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INDEPENDENT COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION GUINEA



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responsiveness MANAGING FOR RESULTS relevance COORDINATION AND DEVELOPMENT
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INDEPENDENT COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION: Guinea

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FOREWORD


I am pleased to present the first Independent Country Programme Evaluation of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Guinea carried out by the Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP. The evaluation covers UNDP programmatic interventions implemented between 2018 and 2021, as reflected in the UNDP country programme period 2018-2022, and in line with the country's National Development Plan for the same period.

Guinea's development trajectory has been hindered by structural weaknesses in governance, marked political violence and instability, and exposure to external shocks, notably the combined lasting effects of the 2014 decline in global commodity prices, the resurgence of the Ebola epidemic, and more recently the COVID-19 global pandemic. While the country's mining sector experienced a boom during the pandemic, offsetting the economic slowdown, the crisis heavily impacted already weak non-mining sectors, on which 97 percent of the population depend, and slowed progress to increase their contribution to the economy.

The evaluation found that UNDP has been a longstanding development partner of national authorities in Guinea, enabling continuous support to key government functions on significant areas of the country's National Development Plan. During this programme period, UNDP continued to play an important role in accompanying national authorities in the development of key national and sectoral planning and policy frameworks, and in supporting institutional capacity for their coordination and implementation, notably for the sustainable management of the country's natural capital and to address climate change. At the same time, the combined effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, political instability and weak baseline institutional performance have not permitted an enabling environment to anchor and sustain project outputs.

Despite providing relevant support to rural communities, country programme support to sustainable livelihoods lacked a clear focus and conceptualization of resilience. Similarly, the support provided for women and youth employment in the non-mining sectors has had limited effect so far, due to the short-term nature of capacity-development and the inadequacy of modalities to promote access to financing. The support provided has mainly been focused on business creation, without commensurate support to ensure value chain integration and the overall enabling environment.

As UNDP Guinea advances the development of a new programmatic framework and supports the ongoing political transition, the country office will need to strengthen aspects of its programmatic engagement to further consolidate its current positioning. This includes strengthening coherence and synergy across its interventions and programme work in provinces and with partners to support women's empowerment. The UNDP response to the multifaceted challenges posed by the mining sector has been positive, and is worth consolidating and expanding further through a portfolio approach. In particular, the country office should take measures to strengthen the rigour of analysis that supports its programming, to avoid technical setbacks that have affected projects with short timeframes.



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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| ABE | 'Adaptation-Based Ecosystem' project |
| AfDB | African Development Bank |
| AGREM | Support Programme for the Governance of Mining Royalties |
| ANPTB | National Agency for the Promotion of Biodigester Technology |
| BSD | Bureau for Strategy Development |
| COVID-19 | Coronavirus Disease 2019 |
| CPD | Country Programme Document |
| CSO | Civil society organization |
| DIM | Direct Implementation Modality |
| EIG | Economic Interest Group |
| FNDL | National Fund for Local Development |
| GBV | Gender-based violence |
| GCF | Green Climate Fund |
| GDP | Gross domestic product |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| GERME | Manage Your Business Better |
| GEWE | Gender equality and women's empowerment |
| GIE | Economic interest group |
| GIRN-PBF | Integrated and Sustainable Natural Resource Management in a Landscape Approach' project |
| HDI | Human Development Index |
| ICPE | Independent Country Programme Evaluation |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| INS | National Institute of Statistics |
| ISAV | High Institute for Agronomy and Veterinary |
| M&E | Monitoring and evaluation |
| MEEF | Ministry of Environment, Water and Forests |
| MFI | Microfinance institution |
| MFP | Multifunctional platform |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| MPCI | Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation |
| NGO | Non-governmental organization |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| ODA | Official development assistance |
| OECD | Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development |
| OHADA | Treaty on the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa |
| OHCHR | Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| OPROGEM | Office of Gender, Childhood and Morals Protection |
| PACEG | Support Programme for the Conduct of Elections in Guinea |
| PBF | Peacebuilding Fund |
| PEGED | 'Environment and Sustainable Natural Resource Management' programme |
| PNDES | National Plan for Economic and Social Development |
| PPCP | Priority Plan for Peace Consolidation |
| REMECC | Project strengthening resilience of farming communities' livelihoods against climate change in the Guinean Prefectures of Gaoual, Koundara and Mali |
| ROAR | Results-Oriented Annual Report |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SIGIP | Integrated System for the Management of Public Investment Programmes |
| SSR | Security Sector Reform |
| UNCDF | United Nations Capital Development Fund |
| UNDAF | United Nations Development Assistance Framework |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children's Fund |
| UNIDO | United Nations Industrial Development Organization |

Evaluation Brief: Guinea

COUNTRY CONTEXT

Despite its progress and many natural and mineral resources, Guinea is a least-developed country, in the low human development category. It was positioned 178 out of 189 countries in the Human Development Index (HDI) ranking in 2019, below average for Sub-Saharan Africa. Guinea's economy has been coping with the combined and lasting effects of external shocks related to a decline in global commodity prices in 2014, and the resurgence of the Ebola epidemic in 2014-2015 and 2021. This caused significant social losses and disruption in non-mining sectors of the economy, and exacerbated pre-existing chronic food insecurity situations in some regions. Guinea saw heightened sociopolitical tensions and violence around its local elections in 2018, and the deferral of parliamentary elections in 2019. This was followed by controversy surrounding constitutional reforms the same year, which enabled the incumbent President to run and win an additional term in 2020. Assessments of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 estimated that poverty in Guinea increased by four percentage points due to loss of revenue for households and businesses, as well as a spike in inflation which raised prices by more than 10 percent by the end of 2020.

THE UNDP PROGRAMME

The UNDP country programme in Guinea (2018-2022) forms part of the United Nations programme in the country, as defined in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the same period. Under its country programme, UNDP support targeted two of the four outcomes defined in the UNDAF results framework. These, in turn, were aligned with three pillars of Guinea's National Development Plan, namely: (i) the promotion of good governance for sustainable development; (ii) inclusive and sustainable economic transformation; and (iii) sustainable natural resource management.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation found that UNDP continued to play an important role during this programming period, supporting national authorities to develop key national and sectoral planning and policy frameworks, and strengthening institutional capacity for coordination and implementation. UNDP has been a key actor for central ministries, and has provided continuous support to key dimensions of the national development process, including electoral assistance and justice and security sector reform.

UNDP has made important contributions to updating policies and strategic frameworks for the sustainable management of Guinea's natural resources and addressing climate change. Downstream interventions have supported the development of sustainable livelihoods for rural communities, but lacked a clear focus and conceptualization of resilience. The distribution of climate change vulnerabilities is uneven - between the four regions of Guinea, between communities, between farming and agro-pastoral systems, and between generations and sexes within communities - yet the UNDP Country Programme Document and project designs were not informed by assessments of climate vulnerability charting climate resilience pathways. The tendency to focus on activities did not allow for the programme to follow the integrated and area-specific approach required to enhance resilience.

UNDP has sought to provide livelihood and employment opportunities to women and youth groups through direct interventions, and indirectly through its interventions for social cohesion and conflict prevention. However, individual results have proved insufficient to address the needs of beneficiaries (such as financing, de-risking, mentorship, incubation or value chain linkage), due to short project durations and limited financing.

UNDP is making a positive contribution to both economic diversification and governance of the mining sector at local level, which are important to promote broader social cohesion objectives. While much remains to be done to optimize the potential of the sector and consolidate the results of UNDP interventions, its centrality makes UNDP positioning significant. While some interventions have been inconclusive, UNDP positioning in the area of environment and with the Global Environment Facility provides an opportunity to strengthen synergy between interventions in the mining and environmental sectors, which have not been leveraged.

Due to the combined effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, political instability and weak baseline institutional performance, the environment has not been conducive to anchor and sustain project outputs. The evolving context and political tensions in Guinea have limited the scope for core governance support to respond to the social cohesion challenges in country. The combined effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the political crisis have also limited prospects for national ownership, and in turn the uptake and sustainability of institutional capacity-development. While acknowledging the challenging operating environment, the evaluation found several shortcomings affecting UNDP performance, and in particular recurrent evidence of technical and operational setbacks which have exacerbated the already short project timeframes, including a lack of rigour in feasibility studies, and limited participation of beneficiaries in the design of project activities and support.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The design of the next country programme should be accompanied by region-specific analyses and theories of change to further articulate the UNDP approach to supporting community resilience, and develop synergies between the different parts of its programme.

Recommendation 2: UNDP should seek new opportunities in the ongoing political transition, to broaden its governance support towards core and structural public administration and civil service reforms, with a view to strengthening the absorptive capacity of the administration in the short term, and the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of public policy implementation in the medium- to long-term.

Recommendation 3: UNDP should take stock of its current positioning in the mining sector and reflect on the progress, successes, challenges and lessons from its interventions, with a view to articulating and consolidating a coherent portfolio of interventions for its next country programme, targeting the multidimensional and complex challenges of the sector.

Recommendation 4: UNDP should look for opportunities to anchor its gender-related interventions with those of other United Nations agencies and development partners, to develop a comprehensive gender-responsive response that better reflects the vulnerabilities and differentiated needs of Guinean women and girls.

Recommendation 5: The country office should strengthen the rigour, timeliness and oversight of the feasibility studies and situational analyses that precede project launch, to reduce risks from technical setbacks and avoid overburdening short-term projects.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION



This chapter presents the purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation as well as the methodology applied. It first lays out the development context of Guinea, before introducing the UNDP country programme.

1.1 Purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducts Independent Country Programme Evaluations (ICPEs) to capture and demonstrate evaluative evidence of UNDP contributions to development results at the country level, as well as the effectiveness of UNDP strategy in facilitating and leveraging national efforts to achieve development results. The evaluation also aims to identify factors affecting the performance of UNDP. ICPEs are independent evaluations carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP Evaluation Policy.¹

This ICPE covers the UNDP programme in Guinea for 2018-2022, although some of the projects reviewed may have been initiated before this period. It assesses all four outcome areas outlined in the Country Programme Document (CPD). The assessment covers all UNDP interventions at national and local levels, from all funding sources including Government, private sector, vertical funds, UNDP resources and other donors.

BOX 1. Evaluation questions

1. What did the UNDP country programme intend to achieve during the period under review?
 2. To what extent has the programme achieved (or is likely to achieve) its intended objectives?
 3. To what extent has UNDP been able to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic and support the country's preparedness, response and recovery process?
 4. What factors contributed to or hindered UNDP performance and the sustainability of results?
-

1.2 Evaluation methodology

The effectiveness of the UNDP country programme was analysed through an assessment of progress towards the achievement of expected outputs, and the extent to which these outputs contributed to the intended CPD outcomes. To better understand UNDP performance and the sustainability of results in the country, the ICPE examined the specific factors that have influenced –positively or negatively – the performance of the country programme. UNDP capacity to adapt to the changing context and respond to national development needs and priorities was also considered.

The evaluation methodology adhered to the norms and standards of the United Nations Evaluation Group.² In line with the UNDP gender mainstreaming strategy, the evaluation examined the level of gender mainstreaming across the country programme and operations. Sex-disaggregated data were collected, where available, and assessed against programme outcomes.

¹ See <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/policy.shtml>.

² See website of the United Nations Evaluation Group: <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/detail/1914>.

The evaluation relied on information collected from different sources and then triangulated, including:

- A review of UNDP strategic and programme documents, project documents and monitoring reports, evaluation reports, documents and publications, research papers and other available country-related publications.³ The main documents consulted by the evaluation team are listed in Annex 5.
- An analysis of the programme portfolio and the development of a country programme theory of change to map the projects implemented against the goals set in the CPD. An illustration of the country programme logic framework is presented below, as Figure 7.
- Remote and face-to-face interviews were conducted with 174 stakeholders,⁴ to collect data and assess stakeholder perceptions of the scope and effectiveness of programme interventions, determine factors affecting performance, and identify the strengths and weaknesses of the UNDP programme. Interviewees included government representatives (38 percent), UNDP staff (23 percent), beneficiaries (15 percent), United Nations country team personnel (10 percent), civil society organizations (CSOs) (7 percent), and other development partners (6 percent). Women represented about a third (27 percent) of interviewees across all groups. A full list of interviewees is available in Annex 4.
- A 10-day field visit was undertaken, covering districts in the regions of Coyah, Mamou, Farannah and Nzerekore, to assess the results of selected initiatives and conduct semi-structured interviews with 40 stakeholders and beneficiaries. Locations were selected through a purposeful sample to cover the four main geographical region of the country (Lower Guinea, Central Guinea, Upper Guinea and the Guinea Forest Region), and the various interventions and themes covered by the country programme. This enabled the inclusion of local authorities in the sample of stakeholders interviewed for this evaluation, as well as project site observations and engagement with the final beneficiaries of community-level interventions.

The draft ICPE report went through a quality assurance process, comprising an external peer review and internal review by IEO evaluators. The report was then submitted to the country office and Regional Bureau for Africa for the identification of factual errors and comments, and finally shared with the Government and other national partners.

Evaluation limitations

This evaluation was mostly conducted remotely in 2021, amid the continued effects and restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic. In addition, on 15 September 2021 Guinea experienced a military coup which deposed the sitting President, and announced a gradual political transition. This had a significant impact on interviews scheduled with national counterparts, created unexpected delays to the evaluation and, in most cases, limited the participation of high-level decision-makers in the process. However, the evaluation team managed to secure extensive interviews with technical staff from national authorities working with UNDP, and lengthen the data collection process, to mitigate this. Finally, an extensive field mission was organized, enabling one of the evaluation team based in the country to conduct project site observations and engage with local authorities and beneficiaries in and outside of Conakry.

³ 16 decentralized evaluations were conducted in the period under review. Project and programme documentation was gathered through the UNDP corporate database, and complemented by the country office.

⁴ 70 percent of interviews were conducted remotely.

1.3 Country context

Guinea is a coastal Sahelian West African country with an estimated population of 13.4 million.⁵ The country has rich natural resources and biodiversity, and hosts the sources of several major rivers crossing Sahel countries.⁶ Guinea's economy relies primarily on its agricultural sector, which is estimated to employ 52 percent of the country's workforce, but only constituted around 20 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2017.⁷ The mining sector has been growing in importance in the country's economy over the last decade, with Guinea estimated to hold the world's largest single bauxite reserves, as well as deposits of gold, diamonds and iron ore. The secondary sector of the economy, dominated by mining activities, accounted for 35 percent of GDP and 85 percent of the country's exports, highlighting both the performance of the sector as well as the economy's vulnerability to fluctuation in global commodity prices and demands.⁸ The country sustained economic and human development progress over the past decade (see Figure 12 in annexes), driven by its abundant natural resources, with increases in its gross national income per capita of 71.2 percent, and in its human development value of 69.1 percent, between 1990 and 2019.⁹

Despite this progress, and its many natural resources, Guinea is classed as a least-developed country with low human development. It was positioned 178 out of 189 countries and territories in the Human Development Index (HDI) in 2019, below average for sub-Saharan African countries. Similarly, the country's HDI value falls by 24.4 percent when discounted for inequality, above the regional average. The 2018 Multidimensional Poverty Index estimated that 66.2 percent of the population of Guinea are multidimensionally poor, while an additional 16.4 percent are vulnerable to multidimensional poverty.¹⁰

The country's economy has been coping with the combined and lasting effects of recent external shocks related to the 2014 decline in global commodity prices and the resurgence of the Ebola epidemic in 2014-2015 and 2021. These caused significant social losses and disruption in non-mining sectors of the economy, and exacerbated pre-existing chronic food insecurity in some regions. An assessment of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 estimated that poverty in Guinea increased by four percentage points due to loss of revenue by households and businesses, and a spike in inflation raised prices by more than 10 percent by the end of 2020.¹¹ At macro level, the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has been absorbed and partly offset by growth in the mining sector in 2020, due to increases in commodity prices and the resurgence of global demand following the reopening of economies across the world.¹² Annual growth of the mining sector increased threefold between 2019 and 2020. However, growth in non-mining sectors is projected to increase only by half of its pre-pandemic projection, highlighting the continued impact of the pandemic on the 97 percent of the population who depend on other sectors of the economy.¹³

⁵ World Bank Data, 2021.

⁶ The sources of the Gambia, Niger, and Senegal Rivers are in Guinea's highlands.

⁷ Republic of Guinea (2017) National Economic and Social Development Plan.

⁸ Republic of France, Directorate General of the Treasury (2021) Economic and financial situation – GUINEA. <https://www.tresor.economie.gouv.fr/Pays/GN/situation-economique-et-financiere>.

⁹ UNDP (2020) Human Development Report 2020; Briefing note for countries on the 2020 Human Development Report.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ IMF Country Report No. 2021/146.

¹² Based on IMF estimates, Guinea recorded GDP growth between 2019 and 2020, and revised its 2020 estimates to account for the growth of the mining sector.

¹³ IMF (2020) Guinea staff report, December 2020.

Poverty rates are higher among households in the agricultural sector and those with low educational attainment. The incidence of poverty for rural areas (65 percent) is almost double that of urban areas (35.4 percent). Based on a national survey on employment and the informal sector in Guinea, 40.5 percent of the population are employed in the agricultural sector (including fishing and forestry), compared to only 3 percent in extractive activities.¹⁴ An estimated 80 percent of unemployed people in the country are youth.¹⁵

Guinea is ranked 118 out of 156 countries on the Global Gender Gap index, with some progress in the area of economic empowerment but significant gaps in the educational attainment and political empowerment of women.¹⁶ 80 percent of women reported having experienced gender-based violence (GBV), and female genital mutilation affects an estimated 97 percent of women between the ages of 15 and 45.¹⁷ Female political participation is limited, and declined over the 2020 parliamentary elections. Currently, only one of 342 mayors in the country is female.

