

Evaluation Brief: ICPE Uruguay

The country programme of UNDP in Uruguay has been guided by the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the period 2016–2020 and the UNDP Strategic Plan, 2014–2017. The country programme focused on three areas: (1) inclusive and equitable development; (2) sustainable development with innovation; and (3) democratic development based on institutional quality, decentralization and human rights.

Conclusions

UNDP demonstrates satisfactory progress towards most country programme outputs. It has, for the most part, delivered relevant and effective contributions to the country programme outcomes. The Government of Uruguay, civil society, academia and the private sector consider UNDP to be a reliable and responsive development partner, strategically positioned to continue and scale up its support to Uruguay’s development with more innovative and accelerated development solutions.

UNDP Uruguay has established a substantive and technically relevant programme with a balanced

amount of administration and fund/project management support that ensures a financially sustainable business model to operate in a high-income country. However, given Uruguay’s level of development and current national capacity, UNDP has been slow in transitioning to a role of providing more integrated and innovative development solutions, primarily in areas which the country is not yet able to address on its own with national capacity.

There is room for UNDP to improve its efficiency and systems thinking for the integration of development solutions. The programme lacks theories of change that consider systems dynamics with mapped integrated cross-sectoral, intergovernmental, inter-agency and multi-stakeholder engagements to improve complementarities and synergies with more coordinated and timely investments.

UNDP has made relevant contributions to ensure the necessary legal framework for gender and ethnicity equality in Uruguay. Significant steps are being taken to address other structural barriers to women’s empowerment, such as the care of small children through Child and Family Care Centres among other

Country programme funding sources, 2016–2019



Programme expenditure by thematic area, 2016–2019



initiatives. Nevertheless, UNDP still lacks a theory of change that more holistically integrates in the programme the broad vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and leaving no one behind.

UNDP has made relevant contributions to introduce alternatives that can help Uruguay to transition its current production matrix into a more sustainable production model. UNDP has prioritized the incorporation of the “productive landscape approach” as a means to address the significant challenge of helping the country to integrate the benefits of economic development while ensuring better conservation of its natural resources.

Considering that for the most part, the Government of Uruguay has enough capacity at the central level, the UNDP programme should have been further focused on the local level, where inequalities persist and there are limited capacities for effective decentralization.

Given Uruguay’s net contributor country status and the potential of the Uruguayan International Cooperation Agency (Agencia Uruguaya de Cooperación Internacional (AUCI)), the UNDP contribution to South-South and triangular cooperation initiatives fell short of helping AUCI and the bilateral cooperation community to map, match and facilitate opportunities to import/export/exchange knowledge and articulate cooperation.

Recommendations

UNDP should improve programme performance with theories of change that adequately consider systems dynamics to map and integrate multi-stakeholder and sectors and improve complementarities and synergies through more coordinated and timely investments.

UNDP should clarify how it will advance on further positioning its integrator role to help Uruguay with innovative and accelerated solutions to inclusive sustainable development in the context of the graduation to high-income and net contributor country status.

UNDP should develop a strategy that holistically integrates in the programme the broad vision of the 2030 Agenda for

leaving no one behind. It should still prioritize attention to gender equality and women’s empowerment, building upon the lessons and success of the country’s early childcare system, but better integrate care of persons with a disability and the elderly, which also constitute a significant structural impediment to gender equality and women’s empowerment.

UNDP should work in partnership with environmental counterparts and the productive sector to develop a conceptual model and strategy to scale up and generate innovations that expand and accelerate the transformation of the country’s current production matrix towards a more sustainable production model.

UNDP should focus its attention at the local level to help decentralization efforts and ensure the capacity development of local governments. At the central level, UNDP should focus its support on improving the effectiveness and efficiency of public policies by providing more integrated and innovative development solutions.

UNDP, with the support of its Regional Bureau, should more systematically help to identify, map, match and facilitate opportunities for Uruguay to learn from other countries and experiences and to collaborate with other countries, providing more technical value to South-South and triangular cooperation.