



Independent
Evaluation
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United Nations Development Programme

INDEPENDENT COUNTRY PROGRAMME EVALUATION NAMIBIA



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IEO TEAM

Directorate: Oscar A. Garcia (Director) and Alan Fox (Deputy Director)

ICPE section chief: Fumika Ouchi

Lead evaluator: Mikal Khan

Research associate: Cheayoon Cho

Evaluation consultants: Margaret Wanjiku Ngunjiri, John Carter and Tega Shivute

Evaluation External Reviewers: Angela Bester and Segbedzi Norgbey

Publishing and outreach: Kate Pond and Jaqueline Souza

Administrative support: Maristela Gabric, Sonam Choetsho and Arthur Kambambi

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STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERS

UNDP Namibia staff: Alka Bhatia (Resident Representative), Anne Madzara (Deputy Resident Representative) and Maano Shimanda (Monitoring and Evaluation Associate).

Other stakeholders and partners: Governments, representatives of United Nations agencies, civil society, non-governmental organizations and bilateral and multilateral development partners.

FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the second independent country programme evaluation of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Namibia, carried out by the Independent Evaluation Office of UNDP. The evaluation covers the 2019-2022 programming period.

Namibia's development path is guided by the fifth National Development Plan, with which the current UNDP country programme is aligned. While Namibia has reduced poverty significantly and achieved status as an upper-middle-income country, it has recently faced economic headwinds, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic and the effects of climate change. Namibia still has significant levels of inequality (especially evident in the rural/urban divide), and youth and women's unemployment rates are high, underlining the need for more economic diversification.

The evaluation found that UNDP was responsive to Namibia's current development priorities and needs, with a strong focus on more effective natural resource management and improving climate resilience, and a smaller but pertinent effort in improving governance and inclusive growth. A major achievement of the programme was redesigning the approach towards inclusive entrepreneurship development for vulnerable and often socially excluded groups, such as youth and women. UNDP also helped with strengthening government systems for collecting data on disabilities, and continued to support anti-corruption initiatives, gender-responsive budgeting, and the government response to the Hepatitis E outbreak and pharmaceutical supply chain issues. A key achievement of the UNDP programme on natural resource management and climate resilience was the increased emphasis on the business aspects of community efforts in the conservancies, to improve sustainability. The COVID-19 pandemic presented opportunities for new partnerships with municipalities (urban gardens, with some innovations tested in Accelerator Lab initiatives). Of course, UNDP and government partners were challenged in maintaining contact with stakeholders and monitoring project actions during the first year of the pandemic. UNDP did support the government with quick re-direction of resources and helped get programme activities back on track in 2021.

Some operational and programme adjustments would help with UNDP support and project sustainability in the next programme cycle. These include increasing the focus on marginalized communities by developing the 'business case' for specific innovations and pilot activities involving these communities – clarifying the workability and net benefits of actions to support replication and scaling up. UNDP can also further support entrepreneurship initiatives by undertaking market access and demand/supply analysis in different locations and communities in Namibia, in order to fully identify the opportunities and barriers affecting the scaling up of entrepreneurship initiatives. Use of the theory of change for project design and monitoring has been a challenge, so there is a need to articulate more realistic targets and observable indicators of development change. These also need to be functionally linked in a portfolio approach, which the country office has started. While there has been a strong awareness of gender equality needs in many projects, UNDP should shift from gender targeting to a more transformative approach that addresses structural and process challenges that women and disadvantaged communities face.

I would like to thank the Government of Namibia, national stakeholders, colleagues from the UNDP country office in Namibia, as well as the Regional Bureau for Africa and various GEF offices, for their support throughout the evaluation. I hope that the insights from this evaluation will inform the next country programme document, so that UNDP can continue to help the government and partners improve the lives of the disadvantaged and marginalized communities in Namibia.



Oscar A. Garcia
Director
Independent Evaluation Office, UNDP

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Anti-Corruption Commission
Acc Lab	Accelerator Lab
BCC	Benguela Current Commission
BCLME	Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem
CO	Country office
COVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CPD	Country programme document
CSO	Civil society organization
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
ICPE	Independent Country Programme Evaluation
IEO	Independent Evaluation Office
INFF	Integrated National Financing Framework
MGEPEWSW	Ministry of Gender Equity, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare
MoHSS	Ministry of Health and Social Services
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises
MURD	Ministry of Urban and Rural Development
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NDP5	(Fifth) National Development Plan
NIM	National Implementation Modality
NPC	National Planning Commission
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NSA	Namibia Statistics Agency
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PMU	Project Management Units
PwD	Persons with Disabilities
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDGIF	SDG Impact Facility
SEIAC-NAM	Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Namibia
SEMER	Sustainable Environmental Management, Energy and Resilience
SERP	Socio-Economic Recovery Plan
ToC	Theory of Change

UMIC	Upper-Middle-Income Country
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNPAF	United Nations Partnership Framework
WHO	World Health Organization

Evaluation Brief: Namibia

Namibia is an upper-middle-income country in southwest Africa. It has a small population (about 2.5 million people) in a fairly large area (people living in municipalities and sparse populations in rural areas). Poverty has been reduced significantly in the last fifteen years, mainly due to sustained political stability, sound macroeconomic management and public commitment to social protection programmes. However, due to its classification as an upper-middle-income country in 2009, Namibia has seen a significant decrease in official development assistance (ODA), from around US\$330 million in 2009 to around \$180 million in 2020, which has affected the country's development agenda. Namibia has faced economic headwinds in the last five years, compounded by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and the effects of climate change, and the country still has significant levels of inequality (especially evident in the rural/urban divide). Youth and women's unemployment rates are high, underlining the need for more economic diversification. These challenges have been at the core of the fifth National Development Plan and UNDP assistance in Namibia in the current programme period.

