



# **CONSULTANCY TO CONDUCT OUTCOME EVALUATION OF UNDP GOVERNANCE PORTFOLIO**

## **FINAL REPORT**



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Prepared by *impact & sustainability*



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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACCG	Anti-Corruption Coalition Gambia
AfT	Agenda for Transformation
BJM	Bakary & Jainaba Marong
COVID-19	Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2)
CPD	Country Programme Document
CRC	Constitutional Review Commission
CSO	Civil Society Organisations
DSPD	Department for Strategic Policy & Delivery
EU	European Union
GBoS	Gambia Bureau of Statistics
GCCI	Gambia Chamber of Commerce & Industry
GFD	Gambia Federation for the Disabled
GPU	Gambia Press Union
KII	Key Informant Interview
LGA	Local Government Authorities
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MDA	Ministries, Departments & Agencies
MoD	Ministry of Defense
MOFEA	Ministry of Finance & Economic Affairs
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MOTIE	Ministry of Trade, Industry, Regional Integration and Employment
NALA	National Agency for Legal Aid
NAO	National Audit Office
NDP	National Development Plan (2018-2021)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisations



NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
ONS	Office of National Security
OP	Office the President
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SGBV	Sexual and Gender Based Violence
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TANGO	The Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
TJHR	Transitional Justice & Human Rights
TOC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TRRC	Truth, Reconciliation and Reparations Commission
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UN RC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP RR	United Nations Development Programme Resident Representative
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USA	United States of America
UTG	University of The Gambia
VDC	Village Development Committee
WANEP	The West African Network for Peacebuilding
WDC	Ward Development Committees
WHO	World Health Organisation
WILL	Women in Liberation and Leadership



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Country Programme Document (CPD) for The Gambia (2017-2021) formally adopted by the Executive Board in September 2016 was anchored on three major programme pillars: i) Poverty and Inclusive Growth, ii) Governance and Human Rights and iii) Environment and Sustainable Development.

Within the Governance and Human Rights pillar, UNDP support has focused on four linked elements that reinforce the basic foundations of governance while targeting a substantially expanded role for women in each area of engagement, in particular their participation in positions of authority and decision-making at the national and local levels. These four elements include (a) the continued development of capabilities (knowledge, skills, systems, procedures, targeted actions) for managing the electoral cycle, with emphasis on elections management, civic and voter education, gender equality, participation of women and youth, prevention of violence and monitoring of electoral processes; (b) support access to justice by strengthening capacities of enforcement authorities in justice delivery and human rights institutions to provide services, enlarge citizen participation in decision-making and elections, and uphold the rule of law; (c) citizen participation and strengthen capacities of oversight and accountability institutions; and d) transparent and accountable management of public resources, specifically follow-through on the National Audit Office audit report and the establishment of a national anti-corruption agency and accompanying national anti-corruption policy and strategy, as well as development of the media, women's groups and other civil society organizations to perform a "watchdog" role.

UNDP's Governance Programmes support national government priorities as defined under the National Development Plan 2018 - 2021.

The UNDP Democratic Governance Unit provides programme and project support to various institutions and line ministries.

In accordance with good outcome evaluation practice, the draft Report outlines clear expectations by specifying the key information on the background and context; evaluation scope and objectives; the stated approach and methodology; data analysis; findings and conclusions; lessons learned and recommendations. The Report reflects the terms of reference (TOR) and its understanding by the BJM Management Consultancy Team.

The purpose of this assignment is **"to undertake an outcome evaluation of UNDP Governance Portfolio in order to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of its contributions to development results at the country level as articulated in both the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD)"**.



A multidisciplinary team with a wide range of experience and expertise undertook the outcome evaluation. The core evaluation team is comprised of four members.

The assignment adopted a participatory evaluation approach, involved engagement with a wide range of stakeholders, including national and local government officials, development partners, civil society organizations, private sector representatives and community members.

A rigorous and tested methodology centred on a structured, transparent and verifiable approach was adopted to achieve the outcome evaluation purpose and objectives. Primary and secondary data, both quantitative and qualitative against the Results Frameworks, from the desk review and stakeholder engagements were collected and analysed.

The evaluation explored some of the key considerations of data analysis and interpretation and particularly the use of triangulation and synthesis among multiple complementary sources of information to enhance the robustness, quality, and credibility of the evidence for evaluation conclusions and recommendations.

The exercise provided answers to some important questions focused around the evaluation criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability as outlined in the TOR, and in the process identified lessons and best practices that should help to inform future programme design and implementation.

The evaluation revealed that Governance Programme has been successful and impacted positively on the lives and livelihoods of Gambians in general. UNDP has been rated a strong and reliable partner by implementing and development partners. It also found out positive contributions and progress registered in key areas like Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening, Transitional Justice and Human Rights, Security Sector Reform, Gender Equality and Mainstreaming, Rule of Law, and Leadership and Accountability.

This notwithstanding, analysis of the findings and lessons learnt exposed some challenges and issues that need the attention of UNDP and the Implementing Partners in order to consolidate the gains registered so far and to achieve sustainable results in the long-term.





Accordingly, the following recommendations are offered to guide the UNDP and Implementing Partners in furtherance of the Governance Portfolio:

**Recommendation 1.**

UNDP should strengthen the capacity in the Governance Portfolio given the expansion and evolution of the Portfolio and attendant high expectations since the Transition in 2017.

**Recommendation 2.**

Government should address the issues of security of tenure, staff turnover, frequent staff movements, and ensure project focal persons/staff are retained for the duration of projects.

**Recommendation 3.**

UNDP should continue to support capacity building and institutional strengthening interventions within Implementing Partners - CSOs/NGOs, Local Government Authorities and Government.

**Recommendation 4.**

UNDP should strengthen M&E capacity within the Governance Portfolio (UNDP and Implementing Partners).

**Recommendation 5.**

UNDP and Government should improve the coordination, collaboration and communication mechanisms of the Governance Portfolio.

**Recommendation 6.**

UNDP should improve the visibility of its contribution to, and engagement with the Private Sector especially in light of the achievements registered in the Governance Portfolio.