The country's development trajectory is hindered by structural weaknesses in governance, marked political violence and instability, and exposure to external shocks. Following independence and years of military rule, Guinea's experience with multiparty democracy is relatively recent, with the first multiparty elections in 1993. Between 2008 and 2010, the country was subject to a military coup and the return of military rule. The various political transitions were characterized by violent events that have left a mark on society, notably the massacre of 28 September 2009 and the *Camp Boiro* repression. While the country saw a return to civilian rule following elections in 2010, its electoral processes have been marred by recurrent social and ethnic political tensions and protests.

Guinea has achieved positive trends in the World Bank Country Policy and Institutional Assessment score, reaching performance levels similar to other International Development Association countries since 2016. However, this performance has since stagnated and remains below average for non-fragile sub-Saharan African States.¹⁸ In 2020, Guinea ranked 39 of 54 on the Mo Ibrahim Governance index, with strongest progress in economic governance and improving the business climate.¹⁹ However, progress has been hindered by a legacy of weak governance structures, centralized governance, and limited public trust in central institutions.²⁰ Other interrelated drivers of fragility, conflict and violence have been noted through rising underemployment, and the political weaponization of ethnicity.²¹

The country saw renewed heightened sociopolitical tensions and violence around the 2018 local elections and the deferral of the 2019 parliamentary elections, followed by controversies surrounding constitutional reforms adopted the same year which, among others, enabled the incumbent President to run and win an additional term in 2020. During this period, there were increased reports of violence and human rights violations in connection with political violence, and the use of the national army to violently repress demonstrations.²²

These are reflected both in the country's decreased ranking in the Mo Ibrahim Index, and its macroeconomic performance. This situation culminated in a military coup in September 2021, deposing the re-elected president, and the formation of a transitional military Government. A National Council for the Transition was established, composed of all sectors of society, and a new Government nominated in January 2022.

¹⁴ Republic of Guinea, National Statistics Office (2019) National Survey on Employment and Informal Sector in Guinea 2018/2019.

¹⁵ Republic of Guinea, MPC (2016) Plan National de Développement Economique et Social (PNDES) 2016-2020.

¹⁶ World Economic Forum (2021) Global Gender Gap Index. http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GGGR_2021.pdf.

¹⁷ United Nations Guinea (2018) UNDAF 2018-2022.

¹⁸ World Bank (2021) Evaluation of politics and national institutions. https://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/documents/cpia/WB_CPIA_FRN_guinea.pdf

¹⁹ Ibrahim Index of African Governance, consulted in April 2021.

²⁰ World Bank. Country Partnership Framework for the Republic of Guinea FY2018-FY2023.

²¹ World Bank (2017) Implementation Note for the IDA 18 Risk Mitigation Regime in Guinea.

²² Amnesty International (2020) Annual Report 2020, Guinea. Human Rights Watch (2021) World Report – Guinea.

Guinea suffers recurring floods during the rainy season, and anticipated changes to rainfall patterns due to climate change are likely to exacerbate this challenge.²³ The increased salinization of water sources and coastal flooding from rising sea levels create significant risks for the 6 percent of Guinea's population living in low-lying areas, threatening water availability, coastal infrastructure and mangrove ecosystems.²⁴ The rapid expansion of the mining sector and hydropower development may pose additional threats to environmental and biodiversity conservation.²⁵

On average, Guinea lost 38,000 hectares of forest per year between 2010 and 2020, representing an annual deforestation rate of 0.59 percent.²⁶ The degradation of biodiversity in Guinea is linked to the excessive harvesting of elements such as timber, wildlife resources and harvest crops, as well as inadequacies in the fisheries management system which have led to the overexploitation of most fish stocks of commercial interest.²⁷ Guinea's National Development Plan notes that the small proportion of the country's natural potential that is exploited is subject to intense environmental pressure, resulting in a decline in plant cover, the release into the atmosphere of dangerous products, and the contamination of ground and surface water. It adds that the environment is also threatened by various kinds of pollution from inadequate solid and liquid waste management.²⁸

1.4 Development planning and financing in Guinea

Guinea adopted its first long-term development plan in 2016, following three successive Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes, with the launch of its National Plan for Economic and Social Development 2016-2020 (PNDES).²⁹ PNDES was developed against the backdrop of Guinea's Vision 2040, which set a vision for "an emergent and prosperous Guinea, guaranteeing a high level of living standard and well-being to its population and future generations", and established the long-term pathways for Guinea to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Africa Union Agenda 2063.³⁰ PNDES is made up of four strategic pillars, namely: (i) the promotion of good governance; (ii) inclusive and sustainable economic transformation; (iii) inclusive development of human capital; and (iv) sustainable natural resource management.

PNDES placed particular emphasis on the pillars relating to human capital and economic transformation, which together were expected to account for 87 percent of the total costing. PNDES is presented as an accelerator of the African Union African Mining Vision, recognizing the potential of the mining sector to catalyse Guinea's economic structural transformation and drive local development through better integration into the economy, employment and creation of added value, and the effective use of mining revenues.³¹ PNDES identifies areas for structural change, emphasizing: (i) the need for catalytic infrastructure investments and good governance in the mining sector, (ii) improved productivity gains in the agro-pastoral and fishing sectors, (iii) and agro-industrial diversification.

²³ African Development (2018) National Climate Change profile, Guinea.

²⁴ USAID (2018) Climate Risk Profile, Guinea.

²⁵ USAID (2020) Guinea, Country Development Cooperation Strategy 2020-2025.

²⁶ FAO (2021) Global Forest Resources Assessment 2020: Main Report.

²⁷ FAO (2019) Fisheries and aquaculture country profiles: Republic of Guinea. <https://www.fao.org/fishery/facp/GIN/fr>.

²⁸ Republic of Guinea (2016). PNDES 2016-2020.

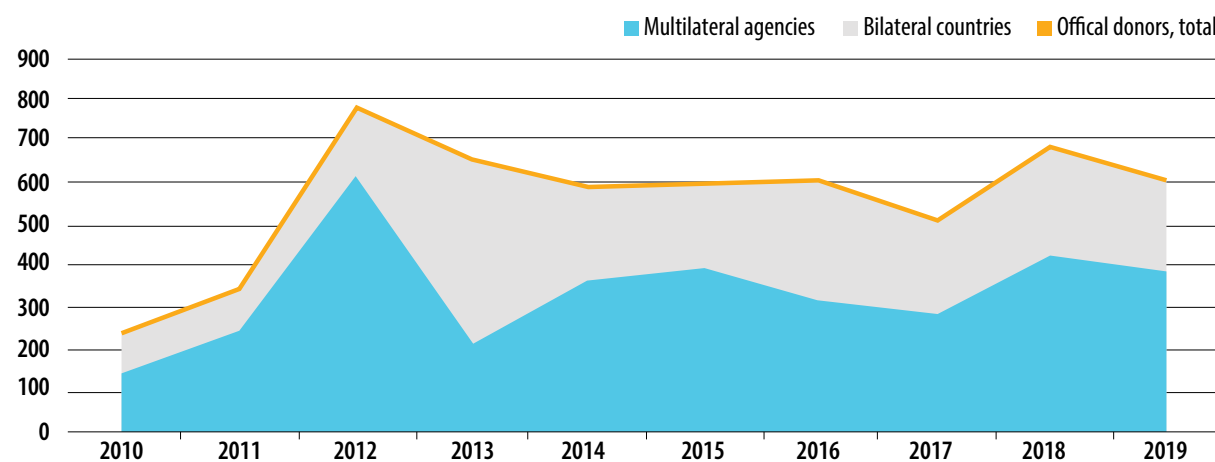
²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Republic of Guinea MPCl. Vision 2040 pour une Guinée Emergente et Prospère.

³¹ The Africa Mining Vision is a policy framework that was created by the African Union in 2009 to ensure that Africa utilizes its mineral resources strategically for broad-based, inclusive development.

PNDES was expected to require a total of US\$ 13.5 billion for implementation, with an estimated average annual cost of \$2.7 billion, equivalent to approximately 150 percent of public spending in 2017.³² 68 percent of this cost was expected to be financed through the State budget and public-private partnerships, with additional financing required for approximately 32 percent of the total estimated cost. Domestic resource mobilization has been a central challenge for Guinea, and several policy measures were taken to improve tax revenue collection, management and distribution. Most notably, the launch of PNDES was preceded in 2013 by a revision of the country's mining code which, among other things, established a transparent breakdown of mining revenues between the State and district budgets, and a national fund for strategic development investment. This was followed by the launch of key financing instruments to support local development and decentralization, such as the National Fund for Local Development (FNDL) in 2016, and the National Agency for Local Communities in 2017. However, improving mining revenue collection remains a considerable challenge, as estimated mining revenues for 2020 were as low as 1.6 percent of GDP and have reached their lowest point as a share of production (6 percent) and sectoral value-added (7 percent) since the 1990s.

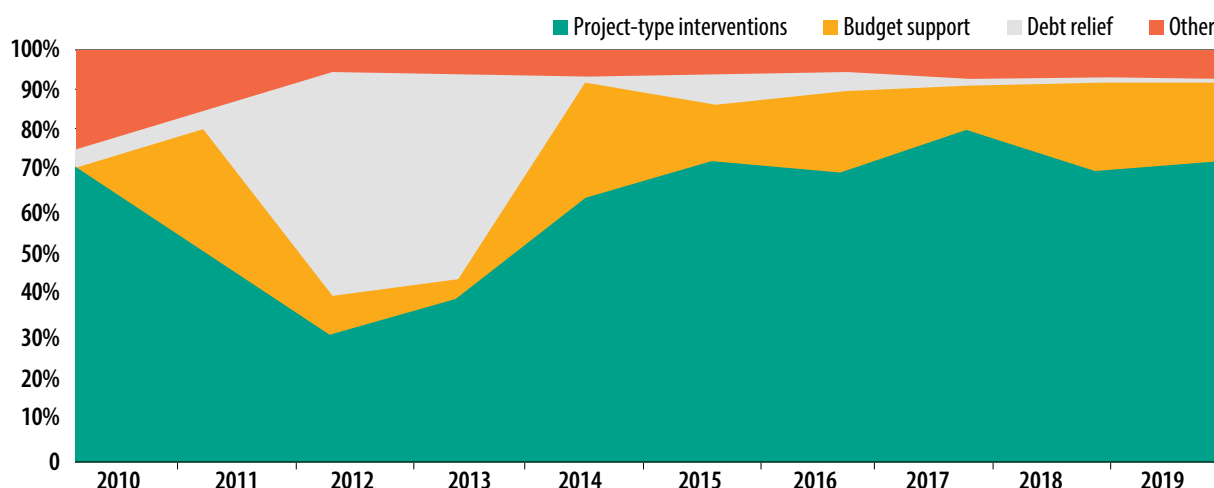
FIGURE 1: Total ODA disbursement 2010-19



Source: OECD- Query Wizard for International Development Statistics August 2021

³² Republic of Guinea Ministry of Budget (2018) Pluriannual Budget Programme. <https://www.mbudget.gov.gn/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Document-de-programmation-budg%C3%A9taire-pluriannuelle-2019-2021.pdf>.

FIGURE 2: ODA disbursement by aid type 2010-19



Source: OECD- Query Wizard for International Development Statistics August 2021

As regards non-domestic sources, there has been an overall increase in flows of official development assistance (ODA) to Guinea in the last ten years, with volumes almost tripling between 2010 and 2019, reaching \$600 million in 2019, the last year for which the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reported ODA data.³³ This overall trend has been supported by an increase in ODA disbursement by bilateral countries, notably through debt relief between 2012 and 2013, and a gradual increase in direct budget support for ODA disbursement. 80 percent of bilateral ODA disbursements between 2010 and 2019 came from four bilateral donors: France (33 percent), United States (29 percent), Japan (13 percent) and Germany (6 percent). Overall, the majority of ODA disbursement occurred through project-type interventions and multilateral agencies, accounting for 67 percent and 61 percent of overall ODA disbursements, respectively. The multilateral agencies with the highest reported level of expenditure in Guinea include the World Bank (24 percent), European Union institutions (22 percent), African Development Bank (AfDB) (17 percent), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (13 percent) and the United Nations system (10 percent).

1.5 UNDP programmes in Guinea

The UNDP country programme in Guinea (2018-2022) forms part of the overall United Nations programme in the country, as defined in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the same period.³⁴ The UNDAF was developed against the four strategic priorities of PNDES, with an estimated budget of \$500 million, equivalent to approximately 11 percent of the total required development financing estimated in PNDES.³⁵

Under its Guinea country programme, UNDP targeted two of the four outcomes defined in the results framework of the UNDAF, aligned with three pillars of PNDES, namely: (i) the promotion of good governance for sustainable development, (ii) inclusive and sustainable economic transformation, and (iii) sustainable

³³ All ODA data were extracted from OECD Query Wizard for International Development Statistics, August 2021.

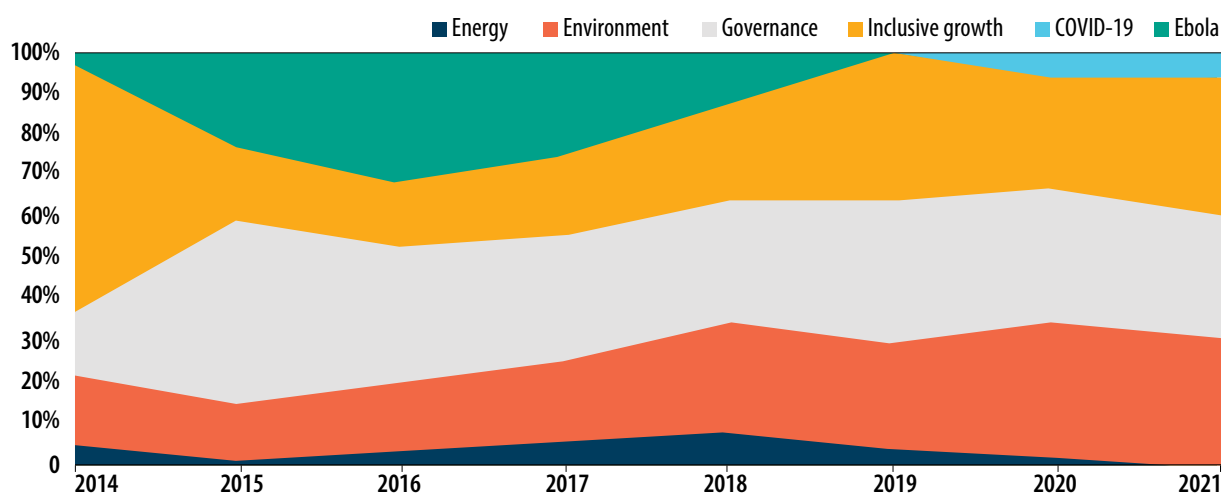
³⁴ United Nations Guinea. UNDAF 2018-2022. The current United Nations and UNDP country programme frameworks were launched two years after the launch of PNDES.

³⁵ See Budget section of Guinea UNDAF 2018-2022.

natural resource management. With an estimated budget of approximately \$144 million, equivalent to one-third of the UNDAF total budget for the same period, the UNDP country programme results framework incorporates the two corresponding outcomes, and frames its contribution under 10 outputs.

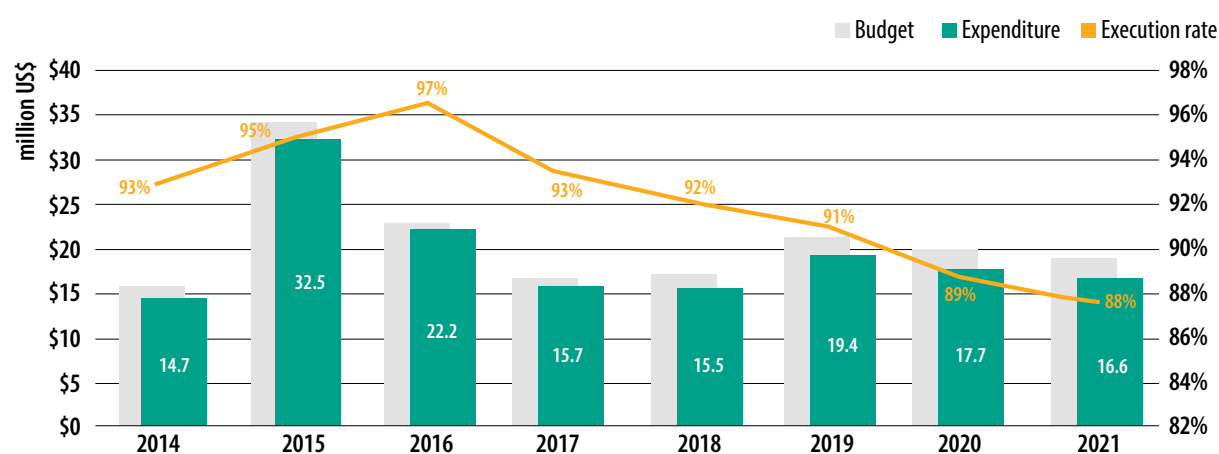
The current PNDES overlaps with the current UNDP country programme and its predecessor implemented between 2013 and 2017. During this period, UNDP supported the operationalization of key democratic institutions and processes such as the national Parliament, the professionalization of the electoral process, justice and security reforms and strategic planning, and the institutional capacity-building of sectoral ministries. However, implementation was disrupted by the Ebola virus outbreak in the region between 2014 and 2016. UNDP was able to adapt to this and effectively contribute to the response and recovery capacity of national authorities, as highlighted in the final CPD evaluation.

