



INDEPENDENT COUNTRY PROGRAMME REVIEW CAMEROON



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Foreword

It is my pleasure to present the Independent Country Programme Review for UNDP in Cameroon, the second country-level assessment conducted by the Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the country. This review covers the programme period from 2018 to 2019.

Cameroon is a lower-middle-income country. Its development is guided by the Cameroon Vision 2035, according to which Cameroon aspires to join the ranks of industrialized, upper-middle-income nations with low poverty rates, strong economic growth and functioning democracies. The country has faced challenges in recent years, with the Boko Haram crisis affecting the Far North and beyond in the Lake Chad Basin, refugee influxes from the Central African Republic in the eastern part of the country, and a socio-political crisis in the Anglophone regions of the Northwest and Southwest.

The review found that UNDP in Cameroon has made significant progress in implementing the recommendations of the country programme evaluation (Assessment of Development Results) conducted in 2016, notably strengthening its strategic positioning in the country. UNDP has not only expanded its programme since 2016 but has found an appropriate balance between important upstream interventions – such as support to the development of the new national development strategy – and downstream support to highly vulnerable communities in the Far North and other regions of the country. With respect

to the implementation of the current country programme, while many CPD targets are not likely to be met, the UNDP country programme is laying a solid foundation for the next country programme.






Moving forward, UNDP will need to ensure that the next UN cooperation framework and country programme document provide an appropriate framework for structuring and monitoring UNDP's contributions to the country's development. Further work is needed to strengthen monitoring, evaluation and reporting. UNDP should also continue to focus on the most vulnerable groups and to mainstream gender and women's equality in all its interventions.

I would like to thank the Government of Cameroon, the various national stakeholders, and colleagues at the UNDP Cameroon country office and the Regional Bureau for Africa for their support throughout the review. I trust this report will be of use to readers seeking to achieve a better understanding of the broad support that UNDP has provided, including what has worked and what has not, and in prompting discussions on how UNDP may be best positioned to contribute to sustainable development in Cameroon in the years to come.



Oscar A. Garcia
Director
Independent Evaluation Office

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADR	Assessment of Development Results
BEM	Municipal Employment Office
CO	Country office
CPD	Country programme document
CFAF	African Financial Community Franc
CEOCA	Centers for Listening, Orientation, Advice and Guidance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
ICPE	Independent Country Programme Evaluation
ICPR	Independent Country Programme Review
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMEP	Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
MINDDEVEL	Ministry of Decentralization and Local Development
PAREC	Support to Economic Resilience Programme
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
TRIDOM II	Transboundary Biodiversity Conservation in the Dja-Odzala-Minkébé Region Project
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNCF	United Nations Cooperation Framework
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
UN-Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
WFP	World Food Programme
YEIC	Youth Entrepreneurship Innovation Challenge

Evaluation Brief: ICPR Cameroon

Cameroon is a lower-middle-income country located in Central Africa, known for its cultural and geographic diversity. Development in the country is guided by Cameroon Vision 2035, through which Cameroon aspires to join the ranks of industrialized, upper-middle-income nations with low poverty rates, strong economic growth and a functioning democracy. In recent years, Cameroon has experienced instability. The country is grappling with the Boko Haram crisis affecting the Far North and beyond in the Lake Chad Basin; the resulting arrival and displacement of refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons; refugee influxes from Central African Republic; and, since October 2016, a socio-political crisis in the Anglophone regions of the Northwest and Southwest.

The 2018–2020 UNDP country programme is intended to contribute to the realization of two related outcomes of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF):

1. In 2020, women and youth have increased and equitable access to opportunities for decent work and are more economically independent.
2. In 2020, the population (especially vulnerable groups) in intervention zones are more resilient to environmental, social and economic shocks.

The country programme document (CPD) foresaw a total budget of \$36.9 million, of which UNDP would provide \$5.4 million (15 percent) and the Government of Cameroon \$12.2 million (33 percent). The remaining \$19.3 million (52 percent) was to be mobilized. At the end of the first two years of the three-year programme, total expenditures were \$21.1 million (\$4.8 million from UNDP, \$15.6 million from other partners and \$0.7 million from the Government).

In January 2020, UNDP conducted a review of the country programme to assess the extent to which it had implemented the recommendations from an independent country programme evaluation conducted in 2016¹ and to assess UNDP's progress towards outputs and outcomes articulated in the current country programme.

Key findings and conclusions

With respect to implementation of the first recommendation of the previous evaluation, which addressed UNDP's strategic positioning and image, UNDP has significantly strengthened its strategic positioning, re-establishing its role as a trusted partner of the Government. UNDP has played an important role in the development of the new national development strategy 2020–2030. This has taken place, for example, through the participatory preparation of the National Human Development Report 2019, titled *Inclusive Growth, Inequalities and Exclusions*, and by accompanying the Government in each step of the development of the new strategy.

UNDP has also been increasing its interventions in the field of governance. Furthermore, it is maintaining an appropriate balance between upstream and downstream work. UNDP has made progress in strengthening its expertise in gender, and the programme gives strong emphasis to reaching the most vulnerable people: women and youth. However, there is still room for progress in this area. With respect to resource mobilization, which was highlighted in the previous evaluation, UNDP has successfully mobilized resources for the current programme and diversified its partnerships with donors.

As to the current CPD, some progress has been made towards achieving the outputs designed to contribute to the first outcome, increased access to

¹ The evaluation covered the period between 2008 and mid-2016, which was the entire 2008–2012 programme cycle and the first three and a half years of the 2013–2017 cycle.

socioeconomic opportunities, and UNDP is contributing in a modest way to this outcome in the zones of intervention. Results are below target, however, in part due to lack of resources, particularly for the resilience programme. Given the limited scale of intervention, UNDP has a low level of influence on the outcome indicators.

As regards the second outcome, strengthened resilience to environmental, social and economic shocks, UNDP has provided significant support at the strategic level to strengthen capacities for inclusive development. This includes support to the development of the new national development strategy 2020-2030. UNDP is contributing to progress at the local level in terms of stabilization, prevention of violent extremism and early recovery efforts. However, progress in other

areas, such as addressing consequences of climate change, has been limited.

With respect to programme design and management, the UNDAF and CPD outcomes do not provide an appropriate framework for UNDP's work, and reporting is inconsistent and insufficiently results-oriented.

Overall, the review concludes that good progress has been made against the implementation of the recommendations of the previous evaluation. With respect to implementation of the current CPD, even though many targets are not likely to be met, given the short time frame of the programme and the difficult context in which it is being implemented, the UNDP country programme is making progress and provides a foundation for the next country programme.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1. UNDP should continue its main lines of strategic programming, notably support to capacity development for implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the national development plan and other key policies promoting inclusive, sustainable development in line with the 2030 Agenda. It should also continue to support stabilization and prevention of violent extremism and other crises.

Recommendation 2. UNDP should ensure that the UN Cooperation Framework (UNCF) outcomes – and the UNDP country programme – provide an appropriate framework for structuring and monitoring UNDP's contribution to the national development framework and the 2030 Agenda.

Recommendation 3. UNDP should continue to strengthen its monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

Recommendation 4. UNDP should continue its focus on vulnerable groups

and ensure that its programmes are 'leaving no one behind'.

Recommendation 5. UNDP should strengthen its knowledge management, particularly in the area of crisis response.

Recommendation 6. UNDP should seek to increase synergies between teams and interventions, for example between the Support to Economic Resilience Programme (PAREC) and stabilization/crisis prevention and recovery projects working in the same areas.



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducts Independent Country Programme Evaluations (ICPEs) and Independent Country Programme Reviews (ICPRs) to assess UNDP's country-level performance and its strategy in facilitating and leveraging national efforts for achieving development results. The purpose of an ICPE/ICPR is to:

- Support the development of the next UNDP country programme document
- Strengthen accountability of UNDP to national stakeholders
- Strengthen accountability of UNDP to its Executive Board.

UNDP Cameroon was selected for an ICPR because its current country programme is coming to an end and it is submitting a new country programme document (CPD) for approval to the UNDP Executive Board in January 2021. A review is being conducted rather than a comprehensive evaluation as the current country programme is a three-year programme (2018–2020), and the IEO conducted an in-depth country programme evaluation (then called an Assessment of Development Results) in 2016, published in 2017. This ICPR follows up on the previous evaluation's recommendations and provides an overview of UNDP's progress towards the outputs and outcomes in the current CPD. The ICPR is conducted in collaboration with the Government of Cameroon, UNDP Cameroon country office and UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa.