**Recommendation 7.**

For the purposes of sustainability of governance projects/programme, Government should continue its support of project activities after project end, and encourage and pursue resource mobilization initiatives. In the same vein, UNDP should maintain frequent engagement with Government and other partners through, but not limited to, the Development Partners Forum.



## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Consultant presents this Report for the assignment “**to undertake an outcome evaluation of UNDP Governance Portfolio in order to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of its contributions to development results at the country level as articulated in both the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD)**”.

The contract for this assignment was signed on 19<sup>th</sup> October, 2020 and kicked off with a meeting held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2020.

The completion date for the assignment is 12<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

The inception phase started with engagement with key staff of UNDP Governance Unit and initial review of relevant documents, followed by informative interviews with key stakeholders in the public and private sectors and CSO community. This deepened the Consultant’s understanding of UNDP Governance Portfolio.

### 1.1 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Following twenty-two (22) years of authoritarian and undemocratic rule, Gambians went to the polls and elected a new Government on 2 December 2016. These years of dictatorship were characterized by extensive/massive human rights violations and abuses, severe socio-economic distress, a dysfunctional public sector and declining social indicators.

On assuming office in January 2017, the new Government adopted a medium-term National Development Plan (NDP) (2018-2021) to address the ills of the 22 years of dictatorship and restore democratic rule, respect for human rights and the rule of law among others. It is against this background that the UNDP, through the Governance Programme accompanied Government on this road to recovery and restoration of democratic rule in the country.

The Country Programme Document (CPD) for The Gambia (2017-2021) was formally adopted by the Executive Board in September 2016, signalling the formal start of a new programme cycle. The CPD was anchored on three major programme pillars, namely: i) Poverty and Inclusive Growth, ii) Governance and Human Rights and iii) Environment and Sustainable Development.

Within the Governance and Human Rights pillar, UNDP support has focused on four linked elements that reinforce the basic foundations of governance while targeting a substantially expanded role for women in each area of engagement, in particular their participation in positions of authority and decision-making at the national and local levels.



These four elements include:

(a) the continued development of capabilities (knowledge, skills, systems, procedures, targeted actions) for managing the electoral cycle, with emphasis on elections management, civic and voter education, gender equality, participation of women and youth, prevention of violence and monitoring of electoral processes;

(b) support access to justice by strengthening capacities of enforcement authorities in justice delivery and human rights institutions to provide services, enlarge citizen participation in decision-making and elections, and uphold the rule of law, tapping into its global network through South-South and triangular cooperation;

(c) citizen participation and strengthen capacities of oversight and accountability institutions, the National Council for Civic Education, and The Association of Non-Governmental Organizations. Support for implementing the citizen engagement framework will target the media and emphasize providing voice to women and excluded groups. Implementation of the decentralization policy and strategy will be prioritized for capacity-building;

(d) transparent and accountable management of public resources, specifically follow-through on the National Audit Office audit report and the establishment of a national anti-corruption agency and accompanying national anti-corruption policy and strategy, as well as development of the media, women's groups and other civil society organizations to perform a "watchdog" role, focusing on their ability to design, fund and manage monitoring and analytic work and advocacy and social mobilization initiatives; and

UNDP's Governance Programmes support national government priorities as defined under the National Development Plan 2018 - 2021.

UNDP partners with the Government of The Gambia, and other development partners and civil society, to support the implementation of governance and institutional capacity priorities. The UNDP Democratic Governance Unit provides programme and project support to various institutions and line ministries. UNDP acts as the lead agency in the area of governance within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

In 2019 a CPD mid-term evaluation was concluded and an annual review of the NDP undertaken. Overall, results thereof show overall governance indicators are on track; with perceptible positive shifts in overall governance indicators. However, peace and social cohesion remain fragile.



## **2. EVALUATION SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

The purpose and scope of this assignment as clearly spelt out in the Terms of Reference are as follows:

### **2.1 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this consultancy is to undertake an outcome evaluation of UNDP Governance Portfolio in order to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of its contributions to development results at the country level as articulated in both the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and UNDP Country Programme Document (CPD). The evaluation was carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy.

The evaluation also captured evaluative evidence of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of current programming, which can be used to strengthen existing programmes and set the stage for new initiatives; serve an important accountability function, providing national stakeholders and partners in The Gambia with an impartial assessment of the results of UNDP governance support; and provide perspectives on the changing post-transition landscape and how that is impacting on governance, accountability and institutional role play as well as insights for strategic re-alignments and prioritization within the governance and human rights sphere of work.

### **2.2 SCOPE OF WORK**

Specifically, the outcome evaluation assessed:

- 1) The relevance and strategic positioning of UNDP support to The Gambia on good governance.
- 2) The frameworks and strategies that UNDP has devised for its support on good governance, including partnership strategies, and whether they are well conceived for achieving planned objectives.
- 3) The progress made towards achieving governance outcomes, through specific projects and advisory services, and including contributing factors and constraints.
- 4) The progress to date under these outcomes and what can be derived in terms of lessons learned for future UNDP governance support to The Gambia.

The evaluation considered the pertinent country programme outcomes and outputs focused towards good governance, as stated in the UNDAF and the CPD (2017 - 2021).



The specific outcomes under the UNDP CPD to be assessed relate to UNDAF and country programme Outcome #1.2: Institutional reforms implemented to ensure rule of law and guarantee the protection of the human rights of all, including access to justice, gender equality, access to basic services, and democratic participation in decision-making processes by 2021. An analysis of achievements across all these programmes was undertaken.

### **3. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 APPROACH**

BJM's approach to this assignment is based on a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the purpose, scope of work and requirements of the assignment as outlined in the TOR.

BJM adopted a "Theory of Change" (TOC) approach to determine causal links between the interventions that UNDP has supported and observed changes/progress in good governance at national and local levels in The Gambia. This presents a logic model of how UNDP governance interventions are expected to lead to improved national and local government management and service delivery.

BJM have always applied a tried, tested and proven approach and methodology to implement its assignments. It adopted the same approach for this assignment and built on current local knowledge, stakeholder involvement, knowledge transfers, strong project management and flexibility as well as tailoring the approach to local requirements, results-based management systems, monitoring and evaluation methodologies and best practice models.