This independent country programme evaluation covers the current programme cycle to date (2019-2022). The UNDP programme has focused on issues around employment, pro-poor income and livelihood development, environmental management and improving climate resilience, and improved governance. Total expenditures were \$21.9 million, with 79 percent focused on environmental management and climate resilience (supported by funds from the Global Environment Facility [GEF]).

Key findings and conclusions

UNDP has certainly been responsive to **Namibia's development priorities and emerging needs** over the last four years. While largely adhering to the original country programme document (CPD) design, UNDP was also able to respond quickly to the COVID-19 pandemic in Namibia. Natural resource management and climate resilience initiatives dominated (Outcome 2, mostly funded by the GEF, with significant support from regional UNDP offices). However, while there was a plan to support renewable energy uptake, this did not occur. UNDP support for governance and inclusive growth was modest, but very pertinent. UNDP was challenged in trying to diversify the inclusive growth and governance portfolio. Government cost sharing has continued to be modest, and efforts to mobilize resources from the private sector have not yet yielded significant programme support.

A major achievement of the UNDP programme in promoting **inclusive economic development** was effectively building the capacity of government partners to redesign the approach towards inclusive entrepreneurship development for marginalized and often socially excluded groups, such as youth, women and persons with disabilities. This initiative was well aligned with associated development plans and blueprints, responding to ongoing priorities associated with unemployment and inequality. It proved to be effective (tested in pilots) and is apparently being adopted by the government for replication and scale-up. In an associated initiative, UNDP made a modest start with the National Disability Forum (strengthening government systems for collecting data around disability).

The main achievement with regard to **climate change issues and natural resource management** has been the ability of UNDP to maintain momentum with key government partners, while building new partnerships, to increase the emphasis on community-based actions to address the impacts of the pandemic as well as the longer-term impacts of climate change. However, the scaling-up and sustainability

of community-based initiatives continues to be a concern. It is only in the last two years that community governance, cooperative approaches, and a more detailed examination of the business aspects of initiatives are being explicitly addressed in project activities (most evident in the northern conservancies). The agency's support for the "Build Back Better" project (through urban gardens in four locations in Namibia, funded by the Government of Japan) was not only a response to the pandemic but also an opportunity to work with municipalities on approaches that address food insecurity and the need for climate resilience, with good scope for replication and scaling up. In general, UNDP has maintained a good balance of effort between marine spaces, important landscapes, urban interventions and climate change reporting obligations, but the linking up of the various donor projects in each of these sectors is not evident and needs attention.

UNDP support to the anti-corruption agenda and to strengthening gender-responsive budgeting has made positive but modest contributions to the advancement of **improved governance**. Several initiatives included in Outcome 3 reporting were not thematically linked to governance *per se* (e.g., support to health services through pharmaceutical supplies and the response to the Hepatitis E outbreak), but nevertheless helped to effectively address significant issues in Namibia. These particular initiatives were also good opportunities to consolidate partnerships with other United Nations agencies and institutions. On the other hand, decentralization efforts did not advance, despite UNDP having global knowledge and experience to offer with such initiatives.

The establishment within UNDP of the **Accelerator Lab** (Acc Lab) provided a platform where various innovations were tested to address persistent challenges such as high poverty and inequality, unemployment and poor public service delivery. After some initial stumbles, modest ripple effects were realized across all three UNDP outcome areas by rolling out Acc Lab innovations. For example, there was clear success with digital market access for urban garden produce (the "Build Back Better" project). However, there is still a need for greater reflection on lessons learned from the various programmes and innovations supported by the Acc Lab.

UNDP has faced **internal and external programme constraints** that have hampered effective delivery of project activities and results (especially evident with Outcome 2: Biodiversity, climate change and renewable energy). These have included: lack of staff capacity and lack of continuity within the country office; the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic; the slow and cumbersome processes associated with regional projects; the restrictive planning and budget processes of the GEF projects; the short timeframes of some projects (Outcomes 1 and 3); and the difficulty in creating linkages between initiatives, mostly due to the ongoing 'silo' approach of various ministries (the key implementing partners, who also have varying capacities). The country office (CO) is trying a portfolio approach with Outcome 2, in which there is more communication and knowledge-sharing between initiatives, but it is too soon to tell if this will address the sector-specificity of government implementing partners.