1.1 Methodology and approach

As detailed in the terms of reference (Annex 1), the review will seek to address the following key questions:

1. To what extent has UNDP implemented the recommendations from the previous evaluation, including the recommendation regarding the mainstreaming of gender?
2. How is UNDP progressing towards key outputs identified in its results framework,

and to what extent are these contributing to stated outcomes?

The review team conducted a desk review of primary and secondary sources including country office responses to a preliminary questionnaire. A one-week mission to Cameroon took place in January 2020. During the mission, the review team attended the annual review of the country programme organized by the Government and the UNDP country office. It also conducted interviews on the sidelines of the meeting, in Douala, and following the review meeting, in Yaoundé. The team was able to meet with approximately 60 stakeholders from UNDP, the Government, civil society and other UN agencies (Annex 2). The review team did not visit any project sites, which is a limitation of this review modality.

The review assesses progress towards planned CPD outputs with a view to identifying whether progress is on track, at risk or off track, defined as follows:

- **On track:** Progress is as expected at this stage of implementation and it is likely that the output will be achieved. Standard programme management practices are sufficient.
- **At risk:** Progress is somewhat less than expected at this stage of implementation and restorative action will be necessary if the output is to be achieved. Close performance monitoring is recommended.
- **Off track:** Progress is significantly less than expected at this stage of implementation and the output is not likely to be met given available resources and priorities. Recasting the output may be required.

The review also assesses progress towards the outcome, examining the level of influence UNDP has on outcome indicators as follows:

- **High level of influence:** There is a clear line of contribution from UNDP to changes in the outcome and associated indicators. UNDP might not be the only contributor, but it is a major contributor.

- **Moderate level of influence:** There is a line of contribution from UNDP to changes in the outcome and associated indicators, but either the level of contribution is only modest, or the significance of other factors contributing to changes in the indicator is not known.
- **Low level of influence:** UNDP made little or no contribution to changes in the outcome and associated indicators, or the indicators used do not adequately capture UNDP's contribution. New indicators may need to be developed that meet quality standards and support monitoring and reporting of progress.
- **Insufficient evidence:** There is insufficient evidence that UNDP contributed to changes in the outcome and associated indicators. Evidence about the attribution of changes in the outcome needs to be improved.

The report does not seek to catalogue all results under each output but to provide illustrative examples. The report concludes with recommendations.

1.2 Context and UNDP country programme

Cameroon is a lower-middle-income country located in Central Africa, known for its cultural and geographic diversity. It has two official languages (French and English) and upwards of 250 local languages. Development in the country is guided by Cameroon Vision 2035, through which Cameroon aspires to join the ranks of industrialized, upper-middle-income nations with low poverty rates, strong economic growth and a functioning democracy. In recent years, Cameroon has experienced

instability. The country is grappling with the Boko Haram crisis affecting the Far North and beyond in the Lake Chad Basin; the resulting arrival and displacement of refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons; refugee influxes from the Central African Republic; and, since October 2016, a socio-political crisis in the Anglophone regions of the Northwest and Southwest, which worsened during 2018 and 2019.

The country programme is intended to contribute to the realization of two related UNDAF outcomes.

1. In 2020, women and youth have increased and equitable access to opportunities for decent work and are more economically independent.
2. In 2020, the population (especially vulnerable groups) in intervention zones are more resilient to environmental, social and economic shocks.

The CPD foresaw a total budget of \$36.9 million, of which UNDP would provide \$5.4 million (15 percent) and the Government of Cameroon \$12.2 million (33 percent). The remainder of \$19.3 million (52 percent) was to be mobilized. At the end of the first two years of the three-year programme, total expenditure was \$21.1 million, \$4.8 million from UNDP, \$15.6 million from other partners and \$0.7 million from the Government.

It is noted that shortly after the data collection, while this report was being drafted, the global and country context changed dramatically with the arrival and spread of COVID-19. This report reflects the findings of the evaluation team as of the end of January 2020, before the pandemic hit.



CHAPTER 2

FINDINGS

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2.1 Implementation of the recommendations of the 2016 Assessment of Development Results

This section of the report reviews the 2016 ADR recommendations and analyses the extent to which the country office has implemented them. The focus of the analysis is on the strategic intent of the recommendations and the current situation, recognizing that some details of the original recommendations are not necessarily relevant in the new context.

ADR Recommendation 1: UNDP should concentrate more on results, strengthen its strategic positioning and cultivate its image.²

Finding 1: The UNDP country office has significantly strengthened its strategic positioning since the ADR was carried out in 2016.

UNDP has improved its strategic positioning in recent years, re-establishing its role as a trusted partner of the Government. UNDP has played an important role in the development of the new national development strategy 2020–2030, for example through the participatory preparation of the National Human Development Report 2019, *Inclusive Growth, Inequalities and Exclusions*, and the preparation of several other studies. It also accompanied the Government in each step of the process of developing the new strategy.

The Government has also asked UNDP to assist in elaborating a reconstruction and recovery plan for the North West and South West regions, and in coordinating its implementation. In addition the Government has designated UNDP as the lead development partner to coordinate support for implementation of the new decentralization reform (discussed under finding 2). Furthermore, UNDP has strengthened its role as an actor in the Far North. To strengthen its communications, in 2018 a communications specialist was recruited and a communications strategy was developed and is being implemented.

UNDP has also made some progress implementing the recommendation to strengthen focus on results and identify a small number of intervention areas where it has a comparative advantage. The 2013–2017 country programme action plan included 4 outcomes and 14 outputs; the current CPD, covering 2018 to 2020, is focused on 2 outcomes and 10 outputs. It is being implemented through 14 active projects at the time of the review. However, the CPD structure is such that it makes it difficult to ‘tell the story’ of UNDP’s intended contributions to Cameroon’s development, as discussed further in the section on programme design and management.

ADR Recommendation 2: UNDP should reflect on the possibility of reinvesting in support to strengthening democratic processes and the rule of law.

Finding 2: UNDP’s initial response to the ADR was focused on increasing its support to electoral processes, with some limited results. Recently, UNDP has been strengthening its positioning in other areas of governance, notably in decentralization, a positive trend.

The ADR concluded that UNDP, when it refocused the country programme in 2012, appeared timid in its governance programming choices. The ADR recommended that UNDP reflect on opportunities to renew its engagement, given its experience and comparative advantages.

In line with the UNDP country office’s initial management response to the ADR, UNDP invested in electoral strengthening by engaging an international elections expert. The expert worked with Elections Cameroon, and UNDP was able to support some dialogue platforms. However, UNDP was not able to mobilize financial support for a project proposal for wider electoral support.

More recently, UNDP has started to engage with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to strengthen support in this area. UNDP commissioned a human rights due diligence exercise through its

² The complete text of the recommendations can be found in Annex 7.

new projects supporting stabilization and recovery in the North West, South West and Far North.

As mentioned above, UNDP has also been actively engaged in supporting strategic State management, notably through support to the preparation of the new national development strategy 2020–2030.

In addition, a new programme of support to decentralization and local development is under preparation in partnership with the Ministry of Decentralization and Local Development. Its aim is to strengthen the Ministry's capacities to coordinate all relevant actors and develop solutions for sustainable cities through localization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The National Human Development Report 2019 included a chapter analysing the potential linkages between decentralization, poverty, inequalities and exclusion.

While these latter initiatives are in early stages, UNDP is strengthening its strategic positioning in the governance area, a positive trend that is addressing the concerns raised in the ADR.

ADR Recommendation 3: UNDP should strike a balance between upstream interventions and downstream work and avoid becoming confined to the role of an implementing agency for rapid recovery projects.

Finding 3: UNDP is maintaining an appropriate balance between upstream and downstream work.

The ADR cautioned against the risk that, if resources were more easily mobilized for crisis response interventions than for regular development work in this middle-income country, UNDP could find itself primarily serving as an implementing agency for rapid response projects. At the time of the present review in January 2020, UNDP had not only expanded its programme but found an appropriate balance between important upstream and downstream interventions. The upstream

activities included preparation of the National Human Development Report and support to the development of the new national development strategy and of a stabilization and recovery plan for the North West and South West; while expanded downstream activities included support to highly vulnerable communities in the Far North and other regions of the country.

ADR Recommendation 4: UNDP should continue to work to reduce gender inequalities and promote the empowerment of women, as well as the reduction of other forms of inequality and exclusion.

Finding 4: UNDP has made progress in responding to this recommendation, although further work is needed.

UNDP Cameroon responded to the recommendation to strengthen its internal expertise in gender by recruiting a gender specialist in December 2017. The country office now has a strategy to promote gender equality and an action plan, approximately 40 percent of which has been implemented to date. The plan includes the objective of obtaining the UNDP Gender Seal. UNDP's programmes give strong emphasis to reaching the most vulnerable people: women and youth. The National Human Development Report, launched in January 2020, is dedicated to analyses of inclusive growth, inequalities and exclusion, including gender inequalities. It notes, for example, that "growth does not have an equal impact on women and men, boys and girls"³ and that "the persistence of gender inequalities is the result of the poor performance of national gender policy actions."⁴ UNDP's communications products (e.g. website) prioritize images of resilient women.

