

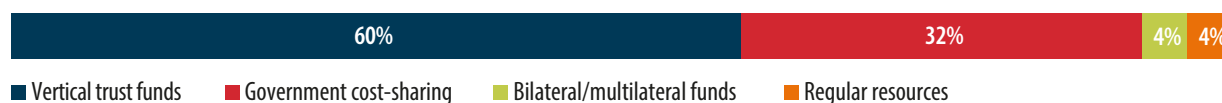
# Evaluation Brief: Turkmenistan

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been operating in Turkmenistan for over 20 years, during which its programme has been shaped by the country's development priorities and challenges. The current programme under review (2016-2020) responds to the priorities identified in the National Programme for Socio-Economic Development of Turkmenistan (2011-2030) and its supporting medium-term strategies for rural and

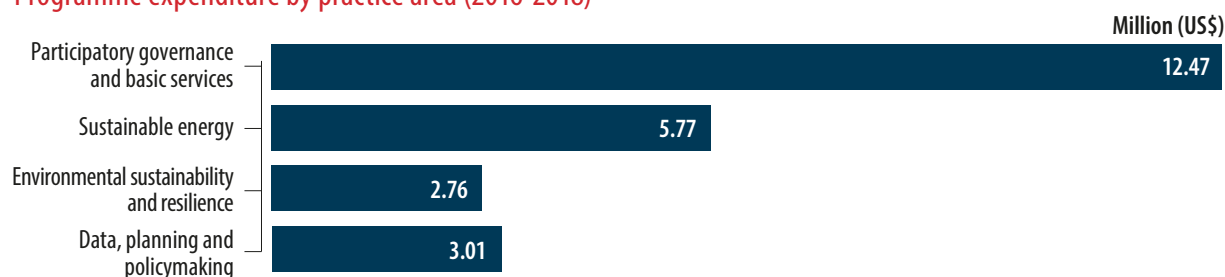
socio-economic development. The programme focuses on four key areas that are aligned with the global and regional sustainable development agenda priorities, reinforcing the links between managing natural resources, economic development and human development. The Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP conducted an Independent Country Programme Evaluation of Turkmenistan in 2019.

## Total programme expenditure (2016-2018)

US\$24,012,653  
Funding sources, 2016-2018



## Programme expenditure by practice area (2016-2018)



## Key findings and conclusions

**UNDP has played an important role in supporting the Government in implementing its national development plans and strategies and established itself as a strong, reliable, valued and trusted development partner in Turkmenistan.** UNDP's strategic position is complemented by its lean and committed country office team, with a high level of expertise and good relations with the government counterparts, which support efficient implementation and raise its credibility.

**The demand-driven nature of UNDP's work – while addressing the country needs – has to some extent contributed to the fragmentation of interventions, reducing their potential for scaling-up or replication to bring about system-level changes.** The broad nature of the UNDP country programme has allowed for more flexibility in response to demands. However, it has also led to a fragmentation across some parts of the country programme with an accumulation of somewhat incoherent small-sized projects, leading to limited catalytic effects within a large set of reforms it aspires to influence.

**UNDP has played a leading role in promoting Agenda 2030 and supporting the Government in integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into domestic plans and policies. However, faster progress is needed to establish an evidence base with reliable statistics for the SDGs and related policies.** It is early to assess the extent to which all measures and outputs will lead to the desired outcome, as the systematic costing of SDG implementation and monitoring still needs to take place.

**UNDP has made valuable contributions in establishing the policy and institutional framework laying the foundations for furthering its human rights work.** More effort is required to meet respective treaty body recommendations, particularly from the perspective of strengthening participatory governance and access to rights. UNDP's continuous investment in this area will ensure UN principles and core values are consistently promoted and protected to benefit the country and its citizens.

**UNDP has played a vital role in strengthening the Government's response to tuberculosis (TB),**

**with catalytic effects on quality and access to treatment and social integration of patients and their families.** Further and consistent effort, however, is needed in the area of persons with disability and social service provisions.

**UNDP's multipronged strategy to strengthen institutional and technical capacities combined with policy advice, advocacy and demonstration pilots has led to important progress in climate change adaptation and mitigation and promoting sustainable energy solutions.** Now, UNDP must focus on and facilitate knowledge transfer of successful green technologies to upscale and institutionalize results for sustainability.

**UNDP's country programme portfolio has a weak gender dimension, with limited efforts to mainstream gender in pursuit of transformative effects on women.** The establishment of the Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan is a positive step and should help integrate the gender dimension, properly address the structural causes of inequality and apply a rights-based approach across the country programme.

## Recommendations

**RECOMMENDATION 1.** Guided by a strong theory of change, UNDP should consolidate its country programme portfolio through the integration of themes and strengthen the focus and depth of interventions in a limited number of thematic areas to ensure stronger outcomes.

**RECOMMENDATION 2.** UNDP should continue its coordination role in driving the SDGs and Agenda 2030 in Turkmenistan and use its strategic position to strongly advocate for the inclusion and contribution of civil society, private sector and other development partners in the fulfilment of the SDGs.

**RECOMMENDATION 3.** UNDP should capitalize on good partnership and collaboration with the Government in the area of human rights to advocate for and

support implementation of its international obligations (Universal Periodic Review, ratified international conventions and treaties).

**RECOMMENDATION 4.** UNDP should evaluate the effective models of social service provision from the perspective of their scalability and focus on their promotion, replication and institutionalization.

**RECOMMENDATION 5.** UNDP should continue supporting the Government in its response to TB as it encounters challenges emerging from the new forms of the disease.

**RECOMMENDATION 6.** Building on achievements, UNDP should deepen its engagement with the Government in areas

of climate change adaptation and mitigation, climate-smart agriculture and sustainable energy solutions with a strong focus on knowledge-sharing, outreach and replication to promote upscaling and institutionalization. To facilitate the implementation of policies, UNDP should continue to support building local capacities, explore innovative financing models involving the private sector and non-traditional donors, and ensure that government ownership is strong in the areas supported by UNDP.

**RECOMMENDATION 7.** UNDP should integrate gender dimensions into all its work and utilize its strategic position and relationship with the Government to advocate for and address the structural causes of women's rights and inequality.