The country office **results-based management** system does not sufficiently link the original theory of change (ToC) to project-level logical frameworks. The monitoring system does not allow collection and compilation of the necessary data to track results and determine their contributions to outcome-level change, to inform management decisions and to bring lessons learned into new project design. This problem was further compounded by pandemic constraints and lack of staffing at country office (CO) level, which reduced monitoring and evaluation efforts. The Outcome 2 programme was especially challenged in monitoring community benefits. Factors contributing to success or failure were therefore not clearly catalogued or known, making it difficult to incorporate these lessons into effective programme design of future projects.

UNDP demonstrated a high degree of flexibility and **responsiveness to the COVID-19 pandemic**, shifting resources and staff to respond to emerging national needs, and taking a leading role in assisting the government in assessing the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic. Examples include the provision of grants for job replacement (especially in the ecotourism sector) and support for public space hygiene (for example, the urban gardens and associated markets).

While UNDP efforts towards **gender and social inclusion** in its programmes have been demonstrated in all outcome areas, the current approach has not been completely effective and has only led to 'gender targeting' outputs rather than the more intentional gender 're-distributive' and 'transformative' outcomes and impacts. Effective gender programming should be preceded by gender needs analysis that will help identify the right gender performance indicators for gender outcomes tracking.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1: The new UNDP country programme strategy should better articulate the agency's comparative advantages and its offer to Namibia, based on lessons learned in this cycle, UNDP areas of expertise (especially natural resource management, climate resilience and social support programmes, with a focus on marginalized communities), and its well established partnerships with government institutions. The use of 'business cases' to prove the potential sustainability of innovations and pilots should be part of the routine work of UNDP in the next programme cycle.

Recommendation 2: UNDP is expected to support the government in promoting entrepreneurship in disadvantaged and marginalized communities in Namibia. UNDP should therefore focus its support on market access and demand/supply analysis in different locations and communities in Namibia, to fully identify the opportunities and barriers affecting the scaling up of entrepreneurship initiatives.

Recommendation 3: The results chain and theory of change in the new CPD should clearly articulate realistic targets and observable indicators of development change (relevant to communities, end-users and beneficiaries). This is critical in order to accurately track UNDP performance and contributions to national and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework objectives.

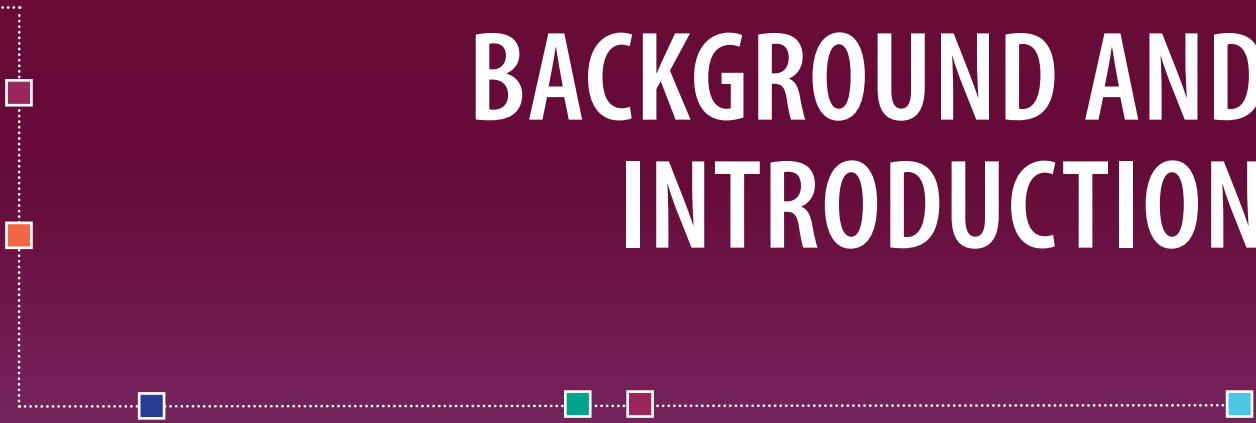
Recommendation 4: UNDP should be more ambitious in mainstreaming gender in all its programmes by shifting from gender targeting to a more transformative approach.

Recommendation 5: The Acc Lab should keep records and document the lessons learned and define options for scaling up and packaging of successful innovations into knowledge products.

Recommendation 6: UNDP should further explore and institute the portfolio approach to strengthen functional linkages between initiatives in all outcome areas.

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION



This chapter presents the purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation, as well as the methodology applied. It lays out the development context of Namibia before introducing the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) country programme.

1.1 Purpose, objectives and scope of the evaluation

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of UNDP conducts independent country programme evaluations (ICPEs) to capture and present evaluative evidence of the UNDP contribution to development results at the country level, as well as the effectiveness of the organization's strategy in facilitating and leveraging national efforts for achieving development results. ICPEs are independent evaluations carried out within the overall provisions contained in the UNDP evaluation policy.¹

This ICPE is the second IEO evaluation of UNDP work in Namibia.² It covered the period from 2019 to July 2022,³ in accordance with the evaluation's terms of reference (see Annex 1, available online). It assessed the entirety of UNDP activities in Namibia from all funding sources.

The ICPE was timed to feed into the preparation of the next country programme document (CPD), which will be implemented starting from 2024. Primary audiences for the evaluation are the UNDP country office (CO), the Regional Bureau for Africa, the UNDP Executive Board and the Government of Namibia.