FIGURE 3: Share of expenditure by thematic area 2014-21



Source: UNDP Atlas data, March 2022

FIGURE 4: Programme budget and expenditure 2014-21

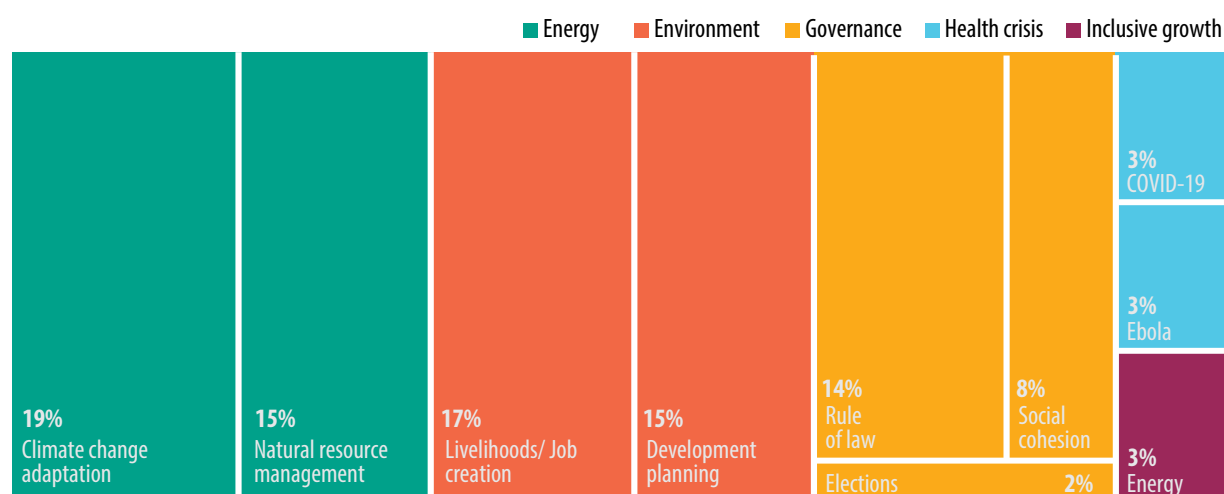


Source: UNDP Atlas data, March 2022

The response to the Ebola crisis saw the UNDP programme budget and expenditure more than double between 2014 and 2015, reaching total expenditure of \$32.5 million in 2015, with the Ebola response accounting for 45 percent of total programme expenditure that year (\$14.7 million). Programming related to the post-epidemic phase continued until 2018, reducing the level of expenditure by approximately 50 percent per year. Overall, programming related to the Ebola crisis accounted for 30 percent of total UNDP expenditure (approximately \$30 million) between 2014 and 2018.

Excluding expenditure related to the Ebola response, UNDP programmatic expenditure over the two country programmes saw the focus gradually shift from governance towards inclusive growth and environment programming, with the overall share of governance programming decreasing from 66 percent of annual expenditure in 2014 to 43 percent in 2018. The average share of expenditure related to environment programmes more than doubled between 2014-2016 (15 percent) and 2017-2020 (38 percent).

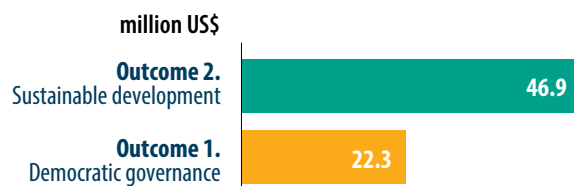
FIGURE 5: Breakdown of focus areas based on expenditure 2018-2021



Source: UNDP Atlas data, March 2022

Under the current country programme, total programmatic expenditure against the two outcomes of the CPD between 2018 and 2021 was \$69.2 million. 75 percent of this (\$46.9 million) corresponded to inclusive growth, environment and energy and health crisis-response programmes (Outcome 2), while 25 percent (\$22.3 million) was disbursed for programming related to democratic governance (Outcome 1). Overall, the two outcomes can be categorized in ten thematic areas targeted by the programmatic interventions developed (see Figure 5), with climate change adaptation showing the largest share of recorded expenditure between 2018-2021 (19 percent), followed by livelihoods and job creation (17 percent), natural resource management (15 percent), support to development planning (15 percent), rule of law (14 percent), social cohesion (8 percent), energy (3 percent), COVID-19 response (3 percent), Ebola crisis response (3 percent) and elections (2 percent).

FIGURE 6: Expenditure by outcome 2018-21



Source: UNDP Atlas data, March 2022

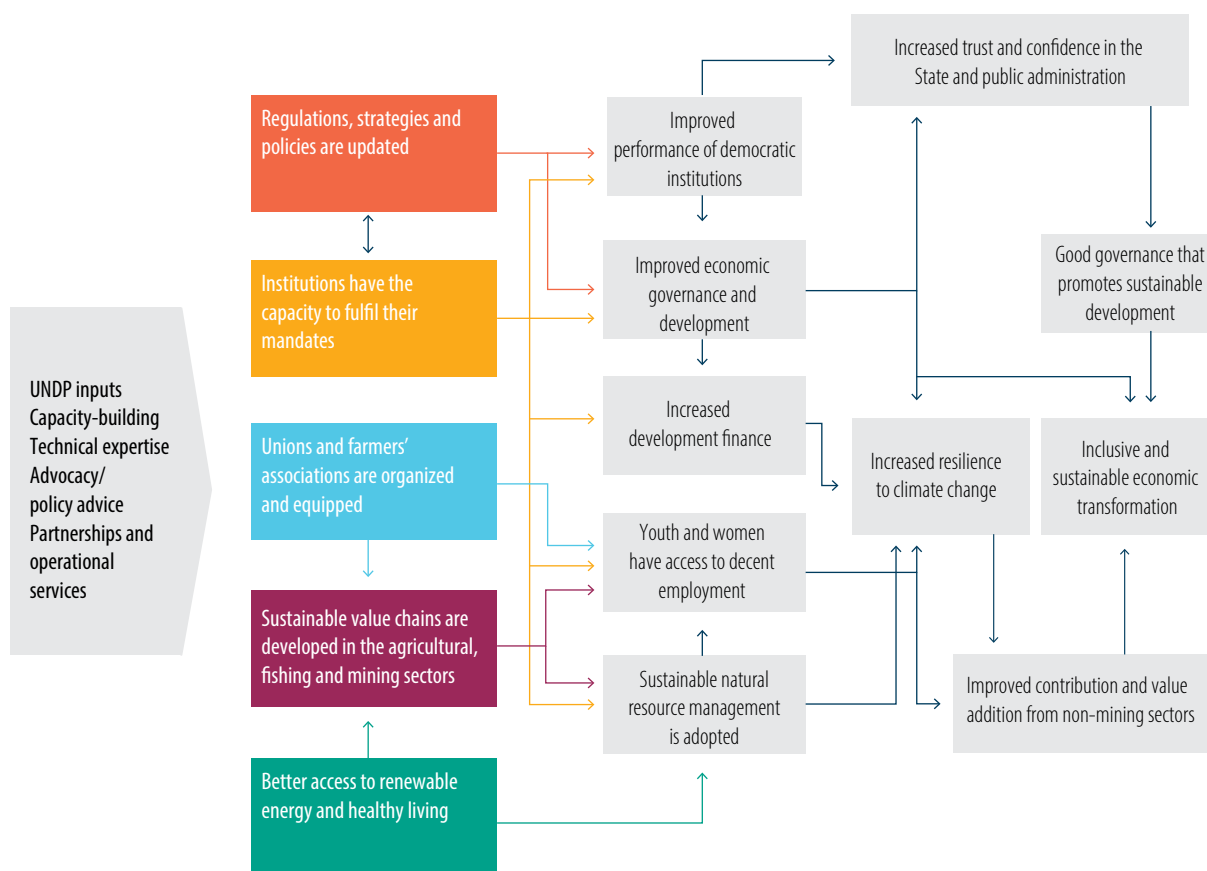
Based on the CPD, the evaluation team reconstituted a summary theory of change to present the overall programme focus and logic, and map UNDP outputs as defined in the country programme results framework (see figure 7 below). The ten outputs defined under the two outcomes of the country programme emphasise institutional capacity-development and the strengthening of productive capacity, with a view to strengthening the enabling environment for inclusive and sustainable economic transformation. In line with PNDES, economic transformation is envisaged through improving the contribution of the non-mining sectors to the national economy, as well as improving employment in the mining sector. This transformation also depends on improved institutional performance in the areas of rule of law and economic governance, with a view to increasing popular confidence in public administration and social cohesion, increasing development finance and revenue collection, and fostering a conducive environment for business. Finally, the sustainability of the economic transformation envisaged depends on the adoption of sustainable natural resource management practices and increased resilience to climate change at all levels.

For the period covered by this evaluation (2018-2021), there were 62 active projects, including 34 initiated in the previous cycle which account for 53 percent of expenditure, and 28 initiated in the current cycle. The ten largest projects by expenditure accounted for 58 percent of total programme expenditure (\$33.7 million). Over this period, UNDP core resources have been the primary source of programmatic expenditure (38 percent), followed by expenditure from vertical funds such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) (21 percent), the United Nation Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) (13 percent), the European Commission (11 percent), the Government of Guinea (6 percent),³⁶ the Government of Japan (4 percent), and the Government of Russia (3 percent).³⁷

³⁶ This pertains to funding from AfDB through the Government of Guinea.

³⁷ Atlas extraction as of March 2022.

FIGURE 7: Guinea programme country logic



CHAPTER 2

FINDINGS



This chapter presents the results of the outcome analysis, and an assessment of crosscutting issues. The main factors that influenced UNDP performance and contributions to results are also described. The assessment was based on an analysis of the correlation between project results, their contribution to the expected outputs under each outcome, and consequently to the overall outcome objectives.

2.1 Good governance that promotes sustainable development

CPD Outcome 1. By 2022, national institutions at the central, decentralized and deconcentrated levels are inclusive, assuring and guaranteeing the rule of law, democracy, security, social peace and effective institutional governance in accordance with the principles of human rights.

Related outputs:

OUTPUT 1.1. Legal/regulatory framework, policies and strategies on rule of law, inclusive growth and environment are updated and harmonized.

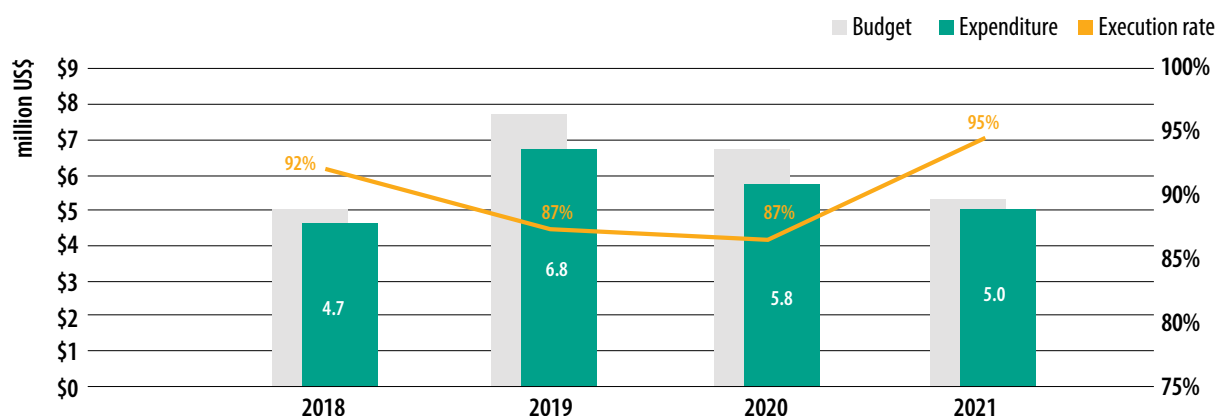
OUTPUT 1.2. Legal/regulatory frameworks are strengthened to improve CSOs, women and youth participation in political, economic and social decision-making.

OUTPUT 1.3. Newly created regional development zones are functional and exercise legal and constitutional prerogatives.

OUTPUT 1.4. Institutions and organizations involved in strengthening democratic and economic governance have the capacity to fulfil their mandates.

UNDP work on democratic governance aimed to strengthen national institutions at central and decentralized levels to guarantee rule of law, social peace, inclusive governance and respect for human rights. In order to advance this priority, UNDP identified four outputs to address good governance at the upstream level: (i) updating and harmonizing legal/regulatory strategies and ensuring that they promote and improve CSOs, and women's and youth empowerment (respectively outputs 1.1 and 1.2); and (ii) strengthening the capacity of national authorities to fulfil their mandates and thus ensure the enforcement and implementation of the updated and harmonized regulatory framework policies and strategies in the areas of democratic governance and economic governance (output 1.4). At downstream level, UNDP aimed to support the functioning of the country's new regional development zones (output 1.3).

FIGURE 8: Evolution of Outcome 1 programme budget and expenditure 2018-21



Source: UNDP Atlas data, March 2022

Strengthening democratic and economic governance (output 1.4) was the most prominent area of UNDP support during the review period, with 47 percent of portfolio expenditure, followed by support to the legal and regulatory framework, policies and strategies (output 1.1, 25 percent) and social participation (output 1.2, 22 percent). As of February 2022, overall expenditure under this portfolio amounted to \$22.3 million, representing 90 percent of delivery over the review period (2018-2021). 93 percent of expenditure was implemented through Direct Implementation Modality (DIM). In total, six projects were implemented under this outcome, funded 39 percent (\$8.6 million) by PBF and 37 percent by UNDP. UNDP work in this area also benefited from contributions from the Government of Guinea (8 percent, \$1.8 million),³⁸ the European Commission (8 percent, \$1.8 million), and other donors.³⁹

Development planning

Finding 1. UNDP has been a key partner supporting the country's development planning process, accompanying national authorities in the development and monitoring of PNDES and mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

UNDP has been a longstanding partner of national authorities in establishing the national development architecture of the country. Since 2010, UNDP has been an important contributor, in partnership with other key development partners, to the preliminary assessments, coordination, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of Guinea's poverty reduction strategy and planning documents. Following the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, UNDP supported Guinea to mainstream the SDGs in its development planning. In partnership with AfDB, UNDP supported preparatory work and consultations for the elaboration of the country's current PNDES, as well as the Guinea Vision 2040 document. Through this support, the Government was able to conduct the country's first Voluntary National Review, and present it at the United Nations High Level Political Forum in 2018.⁴⁰

³⁸ This pertains to funding from the AfDB through the Government of Guinea.

³⁹ Atlas data extracted February 2022.

⁴⁰ Republic of Guinea (2018) Guinea Voluntary National Review Report.

To improve the accountability framework and reporting of progress, UNDP provided technical expertise for the development of an M&E plan for SDG targets, aligned with PNDES, through the capacity-development of technical M&E teams, including at the Bureau for Strategy Development (BSD). In 2019, UNDP supported the development of the National Sustainable Development Strategy, which provides orientation for the development of a common culture of sustainable development, considered necessary to achieve Guinea's SDG targets. This multisectoral strategy addresses the major challenges of sustainable development in Guinea, to improve knowledge in agroecology and sustainable soil management, and the resilience of the agricultural sector to the impacts of climate change.

UNDP leadership in supporting the national development process is seen in its coordination of support for the development of sectoral policies and strategies, the steering of structural reforms, and recently the development of PNDES 2 and monitoring implementation of the SDGs in Guinea. Through the provision of technical expertise, support was also extended to build the capacity of branches of the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MPCI) to improve aid coordination and communication through diagnostic and policy advice. UNDP is an active participant in the emerging aid architecture, involved in all thematic working groups for the implementation of PNDES 1 and the development of PNDES 2, which was ongoing at the time of the evaluation.

UNDP support for Guinea's efforts to mobilize development financing includes a joint programme with United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) with financing from the SDG Fund. This project aims to accompany the development of PNDES 2 and enable Guinea to adopt an integrated national strategy for financing the SDGs through a series of complementary actions. While the engagement of UNDP in this project is centred around its existing support for PNDES, the nature of this intervention, and others in the mining sector (see finding 14), is significant given the finance and revenue mobilization challenges in the country. While at an early stage, work so far has consisted of support to the Government to cost national priority SDG targets and align the future development plan with the SDGs, as well as a study on the fiscal space at national and district levels (Boké, Sangarédi, Kamsar, Koba and Boffa).

Interviewees confirmed the important role of UNDP in supporting MPCI and collaborating with development partners to integrate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into the country's planning frameworks. This leadership is illustrated by the good collaboration with AfDB, built over time, to support the country's development planning process, which enabled their partnership for programme implementation.⁴¹

Finding 2. The collaboration between UNDP and AfDB was effective in providing *ad hoc* but useful support to improved public financial management, the availability of sectoral statistics, and economic governance overall.

UNDP has been supporting the National Institute of Statistics (INS) continuously, since at least 2012. In the previous country programme, UNDP support enabled the operationalization of the National Statistical Development Strategy and the capacity-development of INS technical staff through training and equipment for the production of statistics. With other development partners, UNDP contributed to the implementation of the country's third population and housing census in 2015.⁴²

⁴¹ During this country programme period, UNDP and AfDB partnered on two projects: Strengthening the Institutional Capacity of Public Administration, and Empowerment of Women in Coyah- Forecariah.

⁴² UNDP Guinea (2018) Decentralized Evaluation of UNDP country programme in Guinea 2013-2017.

In 2018, UNDP and AfDB signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the execution of programmatic elements of the Bank's support to the national development process. The MoU enables the transfer of funds to UNDP for the direct implementation of specific activities to support the national development architecture, namely the operationalization of a public finance management platform, strengthening of statistics, and support for aid coordination.

This programmatic collaboration can be considered important, as a review of country office financial data showed that UNDP support for development planning and statistics has relied solely on core resources so far. Interviewees noted that the driver of this partnership was the perceived efficiency gains that could be obtained by AfDB by leveraging the operational capabilities of UNDP on the ground to deliver technical assistance and timely procurement of goods and services. Despite some delays in establishing the modalities between the two entities and the Government, the availability of this additional funding enabled UNDP to expand its traditional support to initiatives for the operationalization of PNDES.

With AfDB financing, UNDP supported the development and publication of sectoral statistics in the areas of social action, culture and historical heritage, transport, environment and youth. In particular, the National Survey on Employment and the Informal Sector, conducted in 2018 and 2019, provided data on work conditions and employment and allowed the socioeconomic profiles of households, employment and characteristics of the informal sector to be updated. This was the first survey of its kind, enabling subregional comparisons on key indicators related to employment and the informal sector, and can provide a way forward for monitoring the formalization of the sector. With the World Bank and UNICEF, UNDP contributed to the fifth Harmonized Survey on Household Living Conditions published in 2020.⁴³ This comprehensive survey is conducted regionally, and harmonized among nine countries of western and central Africa, complementary to the implementation of a related international programme to improve the analysis of household living conditions. UNDP also supported awareness-raising seminars targeting elected officials on the use and communication of official statistics.