The ADR recommendation nevertheless remains relevant, as there is still room for progress, for example in the integration of gender analyses and adaptation of programmatic approaches

³ Republic of Cameroon and UNDP (2019), '2019 National Human Development Report: Inclusive growth, inequalities and exclusions', p. 96, https://issuu.com/undp13/docs/nhdr_2019

⁴ Ibid., p. 116.

that provide extra support to women. This would ensure that targets are met not only in terms of participation in activities but also at the level of results. To cite an illustrative example, the Youth Entrepreneurship Innovation Challenge had a target of 50 percent men and 50 percent women laureates, but the final ratio was 80 percent/20 percent. Lessons may be drawn from this experience to inform future initiatives with respect to additional support for young women who, despite progress, still face challenges overcoming traditional roles and societal expectations.

On another positive note, UNDP has increased its emphasis on youth, particularly youth entrepreneurship, such as through the Youth Entrepreneurship Innovation Challenge and Youth Connekt.

ADR Recommendation 5: UNDP should update its partnership and resource mobilization strategy. It should also strengthen its advocacy with the Government in order to increase the national contribution to the country programme.

Finding 5: UNDP has successfully mobilized resources for the current programme and diversified its donors, but some projects have been unable

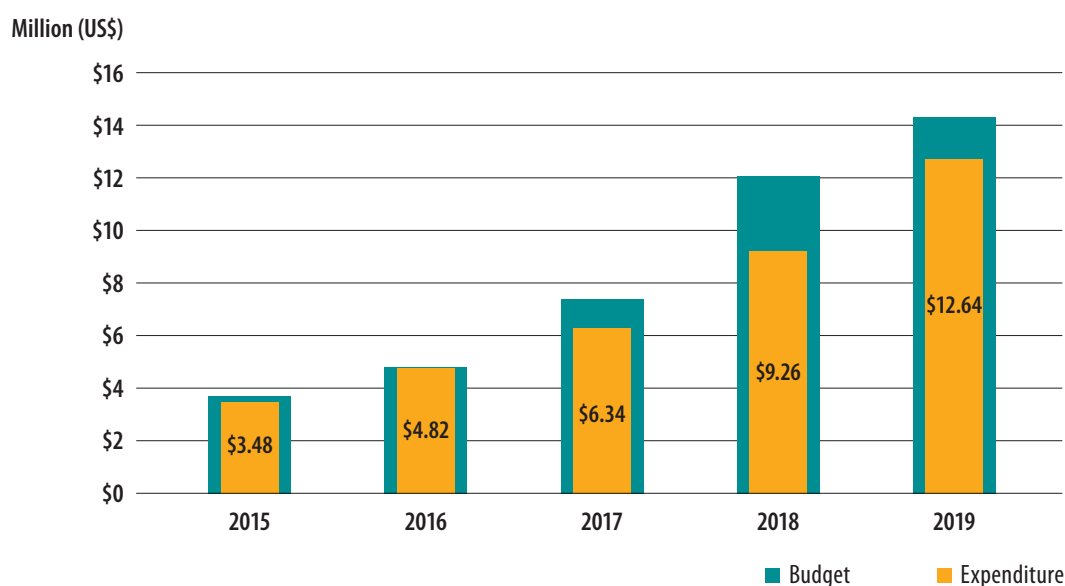
to mobilize the resources needed to achieve their intended results.

The UNDP country office developed a resource mobilization strategy in August 2016, and plans to develop a new strategy for resource mobilization and communication for the next CPD. It has successfully mobilized resources for the current country programme, leading to a significant increase in the overall programme size in the past five years (Figure 1).

The ADR noted that between 2011 and 2015, UNDP core resources constituted 46 percent of the total expenditure. By 2018–2019, UNDP funded only 24 percent of the programme, having mobilized more resources. Japan was the largest donor at the time of the ADR, funding 37 percent of the programme between 2011 and 2015. Japan remains the largest donor, funding 26 percent of the programme in 2018–2019. The portfolio is more diversified now, with additional funds from several other partners (Figure 2).

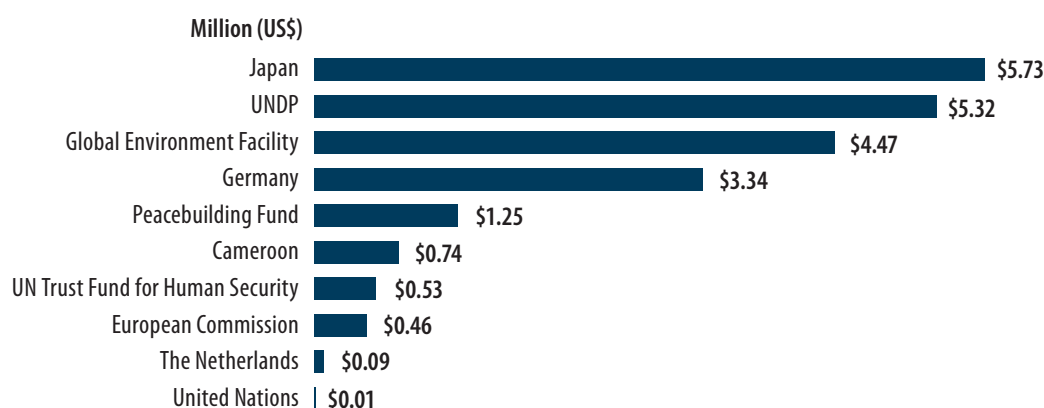
With respect to government cost-sharing, the ADR found that the Government of Cameroon provided 10 percent of the resources for the 2008–2012

FIGURE 1. Evolution of programme budget and expenditures, 2015–2019



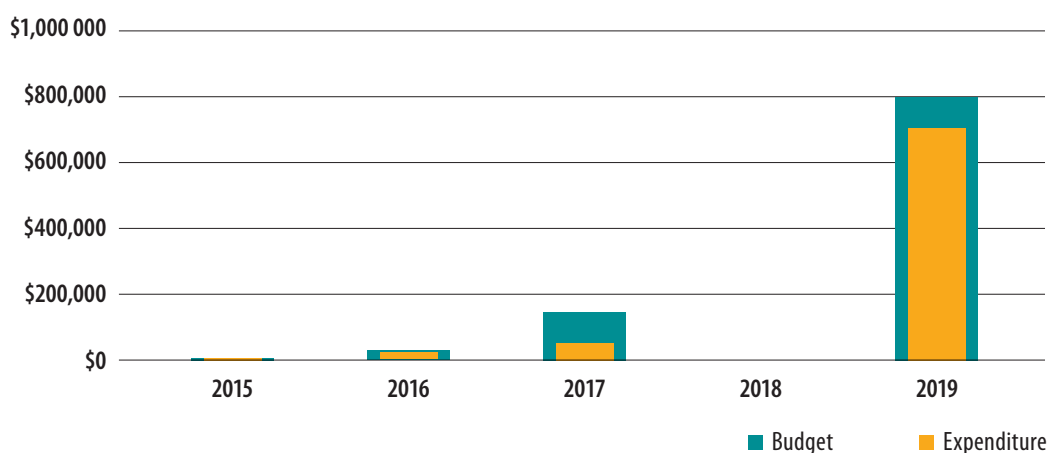
Source: Power Bi, 27 May 2020

FIGURE 2. Top 20 donors to the UNDP country programme, 2018–2019



Source: Power Bi, 27 May 2019

FIGURE 3. Government cost sharing in Cameroon, 2015–2019



Source: UNDP PowerBI 11 March 2020

programme, but less than 1 percent between 2013 and 2015. It recommended that UNDP strengthen its advocacy work with a view to increasing the government contribution. The Government provided 3.4 percent of the funding for 2018–2019, with a significant increase in 2019 (Figure 3). Some ministries still face problems mobilizing their contributions for UNDP-supported programmes.

Despite overall progress in resource mobilization, some projects have faced significant challenges in mobilizing resources and therefore achieving intended results. For example, the project

document for the project Support to Economic Resilience (PAREC), designed to realize four of the CPD outputs, sets forth a total budget of \$4.4 million, with \$0.5 million to be funded by UNDP, \$1 million by the Government and \$2.9 million to be mobilized. For 2018–2019, expenditure was only \$1.5 million, from UNDP (\$1.3 million) and the Government (\$0.2 million), with no third-party cost-sharing. In this case, UNDP compensated for the lack of external resources with an increase in core contribution beyond the planned budget (\$1.3 million instead of the original \$0.5 million).