1.2 Evaluation methodology

The ICPE was conducted according to the approved IEO process.

Following the development of the terms of reference, the IEO recruited two international and one national consultant to support the assessment. During the initial phase, a stakeholder analysis was conducted to identify all relevant stakeholders, including those that may not have worked with UNDP, but who played a key role in the outcomes to which UNDP has contributed.

The effectiveness of the UNDP country programme was analysed through an assessment of progress made 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 the country programme, positively or negatively. UNDP capacity to adapt to the changing context and respond to national development needs and priorities was considered.

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 Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services, 'Evaluation Policy of UNDP', DP/2019/29, New York, 2019, <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/policy.shtml>

² The first Assessment of Development Results, Namibia was conducted by IEO in 2018.

³ The CPD period is 2019-2023.

The evaluation methodology adhered to United Nations Evaluation Group norms and standards. 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.

The evaluation relied on information collected from different sources, which were then triangulated. These included:

- A review of UNDP strategic and programme documents, project documents and monitoring reports, decentralized and external evaluations, research papers and other available country-related publications. The main documents consulted by the evaluation team are listed in Annex 6, available online. An internal financial audit was conducted during the CPD process, and the evaluation team had the opportunity to view the report.
- An analysis of the programme portfolio and the development of theories of change by programme area, to map the projects implemented against the goals set in the CPD. The evaluation covered all projects implemented during the CPD period (this list is presented in Annex 4 online).
- Development of detailed inception reports for each of the outcomes, and a dedicated analysis on the mapping of the donor landscape in Namibia.
- Online and in-person interviews with 121 stakeholders, including programme beneficiaries, UNDP staff, government representatives, United Nations Country Team representatives, development partners and civil society organizations (CSOs). The interviews were used 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. A full list of interviewees is available in Annex 5 online.
- Direct observations of 22 UNDP project sites in four regions: Erongo, Kavango East, Kavango West and Ohangwena. The sites were selected in order to cover all outcome areas, to include both completed and ongoing initiatives, and to include both urban and rural areas. Details of the field visit locations are provided as part of the list of people consulted in Annex 5 online.
- The draft ICPE report was quality-assured by two external reviewers and the IEO internal peer review, then submitted to the country office and the Regional Bureau for Africa for identification of factual errors and comments. It was then shared with the government and other stakeholders.

Evaluation limitations

Due to the continuation of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, members of the ICPE team who were based outside Namibia were compelled to cancel their travel to the country, thus affecting the extent of direct verification of project sites and interaction with groups who benefitted from UNDP assistance. One member of the evaluation team, based in Namibia, was able to conduct such field visits. The majority of stakeholder interviews were conducted remotely, with virtual interviews replacing in-person conversations to the extent possible. A full set of project monitoring reports was not available to the evaluation team during the desk review phase. During the data collection stage, additional documents were made available and remaining information gaps were filled during stakeholder interviews.

1.3 Country context

An upper-middle-income country (UMIC) with a population of 2.5 million (2020), Namibia has experienced one of the fastest reductions in poverty on the African continent, from 28.7 percent of the population in poverty (2009-2010) to 17.4 percent (2015-2016), mainly due to sustained political stability, sound macroeconomic management and government commitment to social protection programmes.⁴ However, the recent economic downturn, exacerbated by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and shrinking development financing, are putting pressure on public finances and negatively affecting socioeconomic indicators.

The country's Human Development Index (HDI) rating of 0.646 is above average for countries in the medium human development group (0.631), and above the 0.547 average for sub-Saharan Africa. When adjusted for inequality, the HDI value falls to 0.418, representing a 35.5 percent loss,⁵ pointing to high inequalities. Namibia's Multidimensional Poverty Index, based on the 2015-2016 value, reveals that more than 43.3 percent of the population live in multidimensional poverty. Poverty is concentrated in rural areas (59.3 percent, compared to 25.3 percent in urban areas).⁶

Due to its classification as a UMIC in 2009, Namibia has seen a significant decrease in official development assistance, from around US\$330 million in 2009 to around \$180 million in 2020.⁷ The number of bilateral donors active in Namibia declined from 22 in the 1990s to 17 in 2006.⁸

Economy. The economy had been in recession since 2016 and experienced contraction in 2017 and 2019, with weak growth in 2018.⁹ This was attributed to weak growth in major trading partner economies (South Africa and Angola), low commodity prices, prolonged drought and the negative effects of fiscal consolidation.¹⁰ There was a severe contraction of 7.9 percent in 2020 due to the pandemic, with recovery expected in 2021.¹¹ Unemployment rates increased from 20 percent in 2019 to 21.7 percent in 2021,¹² with youth unemployment at 40.4 percent,¹³ vulnerable population unemployment at 31 percent, and women's unemployment at 20.6 percent (22.7 percent for men).¹⁴ Unemployment is highest in rural areas, at 39.2 percent, compared to 30.3 percent in urban areas.¹⁵ More than half the population (55.8 percent) is engaged in the informal economy.¹⁶ The economy is highly dependent on extractive industries, with limited investment in economic diversification. Jobs and skills mismatches have resulted from limited investment in technical and vocational training, perpetuating high unemployment, with particular impact on women, youth, persons with disabilities and the marginalized.¹⁷

⁴ World Bank, 'The World Bank in Namibia', World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., accessed December 2022.