Through the same partnership, UNDP provided MPCl with external expertise and training for operationalization of the Integrated System for the Management of Public Investment Programmes (SIGIP). This work capitalized on prior analysis and assessments undertaken by the two entities, equipping MPCl with an integrated and modern software system for the management of its programme planning, budgeting and M&E of public investments. The platform effectively permits MPCl to unpack and organize the process, in line with the mandates of the different services involved, and enables stronger linkages between public investment plans and PNDES.

SIGIP was operationalized in 2019 and formally adopted in 2020. To support the roll-out and sustainable use of the system, MPCl established a dedicated directory with trained staff to manage the platform. Interviews and documentary evidence show that the preparation support provided by UNDP was key to facilitating *ad hoc* improvements in the availability of economic forecasts and the reconciliation of national accounts reports for 2017 and 2018. While the support provides a robust foundation for improving the availability and accuracy of the national budget, the evidence suggests that the sustainability of the system is at risk due to lack of public funding to sustain it. In addition, IMF reports at the time of the evaluation indicated delays in finalizing the public investment manual essential to accompany the functioning of SIGIP, noting that its adoption remained pending.⁴⁴

⁴³ Republic of Guinea INS (2020) Harmonized Survey on Households' living conditions (2018/2019). https://www.stat-guinee.org/images/Documents/Publications/INS/rapports_enquetes/INS_Rapport_Final_EHCVM%20GUINEE_01_03_2021.pdf.

⁴⁴ IMF Country Report No. 21/146.

UNDP support to INS also improved the timely availability of sectoral data, and contributed to strengthening national capacity for planning and M&E of sustainable development objectives. However, the evaluation found operational and institutional weaknesses that limited INS capacity to contribute more fully and sustainably to the national development process.⁴⁵ Limitations in available funding may have constrained prospects for broader support, and the evaluation noted potential missed opportunities to further prioritize support for the BSD.⁴⁶ While there is evidence that UNDP and other partners made concerted efforts to involve relevant BSD bodies in their project architecture, the evaluation found that these have not been consistently institutionalized to fulfil their mandate as envisaged in PNDES.

Democratic Governance

Finding 3. Despite delays, UNDP effectively supported the preparation, drafting and adoption of the national Conflict Prevention Strategy and strengthening of national citizenship and is supporting the consolidation of the national peace architecture. Efforts to pursue the reconciliation process, a fundamental component for social cohesion in the country, began in 2014 but have stalled as they were subsumed by the heightened political situation.

Guinea has been eligible for PBF funding since 2007, and has been on the agenda of the United Nations Peacebuilding Commission since 2011. A mutual agreement between the Commission and the Government of Guinea was translated into Priority Plans for Peace Consolidation (PPCPs), for which PBF supported implementation. About 31 projects, accounting for \$48 million, were implemented under the second priority plan (PPCP2), implemented between 2011 and 2016. PPCP2 included three priority areas, aimed at pursuing and sustaining reform efforts implemented since 2010 in the areas of security, national reconciliation, and women and youth employment.⁴⁷ The coordination and implementation of successive PPCPs, co-led by the Prime Minister and United Nations Resident Coordinator, benefited from high-level technical participation of the Government and sectorial ministries.

Despite significant progress made under PPCP2, results remained fragile and required further consolidation. The 'Permanent Secretariat, Reconciliation and Social Cohesion' transition project was launched in 2017 to extend the Secretariat, supporting the coordination mechanism beyond the closure of PPCP2. This transition project aimed to take stock of progress, consolidate some policy results, and support consultation for the identification of the next round of PBF support (implemented during this cycle), to support a smooth transition and sustainability of results. This was primarily expected to happen through a policy-level objective related to the national reconciliation process, through the implementation of the recommendations of the Temporary Commission of Reflection on National Reconciliation, established in 2011.

The project was able to achieve the main purpose of sustaining coordination and enabling the closure of PPCP2. In this regard, with project support, the Secretariat was able to commission a final evaluation of the PPCPs and use the lessons to lead consultations on priority areas for PBF support. The Secretariat ensured substantive guidance and coordination within and between national counterparts and United Nations

⁴⁵ At the time of the evaluation, the steering and coordination of the national statistical system were reportedly not ensured because the bodies provided for in the statistical law (the technical committee, the national statistics council and the INS Board of Directors) were not yet operational.

⁴⁶ BSD was created by government decree as part of PNDES. BSDs have a dual reporting line with MPCl and INS, and an important mandate in the coordination, reporting, monitoring and evaluation of PNDES.

⁴⁷ While Guinea has not experienced civil war or armed conflict with other countries in the region, the different sociopolitical crises that the country has faced, including violent repressions by security forces (the massacre of 28 September 2009 and the Camp Boiro repression), significantly eroded trust in institutions and security forces. In 2011, the newly elected President announced a national reconciliation process through national consultations.

entities for the identification and validation of new projects to be funded by PBF. The project also enabled ministerial focal points to engage in consultations and undertake monitoring missions and consultation in regions.

At policy level, the support provided by the project achieved some results in the area of social cohesion, notably through the design, drafting, validation and adoption of the National Strategy for Conflict Prevention in 2019. Despite some delays in adoption, these policy output results were achieved through consultations, assessments and an overall framework of technical and operational support to the Ministry of Citizenship and National Unity, established in 2016. Despite delays, the operationalization of the Strategy is being piloted through ongoing PBF projects. In the area of national reconciliation, the project reportedly enabled effective ownership by the Prime Minister of the recommendations of the Commission for Reflection on National Reconciliation delivered in 2016, and supported the establishment of a multisectoral technical committee for the drafting of a law on national reconciliation that integrated transitional justice. The draft law was finalized and submitted, but adoption has stalled and is pending with the Council of Ministers, despite United Nations advocacy.

Finding 4. Following its longstanding support to Guinea's electoral process, UNDP appropriately attempted to respond to the political violence and conflict stemming from electoral deadlines during this programming cycle. Despite evidence of the immediate benefits of contributions of downstream interventions to social cohesion, sustainability has been limited, in part due to the short duration of interventions and lack of exit strategies.

UNDP has been a significant partner supporting national authorities through successive electoral assistance programmes since 2010. The 2019-2020 electoral cycle was the first in a decade without UNDP support, although it included three ballots, parliamentary elections, a constitutional referendum and presidential elections. During the period under review, support to elections was limited to the 2018 electoral cycle, through the extension of an existing project, the Support Programme for the Conduct of Elections in Guinea (PACEG), with no support to the 2019-2020 electoral cycle or constitutional referendum.

PACEG achieved significant results, despite a difficult political context, and constraints due to the diversity of its objectives and, to a lesser extent, management issues. Evidence gathered, including the final project evaluation, shows that PACEG has contributed to capacity-building of the electoral commission, civic education, and women's participation in politics.⁴⁸ The same sources highlight that the project was affected by difficulties inherent to the Guinea political context, the mix of short-term (logistical support to an election cycle) and long-term (capacity-building of the electoral bodies, civic education, women's empowerment) objectives, and by some management shortcomings, including deficiencies in the expertise provided. However, UNDP should be credited for its flexibility in adapting to a changing electoral calendar. UNDP support shifted towards the implementation of conflict prevention and social cohesion projects to prevent violence, considering the deteriorating political dialogue and increasing social tensions related to elections.

⁴⁸ UNDP Guinea (2019) Final Evaluation of Projet D'appui au Cycle Electoral en Guinée. <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/evaluations/detail/9336>.

At upstream level, interventions consisted of facilitating reconciliation. The ‘Support to Inclusive Political Dialogue and Participation’ project aimed to bring together a group of elected officials from both the majority party and the opposition, to forge and display some form of political consensus so as to increase trust between citizens and politicians and reduce conflict between party supporters. The project was slow to start due to political tensions in 2018, and although the group was set up, by 2020 it was no longer operational because of the upcoming elections and referendum. The project was able to demonstrate that some form of dialogue was feasible, albeit in a short timeframe, but it ran into the depth of political conflict in Guinea, highlighting the need for a more robust upstream analysis and theory of change to define expected catalytic effects.

At downstream level, five projects were implemented jointly with other United Nations agencies. These aimed to create the conditions for social cohesion by bringing local authorities, CSOs and specific vulnerable groups (youth, women, moto-taxi drivers) closer together, and to strengthen the participation of vulnerable populations in conflict prevention efforts.⁴⁹ Evaluations and interviews confirmed that the beneficiaries and implementing partners consider these projects effective in strengthening social bonding within local authorities, catalysed by project interventions and conflict-resolution mechanisms, including: organizing dialogue sessions within communities, information-sharing and sensitization workshops, fostering dialogue between representatives and leaders of communities and local authorities, advocating and involving these authorities in conflict resolution mechanisms, and providing income-generating activities for vulnerable youth.

Positive views of this support were captured during interviews and field observations in the city of Nzerekore, confirming the positive lasting effects of the ‘Support to the Reduction of Sociopolitical Violence and Exploitation of Youth Moto-taxi Drivers in the Electoral Period’ project. Interviews confirmed that support for the formalization and federation of existing unions of motorcycle drivers, often subject to political exploitation, laid a positive foundation for social cohesion and reduced the risk of conflict between the different local moto-taxi driver unions. The increased participation and federation of drivers in union organizations was also found to help strengthen their adhesion to rules set by the sector, and the coordination and management of tax and duty collection by local authorities, which also finance the union’s common fund. Though the relationships built between local authorities and unions remain fragile, and field observations showed that compliance (for instance with road safety measures) was only marginally achieved, project interventions laid the foundations to structure this informal sector and improve relationships with local authorities, which in turn is gradually helping with their recognition as rights-holders.

Similarly, youth groups were targeted by the ‘Empowerment, Social Reintegration and Civic Participation of 500 Young People in Security and the Prevention of Violence’ project. The final project evaluation highlighted support for income-generating activities, capacity-development, and cash-for-work and confirmed some immediate positive benefits on perceptions of trust and security in targeted communities, and improved relationships of community actors (security, authorities, CSOs and youth) brought about by neighbourhood forums supported by the project.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ The projects are: Project for the empowerment, social reintegration and strengthening of the civic participation of 500 young people in security and violence prevention (UN-Habitat, UNIDO); Support for youth participation in conflict prevention during electoral periods and the sustainability of local synergies of peace actors (Search for Common Ground); Support to women community leaders for the prevention of possible conflicts related to the 2020 legislative and presidential elections (UNDP, UNICEF); Support for the reduction of the instrumentalization and politico-social violence of young taxi-bikers during electoral periods (IOM, UNFPA).

⁵⁰ PBF (2019) Final report evaluation Project to empower, reintegrate into society and strengthen the civic participation of 500 young people in safety and violence prevention.

However, the sustainability of these interventions, and their capacity to promote changes beyond the project lifetime, is questionable. This stems from the pilot nature of these projects, which concentrate on a limited number of people in a limited area, often a few communes of the country. In addition, limited funding and timeframes have, in some cases, restricted the scope of implementation of planned strategies, and the consolidation of results beyond the project life.⁵¹ No exit strategies or mechanisms to ensure handover to public authorities were found in the available project documentation, despite efforts by projects to share good practices.

Finding 5. UNDP has continued to support the security and justice authorities to consolidate and sustain the achievements of past reforms. Despite progress, the sustainability of recent and past achievements is at risk, due to limited national uptake and financing and the evolving political context in Guinea.

UNDP and the international community have actively supported Guinea's Security Sector Reform (SSR) since 2010. SSR was one of the four pillars of the PBF priority plans, and the past two phases of SSR efforts yielded tangible results over time. As highlighted in the latest UNDP country programme evaluation and the final evaluation of PPCP2, UNDP made important contributions to advance SSR, including reform of the country's national defence and security law and the military justice code, training and sensitization of security forces to reduce impunity, and the rationalization of security administration in the country.⁵² Most notably, the unique value proposition of UNDP was highlighted in its facilitation of the effective retirement of eligible military officers, a highly sensitive aspect of the reform, which, according to the PBF evaluation, "no other development partners could have undertaken".⁵³

Under the current CPD, UNDP continued its support for the third phase of SSR, to consolidate past achievements and ensure the adequate transition of coordination of the reforms. In this regard, UNDP implemented three projects to follow up on past efforts.

UNDP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) implemented the 'Strategic Advisory Support to the Security Sector Reform' joint project between 2017 and 2019. This was conceived as an exit strategy for SSR, to consolidate achievements by enhancing national ownership of the reforms conducted with international assistance, through the provision of advisory skills in political and strategic decision-making processes and operational support. At strategic level, an important enabler for the sustainable transition of SSR envisaged through this project was the newly-formed Superior Council for National Defence, which is the designated body to oversee and monitor progress of sectoral reforms across the defence and security forces. However, the Council could not be operationalized during the project lifetime, due to institutional disagreements.

⁵¹ In the case of the project to empower, reintegrate and strengthen the civic participation of 500 young people in safety and violence prevention, income-generating activities and training of targeted youth groups for employment in the solar sector could not be implemented during the project timeframes due to delays and other operational challenges of participating agencies.

⁵² UNDP Guinea (2018) Final evaluation of the 2013-2017 country programme.

⁵³ PBF (2017) Evaluation of the Peacebuilding Fund Project Portfolio in Guinea.

As emphasized in the final project evaluation, the absence of the envisaged national coordination architecture presented risks to the sustainability of past achievements in reform, in terms of ensuring their institutional anchoring and thus continuation after the project. In addition, it highlighted gaps in domestic resource mobilization, expected in the national security budgets, to further cement the transition between support from the international community to national ownership. This institutional deadlock enabled resources to be redirected to increase capacity-development and awareness-raising activities across different branches of the security apparatus, to update the knowledge of 119 justice personnel on revisions to the Military Justice Code, train 800 police officers on revised law enforcement laws, and train 50 trainers for road/traffic police standards. Perception studies conducted by the country office in 2016 and 2018 highlighted the positive outcomes of SSR in improving the population's perception of defence and security forces, and overall feeling of impunity. However, the consolidation of results was not possible, and these were eventually reversed by the political context around the 2019-2020 election cycle, which saw the deadly interventions of military forces on political demonstrations.

During the remainder of the CPD, UNDP pursued its support to branches of the security sector, namely the police force and more recently customs in the area of border management. The 'Support for the Improvement of Governance of the Police Services' project, implemented in 2019 and 2020, focused on the police force, which has been less targeted than the other security forces. The project included a social cohesion dimension, among other objectives, which aimed to improve the image of the police and mechanisms to combat GBV. The project produced several reports, including a perception report on the police and a report on urban security, and also supported routine inspections of police inspection services, provided training to several hundred police, assisted the Office for the Protection of Gender, Childhood and Morals (OPROGEM) with training in four regions and equipment for the Conakry Office, and helped to operationalize an urban security observatory.⁵⁴

Interviews showed that the support to OPROGEM resulted in a significant improvement in support to GBV cases in the regions where the project was implemented, and helped to enhance the role of police inspection services. Based on the final project evaluation, the capacity-development support delivered to security and justice officers over time helped to increase the number of GBV cases reported to OPROGEM, which in 2020 received 1662 cases, 62 percent of which were transferred to courts.⁵⁵ While current data and trends were not provided in the field visits, in two localities visited the evaluation found evidence that the presence of OPROGEM was effective, notwithstanding operational challenges due to the lack of capacity and turnover of unit members. Data on GBV cases are recorded and reported, but according to interviews, capacity and funding gaps within the units and the police stations where they are based sometimes cause challenges and legal delays for detentions and the treatment of GBV cases. Similarly, interviews showed that the fate of the observatory for urban security is now uncertain because of lack of funding from the Government after the end of the project.

UNDP and OHCHR also implemented the joint 'Support to Strengthen the Penal Chain and Fight Against Impunity in Guinea' project, to consolidate reforms in the justice sector. Implemented between 2017 and 2020, the project aimed to strengthen the capacity of national and regional institutions to deliver sector reforms, and pilot improvements in the functioning of the judicial chain in six jurisdictions of Conakry, Dixin, Kindia, Labé, Kankan and Nzérékoré.

⁵⁴ PBF. Final evaluation of the Support to Improving Police Governance Project funded by the Peacebuilding Fund.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

The PBF project, with support from the UNDP Global Programme on Rule of Law, provided a technical expert as advisor to the Ministry of Justice to strengthen operational and organizational management in the Ministry, provide assessments, facilitate consultation on revised laws, and conduct preparatory work for the drafting of implementing legislation. The final project evaluation showed that the project was able to support the drafting of 27 texts related to the criminal law revised in 2016, including decrees and implementing legislation, but only two were adopted (relating to the statute of criminal investigation officers and application of sentences), with the others still pending at the end of the project.

In five pilot constituencies, the project included training sessions to improve collaboration between the judiciary, police, prosecution office and judges, as well as protection and assistance for victims, particularly of GBV. The project supported the strengthening of inspection services and provided equipment such as computers and printers to pilot courts. At the end of the project, the backload of cases and number of prisoners in preventive custody were reduced, and the number of investigated cases involving women victims of GBV had increased. However, interviews and field observations raised concerns over the sustainability of the improvements brought by the project. Only one of the five pilots could be visited by the evaluation, in Nzerekore, where it was observed that most of the supported activities did not continue after the project end due to the absence of funding to cover recurrent costs. According to interviews, this affected the ability of actors in the judicial chain to abide by procedural time-limits set by the law. A United Nations volunteer was deployed to manage the roll-out of the computer system for case management, but their deployment was abruptly terminated at the end of the project without enough time to adequately hand over the new system to the court. Interviewees highlighted that the intervention demonstrated value in improving the functioning of courts, with positive consequences in terms of justice delivery, access to justice, and respect of the rights of citizens, but noted that the Ministry of Justice did not have the funding to continue the support provided to courts under the project.