#### **3.2 THEORY OF CHANGE**

##### **UNDP Gambia Governance Programme – Theory of Change (TOC)**

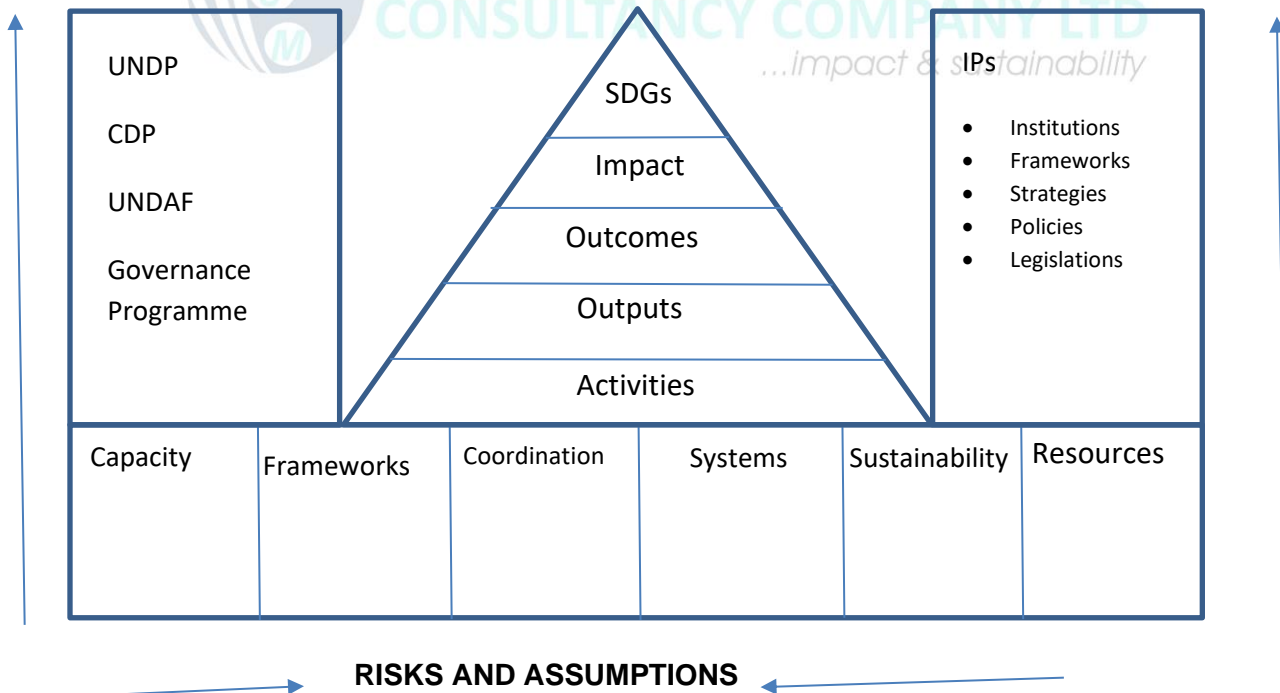
This Theory of Change Model developed for the UNDP Governance Programme is anchored on its mission and guided by UNDP's rationale to address the challenges that impeded The Gambia's development, particularly in the governance sector since the 2<sup>nd</sup> Republic (1994 to 2016). These challenges include, but are not limited to: poverty inequality and exclusion.

In this regard, UNDP’s Governance Programme, 2017–2021 intends to “**consolidate governance related reforms, strengthening national institutions to promote the culture of democracy, human rights, access to justice, and anti-corruption through improved accountability and transparency, and the rule of law, using innovative approaches to reach the poorest**” (Country Programme Document for The Gambia: 2017-2021, p.5)

To consolidate the governance reforms, UNDP employs a partnership strategy of engaging with Implementing Partners comprising national, regional and international institutions/organisations, MDAs, local authorities/communities, CSOs/NGOs, and the private sector.

In collaboration with its partners, UNDP’s key mechanisms developed to address The Gambia’s development challenges in general and governance challenges in particular, are contained in the CPD and UNDAF. These key frameworks provide the basis for UNDP’s Governance Programme comprising governance projects with well-defined Outcomes, Outputs, Activities, Targets and Indicators to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2063 and National Development Plan (NDP) 2018-2021.

**Figure 1. UNDP Gambia Governance Programme – Theory of Change (TOC)**





### 3.3 METHODOLOGY

BJM adopted a simple and easy to sequence and manage chain of linked activities making sure that the activities required to successfully execute the assignment are identified at the onset and sequenced appropriately.

The assignment adopted a participatory evaluation approach, involved engagement with a wide range of stakeholders including national and local government officials, civil society organizations, community members and private sector representatives.

BJM constructed a Theory of Change for the Governance Programme outcome based on stated objectives and anticipated results, and more generally from UNDP's global governance and capacity development strategies and techniques.

BJM reviewed outcome changes and progress, identified gaps, drew lessons, and determined corrective measures to ensure successful accomplishments and sustainability of programme.

BJM conducted a desk review of key documents underpinning the Governance Programme in The Gambia which included the UNDAF and pertinent country programme/project documents, mid-term reviews of the UNDAF and CPD as well as all relevant documentation concerning the four projects. In addition, BJM reviewed the NDP and other documents and reports developed by the Government of The Gambia relevant to UNDP's Governance Programme.

This Report presents the initial results - findings, lessons and recommendations -drawn from the analysis of the inquiry phase (desk review and stakeholder consultations).

#### **LIMITATIONS**

The methodology was limited by the present state of the COVID-19 Pandemic, which poses Medical and Public Health challenges of virus transmission and infection. As such, adherence to WHO & MoH health guidelines and protocols were observed during the consultations. BJM, UNDP and Implementing Partners leveraged on technology for virtual meetings on several occasions. However, some virtual meetings were challenged by internet connectivity issues resulting in extended sessions.



#### 4. DATA ANALYSIS

BJM conducted a detailed review of key documents including CPD, UNDAF, Project documents and evaluation reports, progress reports and technical assessment reports, and engaged in extensive consultations with key stakeholders of the Governance Portfolio. Evidence obtained from these sources was triangulated to assess the performance of individual projects and the Governance Portfolio in general. In general, all projects are on track with significant achievements. The result of this assessment is presented in the Table below. (See Annex 4 for more details).