⁵ United Nations Development Programme, 'Human Development Report, 2020', UNDP, New York, 2020.

⁶ Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 'Namibia Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) Report, 2021', Namibia Statistics Agency, Windhoek, 2021.

⁷ World Bank, 2022. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ALLD.CD?locations=NA>

⁸ Ravinder, R., 'Is Foreign Aid Panacea for African Problems? The case of Namibia', *Managing Global Transitions*, vol. 11, No. 3, pp.223-241.

⁹ African Development Bank, 'Namibia Economic Outlook', <https://www.afdb.org/en/countries/southern-africa/namibia>, accessed December 2022.

¹⁰ The weak economic performance has worsened the triple socioeconomic challenges of high inequalities, high unemployment, and relatively high poverty levels in rural areas, which are uncommon in an upper-middle-income country.

¹¹ African Development Bank, 'Namibia Economic Outlook'.

¹² World Bank Data 2021, Indicator: Unemployment, (total % of labour force) (national modeled ILO).

¹³ World Bank Data 2021, Indicator: Unemployment, youth total (% of total labor force ages 15-24) (modeled ILO estimate).

¹⁴ World Bank Data 2021, Indicator: Unemployment, male (% of male labor force). Unemployment, female (% of female labour force).

¹⁵ Namibia Statistics Agency, 'The Namibia Labour Force Survey, 2018', Namibia Statistics Agency, Windhoek, 2018.

¹⁶ World Bank, Informal Economy Database, 2021.

¹⁷ Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services, 'Country Programme Document for Namibia, 2019-2023', DP/DCP/Nam3, New York, 2018.

Governance. Namibia is a constitutional multi-party democracy and ranks as the tenth most peaceful country in sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁸ The Transparency International Corruption Perceptions Index ranks Namibia as the fifth least corrupt country in sub-Saharan Africa (with a score of 49 out of 100)¹⁹ and seventh on the Ibrahim Index of African Governance.²⁰ Namibia ranks 24 out of 180 countries on the World Press Freedom Index of 2021.²¹ Despite these achievements, there are signs of increasing deterioration in security and rule of law, and human rights and inclusion. Some of the key challenges identified for governance and service delivery were centralized decision-making, inadequate availability of relevant data and limited citizen engagement. The limited capacity of oversight institutions, accountability systems and policies have also contributed to a perception of increasing corruption.

Inequalities. Although the income inequality index (Gini) has steadily declined since 2003, it remains high at 59.1 (2015), making Namibia one of the most unequal countries in the world.²² The government is examining the feasibility of implementing a universal basic income grant, but this is challenging given the current limited fiscal space. The government has committed to reducing the Gini coefficient to 0.30 by 2030.²³ Along with inequality in terms of income and wealth distribution, inequalities also exist in terms of available opportunities between women and men, urban and rural areas, and different groups within the population. The historical biases that have skewed the provision of opportunities have negatively affected various segments of society.^{24,25} Namibia has a Gender Inequality Index (GII) value of 0.440, ranking it 106 out of 162 countries.²⁶ Women hold only 37 percent of parliamentary seats in the country, and they remain disadvantaged in the labour market, where female participation is 56.1 percent compared to 63.3 for men.²⁷ Women also remain disadvantaged in education: 40.6 percent of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 42 percent of their male counterparts. Despite notable achievements in gender, gender-based inequalities persist in multiple dimensions, including gender-based violence and violence against children, economic inequalities, inequalities in local representation and unequal access to land rights.

Environment. Namibia is one of the driest countries in sub-Saharan Africa, with high climatic variability due to unpredictable rainfall, translating into a fragile ecosystem that is vulnerable to shocks. The country faces persistent droughts and recurring floods in the north, desertification in the central, southwest and eastern regions, forest fires throughout the country, and sporadic disease outbreaks (such as cholera and hepatitis E). Namibia has experienced drought over the last seven years.²⁸ Droughts have affected approximately 2 million people, whose livelihoods have been disrupted, especially in agriculture and wildlife tourism.²⁹ Land degradation represents another pressing challenge for Namibia, having cost the government an estimated \$1.6 billion per year over the period 2000-2010 (equal to 19 percent of the country's GDP).³⁰ The carbon dioxide emissions per capita in 2019 were at 1.7 tons.³¹ Fossil fuel energy consumption constitutes

¹⁸ Global Peace Index, 2021.

¹⁹ Transparency International, Corruption Perceptions Index, 2020.

²⁰ 2020 Ibrahim Index of African Governance.

²¹ Reporters Without Borders, 2021 World Press Freedom Index.

²² World Bank Data, Gini Index. 2015 is the most recent dataset.

²³ National Planning Commission, 'Namibia Vision 2030', Windhoek, 2004.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ UNDP, 'Human Development Report, 2020'.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 'Namibia Drought Assessment Report', IFRC, Pretoria, 2022.

²⁹ World Bank, 'Climate Risk Country Profile: Namibia', 2021, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C., 2021.