Overall, UNDP and OHCHR interventions in the security and justice sector have been important in supporting the continued implementation of reforms, and enabled advancements in key areas of reform to promote trust and reduce feelings of impunity. While successive interventions did not enjoy the level of uptake and national ownership expected at design, they were useful in maintaining the dynamic of the reforms and enabling their application, though at a small scale, including the treatment of GBV in a context where gender equality remains a challenge. However, limited uptake and national ownership, largely affected by heightened political tension and violence, have not allowed the support to be sustained much beyond the project duration, and puts past and recent progress at risk.

2.2 Sustainable and inclusive economic transformation, and management of natural capital

CPD Outcome 2. By 2022, national institutions, civil society and the private sector will have implemented policies that improve food security, sustainable management of the environment, resilience of populations to climate change and disaster risk management.

Related outputs:

OUTPUT 2.1. The professional unions and farmers' associations are better organized and equipped to promote their activities.

OUTPUT 2.2. Women and youth benefit from income-generating activities and decent employment within sustainable value chains developed in the mining, agricultural and fisheries sectors.

OUTPUT 2.3. The capacities of the National Statistical Institute are enhanced to provide quality data and analysis for development planning, monitoring and evaluation and decision-making.

OUTPUT 2.4. Households of targeted cities and villages have better access to alternative technologies, renewable energies, and a healthy living environment.

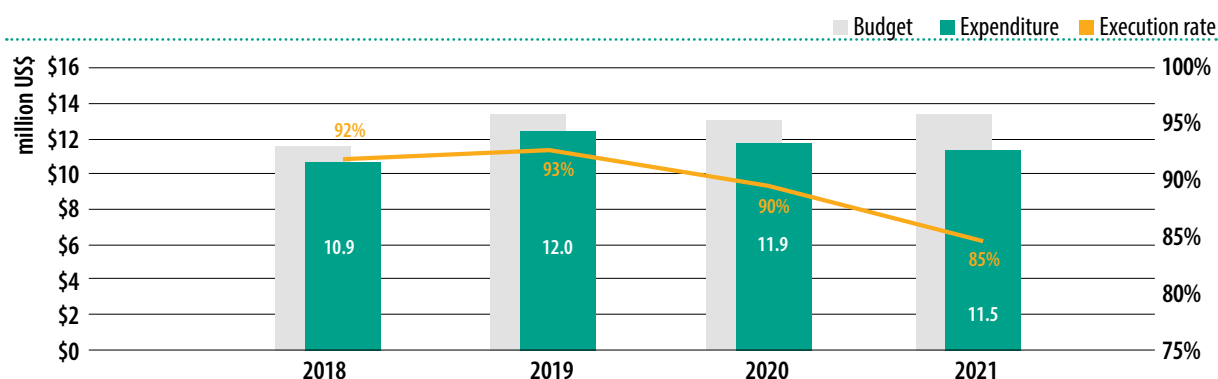
OUTPUT 2.5. The most vulnerable groups have increased capacities for resilience and adaptation to climate change.

OUTPUT 2.6. National environment and natural resources management institutions have strengthened.

The outcome on sustainable and inclusive economic transformation and the management of natural resources was the largest portfolio of the UNDP programme over the review period, as well as the previous cycle. UNDP developed six outputs, focusing on development planning and the capacity-building of national institutions and local organizations, access to sustainable and green employment for women and youth, strengthening access to renewable energy in urban and rural areas, and enhancing resilience and adaptation to climate change. UNDP also sought to support the Government in mobilizing climate financing to address the country's adaptation needs.

The total budget amounted to \$52.2 million, of which \$46.9 million (90 percent) had been spent as of February 2022. In total, 29 projects were developed during the period (2018-2021). Women and youth employment (output 2.2) was the largest focus, with 35 percent of portfolio expenditure, followed by resilience and adaptation to climate change (28 percent, output 2.5). The rest of the portfolio is distributed across the remaining four outputs. 60 percent of the portfolio expenditure was made through National Implementation Modality (NIM), and 40 percent through DIM. 84 percent of the programme was funded by three donors: UNDP (39 percent, \$18 million); GEF (32 percent, \$15 million); and the European Commission (13 percent, \$6.3 million). Other donors include Russia (5 percent, \$2.2 million), the Government of Guinea (4 percent, \$1.9 million) and Japan (3 percent, \$1.4 million).

FIGURE 9: Evolution of Outcome 2 programme budget and expenditure 2018-21



Source: UNDP Atlas data, March 2022

Inclusive and sustainable economic transformation

Finding 6. Through various stages of implementation, support to youth and women’s employment has been primarily supply-driven. The small-scale and fragmented nature of the different approaches implemented presents a risk to their sustainability and catalytic potential. Engagement with larger unions and associations in the non-mining sectors has not yet been developed, limiting prospects for larger value chain integration and promoting a broader decent work agenda.

UNDP has launched several interventions to support youth and women’s employment, which were at various stages of implementation at the time of evaluation. Youth and women have been prioritized as target groups across the portfolio of projects developed during the country programme with regards to social cohesion, inclusive growth and the environment.

The ‘Youth Connekt’ project initially intended to cover three components, namely: the sharing of knowledge among young people; dialogue between young people and institutional actors; and access for young people to initiatives to promote socioeconomic integration and participation in regional and international youth initiatives. However, it was refocused on the latter component, supporting entrepreneurship for 150 women through training, mentoring and the provision of seed funds. At the time of evaluation, implementation was focused on the training of women mentors from local business circles to manage mentees supported by the project. Though at an early stage, the evaluation was able to identify some shortcomings in the approach which could present a risk to its continued implementation. Mentors met during the evaluation did have experience in entrepreneurship, but lacked experience in coaching and the formal management of income-generating activities, as they were from the informal sector. The strategy of basing mentoring on the GERME (Manage your Business Better) approach developed by the International Labour Organization (ILO) was relevant to the target group. However, observations of the administration of GERME during field visits to Mamou highlighted the failure to adopt some of its recommended practices which cast doubt as to their effectiveness.⁵⁶ The evaluation noted that the GERME toolkit was not followed as recommended by the ILO with regards to the duration of the training, or the use of pictorial and video training materials.

⁵⁶ See ILO website: https://www.ilo.org/empent/areas/start-and-improve-your-business/WCMS_551107/lang--fr/index.htm.

At community level, for several years UNDP has depended on the roll-out of Multifunctional Platforms (MFPs) to promote women's economic empowerment in rural areas. MFPs consist of providing micro-infrastructures that promote economic services at community level. These provide a mechanism to build the capacity of women's groups for conducting agricultural transformation activities, and to strengthen energy and water access. During this programme cycle, MFPs were supported in Coyah-Forecariah. The short-term economic benefits of MFPs are indisputable, but the interventions lack a mechanism to ensure sustainability. While this intervention model has been piloted and adopted by UNDP in other Sahel countries for over a decade, evaluative evidence often points to similar issues with regards their sustainability and expansion capacity.⁵⁷

For example, in Guinea, implemented MFPs were often found to be challenging to maintain beyond the project duration due to maintenance costs which, without project subsidies, are left unfinanced and/or for which services are not available locally. The high costs of maintenance of productive assets were highlighted during field visits and interviews in Yenguia Khory. Other challenges cited referred to the distance of MFPs from homes, insecurity around production sites, and insufficient entrepreneurial capacity limiting their diversification prospects, market access and new partnerships. In Yenguia Khory, interviewees raised questions about the process for activity selection, and several beneficiaries noted that the project delivered better economic prospects for a peanut huller than a rice huller, raising questions about the quality of the feasibility studies that preceded the interventions. In general, the experience observed in Yenguia Khory, as well as evidence from other evaluations, suggests that MFPs have a higher chance of success if they form part of broader interventions that stimulate economic activities in the areas where they are implanted.

UNDP interventions were not sufficiently integrated with existing or developing value chains to support the expansion of non-mining sectors. Furthermore, they have been too fragmented and small-scale to promote sustainable value-chain development. Support to entrepreneurship and income-generating activities could have been anchored in the non-mining sectors, but this was not explicit in the strategy. With the exception of MFPs, UNDP interventions linking agriculture and employment were limited to the dissemination of improved agricultural techniques, and a limited number of entrepreneurs were oriented in agricultural transformation in the context of the INTEGRA project.

There was no evidence of the participation of larger unions and professional associations in the country programme strategy at the time of the evaluation, with the exception of the mining sector in the 'Support Programme for the Governance of Mining Royalties' (AGREM) project. In the targeted non-mining sectors, the National Chamber for Agriculture and other professional unions were not targeted to explore synergies in specific value chains or the potential integration of cooperatives into larger agricultural value chains, which would strengthen the relevance, scale and sustainability of interventions. At the time of the evaluation, studies and assessments for the strengthening and optimization of value chains were ongoing, intended for implementation in the next country programme. Such initiatives could provide entry points to anchor interventions with vulnerable groups and further guarantee the economic gains of income-generating activities.

⁵⁷ Based on available evaluations, MFPs were implemented in Mali, Burkina Faso, Senegal, Mauritania and Chad.

Finding 7. Interventions to support the professionalization and formalization of community groups provided useful assistance to boost productive capacity, though the formal legal status promoted was not always well adapted to target beneficiaries.

In line with the CPD outputs, UNDP placed particular emphasis in its downstream activities on the formalization and access to equipment of professional unions and associations. The evaluation was able to observe that this objective was consistently considered across the programme reviewed. For instance, the MFP project supported the organization of cooperatives into Economic Interest Groups (EIGs), to which the MFPs were delivered. UNDP launched a COVID-recovery project targeting the socioeconomic recovery of women, through the UNDP Rapid Financing Facility, creating cooperatives for the management of bio-charcoal manufacturing machines and the development of value chains. The ‘Moto-taxi’ project supported the structuring of transport union organizations, and the organization of drivers into EIGs. The ‘Strengthening the Livelihood Resilience of Farming Communities against Climate Change in Gaoual, Koundara and Mali provinces’ (REMECC) project supported some farmer organizations through training on the adoption of resilient farming practices to support adaptation to the effects of climate change.

The REMECC project evaluation and available progress report showed that the structure was successful as it strengthened collaboration between members, generated catalytic effects in terms of social cohesion within the community, and helped their recognition as rights- and duty-holders. In addition, the constitution of groups provided some obvious advantages in terms of project delivery and efficiency gains for programme execution. Overall, capacity-development and equipment provision were found useful by beneficiaries, and, in the case of moto-taxis, enabled contributions to broader social cohesion objectives at community level.

The approach was also found to promote formal enterprise creation, though not always leveraging existing opportunities provided by the legal framework for cooperatives. While the choice of EIGs was a valid modality to formalize the common economic interest of community groups, the evaluation noted that the fiscal regime adopted may not have been adequate for the level of maturity of groups and activities targeted, potentially exposing them to stricter tax laws.⁵⁸ Article 9 (on Cooperative Societies) of the Treaty on the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa (OHADA) includes legal provisions that enable different models of cooperation and include gradual measures for the formalization and structuring of cooperatives, specifically targeting farmers’ unions and associations commonly covered by UNDP projects.⁵⁹

Though not a fully-fledged project, UNDP support and engagement in this area has mainly been directed towards the Agency for the Promotion of Private Investment, given its mandate as the one-stop-shop for enterprise creation and registration in Guinea. However, the evaluation noted that less attention was directed towards unions and professional associations, and other relevant actors such as the services of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization for the regulation and promotion of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and associations for the formalization of cooperatives and EIGs. This could help to promote the progressive formalization of economic activities based on the level and maturity of activity.

⁵⁸ In the Guinea fiscal environment, any member of the Register of Commerce and the common law tax system is eligible for a periodic (quarterly, sometimes biannual) renewal of their tax registration number, which costs about 1.5 million GNF (\$150) and subject to the payment of certain taxes (apprenticeship tax, lump sum payment, licenses for certain types of activities).

⁵⁹ This framework enables simple cooperatives, and cooperatives with a board. The latter could have been adapted, as EIGs constituted a superior level against the gradual framework of OHADA, for which formalization is made through APIP. For more information on OHADA, see: <https://www.invest.gov.gn/document/acte-uniforme-relatif-au-droit-des-societes-cooperatives>.

Finding 8. UNDP has taken into account the need for networking and partnerships with financial institutions to support access to finance for livelihoods and entrepreneurship. However, this has seen limited results in terms of encouraging and de-risking access to finance for target groups.

Access to productive equipment and other inputs requires the availability of financing, and UNDP has supported dialogue on inclusive finance in Guinea. In addition, UNDP has developed collaboration with microfinance institutions (MFIs) to promote access to funding for the cooperatives and micro, small and medium enterprises for young people and women supported through its projects, including for development minerals and MFPs.⁶⁰

During this country programme cycle, UNDP established partnerships with Afriland Bank and MFI federations to promote access to loans for community groups and entrepreneurs supported through its various project interventions, to help start-up businesses and/or investments in productive assets. A partnership was signed with Afriland Bank to enable a total of \$1 million in the form of loans, including the provision of training, mentoring and support to beneficiary entrepreneurs.

These partnerships have been inconclusive, as they have not generated any outstanding credit or produced expected results in terms of empowerment. Loans were granted to 27 entrepreneurs, two of whom received 43 percent of total outstanding loans. Based on interviews, despite the repeated restructuring of the loans granted, and while the impact of COVID-19 cannot be underestimated, no entrepreneur has yet been able to meet the repayment deadlines. This prolonged rescheduling could put beneficiaries in long-term debt, jeopardizing the economic survival of their businesses and prospects for their empowerment. This also raises questions about the quality of the capacity-building and mentoring provided by operators, including the viability analysis of funded projects.

Interviews and field visits for the ‘Development Minerals’ project identified that the contact established between MFIs and beneficiaries was unsuccessful because, on the one hand, the majority of project leaders did not want to take the risk of getting into debt and, on the other, those who applied for credit were unable to obtain it. In the latter case, MFIs demanded guarantees that the operators could not provide, including the certification of the priority of the development mineral exploitation site. The entrepreneurs supported by the INTEGRA project in Mamou were also put in contact with MFIs, but at the time of the evaluation had not yet accessed credit due to MFI conditions and requirements for guarantees and documents, which were difficult to obtain for small-scale livelihood activities. MFP operators supported in Coyah and Forecariah are in the savings phase, and have not yet applied for loans from MFIs.

The results achieved thus far relate to general capacity-development support to entrepreneurs and community groups, with limited contributions to empowering beneficiaries and supporting risk-taking given the constraints of the financial sector in Guinea. Furthermore, limited consideration has been given to UNDP support in de-risking productive investments and business creation by vulnerable groups. Beyond training opportunities and support to business plan development, the financing offer framed in the CPD theory of change appears to place more emphasis on expanding coverage to existing and established private companies, whereas UNDP targets have tended to support emerging entrepreneurs and/or informal sector workers.

⁶⁰ Development minerals refers to construction materials, including industrial minerals, dimension stones and semi-precious stones such as sand, gravel, stone blocks, kaolin clay and corundum.

The partnership developed with Afriland Bank raises serious questions in terms of design and expected contributions. Loans were made available to 27 entrepreneurs at standard market rates, falling short of incentivizing entrepreneurs to support investments in small-scale productive assets.⁶¹ In addition, the partnership agreement related more to service provision, with the payment of service charges to the Bank for the administration of loans. There would have been value in exploring options to establish a guarantee fund and other mechanisms to promote competition among MFIs, with a view to lowering interest rates to encourage and emphasise support for business incubation.

Failure to access financing for income-generating activities can have a demotivating effect, and further jeopardize the promotion of entrepreneurial behaviour among communities. The evaluation found anecdotal evidence of a negative unintended outcome that illustrates the potentially detrimental effect that poor financing experiences can have. In Nzerekore, until 2018 UNDCDF supported an implementing agreement for a group of women victims of Ebola, but misinformation about the nature of the loans granted for their farming activities led them to default on their repayments. This effectively resulted in a traumatic experience for these women, including days in detention and increased indebtedness of families and inability to meet the instalments of the loans obtained through the project. While this unintended outcome cannot be generalized to all similar interventions, it highlights the difficult enabling environment and the need to extend support beyond access to and supply of financing.

Environment, natural resource management and climate change

Finding 9. UNDP provided policy and institutional support to the Ministry of Environment, Water and Forests (MEEF), that led to the formulation and adoption of strategies and plans for integrated environmental and climate change response approaches, and support financing for their implementation.

UNDP provides institutional support to MEEF through the 'Environment and Sustainable Natural Resource Management' programme (PEGED), which aims to support the Government of Guinea in its efforts to implement its international commitments on environment and climate change, build the resource mobilization capacity of national institutions responsible for environmental management, and improve Guinea's access to climate funds.

The support consisted mainly of revising and updating strategies and plans related to the environment, climate change, sustainable natural resource management and disaster risk management. MEEF officials interviewed expressed high appreciation for this support, which allowed MEEF to update its strategies, plans and enforcement mechanisms for sustainable natural resource management. Overall, UNDP supported the development of national strategies and policy frameworks for the Sustainable Development of Tourism (2018), Disaster Risk Reduction 2019 - 2023 (2019), Climate Change (2019), the National Centre for Disaster Risk Reduction and Environmental Emergencies Strategic Plan 2019-2023 (2019), the National Land Degradation Neutrality Target-Setting Programme (2018), review of the Forest Code (2018), the Environment Code, and the National Biodiversity Strategy (2019).

UNDP support enabled progress in Guinea's international commitments towards the SDGs and climate change, through its support to updating and adopting the country's second Nationally Determined Contributions, which increased the climate ambitions of the country compared to the first. Building on its support for coastal adaptation in the preceding country programme, UNDP supported the development of

⁶¹ Equivalent in Guinea to 18 percent, as reported during interviews.

an initial National Blue Economy Strategy. While the strategy document was referred to as a “pre-strategy” at the time of the evaluation, the interest and ownership of stakeholders was confirmed in interviews, given its strategic relevance for supporting environmental and social objectives.