S/N	PROJECT	STATUS
1.	Security Sector Reform	Results Achieved
2.	Support to Office of the President	Results Achieved
3.	Transitional Justice & Human Rights	Results Achieved
4.	Consolidating Governance	Results Achieved
5.	Rule Of Law	Results Achieved
6.	Strengthening Inclusive Citizen Engagement For More Accountable Governance In The Gambia	Results on Target
7.	Cross-cutting Issues (GENDER EQUALITY)	Results Achieved

The Evaluation found that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on programme delivery of the newly established project Strengthening Inclusive Citizen Engagement For More Accountable Governance in The Gambia necessitating some project activities to be rescheduled to 2021.

Overall, UNDP Governance programme in The Gambia has been successful and impacted positively on the lives and livelihoods of Gambians. UNDP has been rated a strong and reliable partner by implementing and development partners. This is evident in the establishment of NHRC, TRRC and Victims Center; Gender Equality and Mainstreaming initiatives; youth and women empowerment and engagement in the political discourse; sensitisation and capacity building of community elders and influential personalities in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in rural communities; support provided through the Covid-19 Respond and Recovery initiative (especially support to the Prison Services and Judiciary, and cash transfers to women, poor and marginalized groups).





## 5. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The outcome evaluation sought to answer some important questions focused around relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the UNDP Governance Portfolio as outlined in the TOR.

### 5.1 FINDINGS

#### 5.1.1 RELEVANCE

This section contains an assessment of the relevance of the Governance Programme and provides evidence based on independent analysis of UNDP Governance team and stakeholders' views and perceptions on the underlying questions:

- To what extent is UNDP's engagement in governance support a reflection of strategic considerations, including UNDP's role in the particular development context in Gambia and its comparative advantage vis-a-vis other partners?
- To what extent has UNDP's selected method of delivery been appropriate to the development context?
- Has UNDP been influential in national debates on governance issues and has it influenced national policies on legal reforms and human rights protection?
- To what extent have UN reforms influenced the relevance of UNDP support to Gambia in the Governance sector?

**FINDING 1: UNDP's engagement in governance support in the development context in The Gambia is to a large extent strategic given its comparative advantage vis-a-vis other partners.**

UNDP is considered by the Implementing Partners as the most strategic agency handling governance issues under the UNDAF in The Gambia. It has several years of experience dealing with governance issues, guided by a neutral and non-interfering approach in national partisan politics.

During the period under review, UNDP has provided strong support to Government under the Governance Programme in leading reforms in Security Sector, Transitional Justice and Human Rights, Gender Equality, Leadership and Accountability, Law and Order dispensation among others.



**FINDING 2: UNDP's selected method of delivery is considered largely appropriate to the development context in The Gambia.**

The method of delivery is aligned to national development priorities as outlined in the National Development Plan, project-based and anchored on sustaining capacity of the country. It is inclusive, collaborative and provides technical and financial support to Government and partners especially at the local and grassroot levels in keeping with the UN mantra of "*Leaving no one behind*".

**FINDING 3: UNDP has been influential in national debates on governance issues and has influenced national policies on legal reforms and human rights protection.**

UNDP is in the forefront of Governance issues – promoting and participating in all governance processes in partnership with Implementing Partners.

UNDP is instrumental in national debates especially its support to a number of transformative legislations including Anti-corruption Commission Bill, Access to Information Bill, Constitutional Review Commission Bill, Elections Reform Bill, Local Government (Amendment) Bill, Women's (Amendment) of Discriminatory Laws Bill, Sexual Offences Bill, Civil Services Reform, Security Sector Reform among others.

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UNDP also supported the update of the 2018 Conflict and Development Analysis (CDA) and produced the 2019 CDA report which currently informs the programmatic focus of support from the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

In particular, UNDP is a Champion of Gender Equality and Women and Youth empowerment.

**FINDING 4: The UN reforms have largely influenced the relevance of UNDP support to The Gambia's Governance Sector.**

Based on consultations, the UN reforms are assessed to yield positive results in The Gambia as evidenced by the separation of the Offices of UNDP Resident Representative and UN Resident Coordinator.

Following the UN reforms mandated by GA Resolution A/RES/72/279, of 31 May 2018 which started in 2019, the joint post of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



Resident Representative (RR) and the UN Resident Coordinator (UN RC) was officially separated into two distinct functions and offices.

The UNDP RR remains head of UNDP country offices in the field and leads UNDP's operations and programmes in support of Government's development priorities and the UN Systems' contributions towards the achievement of the SDGs, while the UN Resident Coordinator is an independent, impartial and empowered UN post established as the highest-ranking member of UN Country Teams at the national levels across the world.

The UN RC has responsibility over all organizations of the United Nations system dealing with operational activities for development in country and brings them together to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operational activities at the country level.

The Evaluation found the reforms relevant and useful. The separation of the two Offices has further strengthen coordination of UN system in country and support to the Governance Programme.

### **5.1.2 EFFECTIVENESS**

This section presents an analysis of the evidence in response to the questions about the effectiveness of UNDP's contribution to outcomes:

- What evidence is there that UNDP support has contributed towards an improvement in national government capacity, including institutional strengthening?
- Has UNDP been effective in helping improve governance at the local level in Gambia? Do these local results aggregate into nationally significant results?
- Has UNDP worked effectively with other UN Agencies and other international and national delivery partners to deliver governance services?
- How effective has UNDP been in partnering with civil society and the private sector to promote good governance in Gambia?
- Has UNDP utilised innovative techniques and best practices in its governance programming?
- Is UNDP perceived by stakeholders as a strong advocate for improving government effectiveness and integrity in Gambia?



- Taking into account the technical capacity and institutional arrangements of the UNDP country office, is UNDP well suited to providing governance support to national and local governments in Gambia?
- What contributing factors and impediments enhance or impede UNDP performance in this area?