³⁰ United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Namibia Country Profile, 2018.

³¹ Climate Watch. 'Greenhouse Gas Emissions', World Resources Institute, Washington, D.C., climatewatchdata.org/ghg-emissions, accessed December 2022.

66.7 percent of the total energy consumption.³² Despite these challenges, there have been notable efforts with conservation, with 44 percent of the land under conservation management.³³ Yet utilization of other natural resources remains unsustainable owing to high demand, expansion of mining, and increased volumes of waste and pollution in ecologically sensitive areas. Illegal wildlife trade and human/wildlife conflict also threaten environmental sustainability. Weak institutional capacity and inadequate coordination among institutions – evidenced by limited implementation and enforcement of legislation and compliance with environmental regulations – remain critical challenges.

Progress against the Goals. Namibia ranks 114th out of 163 countries on overall progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Three goals are on track (education, gender and climate), seven are in progress, and two (poverty and sustainable cities) are regressing.³⁴ While Namibia has ratified most international human rights conventions and treaties and has a robust legal framework for human rights, implementation and reporting remain inadequate. The recommended universal periodic reviews of main international human rights treaties and their ratification are still pending. Cooperation with human rights mechanisms, mechanisms to monitor the implementation and verification of reviews, the promotion of gender equality and addressing gender discrimination, and effective measures to combat discrimination towards vulnerable groups and marginalized communities are all still limited in Namibia.³⁵

COVID-19. The first cases of COVID-19 in Namibia were registered in March 2020, and the government implemented a national lockdown the following month.³⁶ As of 5 August 2022, 166,467 confirmed cases of COVID-19 had been registered, with 4,072 deaths.³⁷ By 3 July, 417,407 adults had completed their COVID-19 vaccination regimen. The economy contracted by 11 percent in 2020, according to the Namibia Statistics Agency (NSA).³⁸ Significant impact was recorded in the tourism sector, with 96.5 percent of tourism businesses adversely affected, and the manufacturing and construction sectors contracted by 9.2 percent and 5.7 percent, respectively, in 2020.³⁹ Although the health sector experienced a 6 percent increase due to a surge in employment of health workers, serious structural problems persisted, including an initial lack of sufficient staff, capacity and facilities. Education was also considerably impacted, leading to loss of learning for children and lack of access to school feeding programmes. A decrease in the country's Human Development Index ranking is foreseen, driven by major losses in education, health and income. Estimates show that the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to increase poverty levels from 17.2 percent to 19.5 percent.⁴⁰

³² International Labour Organization, 'Green Jobs in Namibia: Opportunities for job creation in the green economy', ILO, Geneva, no date.

³³ Government of Namibia, 'Namibia Fifth National Development Plan, 2017/2018-2021/2022', NPC, Windhoek, 2017.

³⁴ Sustainable Development Report, Namibia, accessed December 2022.

³⁵ Namibia Universal Periodic Review 2021 <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/48/4>

³⁶ World Health Organization, 'Namibia COVID-19 Outbreak Response', accessed 17 March 2020.

³⁷ World Health Organization, 'COVID-19: Namibia Situation', accessed August 2022.

³⁸ United Nations, 'Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Namibia', United Nations, Windhoek, October 2020.

³⁹ United Nations Development Programme, 'COVID-19 Socio-Economic Impact Assessment on Tourism in Namibia', UNDP, Windhoek, 2021.

⁴⁰ Best-case scenario of a 3.4 percentage point drop in GDP growth. Source: United Nations, 'Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Namibia'.

1.4 UNDP programme under review

The Government of Namibia and UNDP formalized their cooperation through the standard basic assistance agreement, signed on 22 March 1990. Since then, UNDP has supported programmes of cooperation for advancing the country's aspirations for sustainable human development by improving capacities at the national, regional and local levels.

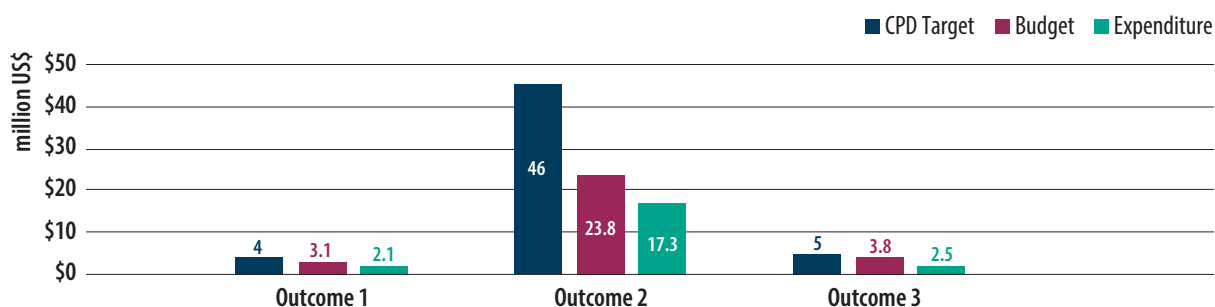
The current UNDP country programme in Namibia is aligned with the fifth National Development Plan (NDP5), which integrates the SDGs under the theme "working together towards prosperity" (around economic progression, social transformation, environmental sustainability and good governance) and the United Nations Partnership Framework (UNPAF), 2019-2023. The UNPAF was developed by the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in Namibia, which is composed of the Resident Coordinator, nine resident agencies and eight non-resident agencies working in coordination with the National Planning Commission.