UNDP institutional support also allowed MEEF to strengthen interactions between its directorates and develop linkages with other government departments and public agencies, such as the Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Maritime Economy, and research institutions. This helped to generate an evidence base on the prospects set out in national development frameworks and the National Adaptation Plan. Interviewees noted the appreciation of partners for technical support to produce disaster risk maps (on floods, droughts, and landslides) and their dissemination to guide decision-making and address climate change impacts.

UNDP helped Guinea to put in place a legal and regulatory environment to support the development of a biogas market involving the private sector. During the Animal Husbandry Days held in Labé in June 2018, the Biogas project (see finding 11) shared its results in biodigester technology with the highest authorities and broader population of Guinea. The President of the Republic welcomed these results, and asked MEEF to collaborate with UNDP to set up a national biogas agency. On January 6, 2021, the President signed a Decree establishing the National Agency for the Promotion of Biodigester Technology (ANPTB). The ANPTB is placed under the technical authority of MEEF. The Decree assigns ANPTB the mission to stimulate and support programmes, projects and initiatives aimed at developing and promoting biodigester technology, within the framework of a public-private partnership with all participating stakeholders.

UNDP has been a key partner for MEEF in accessing GEF financing, and has been the Ministry’s main partner in implementing national GEF projects. UNDP also supports the coordination of the country’s Small Grants Programme, which has enabled the participation of 46 local NGOs in the implementation of 48 micro-projects between 2018 and 2021, in the areas of biodiversity, climate change adaptation, environment degradation in relation to artisanal mining and coastal management.⁶² UNDP also supported Guinea to initiate access to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) between 2016 and 2019, through the ‘Readiness and Preparatory Support’ programme, which helped to develop the GCF Country Programme Document (2018) and set in motion resource mobilization from GCF.

UNDP supported activities to promote awareness of the objectives of the three Rio Conventions, in terms of ensuring sustainable environmental management, and increasing institutional and community engagement in this.⁶³ However, this has not achieved the expected adoption of policy instruments to improve the decentralized delivery of core functions in planning and implementation of the Conventions. The actions lacked focus on environmental management, and delivery tended to be at activity level. They did not address the need to address ecological and social inequities in the existing development model, which does not offer equitable opportunities to the poor in general, and women and youth in particular, to realize sustainable development potential.

As a result, and as observed in the final evaluation and terminal reports, the project was not effective in meeting the challenges of providing policy tools and guidelines to implement the objectives of the three Rio Conventions. Implementation did not commit the Government to sustainable management of the environment or sustainable human development. Most of the key mechanisms, including legal texts and policies for implementation of the

⁶² Based on country office records, as of September 2021.

⁶³ The “Strengthening Decentralized Environmental Management to meet the Objectives of the Rio Convention” project, implemented between 2015 and 2019, aimed to integrate Guinea’s obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity into its national development and sector planning frameworks through “biodiversity planning” and a renewed participatory strategy development process to follow the general orientations of the Convention’s Strategic Plan 2011-2020.

Conventions, have not yet been adopted by the Council of Ministers and Parliament, and as a result, were not formally integrated into local development planning systems. However, UNDP has continued to support the integration of climate change and disaster preparedness during this cycle through its community-level ecosystem adaptation and resilience projects, which enabled 23 local development plans to be updated.⁶⁴

Finding 10. UNDP contributed to laying the foundations for an early warning system, and strengthening Guinea's capacity for preparation to manage the impact of climate variability and climate change-related environmental hazards, but progress has been constrained due to restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

UNDP supported Guinea to install equipment for meteorological data collection and put in place an early warning system for planning to reduce the risks of natural disasters. Building resilience requires improving disaster risk management and the capacity of institutions to cope with emergencies. The programme was initiated with support from GEF in 2017, and was followed by a dedicated project from 2019 to 2022, which was ongoing at the time of this evaluation.

The intervention successfully supported the establishment of a platform to promote the exchange of information between ministries, and delivered capacity-development activities (training, study tours and equipment) to directorates of MEEF and the Ministry of Transport. At the time of the evaluation, the project mainly focused on enhancing the preparedness of national actors to establish and manage the related information systems. The project supported the rehabilitation of the National Directorate for Meteorology building and 13 regional offices, a monitoring room, the procurement of hydro-meteorological stations and lightning detectors, and IT equipment including for the airport meteorology centre. Areas for measurement stations to be installed were also rehabilitated with the help of the project, to ensure readiness and secure the functioning of the stations once installed. The project also procured technical expertise to support the design of tailored software, including the design of warning message models in case of drought, flash floods and other climate episodes.

At the time of the evaluation, the stations had been handed over to MEEF but were not yet deployed and operational. Interviewees emphasized that the combined impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the political transition significantly slowed this effort. In addition, project reports highlight that some challenges were experienced in finding adequate suppliers for the equipment. In total, a 26 automatic weather stations (nine automatic synoptic stations including two aerodrome stations, 12 climatological stations and five automatic agro-meteorological stations), 22 automatic hydrological stations, an automatic flow meter, a Zodiac boat with on-board engine and 12 lightning rods were acquired. Based on the latest annual report and interviews, installation is now underway, with additional training delivered to support maintenance of the equipment.

The use of meteorological information contributes to strengthening absorptive capacity, boosting the ability of agricultural production systems to prepare for, mitigate or prevent the negative impacts of climate-related hazards. However, there is not yet clear evidence of the programme's performance in identifying and responding to the needs of farmers and herders, including the information they require to support resilience in their production cycles and respective climate-related risks. A review of activities ongoing at the time of the evaluation shows a relevant focus on the capacity-development of technical departments to play their role in the system, in terms of equipment, facilities and training. Less emphasis has been given at this stage to support the use of climate information at community level to promote understanding, and eventually translate it into adaptive practices for crops, pastoral production and the

⁶⁴ UNDP Guinea (2021) ROAR. In 2021, the UNDP Guinea country office reported the update and mainstreaming of climate change and disaster risk management in the local development plans of six rural localities.

agricultural calendar. As such, the intervention provides significant foundational support, but is somewhat incomplete and deserves to be pursued to include this dimension more purposefully and ensure that community resilience is effectively supported.

Finding 11. UNDP support for the development of renewable energy solutions varied in scope and scale, but adopted a useful mix of solutions adapted to the context of Guinea. While there were some missed opportunities to more purposefully combine food production and environmental protection in the project strategy, UNDP was successful in setting the foundation for a market for Biogas in rural areas of the country.

During this programming cycle, UNDP contributed to the expansion of renewable energy, in particular in rural areas, through various interventions of this portfolio. The ‘MFP and women’s autonomy in Coyah and Forecariah’ project aims to enhance access for 10,000 households to the energy produced by MFPs (see finding 6). Project records show that it provided 283 beneficiaries, including 172 women, with awareness-raising sessions on the utility of improved cook-stoves and environmental protection. Access to clean energy was also well mainstreamed into the Adaptation-Based Ecosystem (ABE) and ‘Integrated and Sustainable Natural Resource Management in a Landscape Approach’ (GIRN-PBF) projects, which enabled the introduction of 8,947 improved cook-stoves, and promoted their local production by women groups. The country office was also able to initiate the installation of two mini-dams in Kissidougou and Gueckedou, after competing for Track 2 core resources, further supporting the introduction of new approaches to enhance the off-grid energy mix and leverage the great hydraulic potential of the country. The introduction of off-grid mini-dams in the UNDP offer is highly relevant in addressing access to energy, as well as supply risks related to solar technologies. The field visit to the Kissidougou site noted some technical shortcomings, which the country office has taken steps to mitigate, but the learning from these pilots provides useful prospects for further considering the expansion of off-grid mini-dam systems in other localities in the country.

The UNDP contribution under this CPD output was particularly notable in the ‘Creation of a Market for the Development and Use of Biogas Resources in Guinea’ project. Initiated with UNDP funding in 2015, the project was co-financed by GEF, and finalized in 2021. Through this project, UNDP helped MEEF, the Ministry for Livestock and Animal Production and the Ministry of Agriculture to overcome obstacles and increase the potential of biogas resources to meet the country’s energy needs. Biodigesters are expected to help farmers adopt sustainable practices, enabling them to increase their agricultural production and food security, improve their health, curb deforestation by replacing wood for heating, cooking and lighting, and reduce the greenhouse gas footprint of agricultural activity.

At upstream level, this investment enabled the project to establish the potential of national biogas resources, and the National Assembly ratified the agreement on the Biodigester Alliance in West and Central Africa and promulgated a decree to set up a regulatory authority and market for biogas products in Guinea.⁶⁵ This development result consolidates the prospects for sustainability of the project achievements. In addition, 1,440 domestic biodigesters and two semi-industrial biodigesters are relatively operational, and create a concrete basis for the establishment of the biogas technology supply chain. This supply chain is led by 222 masons, seven technicians, and 15 other partners and trained focal points. According to the final evaluation report, 13 micro-enterprises were supported in the manufacture and monitoring of biodigesters. This mobilization of actors in the supply chain and users (households and women’s groups) was made possible by intense communication and awareness-raising activities carried out by the project. Based on

⁶⁵ Decree creating the National Biodigester Agency in Guinea.

the final evaluation, a total of 1,440 families comprising 8,550 people benefited from 48,426 megawatt hours of energy supplied by the biodigesters during the duration of the project. This is estimated to reduce emissions by 14,316 tonnes of carbon dioxide.

Despite the relatively small resources and shortcomings in resource mobilization (\$2.1 million over five years), the Biogas project was able to cover 28 districts in all administrative regions of the country. 28 percent of the total project budget was not mobilized due to failures in the initial project strategy to leverage beneficiary-level co-financing, including through access to financial services (see finding 8). As a result, the additional technology input required to convert gas into electricity did not materialize during the project. Nevertheless, the evaluation could observe the relative success in uptake and increased use of biogas by households, as well as continued demand from beneficiaries and supply from micro-enterprises trained to promote its use and expansion. Field observations showed that the project was also able to demonstrate the potential of semi-industrial uses for large farms, and demonstrate the indirect benefits of such installation on more vulnerable households through the availability of natural fertilizers generated by the biodigesters.

The evaluation found some shortcomings in the initial strategy, which suggest that consolidation and follow-up of the project achievements are required. The use of cow dung collected off-farm can be questioned as regards the objectives of reducing the greenhouse gas footprint of farming activities. The largescale collection of cow dung has a negative ecological impact on soil fertility, biomass production, and carbon stock potential. At the same time, the project missed opportunities to further anchor its approach in agro-energy strategies, by more purposefully targeting large livestock areas to optimize the use of the strategy. Field observations found less than optimal use of biodigesters related to the difficulties for households to collect enough dung, due to lack of livestock and herding practices. This, in turn, affected the expected benefits for women and children in terms of reducing chores associated with wood collection, which was transferred to dung collection.

Positive signs were found in areas where synergy could be established with other projects, such as the ecovillages of the ABE project and the activities of the aquaculture project, which allowed the integration of environmental conservation, biodiversity, food security and the gradual emergence of a green circular logic between inputs and outputs in agriculture and energy production at community level. While significant, this also constitutes a missed opportunity as this level of integration, as synergy appears to result more from the overlapping activities of projects than strategic design. This nevertheless provides a positive basis for future intervention models.

Finding 12. UNDP revitalized the practice of aquaculture in selected areas of Upper and Middle Guinea. While the results were affected by technical difficulties and are still to be consolidated and expanded beyond domestic consumption, the interventions provide a useful contribution to the food security and livelihoods of target populations.

The country programme provided support to communities in Upper and Middle Guinea to develop community-based aquaculture. As referenced in project documents, aquaculture practices were common during colonial times in Guinea, but progressively abandoned over time. The 'Support to Aquaculture Development in Upper Guinea' project promotes community-based aquaculture based on the polyculture farming of three species: *Oreochromis niloticus* (Nile tilapia), *Heterotis niloticus* (Nile arowana), and *Heterobranchus isopterus* (catfish).⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Polyculture farming is the production of multiple crops on one piece of land.

Good results were achieved in the reduction of poverty, food security and nutrition. The contribution to food security is considerable, as the project reports that 15 fish-farming sites were developed and stocked in 2019, and in production at the time of the evaluation. Eight of these are at harvest stage, with a production of 17,121.27 kilogrammes of fish and an average production of two tons per site, way over the forecast. These are expected to benefit 11,700 people, 82.7 percent of whom are women. To scale up this initiative, 22 new fish farming sites have been developed, to benefit 25,588 people, of which 78.42 percent are direct beneficiaries.⁶⁷

With a participatory approach, the project has strengthened the ‘bonding social capital’ of target communities, through dialogue among community groups in identifying the production sites.⁶⁸ The project has promoted social cohesion through sensitization, generating community engagement in implementing project activities and integrating gender and youth equity. Implementation of the project also benefitted from synergy with the Biogas initiative, in relation to waste recovery, and with the ABE project, where market gardening activities are supported by fertilizers from the fishpond waters.

The quality of the works to develop fishponds, and the related technical assistance, need be reinforced, however. The preliminary analysis for the installation of ponds did not take into account all the hazards likely to affect their correct functioning. For instance, climate risks were not properly assessed, and during the first year rain scarcity and the drying up of the basin hosting the sources of nearby rivers obstructed production. In the area of Tolo, Mamou district, the design of the ponds observed on three sites showed leakages and infiltration issues which hindered production. In another case, observed ponds were able to renew biodiversity but also attracted predator birds and other species, threatening the survival of fry. Supply for the feeding of fry was also not considered in the original design of the project, nor the need for considering the conservation of fish production, limiting the output to domestic consumption.

Finding 13. UNDP support for the resilience of rural communities in target areas has been effective in supporting the adoption of climate-smart practices, with initial evidence of enhanced adaptive capacity of target groups. There is less evidence of UNDP interventions consideration for addressing climate absorptive capacity, though this is also part of the continuum of support implied by climate resilience.

Several UNDP projects in Guinea have implemented approaches and supported processes for local community development. Objectives and implementation strategies are varied and include: (i) resilience of the livelihoods of farming communities to climate change (REMECC, ABE); (ii) integrated and sustainable management of natural resources in a landscape approach (GIRN-PBF); and (iii) livelihoods diversification (see finding 12). All projects were launched and ongoing at the time of the evaluation.

⁶⁷ UNDP Guinea (2020). Results Oriented Annual Report 2020.

⁶⁸ When social networks are composed of kinship, close friendship and neighbourly relations, they are bonding social capital. Networks of vertical relationships, connecting people of dissimilar social standing, involve linking social capital. See: UNDP (2009). The ties that bind – Social capital in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The 'Ecosystem Adaptation Targeting Vulnerable Communities in the Upper Guinea Region' project (2016-2022) seeks to reduce the vulnerability of local communities in the Upper Niger River Basin to the additional risks posed by climate change, and build their resilience through an ecosystem-based approach that focuses on watersheds, land-use practices, and adaptive capacity. In 2020, UNDP launched the 'Integrated Natural Resource Management in the Bafing-Falémé Landscape' project, with the aim of improving river flows through the restoration of the upper catchment areas of the Bafing and Falémé Rivers by introducing innovative landscape-level sustainable land management and the reforestation of riverbanks.

The evaluation field mission observed positive results from the ABE project, in particular in areas where synergy could be established with the Biogas and Aquaculture projects. As part of the project, the ecovillage model was promoted, which included community-led farming and nature-based livelihood solutions implemented in several localities comprising: access to water; the organization and development of market gardens; and beekeeping. The model was usefully complemented by aquaculture and access to energy through biodigesters, which synched well with ecovillage interventions and enabled them to boost their outputs. For instance, biodigesters have been used to meet the energy consumption of water pumps, provide natural fertilizer for farming gardens, and reduce the need for wood. Fishponds have provided a renewal of biodiversity and developed natural fertilizer, in addition to their outputs in terms of fish production.

The REMECC project was mainly implemented in the previous programme cycle, but its experiences of community resilience to climate change informed the design of more recent projects such as GIRN-PBF and ABE, with activities to strengthen livelihoods in 15 rural communities in Gaoual, Koundara and Mali. The focus of these projects was mainly on short-term actions rather than those that institutionalize the leverage of resilience capacity.

Without a theory of change, the design of REMECC lacked a clear rationale for the link between the investments and the strengthening of climate change resilience capacity at community and institutional levels. Analysis reveals that the implementation approach did not follow a resilience framework, which would require strengthening three specific capacities:

- i. **absorptive capacity**, through natural resource management interventions, strategic investments, and improved basic social service delivery to help target communities absorb climate-related and other shocks and reduce asset losses;
- ii. **adaptive capacity**, through livelihood improvement, by helping beneficiaries adopt climate-smart agriculture and pastoral production, and by investing in research systems that contribute to better adaptation to a changing climate; and
- iii. **transformative capacity**, through market links and livelihood diversification, which together can provide a basis for more fundamental socioeconomic changes and help beneficiaries reduce their vulnerability to climate variability and other hazards.

As a consequence of this weakness, which is also observed in ongoing projects targeting climate resilience, UNDP interventions did not sufficiently deploy a continuum of support to strengthen the capacity of households and communities for resilience, or of national and subnational government institutions to work differently to build resilience. The REMECC midterm evaluation observed this weakness, noting that “the definition of community resilience strategies to climate change appears to be limited to the strengthening of operational and institutional capacities, setting aside the issues of infrastructure development ... capable of boosting the economic development of the project area”.⁶⁹

A close analysis of the objective of enhancing the resilience of the livelihoods of farming communities to climate change shows mixed results in terms of building the absorptive capacity of target communities.⁷⁰ While the design of the projects does not explicitly mention the absorptive capacity of rural producers, some interventions have the potential to strengthen coping capacity, such as the support for meteorological data (see Finding 10). However, a challenge for UNDP to develop such a continuum of support is the need to mobilize sufficient funding to offer such a package and/or reduce fragmentation in its portfolio and across its country programme. This would reduce the geographical coverage of its interventions, but in turn ensure a comprehensive response to the multidimensional nature of resilience.