ADR Recommendation 6: UNDP should strengthen its monitoring and evaluation activities, placing the accent on the changes brought about by these activities, as well as on the progress made in achieving the intended outcomes. UNDP should also structure its office according to the geographic concentration of its programming, allocating more staff to the Far North to strengthen coordination and monitoring.

Finding 6: UNDP has made some progress in response to this recommendation but needs to further strengthen its results-based monitoring, reporting and evaluation.

UNDP engaged a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) specialist for its humanitarian support and stabilization team based in the Far North in 2017. The number of project staff based in the Far North has also expanded with the recruitment of a new team to implement the Cameroon window of the Lake Chad Basin Regional Stabilization Facility. However, the new team does not include an M&E specialist.

Monitoring and reporting still tends to focus on activities and to some extent outputs, rather than on actual changes brought about by the interventions. There is little evidence of monitoring with respect to sustainability (for example, how many people who received livelihood support were still engaged after six months or a year) or knowledge generation (for example, which forms of support appear to be the most successful? Are there differences in success rates for women and men?). Conflict-sensitive monitoring is extremely important in a context like Cameroon to ensure that interventions are 'doing no harm' and to share lessons learned for future interventions. Further discussion on monitoring and evaluation under the current programme is found in the section on programme design and management (findings 19 and 20). The ADR recommendation remains valid.

With respect to coordination, UNDP created a working group on prevention of violent extremism at the national and local levels (Maroua, Far North). It meets monthly to review strategic orientations and coordination and track information on how the Boko Haram crisis is affecting communities.

2.2 Progress towards outputs and outcomes of the 2018–2020 CPD

→ **OUTCOME 1:**

By 2020, women and youth have increased and equitable access to decent employment opportunities and are more economically independent

UNDP's programme seeks to contribute to this outcome by supporting institutional development (municipal employment offices); strengthening agricultural value chains; strengthening recognition of the importance of the development minerals sector and community-level actors in it; and extension of financial services to unserved vulnerable populations. Expenditure under this outcome represents 13 percent of the total country programme.

Output 1.1: Appropriate mechanisms are operational for women and youth to access socioeconomic opportunities.

Finding 7. UNDP made some progress towards achievement of the intended output through support to the Government to articulate the instructional architecture for and legal status of municipal employment offices (BEMs), which are designed to implement employment policy at the local level. UNDP also supported establishment of several BEMs. In addition, UNDP has supported other initiatives promoting youth entrepreneurship that contribute to the intended outcome, even if not to the mechanisms referred to in the output statement. Achievement of the output is 'at risk' and implementation will need to be accelerated if the BEMs are to be fully operational and the target number of jobs and self-employment opportunities achieved by the end of 2020.

On the institutional front, UNDP reports that, through the PAREC initiative, nine Centres for

Listening, Orientation, Advice and Guidance (CEOCAs⁵) have been transformed into BEMs and three additional BEMs have been established, bringing the total number to 12.⁶ Evidence that four CEOCAs were transformed into BEMs was made available. Training for the personnel is planned for 2020 to contribute to operationalizing the BEMs.

In parallel to the institutional support, UNDP also implemented interventions to promote youth entrepreneurship and the development of economic activities through the projects PAREC, Youth Entrepreneurship Innovation Challenge (YEIC) and Youth Connekt. The YEIC was developed by UNDP to support innovative youth projects in Cameroon through a competitive process. UNDP reported that more than 1,228 applicants (25 percent women) submitted projects to the challenge in a range of sectors. UNDP provided contestants with training on how to build a sustainable business model and develop the mindset of a successful entrepreneur.

The top 60 contestants (37 percent women) were selected for intensive training and a final competition, and the top 30 laureates (20 percent women) received grants to implement their projects. As a result, UNDP calculates that almost 150 jobs were created through the YEIC. Mechanisms are not yet in place to sustain or scale up these results, although UNDP has been engaging with private sector partners to develop innovative tools to support young entrepreneurs.

In December 2019, Cameroon launched Youth Connekt Cameroon, part of an Africa-wide initiative, with the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education. This new initiative is designed to strengthen youth socioeconomic empowerment

and civil engagement, with a target of reaching 1.2 million young entrepreneurs over the next five years.

In addition, UNDP provided support to women and youth through PAREC to develop 62 micro-projects. UNDP reports that 275 self-employments were created through this initiative. Women represented 35 percent of the beneficiaries,⁷ significantly below the cumulative 2020 target of 6,500.

In terms of promoting gender equality, results have been below target. Only 35 percent of the PAREC beneficiaries were women. The YEIC aimed for 50 percent women laureates, but in the end, only 6 out of 30 prize winners were women. In the context of entrepreneurship initiatives, studies show that men and women do not have the same chances of initiating and managing business projects, especially in developing countries.⁸ Greater attention during the process to structural, institutional and cultural barriers that women entrepreneurs face might have led to better gender results.

Output 1.2: Inclusive economic diversification supported through qualitative improvement of local products brought to market, exploitation of neglected development mineral resources and access to benefit-sharing of genetic materials.

Finding 8. UNDP has supported strengthening of agricultural production chains, development of the development minerals sector (which has received no attention in the past) and access to benefit-sharing of two plant resources, as planned. The output is not likely to be fully achieved ('at risk') at programme end, particularly with respect to the first component (agricultural production chains).

⁵ Eight CEOCAs were established with UNDP support during the previous programme. At the time of the ADR, the CEOCA model was judged to be promising, but it was too early to assess results. The ADR recommended that an evaluation of the model be carried out after some time to assess in more depth its potential for replication. In 2018, the Government carried out an assessment of the CEOCA, which showed that results were generally well below target, due to a lack of resources and mixed results in terms of collaboration with the municipalities.

⁶ The presentation at the CPD annual review refers to a total of 12 BEMs. The 2019 annual report of the project (generated by Atlas) indicates the target for 2019 was 10 BEMs in place and functioning. But the 2019 achievement statement does not indicate a number of BEMs, and explains that the "next step" is formalization, training of personnel and equipping the BEMs. UNDP Integrated Results and Resources Framework (IRRF) reporting indicates the 2019 target for "number of community centres in place" was 15, with an actual of 14 at end 2019. The CPD target for 2020 is 20 centres.

⁷ Rapport d'activités annuel 2019, PAREC; Presentation at the CPD Annual Review.

⁸ World Bank Group, 2019, 'Profiting from Parity: Unlocking the Potential of Women's Business in Africa', World Bank, Washington, DC.
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Through the African, Caribbean and Pacific-European Union Development Minerals programme, UNDP has supported the Government of Cameroon in promoting legal standards and technologies to improve mining techniques in small-scale mines and quarries. UNDP reported that 348 small-scale mining enterprises were able to use adapted technology in 2019, against a target of 500 for the programme end in 2020.⁹ UNDP also reported that through this intervention more than 2,000 artisanal miners were educated on environmental issues, health and legal standards and are capable of educating their peers.

Moreover, UNDP supported the creation of 48 miners' cooperatives with the aim of facilitating access to financial services to develop activities in the sector. As a result, UNDP reported that 2,000 jobs were created (30 percent women). This support has contributed to building foundations for the development of the minerals sector.

However, the success of this intervention depends on the development of a sustainable economic value chain in the minerals sector, which has not yet been realized. There is no evidence that the mining cooperatives created have had access to financial services and loans to develop their activities. Therefore, it is too early to conclude the initiative has contributed significantly to economic diversification in Cameroon.

UNDP also reports having supported the development of agricultural production chains by supplying equipment for the transformation of six agricultural commodities.¹⁰ However, the review team was unable to obtain data on how many groups of producers or individual producers benefited from the new equipment or saw any change in their revenues or livelihoods. In addition, although the supply of equipment is an important component of supporting the transformation of agricultural products, it is not sufficient to ensure the development of

sustainable economic value chains of the selected products at local level.¹¹

During interviews stakeholders said the original project concept couldn't be implemented due to lack of financial resources, hence the limited intervention. The review team notes that the indicator for this output is poorly defined and reported against. The indicator is 'number of value chains for local products reinforced' and the annual project report simply states that "six value chains were reinforced" (against a target for 2020 of 15), without defining 'reinforced' or indicating the actual changes and their scope.

UNDP has also sought to enhance the capacity of communities in two municipalities (Magha-Bamumbu and Lewoh) in line with the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Benefit-Sharing (ABS) to develop value chains based on *Echinops giganteus* and *Mondia Whitei* in compliance with ABS principles. The results achieved have been limited, and even where targets are reported as achieved, project documentation provides no details as to what change in development conditions actually occurred. A key objective of reviewing and updating the national ABS action plan has not been achieved.¹²

Output 1.3: Local financial institutions enabled to provide financial products and services to youth and women in the intervention areas.