**FINDING 5: There is evidence to showcase UNDP’s contribution to improvements in national government capacity, including institutional strengthening.**

This support is evident in the establishment and operationalization of institutions such as TRRC, NHRC, CRC, Victims Centre, Parliamentary Research Unit at National Assembly; implementation of transformative reforms such as SSR (policies, strategies and study tours), Civil Service Reform (Policy mapping exercise for MDAs), capacity building and institutional strengthening for Government institutions (DSPD, GBoS, UTG). UNDP contributed to the transformation of the Policy Analysis Unit (PAU) into a fully-fledged Directorate, Directorate of Strategic Policy and Delivery through the Support to Office of the President project; and supported GBoS and UTG in data collection on women and youth participation and empowerment.

Under its COVID-19 Response and Recovery initiative, UNDP and GCCI provided the Prisons Services with a 30-seater bus with 6 months’ worth of fuel vouchers; GCCI distributed 100,000-Dalasi worth of detergents and 10 hand washing stations; rehabilitated the kitchens and medical facilities in Mile 2 and Jeshwang Prisons, 2 dormitories in Jeshwang Prison, and raised the low perimeter wall; UNDP also procured PPEs of over 270 pairs of gloves and 5000 facemasks for the Prisons Service and Gambia Police Force, in addition to 9 internet dongles for Police personnel attached to the Statistics and the Community Policing Units.

In support of the Virtual Courts, UNDP provided a cell tower at Mile 2 Central Prison and Prison Service Headquarters, and an assortment of ICT equipment (27 laptops, 27 internet dongles, procured 7 laptops, 7 monitors, 7 docking stations, 5 internet dongles with 1-year subscription, 2 back up batteries and Zoom licenses) for NALA to facilitate its participation in the Virtual Courts to ensure inmates have access to justice during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to material support, UNDP provided technical support to the conceptualization of the Virtual Courts.

The Governance Portfolio promoted social cohesion, peace and democracy through the Infrastructure for Peace (I4P) Initiative.



**FINDING 6: UNDP has been effective in helping improve governance at the local level in Gambia and these have aggregated into nationally significant results.**

UNDP support in The Gambia has been effective in improving governance at the local level as evidenced by improved capacity of CSO/NGOs (TANGO Constitution reviewed and Strategic Plan developed), WANEP (Conflict and Development Analysis), LGAs and Communities (Strategic Plans developed) and Private Sector (Gender Seal, Entrepreneurship Development Project).

UNDP contributed to awareness-raising initiatives/interventions targeting community elders and influential personalities, in addition to supporting WANEP in conflict resolution and peace promotion interventions in various regions of the country. For example, in 2019, 48 participants (15 females and 33 males) drawn from WCR, LRR, NBR, CRR and URR were trained on peacebuilding and conflict resolution mechanisms to strengthen their understanding of the concepts of peacebuilding and conflict resolution, and enhance their skills to manage and resolve conflicts in their respective communities.

Similarly, UNDP supported capacity assessment of 516 Village Development Committees (VDCs) and 119 Ward Development Committees (WDCs), developed a Training Manual and trained committee members in 80 VDCs and 32 Wards.

Furthermore, UNDP championed Gender Equality and Mainstreaming, and Youth participation in national development discourse as well as training Women Councilors in various wards in Central River Region; the NA Women Caucus; supported the CSO Gender Platform to champion SGBV and issues affecting women; and launched REFELA - a unifying Platform advocating for the participation of women leadership in local politics in furtherance of realizing the 2030 agenda.

UNDP supported the 2016/2017 elections cycle (presidential and national assembly elections) and Elections Reform Bill and its validation for use in the 2021 elections.

**FINDING 7: UNDP worked effectively with other UN Agencies and other international and national delivery partners in delivering governance services.**

In delivering services, UNDP engaged and collaborated well with other agencies - national, regional and international under the joint coordination mechanism of the UN System. Examples of these partners include, but are not limited to UNOWAS, UNICEF, UNFPA, OHCHR, ECOWAS, AU, EU, USA, UK, Egypt, France, Turkey, TANGO, Action Aid (G), WANEP.



**FINDING 8: UNDP has been effective in partnering with Civil Society, and to a lesser extent with the Private Sector to promote good governance in The Gambia.**

UNDP provided significant support to many CSOs/NGOs mainly through TANGO. Furthermore, it supported TANGO in reviewing its constitution and developing a strategic plan; GPU in drafting the Access to Information Bill; and WANEP in Conflict and Development Analysis.

UNDP draws on international expertise to help build capacity of Implementing Partners (Government partner institutions, CSOs/NGOs and LGAs).

The evaluation revealed that UNDP partnership with the Private Sector is relatively limited. However, under its COVID -19 Response and Recovery, UNDP partnered with GCCI to provide a Mini-bus for the Prison Services, PPEs for the Prison Services and Police Force, rehabilitated two dormitories in Mile 2 and Jeshwang Prisons, and raised the perimeter fence in Jeshwang Prison among other things.

Similarly, UNDP partnered with GCCI in Gender Mainstreaming particularly in promoting the Gender Equality SEAL in Private Sector institutions as well as the development and promotion of Entrepreneurship through MOTIE.

The foregoing paragraphs notwithstanding, visibility of UNDP contribution to, and engagements with the Private Sector is relatively limited.

**FINDING 9: UNDP has been innovative in delivering its governance programme.**

UNDP has utilised innovative techniques and best practices in its Governance Programme. Under its COVID-19 Recovery and Response, Virtual Courts were introduced for the judiciary to expedite judicial proceedings especially for the Prison Service to decongest the Remand Wing; Legal Caravans were deployed to provide Legal Aid to improved access to justice especially for women and children who are victims of serious human rights violations; Zoom licenses facilitated Zoom meetings; digital translator provided to the National Assembly to improve Assembly proceedings; and cash transfers to beneficiaries, especially in the rural areas.

In the area of best practice, UNDP supported the establishment and operationalization of key institutions like TRRC, NHRC, CRC, Victims Centre; and adopted the Direct Implementation strategy as a mechanism to fill in capacity gaps of Implementing Partners.

In addition, the interest generated by participants of the SSR gender-responsive training and the formation of a gender caravan to go nation-wide and sensitize targeted security



personnel in security installations was innovative and remains relevant to mainstreaming gender in the security reform process.