2.3 Cross cutting issues

Mining sector

Finding 14. While challenges remain in the mining sector, UNDP has provided useful support to national and local authorities to improve governance and transparency in the collection and management of mining revenues, and diversify the sector to promote the participation of communities in development minerals value chains.

UNDP has helped the Government to adopt a Mining Policy Statement, consolidated in the Mining Code and operationalized through the Mining Sector Development Programme, which contains a priority action plan. Among its priority actions, the Mining Sector Development Plan included the development of artisanal mining, and the structuring, formalization and professionalization of small artisanal miners of development minerals. Initiatives such as the dissemination of the Social Responsibility Policy for mining companies aimed to contribute to improving transparency in the management of mining resources and support for the economic governance of mining sites, alongside key reforms in the payment of royalties to the Local and National Development Funds. These achievements have, among other things, helped Guinea to gain 12 points in the 2021 Natural Resource Governance Index between 2017 and 2021, and access the top performance band (satisfactory).

⁶⁹ UNDP (2016) Midterm evaluation of REMECC project.

⁷⁰ The absorptive capacity of a system refers to coping strategies by which its members moderate or buffer the impacts of shocks on their livelihoods and basic needs. In target rural communities, this may mean the ability to ensure adequate assets and strategies to enable them to cope with impacts from shocks due to climate variability. According to Dufour et al. (2014), an individual or household could be said to have a high absorptive capacity if, in the face of a shock, negative nutritional coping strategies are not very common. In other words, individuals and households have strategies to buffer the impact of climate related shocks when they occur, without fundamentally changing their production systems. See Béné, C., Frankenberger, T. and Nelson, S. (2015). “Design, monitoring and evaluation of resilience interventions: conceptual and empirical considerations.” <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/29410017.pdf>

UNDP partnered with UNCDF to implement the AGREM project. The project strengthened the operational capacity of the technical services of the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization, as well as the executive offices of the mining site consultation committees and 18 urban and rural communes of Boké and Boffa.⁷¹ These municipalities were equipped and supported to improve the transparent management of mining royalties. Through another joint project, implemented with UNIDO and FAO between 2019 and 2020, UNDP also supported the updating of the social and environmental plan of the locality of Boke and supported local authorities to participate in the evaluation and inspection of the environmental impact of mining activities.

However, these efforts were limited relative to the scale of governance issues in the extractive sector. Transparency in the management of mining revenues and the effective application of the policy developed by the Guinean Government are in progress. The existing legal framework has yet to be fully applied, and some texts are pending adoption. A recent IMF analysis of the mining sector stressed the potential and centrality of the sector to the Guinean economy, and the soundness of the Mining Code, while at the same time noting the loss of opportunities and revenues caused by the lack of compliance and enforcement in mining contracts.⁷²

In the area of economic diversification and value chain development, UNDP has supported Guinea to join the group of 41 beneficiary countries of the African, Caribbean Pacific-European Union Development Minerals Programme. This regional programme aims to formalize and strengthen the capacity of the development mineral subsector. The development of this subsector is increasing, driven by rapid urbanization, infrastructure development and industrialization, but has not yet been subject to policymaking, even though the sector is more labour-intensive and has a higher impact on employment and poverty reduction than more visible metals and high-value minerals.

In Guinea, this programme is being implemented in two phases, and aims to support artisanal and small-scale miners of development minerals. The first phase of the programme was implemented between 2015 and 2018 in eight pilot prefectures, including Coyah, Boffa, Koundara, Labé, Faranah, Kankan, Kissidougou and N'zérékoré. This pilot phase enabled support to 64 pilot cooperatives, of which 16 were subsidized. The second phase of the project, under implementation at the time of the evaluation and until 2022, aimed to strengthen capacity and formalize the sector.

The evaluation field visit to Farannah revealed that the 'Development Minerals' project is having positive effects beyond the direct results. Through the capacity-development delivered, the project supported conservation initiatives by targeted cooperatives, which made it possible to limit detrimental practices and exploitation activities such as logging along the Niger River, unplanned drilling, and the use of charcoal for the production of clay-fired bricks, and engage in reforestation activities. This is a great contribution for preservation of the River, on which nine other African countries depend.

⁷¹ These technical services include: National Directorate of Local Development, Regional Support Service for Communities and Cooperatives, Prefectural Development Services, and Executive Offices of the Prefectural Development Committees.

⁷² IMF Country Report No. 21/147.

The evaluation also observed some constraints to the consolidation of value chains and participating cooperatives, stemming from the approach of working with MFIs to promote the access of development mineral cooperatives to finance. This achieved a similar outcome as other cooperatives supported through this modality (see finding 8). In addition to the reluctance to give credit, experienced by other beneficiaries, artisanal mining cooperatives faced challenges in relation to the ownership titles of the land on which they operated. Field observations highlighted a frequent situation whereby cooperatives do not own land but loan the rights for their activity from landowners, and often the duration of their leases was shorter than the schedule of credits proposed. In the absence of land ownership titles, interviewees explained that they were requested to submit their home ownership titles as guarantee, which often surpassed their risk appetite for the productive investment needed, despite the recognized economic benefit and potential. As such, the objective of increasing production and productivity did not appear to have materialized as intended.

The Ministry of Mines and Geology did take steps to address the issue of land titles for artisanal mining, and a recent decree enabled exploitation corridors to be assigned for small scale mining. However, this decree had not been signed or applied at the time of the evaluation. It is difficult to assess the viability and sustainability of the value chain developed, but the enthusiasm and commitment of beneficiary cooperatives provides a positive prospect as the sector pursues reforms and restructuring. In relation to land use and mining activities, in 2022 UNDP launched a PBF funded joint project with UN-Habitat and the NGO ACCORD to address conflict risks related to land use and the mining sector. Through these various interventions in the mining sector, UNDP has delivered modest contributions to a sector that holds important catalytic potential for the development trajectory of the country in terms of employment, domestic resource mobilization, and social cohesion.

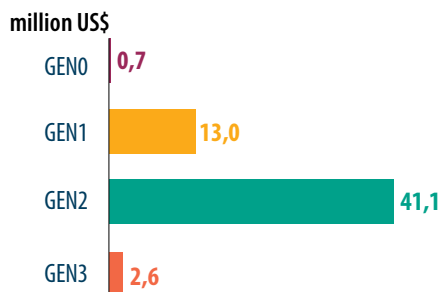
Gender

Finding 15. The country office has made a concerted effort to target women in its interventions across the portfolio. With a few exceptions, interventions targeting women did not showcase a differentiated approach that reflected their specific vulnerabilities, to respond to the scale and depth of gender inequalities in Guinea.

The distribution of programme expenditure against the United Nations gender marker between 2018 and 2021 shows that 71.7 percent (\$41.3 million) was allocated to GEN2, interventions that significantly affected gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE). This distribution is identical for the two outcomes. GEN 0 and 1, which indicate limited to no effect on GEWE, accounted for 24 percent (\$13.7 million) of the total programme expenditure. A similar trend can be observed in the previous country programme period. GEN 3 interventions, which specifically target GEWE, were limited (4.5 percent of total expenditure, \$2.6 million).

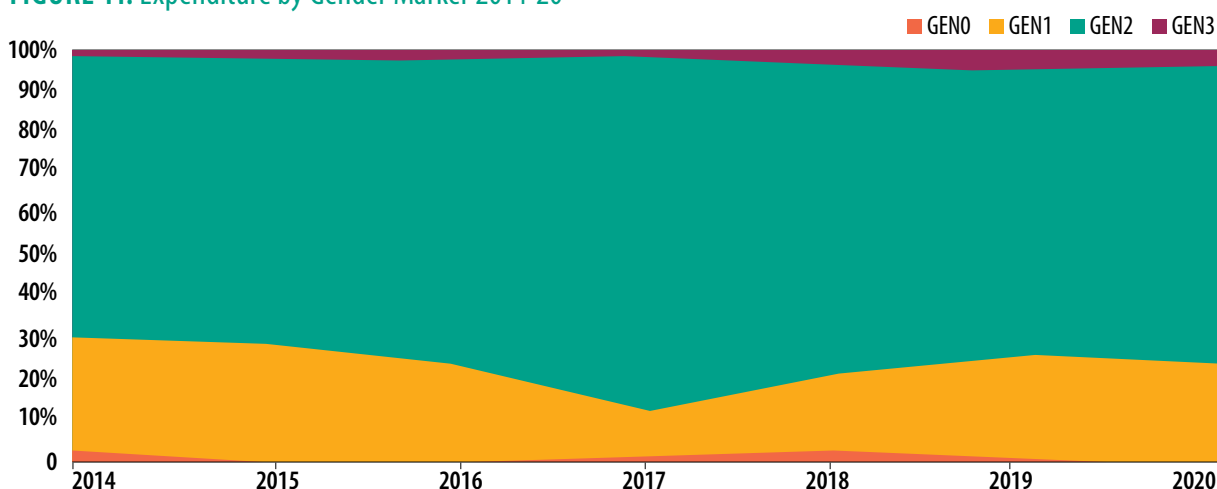
Interventions that were reported as having no to limited effect on GEWE corresponded mainly to UNDP support in the area of development planning through its support to MPCl and INS and projects in the area of ecosystem-based adaptation and climate information, which all together represented 24 percent of total programme expenditure between 2018-2021.

FIGURE 10: Expenditure by Gender Marker 2018-21



Source: UNDP Atlas data, March 2022

FIGURE 11: Expenditure by Gender Marker 2014-20



Source: UNDP Atlas data, March 2022

The country office established a Gender Strategy to accompany this CPD, but this was not finalized until mid-2019 and thus had limited time for implementation. The Strategy placed significant responsibility on the Gender Focal Point of the office, but at the time of the evaluation the designation of this role was unclear. It is not clear to what extent the Strategy is used, but its target to develop two GEN3 projects during this CPD period, though not ambitious, was met. In total, four of the 61 projects active during the period covered by the evaluation were marked as GEN 3, with a limited share of programme expenditure (5 percent).

For those projects specifically marked GEN2 and GEN3, there is limited evidence that their implementation strategies go beyond the prioritization of women and girls as target beneficiaries. In the area of economic empowerment, for instance, and with the exception of the 'Youth Connekt' project, initiatives to improve the livelihoods and economic opportunities of women have not included specific considerations to differentiate the support from that provided to men, and recognise the vulnerabilities of women beneficiaries. For instance, the strategy deployed to support a group of women in Coyah Forecariah through an MFP does not differ significantly from the implementation of MFPs that also target men. In terms of results, implementation is affected by the same challenges, notably the short duration of training, and lack of access to finance and markets. In addition, the project strategy, monitoring and reporting does not cover

the beneficiary experience, or consider power dynamics within community groups, how additional income has been shared and used within households, or how this supports empowerment objectives. Similar challenges are noted in the evaluations of other MFP projects in Sahel countries.⁷³ The approach taken by the Youth Connekt initiative, with a focus on mentoring, shows intent to address and more fully understand women's issues by promoting a capacity-development approach more grounded in the beneficiaries' context and realities.

In the area of governance, women's participation was limited and small-scale in conflict prevention activities. The country office made concerted efforts to mainstream the consideration of GBV in the justice and security sector, and incremental improvements were noted in the reporting and treatment of GBV cases. However, funding limitations in this area pose a serious constraint on the ability of UNDP to implement gender-responsive and -transformative strategies, which considering the status of women in Guinea, would invariably require lengthy and comprehensive responses.

Partnerships

Finding 16. Country office partnerships have been uneven across the country programme and conditioned by financing. However, positive partnerships emerged during this programme cycle, notably with academia and AfDB, which have enabled UNDP to increase the reach and relevance of its interventions.

UNDP developed several partnerships during this country programme period. Within the United Nations system, PBF has been a significant catalyst for joint United Nations programming, as the entirety of its funding is disbursed through joint programmes. As seen above, this funding has enabled UNDP to support authorities in this and previous cycles, in conjunction with its core funding, to advance key reforms in the country, notably in the justice and security sectors and social cohesion.

The evaluation noted some inconsistencies in the follow-up of joint projects after closure, and/or in the roles different agencies play. For instance, the joint project with FAO, which at the time of the evaluation was the only formal project explicitly targeting the environment-conflict nexus, was not continued with UNDP, as other participating agencies continued the work through another PBF project. For the intervention targeting youth vulnerable to political violence, UNIDO and UN-Habitat were responsible for income-generating activities and training for solar energy related jobs, respectively.⁷⁴ Finally, in the SDG Fund supported 'Integrated National Financing Project for the SDGs', UNDP participation has mainly been limited to its existing support for national planning, while UNICEF and UNCDF are responsible for conducting the envisaged fiscal space assessments. Questions related to the selection and participation of United Nations agencies for PBF funding were also raised in recent evaluations of the UNDAF⁷⁵ and the PBF portfolio⁷⁶.

Outside of the United Nations system, a positive new partnership emerged during this programming period between UNDP and AfDB. As highlighted above, these two agencies have enjoyed a long collaboration through support to the national development planning process. During the period under review, this materialized in the signing of two MoUs for the implementation of a support project for MPCl (see findings 1 and 2) and the MFP project as part of the Bank's road infrastructure project in Coyah- Feccariah. Interviewees

⁷³ Midterm evaluation of the second phase of the national multifunctional platforms for the fight against poverty in Burkina Faso and the materiality audit of the MFPs implemented from January 2010 to 30 June 2013; Final evaluation of the second phase (2010-2015) of the national programme of MFPs for the fight against poverty (PN-PTFM/LCP) in Burkina Faso; Soubeiga & Togola (2017).

⁷⁴ Both activities suffered significant planning and execution setbacks and were not fully implemented at the terminal evaluation of the project.

⁷⁵ UN (2021)- Final evaluation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2018-2022.

⁷⁶ PBF (2017)- Evaluation of PBF portfolio of PBF projects in Guinea.

attested to the challenges of setting up this partnership, which eventually enabled AfDB to outsource some activities of its programme to benefit from UNDP expertise and operational capacity for expedient project management and procurement. This partnership is charting the way for new funding partnerships, as UNDP has also been discussing partnership agreements with the Islamic Development Bank.

The country office should be commended for the partnerships established with universities and public research and training institutes for project implementation. Several partnerships were developed, which should be expanded and replicated in the future. Outside of its formal project engagement, UNDP collaborated with National School of Technical Agents of Water and Forests and High Institute for Agronomy and Veterinary (ISAV) in the locality of Mamou to strengthen training in research and data collection for the identification of value chains. UNDP supported 126 Master's students from the universities of Boké, Mamou, Kindia, N'Zérékoré and Faranah to conduct surveys. Through this, ISAV was able to support improvements in bio-charcoal, promoted by UNDP in its project.

For the development of aquaculture, UNDP fostered a partnership between the Russian university of Astrakhan and the veterinary institute of Dalaba to conduct preliminary studies to support the production of fish fry for the fishponds supported by the project. The country office Accelerator Lab also leveraged partnerships with universities to pilot a national network for social innovation, which already has 300 student members who have been engaged in the Accelerator Lab exploration work. According to the 2021 Results-Oriented Annual Report (ROAR), this network will be formalized in 2022. Through these partnerships, UNDP is demonstrating positive intentions in leveraging existing capabilities, which holds potential for catalytic effects and sustainability.

Operational management

Finding 17. Notwithstanding the challenging context, recurrent shortcomings in the operational and technical execution of interventions have caused delays, raising questions over the quality and timeliness of preliminary analyses that underlie project implementation in a context of limited resources and short project timeframes.

Several interventions faced technical and operational issues, which created setbacks, and may suggest that preparatory processes have not been sufficiently participatory and/or rigorous with regards to needs assessments, the identification of beneficiaries and localities, and the planning of activities.

In the context of access to energy, the use of improved cook-stoves was not always successful due to technical issues in the stoves in some localities due to poor quality of the soil (e.g. in Yenguia Khory). Stoves developed within the ABE project only partially functioned, because households were unable to use them in the open air and women were forced to install them inside shelters. In some places, this requires additional costs not covered by the project, which led to the abandonment of the stoves by those households. The same project undertook to drill boreholes without prior technical studies, which caused failures in the first four pilot boreholes.⁷⁷

⁷⁷ The project eventually conducted the required technical studies, the results of which made it possible to start the construction of new boreholes to water the market gardening perimeters and to supply the pastoral units and forest nurseries within the framework development of ecovillages.

For the MFP in Yenguia Khory, the selection of productive assets could have been better tailored to the demands of women beneficiaries and available market opportunities. In aquaculture development, interviews highlighted that the first pilot experience in Upper Guinea failed at first as preliminary analyses did not sufficiently consider climate risks. For the Youth Connekt project, the lack of funding limited the scope and conduct of the planned baseline study to a simple field mission to identify activities and local partners. This presents a risk for the foundation of the project, and could affect strategic decisions. Evidence of this can be found in the selection of rural radio as a community awareness platform in the Lola prefecture, even though this is not one of the intervention sites.

While UNDP did adopt corrective measures and adapt its interventions to circumstances, recurrent shortcomings in the quality and rigour of analysis underpinning project strategies and solutions pose a risk to the effectiveness of interventions and credibility of UNDP. In addition, while project setbacks are inherent and provide an opportunity for learning, they also place an additional burden on the usually limited timeframes and budgets of projects, such as the aquaculture project funded by Japan and Russia. Furthermore, PBF funds have essentially funded the entirety of UNDP social cohesion interventions during this cycle.

Several PBF projects included the conduct of baseline studies in the form of population-based surveys. Without a quality assessment of individual studies, regular surveys support a significant practice of informing project implementation, direction and evaluation, as well as broader policy discussion. However, the evaluation found several concerns about the use of these studies, which can be an intensive undertaking that often relies on international expertise. While they would benefit projects far more if done at the design stage, the time required for sound research and analysis reduces the time for implementation. This can be as much as six months pre-assessment within an 18-month project, which could be considered out of proportion.⁷⁸ This is particularly detrimental to projects focused on a specific period, such as elections. Most of the activities of the three reviewed projects focusing on elections were not implemented *before*, but *during* or (for a significant proportion of the activities) *after* the elections.