Finding 9. UNDP has contributed to improving financial inclusion in Cameroon by supporting the completion of a FinScope survey and the development of new financial services and products to aid three financial institutions in expanding their coverage of vulnerable groups. However, tangible results for youth and women are limited to date. Achievement of the output is 'at risk'.

UNDP has been supporting the development of microfinance in Cameroon since 2011. Under the

⁹ Data from UNDP Corporate Planning System.

¹⁰ PAREC 2019 progress reports mentioned six agricultural production chains: cassava, beans, onions, rice, cowpeas and peanuts.

¹¹ An economic value chain goes beyond transformation; it also integrates dimensions related to production and sales that have not been factored into the intervention.

¹² 2019 progress report of the project.

current programme, UNDP is supporting national financial inclusion policies at the central level, and actions to support some local financial institutions in developing innovative services that will enable access of the most vulnerable populations to financial services.

At the national level, UNDP supported, with the UN Capital Development Fund, finalization of the FinScope survey, which provides an analytical profile of the demand for financial services in Cameroon. The objective of this survey was to describe the level of financial inclusion; identify the levers and barriers to access to financial services and products; stimulate dialogue for more efficient interventions; and create benchmarks that will allow an assessment of changes and factors over time.¹³ The survey results provide evidence to guide the development of relevant interventions at all levels. At the time of this review, national initiatives informed by the survey to promote financial inclusion are not yet in place. UNDP also facilitated the first national forum on Islamic finance in December 2019.

At the local level, UNDP has supported three financial institutions in the development of three digital financial services and products (mobile money, e-banking) to facilitate the inclusion of the most vulnerable populations in the Far North of Cameroon. This is against a target of 6 for 2019 and 10 for 2020.¹⁴ Interviews with stakeholders revealed that the development of the services is under way, but it is too early to assess results.

As the services are introduced, UNDP will need to monitor its strategy to assess the extent to which the most vulnerable populations are able to benefit from the new services and/or develop complementary strategies to ensure the furthest behind are not left further behind. It is also noted that there is potential for synergy with other interventions supported by UNDP, such as cash-for-work initiatives that promote saving, subsidies to local miners,

etc. These interventions could be integrated into the financial inclusion strategy to improve access to financial services.

2.2.1 Progress towards outcome 1

Finding 10. Some progress has been made towards achieving the outputs designed to contribute to the first CPD outcome, and UNDP is contributing in a modest way to the intended outcome of increased access to socioeconomic opportunities in the zones of intervention. Results are below target in part due to a lack of resources, particularly for the resilience programme (PAREC). While a lack of data precludes assessment of UNDP's contribution to achievement of the outcome indicators, UNDP's intervention was on a limited scale and it has a low level of influence on the indicators.

UNDP is contributing to the creation and strengthening of institutional mechanisms to promote employment opportunities in the northern part of the country, although it is too early to assess the effect of these mechanisms on employment. UNDP reports having contributed to the creation of approximately 3,000 jobs (although this could not be validated), which is in direct line with the intended outcome. The support to the microfinance sector has potential to improve access to finance in the Far North of Cameroon.

With respect to the outcome indicators, there are no new data on unemployment rates, percentage of youth and women entrepreneurs, or percentage of men and women with accounts at formal financial institutions, as the data come from national surveys conducted every five years. If data from these surveys are disaggregated to the municipal level, it might be possible to map a correlation between UNDP support and improved figures, but if the data are only available at regional or national level, UNDP's support has a very low level of influence on the indicators.

¹³ Presentation "FinScope Consumer Survey Cameroon 2017", 16 November 2018, originally downloaded from http://www.minfi.gov.cm/images/documents/resultats_etude_finscope/Enquete_FinScope_Consoommateur_au_Cameroun_2017.pdf; also available at <http://finmark.org.za/finscope-cameroon-2017-launch-presentation/>

¹⁴ According to the UNDP online IRRF CPD output indicator reporting. The CPD target is "2 financial products and services will be developed per financial institution," but does not indicate a number of institutions to be supported.



OUTCOME 2:

By 2020, the population (especially vulnerable groups) in the intervention areas are more resilient to environmental, social and economic shocks

UNDP has undertaken a wide range of interventions designed to directly or indirectly strengthen resilience to environmental, social and economic shocks. They include development planning at multiple levels; development of market information systems, livelihoods initiatives, natural resource management and disaster risk reduction mechanisms; and prevention and management of social conflicts and violent extremism. Interventions under this outcome account for 87 percent of programme expenditure in 2018–2019.

Output 2.1: Relevant institutions demonstrate sensitivity to and responsibility for the priorities voiced by citizens (in particular young people, women and marginalized groups) and have improved service delivery.

Finding 11. UNDP has provided significant support at the strategic level to strengthen capacities for inclusive development, including for preparation of the new national development strategy 2020–2030. In this respect this part of the output can be considered ‘on track’. UNDP has provided some support to delivery of specific and relevant services (e.g. birth certificates) in the Far North, but otherwise contributions to improved service delivery appear to have been limited.

At the strategic level, UNDP provided important, relevant technical and financial support to the development and drafting of the new national development strategy 2020–2030. Among other actions, UNDP supported consultations with development

partners, civil society and the private sector to identify the challenges and priorities of local populations. Strategic analyses fed into the preparation of the new development plan.

The National Human Development Report on inclusive growth, inequalities and exclusion, developed through a participatory process including regional consultations, contributed significantly to the formulation of the new national development strategy. UNDP also supported preparation of the two prospective strategic studies, revision of two sectoral strategies for integration of the SDGs, and preparation of the Voluntary National Report 2019 and two SDG monitoring reports. UNDP also supported the elaboration of a diagnostic report on public policy evaluation practices to contribute to formulation of the national public policy evaluation guidance. At the municipal level, UNDP supported the development of guidance for integrating the SDGs into the municipal development plans, and 10 municipalities reviewed their plans in line with the SDGs.

With respect to improved service delivery, the CPD anticipated achieving this in part by expanding the number of institutions implementing the quality standards for public services (a product developed under the previous CPD and discussed in the 2016 ADR). In the 2018 Results-Oriented Annual Report (ROAR), UNDP noted that intended results were not achieved, as the most appropriate approach had not yet been agreed upon. The 2019 ROAR stated that there are now four such institutions, up from the baseline of two. It was reported during the annual review meeting in January 2020 that 37 institutions are implementing the standards, but the review team has no documentary evidence to validate the extent to which these institutions are applying the standards.¹⁵

With reference to delivery of birth certificates (one element of indicator 2.1.3), through the stabilization and prevention of violent extremism initiative, UNDP has provided training to local authorities, religious leaders and courts on the procedures and

¹⁵ The team did not have the opportunity to speak to representatives of the institutions at the local level reported to be using the quality standards.

texts that govern civil status in Cameroon. This support contributed to the issuance of 503 birth certificates to children and young people aged 14 to 24, mainly from Koranic schools, and 100 birth certificates to children affected by the crisis in the North West and South West. Civil documentation is often required to access other services, including taking exams to enter secondary-level education. CPD output indicators also refer to access to services related to immigration and justice, but the review team has no information on support to these services.

UNDP also supported Elections Cameroon to establish platforms to promote dialogue, service delivery and peaceful electoral processes, and encourage women and youth to participate in electoral processes. UNDP reports that as a result 15 local NGOs are able to sensitize citizens for their participation in elections, significantly below the target of 50 institutions (the final indicator for this output).

Output 2.2: Relevant institutions are able to prevent and manage economic shocks that affect the demand for and supply of main consumer products.

Finding 12. No significant results have been achieved to date with respect to this output, and the lack of financial resources and the complexity of the mechanisms envisaged put the achievement of this output ‘at risk’.

The strategy underlying this output is two-pronged: (i) develop market information systems that would provide market supply and price information (as well as weather predictions) to stakeholders, including small producers; and (ii) organize local markets using a system of community granaries to better regulate prices and respond to supply and demand of key consumer products.

UNDP has supported the Ministry of Commerce to develop market information systems in a few localities in the Far North of Cameroon. While this is progress towards the target, the systems are not yet operational. The financial resources required to test them in the beneficiary localities are not secured. Elements of the strategy that are key to ensuring that intended beneficiaries of the system will have

access to the information have not been fully elaborated with a financing plan. With respect to the community granaries, a feasibility study for community supply systems was carried out, but according to stakeholders, lack of resources prevented pursuit of the initiative.