Furthermore, UNDP support to Civil Service reform and performance management within the Service, and its participatory/joint planning approach particularly in its engagement with CSOs/NGOs has been applauded not only for being best practice but also promotes accountability.

**FINDING 10: UNDP is perceived by stakeholders as a strong advocate for improving government effectiveness and integrity in The Gambia.**

UNDP is acknowledged as a strong and effective partner in development. It champions best practices and international standards/norms for Implementing Partners to adopt and institutionalize. Its support to national institutions (National Audit Office, National Assembly, IEC, Public Service) further strengthens Government effectiveness and integrity. This coupled with its interventions with CSOs/NGOs and LGAs justifies this perception by stakeholders of being a strong advocate for improving Government effectiveness.

UNDP's flexibility in providing support to Government and ability to maintain its neutrality makes it a strong advocate for improving Government effectiveness and integrity.

**FINDING 11: Given UNDP's technical capacity and institutional arrangements, it is generally well suited to providing governance support to both national and local governments in The Gambia.**

UNDP has a hub of professionals and expertise within the West Africa region and beyond to draw from in the execution of its Governance Portfolio. However, the Evaluation reveals capacity gaps within the Governance Portfolio resulting from the portfolio growing and evolving with high expectations since the Transition in 2017.

**FINDING 12: The Evaluation has identified a number of factors that enhance and impede UNDP performance in execution of the Governance Portfolio.**

Continued Goodwill of Government and other national stakeholders has been identified as an asset in enhancing UNDP's performance in the Governance Portfolio .

UNDP performance is, in general challenged by inadequate capacity within (Government institutions, CSO/NGOs and LGAs), and UNDP itself (Governance Portfolio).



Security of tenure, staff turnover and frequent staff movements within Government is also a major impediment in project delivery.

### 5.1.3 EFFICIENCY

This section provides an analysis of the evidence in response to the questions about the efficiency of UNDP's contribution to outcomes:

- Are UNDP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework relevant to achieve the planned outcome? Are they sufficiently sensitive to the political and development constraints of the country (political stability, post crisis situations, etc)?
- Has UNDP's governance strategy and execution been efficient and cost effective?
- Has there been an economical use of financial and human resources?
- Are the monitoring and evaluation systems that UNDP has in place helping to ensure that programmes are managed efficiently and effectively?
- Were alternative approaches considered in designing the Projects?

**FINDING 13: UNDP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework are relevant to achieving the planned outcome and are sufficiently sensitive to the political and development constraints of the country.**

The Evaluation reveals that UNDP approaches, resources, models, conceptual framework are relevant to achieving Governance outcomes.

In the design of projects and programmes, UNDP interventions are sensitive to political and cultural constraints, and risk and mitigation measures are taken into consideration. However, inadequate coordination, especially at the level of Government partners coupled with unilateral decisions delay project implementation/execution.

**FINDING 14: UNDP governance strategy and execution has in general been efficient and cost effective.**

The strategy and its execution are generally considered efficient and cost effective, often guided by the principle of "value for money" and thorough scrutiny of financial submissions. The Evaluation reveals that UNDP encourages and supports collaboration among Implementing Partners through coordination mechanisms, taskforces etc, etc.





Furthermore, the use of local consultants vis-à-vis international consultants is considered efficient and cost effective.

**FINDING 15: There has been an economical use of financial and human resources**

The Evaluation shows an economical use of financial and human resources as outlined in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2: UNDP GOVERNANCE OUTCOME EVALUATION**

UNDP GOVERNANCE FINANCIAL ANALYSIS - 2017 -2020

CURRENCY: USD

PROJECT	BUDGET	EXPENDITURE	BALANCE	%
SSR	1,400,000	1,392,579	7,421	99%
SUPPORT TO OP	500,000	499,869	131	100%
TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE	4,700,000	3,478,413	1,221,587	74%
CONSOLIDATING GOVERNANCE	4,310,000	1,915,939	2,394,061	44%
RULE OF LAW	6,360,000	1,343,110	5,016,890	21%
<b>TOTAL PORTFOLIO</b>	<b>17,270,000</b>	<b>8,629,910</b>	<b>8,640,090</b>	<b>50%</b>

It is observed that the Rule of Law project has a substantial amount of funds yet to be utilised. The reasons advanced for this relate to delays in recruitment of essential staff, late start of project implementation, and new PBF funding for 2020-2021. Almost all outputs for 2019 were achieved under the TRAC Fund.

**FINDING 16: The Evaluation reveals that the monitoring and evaluation systems that UNDP has in place are inadequate to ensure that programmes are managed efficiently and effectively.**

Consultations with stakeholders both at the level of UNDP and Implementing Partners revealed that there is no centralised monitoring and evaluation system at the UNDP. However, individual projects do have dedicated M&E systems/frameworks which include quarterly visits, spot checks, annual reviews with partners, and NAO audits. UNDP generally use the services of these M&E project staff.



**FINDING 17: The Evaluation reveals that alternative approaches were considered in designing the Governance Projects.**

Specific examples of alternative approaches include Direct Implementation approach, and the pilot and phased approaches adopted in the TJHR and SSR projects respectively.

#### **5.1.4 SUSTAINABILITY**

This section presents an analysis of the evidence in response to the questions about the sustainability of UNDP's contribution to outcomes:

- What is the likelihood that UNDP governance interventions are sustainable?
- What mechanisms have been set in place by UNDP to support the government of Gambia to sustain improvements made through these governance interventions?
- How should the Governance Portfolio be enhanced to support central authorities, local communities and civil society in improving service delivery over the long term?
- What changes should be made in the current set of governance partnerships in order to promote long term sustainability? *...Impact & sustainability*

**FINDING 18: In principle, UNDP governance interventions are sustainable in design and implementation.**

The Evaluation reveals that sustainability mechanisms are inbuilt in almost all projects with annual sustainability plans developed and reviewed. Further, capacity building and grassroots consultations from project design through to implementation are likely to ensure sustainability.

Notwithstanding, staff turnover especially for trained staff in Government coupled with project staff reverting to Government salary scale are key challenges to sustainability.

