and in close collaboration with the task manager, the principal consultant will prepare a report detailing the evaluation instruments used, findings, lessons learned and recommendations.

3. Country & regional report(s)

Upon completion of each country mission, the team and/or consultant shall prepare and submit a country report. These reports shall highlight the country context as well as the issues and challenges faced by the NHDR system and shall be gender sensitive. They will assess the performance of the NHDR system in the country based on the outcomes and a detailed narration of the evaluation instruments and indicators used. They must present, among other things, findings supported by evidence and clear recommendations.

The principal consultant and the team leader shall ensure that the final country reports incorporate necessary changes recommended by the review processes. The country report shall be considered completed only after it has been approved by the task manager.

4. The global assessment report

The principal consultant and the team leader will be jointly responsible for preparing the global report synthesizing the findings of the country reports. They shall do so in close collaboration with other team members and the Evaluation Office. The report, in reflecting the country studies, must be gender sensitive. It must present, among other things, findings supported by evidence and clear recommendations.

The global report will be subject to UNDP review as well as to an independent peer review process involving internal and external readers (Advisory Board). The principal consultant will be responsible for incorporating the required changes recommended by the reviewers. The report must be approved by the Evaluation Office to be deemed completed.

The findings from the finalized report will be presented in stakeholder meetings with the key partners at Headquarters—senior management, HDRO, Bureau for Development Policy and regional bureaus. The final printed report should be available for the Executive Board session of January 2006.

TIME FRAME

The assessment exercise is expected to commence in June 2005 and the final report is expected by December 2005.

Evaluation Office
May 2005

EVALUATION TEAM

The team members for this evaluation were as follows:

Ha-Joon Chang is a reader in the faculty of Economics, University of Cambridge, where he has taught since 1990. He is the author of numerous articles and books, including the award-winning (Myrdal Prize, 2003) *Kicking Away the Ladder—Development Strategy in Historical Perspective*

(2002). He has worked as a consultant for many international organizations, including UN agencies, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank. He has been a member of UNDP's Asia-Pacific Advisory Panel on Democratic Governance since 2005. He was the team leader for this evaluation and led the efforts to develop the methodology used in it. He is also the lead author of this report.

Carl Riskin is distinguished professor of economics at Queens College, City University of New York, and senior research scholar at the Weatherhead East Asian Institute, Columbia University. He is the author of *China's Political Economy* (Oxford University Press, 1987) and *Inequality and Poverty in China in the Era of Globalization* (with A.R. Khan, Oxford University Press, 2001), and principal editor of *China's Retreat from Equality* (M.E. Sharpe, 2001). During the past five years he has had no affiliations with NHDRs, but has performed various consultancies for UNDP China. As the principal consultant for this evaluation, he led the pilot mission to India, participated in the pilot mission to Brazil and co-authored this report.

Celina Souza is currently a research fellow at the Centre for Human Resources at the Federal University of Bahia, Brazil, where she has also been a professor in the Department of Finance and Public Policies. She is the author of *Constitutional Engineering in Brazil: The Politics of Federalism and Decentralization* (1997) and has authored a number of journal articles on Brazilian federalism, public policies and public finance. She has no prior links with UNDP. She led the pilot mission to Brazil, conducted desk studies on Bolivia and Colombia, and co-authored this report.

Sam Moyo is the executive director of the African Institute for Agrarian Studies based in Harare (Zimbabwe) and has more than 25 years of research experience in rural development. His list of published books include: *The Land Question in Zimbabwe* (1995, Sapes Books, Harare) and *Land Reform under Structural Adjustment*

in Zimbabwe (2000, Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala). He carried out consultancies for UNDP in 1997/1998 and in 2004, including a regional background paper for the HDR 2004 on 'Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World'. He led the mission to Zambia and conducted the desk reviews for Botswana and the United Republic of Tanzania.

Mohamed Ould Maouloud, from Mauritania, is active in that country's civil society. He is a professor of history at the University of Nouakchott and has produced a report on ethnic conflict in the West African subregion (Mauritania, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau). He is a founding member of the vigil for peace in West Africa. He has no links to UNDP. He led the mission to Senegal.

George Kossaiji is director of Dar al Tanmiya (Consultants in Development) in Beirut, Lebanon. For 30 years prior he worked for the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, and spent the last decade of his career there as chief of Human Development Section. He has published several articles and studies on labour migration and labour markets, human development, poverty eradication and Palestinian issues. He has no prior links to UNDP. He led the mission to Egypt.

Oscar Yujnovsky, an Argentinean citizen, has been a development consultant since 2000. He was undersecretary of state for international cooperation and ambassador at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, and director of the Center for Urban and Regional Studies, an NGO in Buenos Aires, before joining UNDP in 1990. He worked for UNDP as a senior adviser in the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean in New York for 10 years before retiring in 2000. He has published several books and journal articles on human development, social and economic development and urban development. He has undertaken a number of consultancies for UNDP. He led the missions to Albania and Armenia.