Output 2.3: The local economy is revitalized and generates jobs and environmentally sustainable livelihoods opportunities for crisis-affected men and women.

Finding 13. During the current programmatic cycle, UNDP has provided cash for work and kits to develop income-generating activities to men and women in crisis-affected areas in the Far North, as well as support to livelihoods in the North West and South West. UNDP has been contributing to the output, but due to inconsistencies in data and reporting it is difficult to assess if progress is on track to meet the CPD targets.

UNDP’s strategy to contribute to the revitalization of the local economy is to provide support for creation of job and livelihood opportunities in regions affected by crisis. UNDP developed several programmes in this vein for vulnerable communities in the Far North. The interventions include the Enhancing Human Security initiative; stabilization and prevention of violent extremism; and early recovery projects. The Enhancing Human Security initiative was a joint programme implemented by UNDP, UNICEF and FAO in three municipalities in the Far North, with the aim of strengthening human security through urgent cross-cutting and multidimensional interventions.

UNDP provided livelihood opportunities for women and young people and support for emergency management mechanisms, including the establishment and functioning of disaster risk reduction and response plans. FAO provided households with small ruminants. UNICEF contributed to strengthening dialogue through the establishment of forum and multi-stakeholder committees, information management systems, and inclusive actions undertaken with government authorities and civil society to address social norms and increase access to social services.

In accordance with UNDP's component in the Enhancing Human Security initiative, UNDP delivered cash for work and provided kits for income-generating activities to nearly 400 young people and women, including 188 women in the targeted areas.¹⁶ UNDP also contributed to the rehabilitation of infrastructures such as CEOCA (which have been transformed into BEMs) and youth and social centres in Moulvoudaye and Maga.

Moreover, through the stabilization and prevention of violent extremism programme, UNDP delivered cash-for-work initiatives and provided kits for income-generating activities. UNDP reported that in 2019 1,250 vulnerable youth, including 625 women, had developed income-generating activities after being trained by the programme. This built on a reported achievement of 2,825 people supported in 2018.¹⁷ In the North West and South West, 100 women received 4,000 chicks for chicken farming, and 100 fishers received kits to improve their activities. According to UNDP, this has increased their weekly productivity from 4,500 CFAF to 17,000 CFAF. In the agriculture sector, UNDP reported that 200 youth farmers received kits that helped to increase their productivity by 80 percent. In the North West and South West areas, 44 people received grants to develop business plans.

Output 2.4: Local institutions and communities in intervention areas enabled to prevent and address social conflicts and violent extremism.

Finding 14. UNDP considers results in this area among its most important. This includes the creation of 11 mediation platforms in the Far North and work with 6,700 young people who are now considered 'actors for conflict prevention'. An evaluation of two projects in 2019 found that, despite challenges due to the deterioration of the security situation, the projects generated significant results. Progress towards this output is 'on track'.

UNDP's work to strengthen stabilization and prevent and address social conflicts and violent extremism

includes establishment of 11 community platforms for mediation, which UNDP reports in 2019 were able to manage 20 local conflicts and facilitate the reinsertion of 300 former associates of Boko Haram. UNDP reports reaching 6,700 young people who have become 'actors for prevention'. UNDP also reports building the capacities of 504 traditional, religious and community leaders to help manage issues of violent extremism, social cohesion and engagement with youth at risk.

UNDP also contributed to the establishment of four community early warning systems. In Maga and Moulvoudaye municipalities, where emergency plans have been developed, UNDP also supported the establishment of two local emergency coordination committees involving local authorities and civil society and religious leaders as well as security forces. UNDP also helped local authorities to incorporate emergency plans into their municipal development plans.

In addition UNDP supported training for security forces and civilians on topics including protection of civilians, prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, human rights and prevention of violent extremism through a project to support the International School for Security Forces. UNDP reported that 300 security forces were trained on prevention of electoral violence and 388 on peace-keeping operations. These trainings were provided at local level to contribute to peacebuilding and strengthen collaboration between security forces and communities, to improve social cohesion.

Output 2.5: Systems in place to manage natural resources including preparing for and addressing consequences of climate change and natural hazards at all levels of local institutions and community.

Finding 15. Progress towards this output is currently 'off track' due to a delayed start of one initiative and a partial suspension of activities of the other. But there is still potential to achieve results if the projects continue beyond the current programme period.

¹⁶ Enhancing Human Security Project, second progress report of July 2019.

¹⁷ https://intranet-apps.undp.org/UNDP.HQ.CPS2018/Pages/IRRFCDOutputIndicators.aspx?ou=CMR&cycle_id=10, Indicator 2.3.1.1.

Two interventions are intended to contribute to this output: a regional project for sustainable financing of protected areas and a transboundary project for conservation of biodiversity in the Dja-Odzala-Minkébé region of Cameroon, Republic of Congo and Gabon (TRIDOM II).

With respect to sustainable financing of protected areas, the project started late (nine years passed between the original submission of the project and the inception workshop), limiting results to date. A midterm evaluation of the project carried out in 2019 highlighted achievements, including the development of a national strategy for the sustainable financing of protected areas (validated by technical partners in November 2019), and the establishment at national level of a multi-sector high-level working group on the financing of protected areas. However, system-level business plans and financial mechanisms are not yet in place, and demonstration sites have not yet been selected for piloting the revenue-generating mechanisms.

TRIDOM II aims to strengthen the conservation of endangered species in Cameroon by improving law enforcement, resilience and biodiversity management, especially in the tri-border area Dja-Odzala-Minkebe.¹⁸ Field-level activities designed to reduce poaching and strengthen community-level management were suspended in March 2019 following a complaint about human rights violations. An investigation report is awaited from the Social and Environmental Compliance Unit to determine the way forward for the project. In the meantime, there has been progress on training, preparatory analytical work and strengthening of legislative frameworks.

In addition to the above-mentioned efforts, the community early warning systems set up in Maga and Moulvoudaye with the contribution of UNDP are also responsible for ensuring the environmental aspect of human security in terms of management of climate change issues. However, the municipalities

have not identified any concrete action addressing the environment and climate change adaptation.

Output 2.6: National and local institutions enabled to mobilize resources to cope with natural hazards (floods, drought).

Finding 16. No progress has been made towards output 2.6; it is 'off track'.

The country office reports that a new project document has been finalized to contribute to this output.

Output 2.7: Capacities of affected and vulnerable populations enhanced for natural resources management and mitigation of the consequences of natural hazards.

Finding 17. This output overlaps with other outputs and there are no other significant results. Consistent with the IEO's assessment of the other outputs, this output is rated as 'off track'.

This output overlaps with other outputs such as 1.2 on inclusive economic diversification and 2.5 on systems to manage natural resources. UNDP reporting refers to results under the regional projects for protected area financing (which have not yet started work at demonstration site level) and for biodiversity conservation where activities at the community level have been halted. Thus there is little progress in terms of raising the capacities of vulnerable groups other than through the access-to-benefit-sharing project (discussed under finding 8). Some work on human security has focused on early warning systems in four municipalities (see above on output 2.4). No major interventions are focused on the mitigation of natural hazards.

2.2.2 Progress towards outcome 2

Finding 18: Despite uneven results across outputs, generally UNDP's programme under the second outcome is judged relevant. Given the challenging context, it appears to be making noticeable contributions in terms of outputs at the central level on

¹⁸ The project's strategy involved capacity-building in the governance of protected areas and the control of illegal wildlife trade; improvement of protected areas management with global reach by national and local institutions; reduction of poaching and illegal trafficking of endangered species on the project site; and knowledge management.

strategic planning and at the local level on multiple fronts on stabilization, prevention of violent extremism and early recovery. However, given the broad outcome statement and weak link between UNDP's programme and the outcome indicators, it is difficult to judge the extent of progress towards the intended outcome-level change.

The outcome is very broad ("By 2020, the population [especially vulnerable groups] in the intervention areas are more resilient to environmental, social and economic shocks") and could encompass the first outcome as well. In addition, UNDP is providing a wide range of support at multiple levels, with very mixed results. A weak evidence base (for example, few decentralized evaluations have taken place) and inconsistent reporting against indicators limit the degree of confidence of the review team in its assessment with respect to overall effectiveness of the interventions.

Regarding the outcome indicators, UNDP has a low level of influence on indicators related to level of public confidence in the delivery of basic services; no influence on the average prices of mass-consumption products; and little to no influence on the proportion of people using good practices in pastoral agriculture and forestry. The indicator "number of critical benchmarks identified, and actions implemented for local economic revitalization" is unclear, and it is an activity indicator, not an outcome indicator. The other indicators on which UNDP has high-level influence are set at a level that would be more appropriate for measuring UNDP's progress towards outputs. These have relatively low targets (amount of infrastructure rehabilitated and functional, number of affected populations benefiting from improved livelihoods, and number of local institutions applying techniques and strategies for conflict prevention).