**FINDING 19: Mechanisms have been set in place by UNDP to support the government of The Gambia to sustain improvements made through these governance interventions.**

These mechanisms include using UNDP "Good Offices" to ensure continued engagement of Development Partners and Government in governance interventions; the creation of



Inter-party Committees (political parties) at National Assembly to promote political dialogue; and increased women and youth participation in national dialogue.

Furthermore, consultations and review of project documents revealed that specific line Ministries have been identified as Implementing Partners in project execution, for example OP, MOFEA, MOJ and MOTIE.

**FINDING 20: The Evaluation shows that UNDP and Government must work together to ensure the Government Portfolio is enhanced to support central authorities, local communities and civil society in improving service delivery over the long term.**

Accordingly, Government should continue its support of project activities after project end, and promote and pursue resource mobilization initiatives. UNDP on the other hand, should maintain frequent engagement with Implementing Partners and Development partners through, but not limited to, the Development Partners Forum.

**FINDING 21: The Evaluation identifies some changes that should be made in the current set of governance partnerships in order to promote long term sustainability.**

These changes include *inter alia* to: improve coordination, communication, collaboration and M&E mechanisms; share knowledge and experience, and enhance data management among partners; and strengthen security of tenure of staff, minimize frequent staff movements and retain project focal persons for the duration of projects.

### **5.1.5 PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY**

This section provides an analysis of the evidence in response to the questions about the appropriateness of the Partnership Strategy:

- Has the partnership strategy in the governance sector been appropriate and effective?
- Are there current or potential complementarities or overlaps with existing national partners' programmes?
- How have partnerships affected the progress towards achieving the outputs?
- Has UNDP worked effectively with other international delivery partners to deliver on good governance initiatives?



- How effective has UNDP been in partnering with civil society (where applicable) and the private sector to promote good governance in the region?

**FINDING 22: Stakeholder consultations confirm that the partnership strategy in the governance sector has to a large extent been appropriate and effective.**

The partnership strategy has been generally rated as appropriate and effective. However, the consultations revealed that there is still room for improvement as the portfolio is growing and partnerships are evolving.

With regard to project implementation, the strategy provides for flexibility depending on the relative capacity and institutional strength of the Implementing Partner. Where the capacity and institutional strength of the Implementing Partner was assessed to be relatively adequate, the Implementing Partner assumed full responsibility for project implementation, and where it was considered otherwise, the Direct Implementing approach was adopted.

**FINDING 23: Stakeholder consultations reveal that the Governance Portfolio demonstrates complementarities and little or no overlaps with existing national partners' programmes.**

The consultations revealed strong complementarities among and between Implementing Partners - Government, CSOs/NGOs, LGAs and Development Partners, as in SSR, TJHR projects.

The evaluation revealed that UNDP and Implementing Partners engage in consultations during project design, reviews and evaluation to avoid overlaps and duplications.

**FINDING 24: Both the desk review and stakeholder consultations reveal that significant progress was made towards achieving the outputs during the period under review.**

As mentioned earlier in the Data Analysis section, the Evaluation confirms the significant progress made towards achieving the outputs during the period under review.

**FINDING 25: The Evaluation shows evidence that UNDP worked effectively with other international delivery partners to deliver on good governance initiatives.**

The desk review and consultations confirmed that partnerships were forged and maintained with regional, continental and bi-lateral partners in the implementation of the Governance Portfolio (ECOWAS, AU, EU, UK, USA, FR, Egypt, Turkey).



However, there is still room for improvement especially the need for better coordination of Development Partner activities.

**FINDING 26: UNDP partnership with Civil Society and Private Sector is considered effective in promoting good governance in the region.**

The Evaluation noted strategic partnerships between UNDP, CSOs, Private Sector and Government within the region (E.g. Senegal).

### **5.1.6 HUMAN RIGHTS**

This section presents an analysis of the evidence in response to the questions related to the cross-cutting issues (Human Rights and Gender Equality):

- To what extent have poor, indigenous and tribal peoples, women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups benefitted from UNDPs work in support of good governance?

**FINDING 27: In general, UNDP interventions largely benefitted the poor, women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups.**

UNDP interventions including COVID-19 Response and Recovery initiative benefitted the poor, women and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups in the urban and rural areas. Examples include: cash transfers to beneficiaries, Virtual Courts, TRRC, Victims Center.

Furthermore, on the issue of civic engagement and enhancing participation by women, youth and other marginalized groups, UNDP strengthened the institutional capacity of the Gambia Federation for the Disabled (GFD) through reviewing and restructuring of the GFD Constitution and Programme of Action.

### **5.1.7 GENDER EQUALITY**

- To what extent has gender been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of governance projects? Is gender marker data assigned to projects representative of reality (focus should be placed on gender marker 2 and 3 projects)?
- To what extent has UNDP governance support promoted positive changes in gender equality? Were there any unintended effects?



**FINDING 28: The consultations reveal that gender issues have to a large extent been addressed in the design, implementation and monitoring of governance projects.**

The desk review and consultations revealed the successful implementation of the Country Office's Gender strategy. Its Gender Equality and Mainstreaming interventions received commendation from the UNDP Gender Equality Seal Certification Assessment Summary Report : 2018-2020 Round. The Country Office achieved a SILVER Level Certification with a final score of 72%. "This is a significant improvement from a baseline of 44% in the 2018 assessment. Congratulations on your progress!" (Haoliang).

**FINDING 29: UNDP governance support has to a large extent promoted positive changes in Gender Equality and Mainstreaming in The Gambia.**

UNDP governance interventions contributed to the establishment of a separate Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare; supported existing Gender Units in Security Institutions, encouraged creation of new ones, and pushed for involvement of women in decision-making within the security institutions; opinions of men and women, girls and boys, marginalized groups and differently abled persons are equally sought on the different aspects of activities as was the case in TJHR project; promotion of the Gender Equality Seal among Private Sector institutions and enterprises; and support to the CSO Gender Platform to champion SGBV and issues affecting women.

The appointment of the first female Deputy Director General of the Gambia Immigration Department can be considered among the unintended positive effect of UNDP's contributions to Gender Equality in The Gambia, as well as the establishment of the Female Police Network.