Secondly, the sophisticated analysis of these studies can question some indicators defined in the project document. On the other hand, some of the initial investigations are quality, well-researched documents which could be shared beyond the circle involved in the projects and used as a basis for further projects or by the Government to elaborate policies.⁷⁹ However, there was no evidence that these studies have been leveraged for advocacy purposes.

⁷⁸ Examples of this situation can be found with the project “Support to women community leaders for the prevention of possible conflicts related to the 2020 legislative and presidential elections” where a preliminary perception survey (labelled “Baseline study” was only completed in September 2020, while the project had officially been launched in December 2019; the same situation appears with the project”.

⁷⁹ The reports produced under the project “Support to women community leaders for the prevention of possible conflicts related to the 2020 legislative and presidential elections” (“Baseline study” and “Mapping of non-formal organizations of women and girls community leaders in 5 communes of Conakry” provide sociological data which could be exploited beyond the project; the same goes for the “Initial survey of community perception of social peace infrastructures in Guinea Forestière” produced under the project “Support for youth participation in conflict prevention during electoral periods and the sustainability of local peace synergies”.

2.4 Country programme performance ratings

The following table provides an overview of the performance of the country programme, using the five internationally agreed evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, and a set of parameters for each of the criteria. A four-point rating scale is used, with 4 being the highest and 1 the lowest rating.⁸⁰ This rating table should be read keeping in mind the findings presented in the previous sections, which provide more detailed justification for the ratings.

TABLE 1. Country programme performance ratings

| Criteria and parameters | Overall rating (scale 1-4) | Remarks/justification |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| 1. RELEVANCE | 3 | |
| 1.A. Adherence to national development priorities | 3 | All aspects of the country programme were aligned with the country's PNDES and overarching Vision 2040. The implementation of the country programme reflected all Signature Solutions of the UNDP Strategic Plan. The programme was also reactive to the changing context and demonstrated adaptation to the course of events in the country. |
| 1.B. Alignment with United Nations/UNDP goals | 4 | |
| 1.C. Relevance of programme logic | 2 | |
| 2. COHERENCE | 2 | |
| 2.A. Internal programme coherence | 2 | The design and implementation of the country programme reflected some complementarities in addressing CPD outputs; however, the geographic spread and project focus did not allow potential synergies within and across portfolios to be maximized, though positive practices are emerging. Though uneven, across the portfolio positive partnerships were established by the country office, and an important proportion of the portfolio is being delivered through joint programmes. |
| 2.B. External programme coherence | 3 | |

⁸⁰ 4 = Satisfactory/Achieved: A rating of this level means that outcome exceed expectations/All intended programme outputs and outcomes have been delivered; 3 = Moderately satisfactory/Mostly achieved: A rating of this level is used when there are some limitations in the contribution of UNDP programmes that prevent an excellent rating but there were no major shortfalls. Many of the planned programme outputs/outcomes have been delivered and expected results likely to be achieved. Overall, the assessment is substantially positive, and problems were small relative to the positive findings; 2 = Moderately unsatisfactory/Partially achieved: A rating of this level is used when significant shortfalls are identified, but there were also some positive findings. Only some of the intended outputs and outcomes have been completed/achieved. Overall, the assessment is less positive; 1 = Unsatisfactory/Not achieved: A rating of this level means that the contribution of the UNDP programme faced severe constraints and the negative assessment outweighs any positive assessments. There has been limited or no achievement of planned outputs/outcomes.

◀ Table 1 (cont'd)

| Criteria and parameters | Overall rating (scale 1-4) | Remarks/justification |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| 3. EFFICIENCY | 2 | |
| 3.A. Timeliness | 2 | Challenges related to the efficiency of programme delivery were noted, due to recurrent delays caused by operational challenges, the late deployment of staff, and inadequate project preparation. Feasibility and technical analyses were often too succinct to prevent technical and operational setbacks during project implementation. UNDP made some successful efforts to expand its resource mobilization to new partners, despite the evolving socio-political context, but still fell short of the resource mobilization targets presented in the CPD. |
| 3.B. Management efficiency | 2 | |
| 4. EFFECTIVENESS | 2 | |
| 4.A. Achieving stated outputs and outcomes | 3 | The country programme made progress towards delivery in almost all outputs. At the same time, outcome-level results could not always be achieved due to limited national ownership and uptake, stemming from the combined effects of the political crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic. Outcome-level achievements were also constrained, due to the fragmentation of interventions into individual projects for the most part, and their geographical spread. Interventions aimed at supporting employment and social cohesion objectives lacked depth, due to short durations and lack of financing, and did not allow deployment of a package of activities that combine responses to stimulate demand, supply and the enabling environment. Finally, the country office made a concerted effort to target vulnerable populations, in particular women, youth and people in special need, but these interventions lacked differentiation to reflect their specific vulnerabilities and mostly follow a similar implementation strategy as other target groups. |
| 4.B. Programme inclusiveness (especially those at risk of being left behind) | 2 | |
| 4.C. Prioritizing GEWE | 2 | |
| 4.D. Programming processes adhered to sustainable development principles | 2 | |

◀ Table 1 (cont'd)

| Criteria and parameters | Overall rating (scale 1-4) | Remarks/justification |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 5. SUSTAINABILITY | 2 | |
| 5.A. Sustainable capacity | 2 | The sustainability of results is uncertain for most interventions, in particular institutional capacity-development work, due to the limited ownership and uptake of project results and experiences. They nevertheless provide a foundation to work from when the institutional environment becomes more conducive and less fluid. The country programme has included several direct and indirect interventions that support development financing objectives. While at an early stage, efforts to promote domestic resource mobilization, and the support extended to the national development process and sectorial strategies in general, provide a foundation for resource mobilization with other partners. |
| 5.B. Financing for development | 3 | |

CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE



This chapter presents the evaluation conclusions on the performance and contributions of UNDP to development results in Guinea, as well as the recommendations and management response. The recommendations were formulated in ways that allow flexibility in their operationalization, recognizing the fluid political context as Guinea begins its political transition.

3.1 Conclusions

Conclusion 1. During this programming period, UNDP continued to play an important role accompanying national authorities in the development of key national and sectoral planning and policy frameworks, and supporting institutional capacity for their coordination and implementation. At the same time, the combined effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, political instability and weak baseline institutional performance have not provided an enabling environment to anchor and sustain project outputs.

UNDP has been a key actor for central ministries, extending continuous support to key dimensions of the national development process, electoral assistance, and justice and security sector reforms. The evolving context and political tensions in Guinea have limited the scope for core governance support, prompting UNDP to respond to social cohesion challenges in country. The combined effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the political crisis have constrained prospects for national ownership, in turn limiting uptake and sustainability of institutional capacity-development. Very few development assistance projects in Guinea have been nationally implemented, further limiting the prospects for national ownership of institutional capacity development.

Conclusion 2. UNDP has made important contributions to update policies and strategic frameworks for the sustainable management of Guinea's natural resources, and addressing climate change. Downstream interventions provide useful support to the development of sustainable livelihoods of rural communities, but have lacked a clear focus and conceptualization of resilience.

The distribution of vulnerabilities and climate change impacts is uneven between the four regions of Guinea, between and within communities, between farming and agro-pastoral systems, and between generations and sexes. The CPD and project design processes were not informed by climate vulnerability assessments that recommend resilience pathways. The CPD tendency to focus on activities did not permit an integrated approach, which is needed to enhance resilience, to be followed. Many activities have strengthened the livelihoods of target communities and households and contributed to improving climate change adaptation, but their resilience approach was too broad. However, a more advanced integrated approach to enhance resilience is taking shape in ecovillages under the Ecosystem Based Adaptation project.

Conclusion 3. UNDP support to women's and youth employment in non-mining sectors has had limited effect so far, due to the short-term nature of capacity-development and inadequacy of modalities to promote access to financing. The support provided has mainly been focused on business creation, without commensurate support to ensure value chain integration and a supportive enabling environment.

UNDP has sought to provide livelihood and employment opportunities to women and youth groups through direct interventions, and indirectly through interventions for social cohesion and conflict prevention. However, individual results achieved by these interventions have proved insufficient to ensure an adequate package of support to beneficiaries, that addresses their needs (financing, de-risking, mentorship, incubation, value chain linkage), given the short duration and limited financing. There is no evidence of UNDP support to incentives and changes in regulatory frameworks.

Conclusion 4. UNDP is making a positive contribution to both the economic diversification and governance of the mining sector at local level, which can support broader social cohesion objectives. Despite its parallel engagement on environmental issues, UNDP work in the mining sector did not deepen considerations of the environment-natural resource management-conflict nexus, or link to UNDP interventions within the GEF portfolio.

UNDP capitalized on its past positioning to support the revision of national level regulatory frameworks for the mining sector, extending relevant support to local authorities to improve the oversight and management of resources related to mining activities. The operationalization of artisanal mining through development minerals promotes employment opportunities and sector diversification. While much remains to be done to optimize the potential of the sector and consolidate the results of UNDP interventions, the centrality of the sector makes UNDP positioning significant. While some interventions may have been inconclusive, there may be lost opportunities to further strengthen synergies between interventions in the mining and environmental sectors, considering UNDP positioning in the area of environment and with GEF.

Conclusion 5. The operational and technical management of programmes has been constrained by weaknesses in preparatory phases preceding the planning and launch of projects, leading to setbacks during implementation which in turn have created delays in implementation.

The implementation of projects has been particularly challenged by the changing context, given the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which caused delays and changes to the country programme strategy. However, the evaluation found recurrent evidence of technical and operational setbacks which have exacerbated the already short project timeframes, due to a lack of rigour in feasibility studies, and the limited participation of beneficiaries in the orientation of project activities and support. These have created an additional burden on project implementation and a risk for UNDP credibility.

3.2 Recommendations and management response

RECOMMENDATION 1.



The design of the next country programme should be accompanied by region-specific analyses and theories of change to further articulate the UNDP approach to supporting community resilience, and develop synergies between the different parts of its programme.

Explicit and nested sub-theories of change will help to guide synergy between its various interventions and provide operational guidance to strengthen the resilience of the socio-ecological systems of rural populations. If underpinned by rigorous situational analyses and vulnerability assessments, they can also help to map coordination and partnership strategies with other development partners to achieve synergy and improve partnerships with decentralized local authorities. This would be conducive to the ongoing direction proposed by the last UNDAF evaluation, which recommended greater regional-level coordination among United Nations agencies.

Management response: Fully accepted



The country office accepts the recommendation and has been part of a logic of strategic and joint planning since the beginning of the cycle, in perfect harmony with Guinea's national sustainable development priorities. The office actively participated in joint actions organized by the United Nations system in Guinea, in particular joint planning and programming, reviews and monitoring of joint implementation. On the basis of the national planning document, the office will ensure that its positioning, which will be based on its comparative advantage, is part of a joint logic while taking into account local and sectoral analyses. The region-specific diagnostic, analysis and theory of change will be based on regional development priorities and data available at the decentralized level. This is why the country office will invest in a joint dynamic of support for the production and dissemination of knowledge, as well as regional development and planning plans in order to facilitate joint action planning aimed at supporting resilience. As a result, the main actions identified to respond to the recommendations are as follows:

| Key action(s) | Time frame | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking* | |
|---|---------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------|
| | | | Comments | Status |
| 1.1 Support the production and dissemination of economic and social reports by administrative region, reports that will take into account the results of interventions by UNDP and all partners, and will serve as a basis for better regional development planning | December 2023 | Policy and Strategy unit | | |
| 1.2 Strengthen the capacity of the structures in charge of planning and M&E at central and decentralized levels | December 2023 | Policy and Strategy unit | | |

RECOMMENDATION 2.



UNDP should seek new opportunities in the ongoing political transition, to broaden its governance support towards core and structural public administration and civil service reforms, with a view to strengthening the absorptive capacity of the administration in the short term, and the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of public policy implementation in the medium- to long-term.

There is a need to balance short- and long-term institutional capacity-development in public administration and the civil service, to chart pathways to enhance the short-term capacity of institutions for national leadership of development assistance projects, to promote national ownership and support the country consolidate the foundation of public administration. UNDP should look for opportunities in the new, yet fluid, environment, to support structural public administration reforms that can complement ongoing sectoral capacity-development and support future consolidation.

Management response: Fully accepted



The country office accepts the recommendation. Indeed, the support actions of the current office are part of this logic. Supporting the Government in the ongoing social dialogue is one of the priority actions at the moment. To provide the Government with a planning reference document, the UNDP office supported the development of the Interim Reference Programme, a planning framework document. The country office remains active in supporting priority areas.

| Key action(s) | Time frame | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking* | |
|---|---------------|--|-----------|--------|
| | | | Comments | Status |
| 2.1 Strengthen frameworks for dialogue, participation and societal mobilization for peaceful and inclusive governance | December 2023 | Economic and democratic governance cluster | | |
| 2.2 Support the implementation of public administration and public finance management reforms | December 2023 | Policy and Strategy unit | | |
| 2.3 Strengthen the capacity of <i>a priori</i> and <i>a posteriori</i> control structures in the management of public finances | March 2024 | Policy and Strategy unit | | |
| 2.4 Strengthen capacity in South-South and triangular cooperation and economic diplomacy | December 2023 | Policy and Strategy unit | | |
| 2.5 Strengthen evaluative practice within the national structures in charge of control and evaluation, for greater accountability and transparency in the implementation of public policy | February 2024 | Programme management and support unit | | |

RECOMMENDATION 3.



UNDP should take stock of its current positioning in the mining sector and reflect on the progress, successes, challenges and lessons from its interventions, with a view to articulating and consolidating a coherent portfolio of interventions for its next country programme, targeting the multidimensional and complex challenges of the sector.

UNDP is well positioned to further affirm its support in a highly complex but central sector for the development trajectory of the country and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. UNDP should leverage the preparation of the next country programme to conduct analysis and consultations, take stock of development in the sector and the positioning of other partners, to design a realistic and coherent portfolio of support that spans its positioning across environment, governance, conflict prevention and inclusive growth. The country office could leverage the expertise of the UNDP innovation facility to support this effort.

Management response: Fully accepted



The country office accepts the recommendation, which it finds to be an opportunity to take stock of the implementation of these actions during the cycle. This is the time to establish the challenges and identify the avenues of opportunity that will constitute a frame of reference for the development of programmatic documents.

| Key action(s) | Time frame | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking* | |
|--|---------------|---|-----------|--------|
| | | | Comments | Status |
| 3.1 Organize a review workshop on UNDP interventions in the mining sector | June 2023 | Economic and democratic governance unit | | |
| 3.2 Consolidate the programmatic response for inclusive and sustainable democratic and institutional governance by evaluating the impact of the UNDP and United Nations system Transition Support Strategy (2022-2023) | December 2023 | Economic and democratic governance unit | | |
| 3.3 Support the updating of the Corporate Social Responsibility policy | December 2023 | Economic and democratic governance unit | | |

RECOMMENDATION 4.



UNDP should look for opportunities to anchor its gender-related interventions with those of other United Nations agencies and development partners, to develop a comprehensive gender-responsive response that better reflects the vulnerabilities and differentiated needs of Guinean women and girls.

There is scope to expand partnerships with other United Nations agencies for the implementation of gender-related interventions, to enhance the overall contribution to women's empowerment and generate a comprehensive and complementary United Nations response to the challenges of gender equality. Engagement in economic empowerment and the fight against GBV provides positive entry points to further expand this as part of the United Nations coordination structure in the evolving country context.

Management response: **Fully accepted**



The country office accepts the recommendation and would like to point out that the actions undertaken in the context of gender equality have produced quite encouraging results. The Office participated actively and effectively in joint actions with all the other agencies and particularly those dealing with gender, with proven leadership (Gender Gold). Strengthening this participation by allocating more resources to gender-related issues, in particular taking into account the specific vulnerabilities and needs of Guinean women and girls, will be the subject of particular attention.

| Key action(s) | Time frame | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking* | |
|--|---------------|---|-----------|--------|
| | | | Comments | Status |
| 4.1 Organize a review workshop on UNDP gender interventions | June 2023 | Economic transformation and sustainable development cluster | | |
| 4.2 Conduct a study on the specific vulnerabilities and needs of Guinean women and girls in the context of the global financial crisis that the world is going through and particularly in that of the ongoing transition in the country | December 2023 | Economic transformation and sustainable development cluster | | |
| 4.3 Support the development of joint interagency programs for a comprehensive response to gender issues | January 2024 | Economic transformation and sustainable development cluster | | |

RECOMMENDATION 5.



The country office should strengthen the rigour, timeliness and oversight of feasibility studies and situational analyses that precede a project launch, to reduce risks due to technical setbacks and avoid overburdening short-term projects.

UNDP should enhance the rigour and use of preparatory analysis to inform implementation strategies and ensure that activity-level setbacks do not jeopardize project momentum, particularly in the context of short-term funding. In this case, UNDP should leverage its core resources before the launch of a project, to enhance preparedness for technical and operational project execution.

Management response: **Fully accepted**



The country office accepts and notes the relevance of the recommendation, which moreover emerged on several occasions from the conclusions of its management teams. A meticulous analysis, coupled with the implementation of instruments aimed at strengthening the quality of projects, will be established for this purpose. Rigour and regularity in the management teams of the programme and country office projects will be required.

| Key action(s) | Time frame | Responsible unit(s) | Tracking* | |
|---|---------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|--------|
| | | | Comments | Status |
| 5.1 Review the composition of the members of the quality assurance committee of the country office, and integrate into its mandate the approval of the start of projects by ensuring that all requirements are taken into account | December 2022 | Programme management and support unit | | |
| 5.2 Develop, validate and share a checklist for control, validation, implementation, monitoring and closure of projects | December 2022 | Programme management and support unit | | |

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/13387>

Annex 1. Evaluation terms of reference

Annex 2. Country at a glance

Annex 3. Evaluation framework

Annex 4. People consulted

Annex 5. Documents consulted

Annex 6. List of projects for review

Annex 7. Status of country programme outcome and output indicators



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