The CPD is focused around three key pillars/outcome areas (nested under "sustainable, inclusive and green growth"): Diversified employment, pro-poor income and sustainable livelihoods for women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalized populations (Outcome 1); sustainable environmental management and increased resilience to shocks and crises (Outcome 2); and improved governance for accountable, responsive institutions and civic engagement (Outcome 3). The largest investment of the CO is under Outcome 2.

The CPD resource targets, budgets and expenditures are summarized below in Figure 1, indicating that the CO delivered around 50 percent of its intended targets for Outcomes 1 and 3, and around 38 percent of its target for Outcome 2.

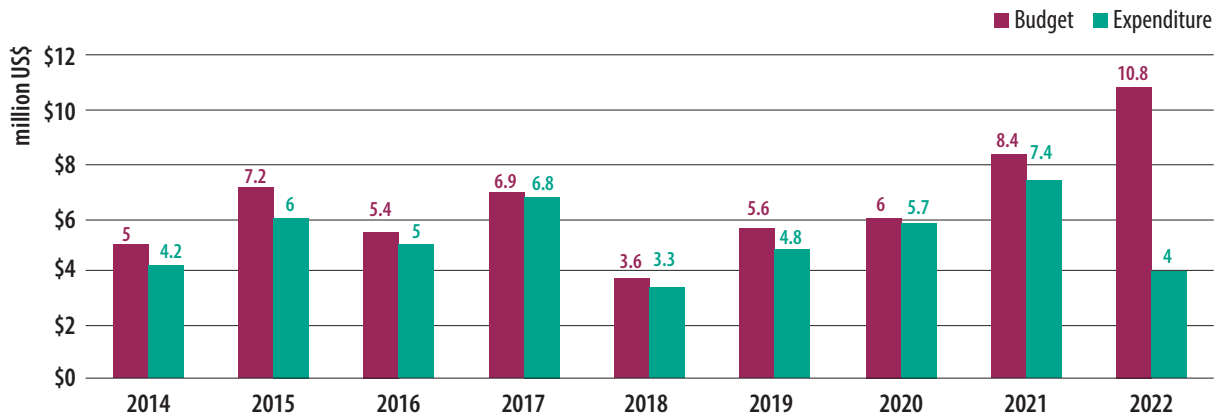
Figure 2 shows the budget and expenditures for all outcomes over the last two CPD cycles, indicating that the overall programme size has remained mostly stable over time, with a slight uptick in 2021-2022.

FIGURE 1. UNDP resource targets, budgets and expenditures 2019-2022



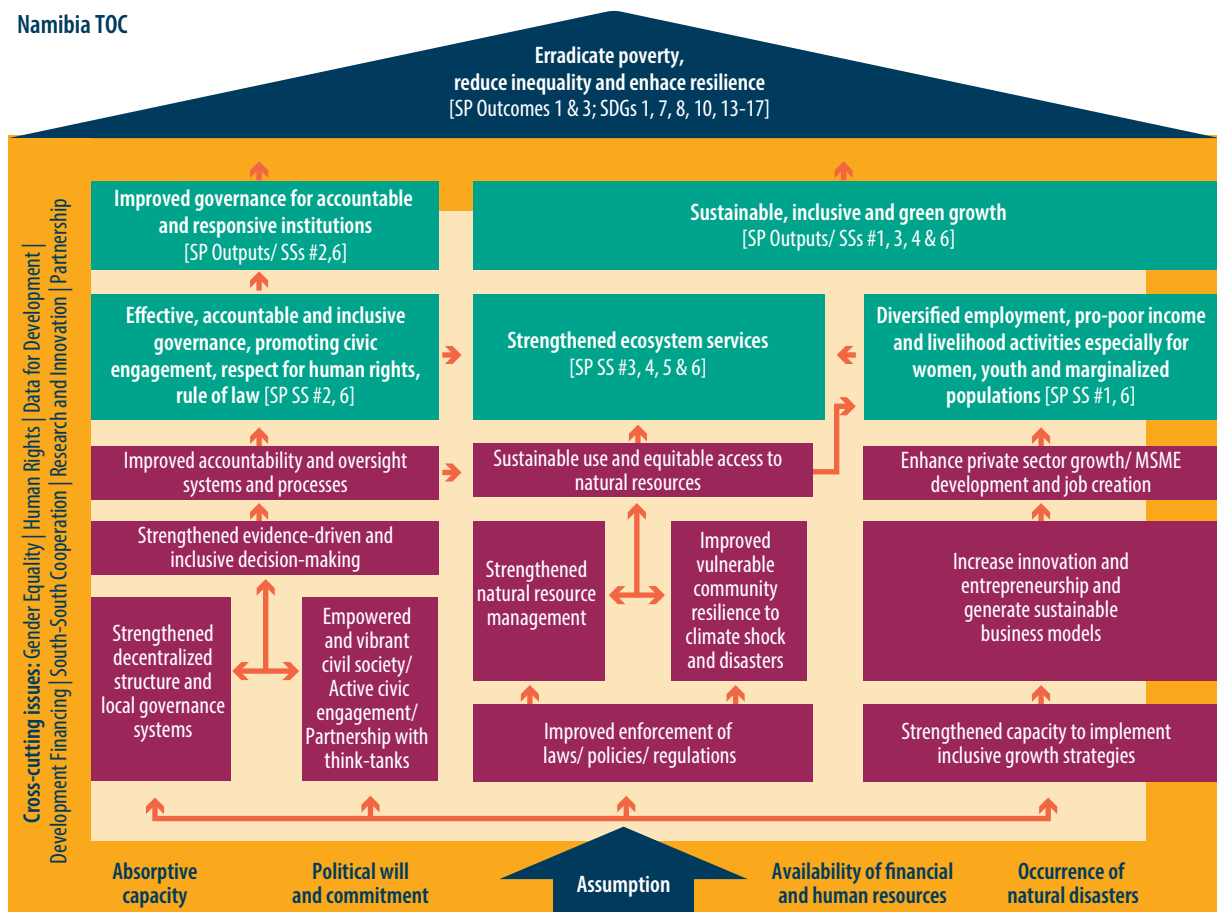
Source: Atlas project data as of 27 July 2022