2.3 Programme design and management

This section briefly examines some elements of the country programme design and programme management.

Finding 19. The UNDAF and CPD outcomes do not provide an appropriate framework for UNDP's work. The CPD outcomes, outputs and indicators overlap, limiting their utility as a framework.

According to the UNDAF, UNDP only contributes to two of the nine outcomes, which have been translated into the two CPD outcomes. The first, focusing on employment opportunities and social protection, is the only UNDAF pillar that references SDG 16 – which addresses peace, justice and strong institutions and is of particular relevance to UNDP – although the outcome's themes are not strongly linked to SDG 16.

The second of these outcomes is quite broad, covering resilience to environmental, social and economic shocks. Most of UNDP's programmes are linked to this outcome, including its work on governance (e.g. support to the national development plan and to peacebuilding mechanisms, which are more relevant to SDG 16). The wide range of interventions contributing to this outcome – from the support to national development planning to stabilization and prevention of violent extremism to management of natural resources – makes it difficult to articulate UNDP's actual contributions to outcome-level change.

Other UNDAF outcomes (to which other agencies contribute) are narrower in scope, making the link between interventions and outcome more visible. For example, other UNDAF outcomes include "populations... have increased equitable access to adequate food" (primarily WFP, with UNHCR and UN-Women contributing) and "Youth... have increased and equitable access to vocational training and apprenticeship opportunities..." (UNESCO and UNHCR).

In addition, there is overlap between the two outcomes UNDP adopted for its CPD, further limiting their utility as a framework for managing and reporting on UNDP results. The first – "women and youth have increased and equitable access to decent employment opportunities" – could be encompassed under the second, as access to employment would help ensure vulnerable groups "are more

resilient to environmental, social and economic shocks". This would have allowed for alignment of indicators that appear to overlap, such as indicator 1.1.2, number of jobs created, and 2.3.2, number of people benefiting from employment opportunities in post-crisis contexts. The distinction between indicators 2.3.1. (number of people benefiting from livelihoods opportunities in post-crisis settings) and 2.3.2 is also unclear, as the country office used the same data in 2019 to report against both indicators.

Finding 20. Reporting is inconsistent and insufficiently results oriented.

The UNDP country office and the Government have held annual review meetings to assess progress towards CPD targets, a good practice. However, there is scope to further improve the reporting and review processes.

As has been discussed, the CPD is organized around two interconnected outcomes. The country office has two main programme units: the Sustainable Development Unit and the Governance and Crisis Prevention and Recovery Unit.¹⁹ The Sustainable Development Unit coordinates a number of projects that contribute to both outcomes (e.g. the PAREC contributes to outputs 1.1, 1.2, 1.3 and 2.1; the ABS project contributes to outputs 1.2 and 2.7; the development minerals project contributes to outputs 1.1, 1.2 and 2.7). This is not in and of itself problematic, as it reflects the complexity of development. However, country office results reporting — for example at the January 2020 annual review meeting attended by the review team — follows the unit structure and project-level activities or outputs, and not the CPD outcome structure. This makes it more difficult to grasp synergies and link overall programme contributions to outcome-level change.

Reporting against CPD outputs and indicators is inconsistent in some cases. For example, during

the annual review presentations, it was mentioned under output indicator 1.1.1 (number of community centres in place), that there are 12 BEMs in place, while another slide gave the figure of 22; the online reporting against the same indicator for 2019 states that the current value is 14. With respect to indicator 2.1.2 (number of institutions capable of using high-quality service standards), the online reporting system indicates 4 institutions in 2019, but the annual review meeting presentation indicated 37.

Other indicators overlap. The reporting on indicator 2.3.1 (number of people benefiting from livelihoods opportunities in post-crisis settings) includes some of the same people counted in 2.4.3 (number of new livelihoods opportunities created for at-risk young women and men aged 18-30 in fragile areas threatened by radicalization). Cumulative reporting is particularly difficult to follow.

Reporting against indicators is often insufficient to communicate results or linkages to the intended outcomes. For example, establishment of BEMs is a step towards improving people's access to employment opportunities. Even if not specifically a CPD indicator, it would be useful to know how many people have benefited from the services of the BEMs, and among them, how many have found a job. Several projects have reportedly contributed to 'strengthening' or 'enhancing' local product value chains, but information is lacking on what this means in concrete terms and on any changes in livelihoods.

The annual review meeting as conducted in January 2020, which brought together a wide range of stakeholders, is a good practice. Not only is it a good mechanism for reviewing progress and reporting against targets, but it also provides an opportunity for teams to interact, learn about other initiatives and identify strategies for sharing information and working together.

¹⁹ In addition, there is a Policy and Strategy Unit and, as of late 2019, a Stabilization Unit focused on the new work under the Lake Chad Basin Stabilization Programme.



CHAPTER 3

RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

DEVELOPMENT effectiveness COORDINATION efficiency PARTNERSHIP sustainability NATIONAL OWNERSHIP
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Overall, the review concludes that good progress has been made in implementing the ADR recommendations. Notably, the UNDP country office has considerably improved its strategic positioning and is expanding its governance programming. With respect to implementation of the current CPD, even

though many CPD targets are not likely to be met — given the short time frame of the programme and the difficult context in which it is being implemented — the UNDP country programme is making progress and provides a foundation for the next country programme.

Recommendations and management response

Recommendation 1.



UNDP should continue its main lines of strategic programming, notably support to capacity development for implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the national development plan and other key policies promoting inclusive, sustainable development in line with the 2030 Agenda. It should also continue to support stabilization and prevention of violent extremism and other crises. UNDP should continue to pursue openings to expand its programming in other areas of governance in partnership with the Government, such as decentralization, human rights and access to justice. UNDP should also continue to strengthen its portfolio in support of realizing the “planetary” SDGs.²⁰ However, UNDP may reconsider its ongoing investment in agricultural value chains, which was identified as an area of weakness in the ADR and for which results again are limited under the present programme. Resources could be better used to increase the scale and results of work in other areas.

Management Response: Partially Accepted.



The UNDP country office has successfully oriented its interventions to better integrate issues related to governance, human rights and support for the achievement of the SDGs. The point on investment in agricultural value chains shall be reviewed.

- **Support to the decentralization process:** In partnership with the government counterpart (MINDDEVEL), a project to support the decentralization process is about to be finalized. The project aims to provide strategic support to decentralization, socioeconomic development, promoting and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals at the local level, governance, promotion of citizen participation and accountability.

To reinforce decentralization and employment, the PAREC project strengthened the effectiveness of local government councils in the domain of employment through the creation of municipal employment offices (BEMs) in 12 councils in the Far North, North, Adamawa and East Regions.

With the COVID-19 outbreak, the UNDP country office provided prevention kits to seven councils in Yaoundé, and a socioeconomic survey is being implemented to measure the impact of COVID-19 on the local economy.

²⁰ These include, among others, Goal 7 (affordable and clean energy), Goal 13 (climate action); Goal 14 (life below water) and Goal 15 (life on land).

- **Human rights:** The CO is part of the UN country team human rights working group, which is overseeing agencies' work on human rights, supporting capacity building and other targeted actions. On this line, the CO is planning not only to mainstream human rights in all its work but also carry on human rights' due diligence prior to the implementation of all its big and/or sensitive projects.

Moreover, during the COVID-19 pandemic the CO has established an excellent partnership with the national human rights institution (CNDHL), which is meant to grow on the fight against stigma and discrimination in all the aspects of its work.

- **Support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the National Development Strategy**
 - Production of a public policy evaluation guide
 - Identification of the SDG acceleration with the support of the Millennium Institute.
- **Reinforce the agricultural value chains:** The UNDP country office does not agree with the recommendation with respect to agricultural value chains. In fact, agriculture in Cameroon is the main contributor to economic growth (+70 percent). It is an important source of job creation, mostly in rural areas, where more than 60 percent of the whole population is living. Current interventions to enhance agricultural value chains must be strengthened through the development of strategic partnerships with IFAD, FAO, etc., which could bring a comparative advantage in the agriculture sector, especially in the development of agricultural value chains.

Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status
1.1 Finalize elaboration of the decentralization support programme and facilitate its implementation in partnership with government and key stakeholders	Q4 2020	ARR Governance, Economic Unit CTP PAPPRINS		
1.2 Establish strategic partnerships with specialized actors (MINADER, MINCOMMERCE, IFAD, FAO, etc.) in the analysis and strengthening of agricultural value chains	Q1 2021	ARR SD DNP/PAREC CTP PAREC		

Recommendation 2.