## 5.2 CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation was undertaken as per the methodology outlined above. It was inclusive and participatory, engaging stakeholders from both UNDP and Implementing Partners despite the Covid-19 Pandemic.

The evaluation exercise elicited interesting findings, lessons and attendant recommendations which would help improve the design and implementation of future projects and ensure their sustainability.

Overall, the Governance programme has been successful and impacted positively on the lives and livelihoods of Gambians. UNDP has been rated a strong and reliable partner by implementing and development partners. This is evident in the establishment of NHRC, TRRC and Victims Center; Gender Equality and Mainstreaming initiatives; youth and women empowerment and engagement in the political discourse; sensitisation and capacity building of community elders and influential personalities in conflict resolution and peacebuilding in rural communities; support provided through the Covid-19 Respond and Recovery initiative (especially support to the Prison Services and Judiciary, and cash transfers to women, poor and marginalized groups) among others.

As detailed in the recommendations, there is still room for improvement namely in strengthening the capacity of the Governance Portfolio especially given the high expectations of the citizenry since the transition in 2017; improve coordination and communication mechanisms between UNDP and Implementing Partners to enhance the performance of the Governance Portfolio and ensure the successful accomplishment of its outcomes.

UNDP is assessed to be ready, willing and able to continue working with Implementing Partners through innovative approaches and techniques in the advent of COVID-19.



## 6. LESSONS LEARNED & BEST PRACTICES

The Governance Programme was implemented in partnership with Government, CSOs/NGOs and the Private Sector. This section identifies lessons learned and best practices that should help inform future programme design and implementation.

### **Lesson 1. Needs assessments to identify capacity and institutional strength of Implementing Partners help to determine the partnership approach appropriate to deliver the programme activities.**

UNDP often undertakes needs assessments of the capacity and institutional strength of Implementing Partners with a view to determine the appropriate implementation approach to adopt. Where the implementing partner's capacity was assessed to be appropriate, the partner led the implementation process. On the other hand, where capacity gaps and institutional weaknesses exist, the Direct Implementation approach was adopted wherein UNDP led the implementation process.

Visibility of UNDP contribution and engagements with the Private Sector is relatively limited despite progress registered in the areas of Gender Equality and Mainstreaming in the Private Sector institutions, the COVID-19 Response and Recovery, and Entrepreneurship Development (GCCl, TAF Foundation etc).

### **Lesson 2. Gender Equality and Mainstreaming is a cardinal pillar in all projects in the Governance Portfolio.**

Gender issues are very important to the governance programme. The requirement for 15%-20% of project funds to be spent on gender related activities (Gender SEAL, GWE) to promote Gender equality and mainstreaming is considered best practice.

Tremendous support provided to the establishment and operationalization of NA Women Caucus and attendant capacity building of the Caucus, coupled with the request for equal representation of gender at events hosted by some projects all serve as evidence of the importance UNDP attaches to gender issues. The Evaluation revealed that female representation in the staff complement of SSR and TJHR projects was 40% and 99% respectively.





**Lesson 3. Diversity in partnerships have not only strengthen the partnership but have also guaranteed sustainability of programme activities.**

Committees and structures developed during project design and implementation are participatory and inclusive giving Government/Communities, CSOs/NGOs voice and ownership of programme activities.

**Lesson 4. Sustainability is a critical success factor in project implementation and therefore needs the attention of all partners.**

Sustainability mechanisms in-built in project design coupled with strong stakeholder participation, input and subsequent ownership are important to ensure sustainability.

**Lesson 5 Innovative approaches in project design and implementation featured among projects**

Projects like TJHR were initially piloted and subsequently scaled up into full blown projects following regional consultations and knowledge sharing. Similarly, a project like SSR is executed in phases (first phase ended in April 2020, and second phase is in the making).

COVID-19, in spite of its international scare, has prompted critical thinking, innovative approaches and increased use of technology in project implementation. Innovations like Zoom licensing and Zoom meetings, Virtual Court proceedings, Mobile Aid Clinics and WhatsApp Group-consultations are testimonies of this new thinking and approach in programme delivery.



## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated earlier, the UNDP Governance Programme in The Gambia has been successful and impacted positively on the lives and livelihoods of Gambians in general. UNDP has been rated a strong and reliable partner by Implementing and Development Partners.

The Evaluation revealed positive contributions and progress in key areas like Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening, Transitional Justice & Human Rights, Security Sector Reform, Gender Equality and Mainstreaming, Rule of Law, and Leadership and Accountability.

The foregoing notwithstanding, analysis of the findings and lessons learnt exposed some challenges and issues that need the attention of UNDP and Implementing Partners in order to consolidate the gains registered so far and to achieve sustainable results in the long-term.

Accordingly, the following recommendations are offered to guide the UNDP and Implementing Partners in furtherance of the Governance Portfolio:

### 7.1 Recommendation

Given the expansion and evolution of the Governance Portfolio since the Transition in 2017, UNDP should strengthen the capacity of the portfolio in order to manage the attendant high expectations.

### 7.2 Recommendation

In order to ensure smooth and effective project/programme implementation and sustainability, Government should address the issues of security of tenure, staff turnover, and frequent staff movements.

### 7.3 Recommendation

For the purposes of smooth and effective implementation, enhancement and sustainability of the Governance Programme, UNDP should continue to support capacity building and institutional strengthening initiatives/interventions among Implementing Partners - CSOs/NGOs and LGAs and Government.



#### **7.4 Recommendation**

UNDP should strengthen M&E capacity within the Governance Portfolio (UNDP and Implementing Partners).

#### **7.5 Recommendation**

In the interest efficiency, effectiveness and economy, UNDP and Government should strengthen coordination, collaboration and communication mechanisms within the Governance Programme.

#### **7.6 Recommendation**

UNDP should improve the visibility of its contribution to, and engagement with the Private Sector especially in light of the achievements registered by the Governance Portfolio.

#### **7.7 Recommendation**

For the purposes of sustainability of the Governance Programme, Government should continue its support of project activities after project end, and promote and pursue resource mobilization initiatives. In the same vein, UNDP should maintain frequent engagement with Implementing Partners and Development Partners through, but not limited to, the Development Partners Forum.



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