UNDP should ensure that UN Cooperation Framework (UNCF) outcomes – and the UNDP country programme – provide an appropriate framework for structuring and monitoring UNDP's contribution to the national development framework and the 2030 Agenda. For example, UNDP should advocate for a UNCF outcome with a stronger linkage to SDG 16 and national goals with respect to building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions. It should also advocate for an outcome clearly related to the SDGs strongly associated with the 'planet'. An outcome referring to strengthened resilience of vulnerable populations would still be appropriate, but even if most of UNDP's work arguably contributes in one way or another to building resilience, this should not be a 'catchall' outcome for all of UNDP's contributions.

Management Response: Accepted.



UNDP Cameroon has a strategic position in the discussions on the development of the new cooperation framework. It actively participated as the cluster lead for the Economy, Democratic Governance and Environment components. Based on the conclusion of the common country assessment, four strategic priorities have been identified:

- Structural transformation of economy (energy, digital solutions, natural resources management)
- Human capital development;
- Promotion of employment and economic integration;
- Governance and strategic management of the State (decentralization, rule of law...).

In partnership with the Millennium Institute, UNDP has conducted a study to identify SDG accelerators.

Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status
2.1 Participate in discussions on the development of the UNSDCF and advocate for the consideration of the following thematics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance and institutional strengthening; • Promotion of peace; • Resilience of vulnerable populations; • Sustainable development and environment protection 	Q1 2021	DRR, ARR Governance ARR SD, Economic Unit		

Recommendation 3.



UNDP should continue to strengthen its monitoring, evaluation and reporting. As mentioned in the ADR, close monitoring is important in crisis contexts to ensure that interventions are doing no harm. Monitoring of sustainability is also important when working with vulnerable populations, for example to ensure that livelihoods support has included sufficient follow-up to allow the majority to continue their new income-generating activities. There is scope to further strengthen the monitoring team covering work in crisis-affected areas. Indicator protocol sheets should be developed for all new programme indicators with precise definitions indicating what data are to be collected from where, and records kept so that reporting from year to year is consistent and meaningful. While accurate reporting against indicators is important, going beyond indicators is often necessary to communicate real changes in development conditions.

Management Response: Accepted.



- UNDP CO will strengthen monitoring by multi-functional teams with a focus on sustainability precisely for livelihood initiatives. The way of reporting will also be reoriented from 'reporting on process' to 'reporting on changes' to better capture how our interventions are changing lives.
- To be more effective in our monitoring and evaluation activities, capacities building is planned for staff on results-based management, results-based reporting. It is also planned to digitalize our IMEP as a soft application that integrates mapping of interventions, alert system (deadlines, evolution of our targets, critical indicators, etc), dashboard.

Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status
3.1 Organize training sessions on results-based management, results-based reporting	Q1 2021	DRR, M&E		

Recommendation 4.



UNDP should continue its focus on vulnerable groups and ensure that its programmes are 'leaving no one behind'. When seeking to identify the 'most vulnerable' or those being left behind, UNDP should ensure that even when focusing on the poorest or most crisis-affected municipalities, it identifies the most vulnerable within those areas. UNDP should continue to implement its gender strategy and pursue gender mainstreaming and women's equality in all of its interventions.

Management Response: Accepted.



- UNDP has developed a gender equality strategy and is striving for gender mainstreaming from project elaboration to M&E. In addition, with a close follow-up of gender markers, UNDP is working towards standard operating procedures to implement leave no one behind, vulnerabilities and human rights in a COVID-19 evolving environment. UNDP with the Government will continue to involve local communities to better identify the most vulnerable.
- Strategic partnership with UN-Women: Construction of women's and youth houses, cash transfer, etc.
- Strengthening community mechanisms and the role of human rights defenders in the peacebuilding process in the North West and South West regions.

Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
4.1 Develop standard operating procedures on how to better work with different vulnerabilities	Q1 2021	DRR, ARR Governance, ARR SD, Gender Specialist		
4.2 Ensure that the leave no one behind dimension is considered in the development of the next CPD				
4.3 Assess the implementation of the CO gender strategy and participate in the corporate Gender Equality Seal process				

Recommendation 5.





UNDP should strengthen its knowledge management, particularly in the area of crisis response. UNDP's programme is increasing in size, with a growing number of interventions in crisis-affected areas. It is an opportune moment to develop strategies for documenting lessons learned – beyond minimum requirements for monitoring, evaluation and reporting – and ensure they are shared with teams working in other projects or areas of the country, as well as with other countries in the region (including documentation of any cases where something that worked in one context did not work in another).

Management Response: Accepted.



Knowledge management should be improved and better structured. Projects, especially those implemented in crisis-affected areas, should generate knowledge to be shared among stakeholders to improve the impacts of interventions. This is supposed to develop a clear methodology to generate knowledge and set up tools for sharing. The M&E section, ICT and Communication will work together and develop strategies to enhance the knowledge management in Cameroon country office.

Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
5.1 Publish a magazine/ newsletter that highlights lessons learnt, good practices, success.	Q2 2021	DRR, M&E, ARR Governance, ARR SD		
5.2 All project reports should include a chapter on lessons learnt and identify good practices				
5.3 Improve capacities of staff/partners in utilization of digital platforms to share information (common drives, Yammer, etc)	Q2 2021	M&E, ICT, Communication		

<p>Recommendation 6.</p> 	<p>UNDP should seek to increase synergies between teams and interventions, for example between the Support to Economic Resilience Programme (PAREC) and stabilization/crisis prevention and recovery projects working in the same areas. Many of UNDP's downstream interventions include components related to expanding opportunities for self-employment, job creation and/or access to financial and other basic services. UNDP should maximize synergies and sharing of lessons learned between the different interventions.</p>			
<p>Management Response: Accepted.</p> 	<p>The UNDP office in Cameroon will review its various projects to identify possible synergies. Synergy points are related to self-employment, employment and access to credit. A mapping of current projects as well as possible synergies will be carried out.</p>			
Key Action(s)	Time-frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments
<p>6.1 Identify synergies between projects in their design phase and when elaborating their annual work plan.</p>	<p>Q4 2020</p>	<p>DRR, M&E</p>		
<p>6.2 Mapping of current projects and identification of possible interactions</p>				

* The implementation status is tracked in the Evaluation Resource Centre.

Annexes



Annexes to the report (listed below) are available on the website of the Independent Evaluation Office at: <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/detail/12268>.

Annex 1. Terms of reference

Annex 2. People consulted

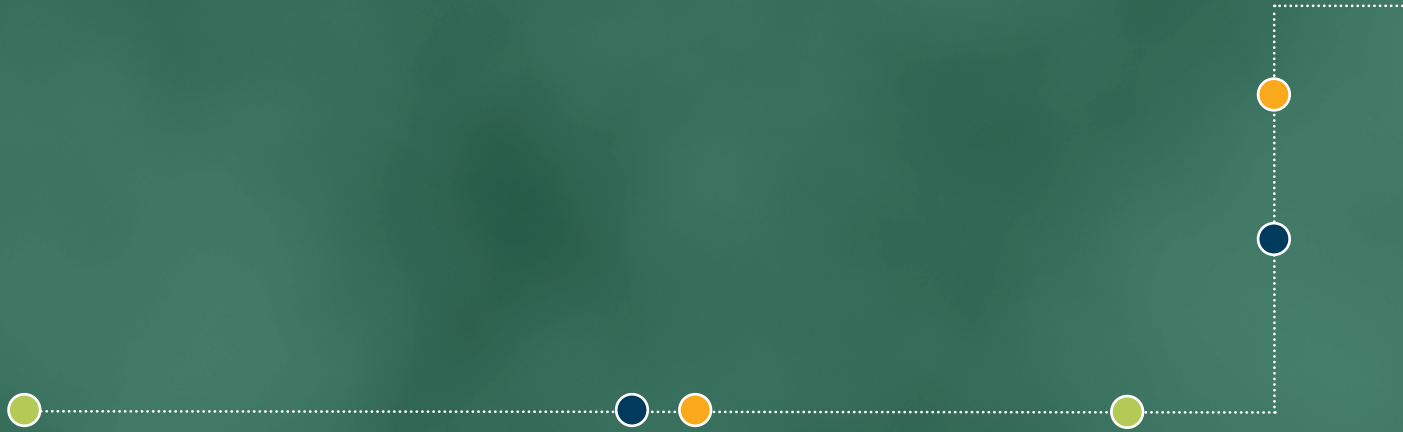
Annex 3. Country at a glance

Annex 4. Country office at a glance

Annex 5. Project list

Annex 6. Status of country programme indicators

Annex 7. ADR recommendations



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