FIGURE 2. UNDP budgets and expenditures 2014-2022 (US\$ millions)



Source: Atlas project data as of 27 July 2022

FIGURE 3. UNDP Namibia theory of change



Source: UNDP Namibia Country Office

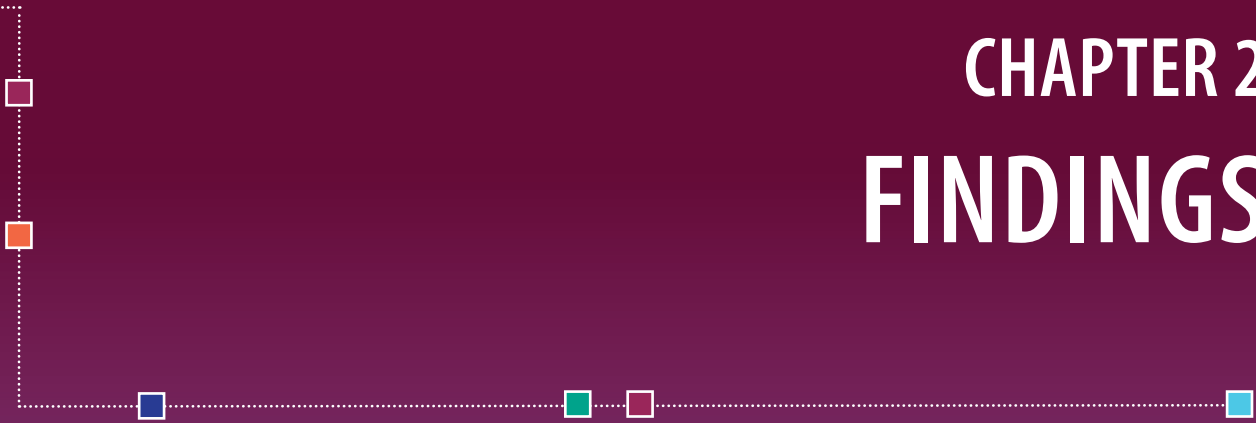
UNDP COVID-19 support

UNDP Namibia was the technical lead in drafting two UNCT assessments: the 'Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Namibia' (SEIAC-NAM) and the 'Socio-Economic Recovery Plan' (SERP). The SEIAC-NAM, which examined the effects of COVID-19 on key economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism, services and manufacturing, was conducted in collaboration with the Inter-University Task Force, which consists of the University of Namibia, the Namibia University for Science and Technology and the International University for Management. Building on the SEIAC-NAM, the SERP prescribed specific key strategic interventions (KSIs) under each pillar, which articulated UNCT activities that supported the Government of Namibia in its response and recovery to the pandemic.

UNDP also undertook several programmatic initiatives in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Social Services and the World Health Organization (WHO). These included, for instance, the procurement of testing kits, oxygen concentrators and personal protective equipment for an estimated 3,000 frontline health workers. UNDP also supported the establishment of an emergency operation centre that included a toll-free number to enable the public to access information on the pandemic. In addition, UNDP played a role in social mobilization and risk communication to raise awareness on curbing the spread of COVID-19. UNDP, through specific initiatives such as the Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilience Facility (CRRRF), supported the government in providing salary support to wildlife tourism operations.

CHAPTER 2

FINDINGS



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

2.1. Inclusive growth

CPD Outcome 1. By 2023, institutions upscale efforts to implement policies for inclusive development and poverty reduction for vulnerable groups.

Related outputs:

Output 1.1. Innovative measures in place to increase ‘vulnerable/disadvantaged’ women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalized groups’ empowerment and participation in economic development processes.

Output 1.2. (Sustainable Development Goal 1, target 1b). By 2023, Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and SME Development, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare and other governing council members enabled to create and implement innovative pro-poor and gender-responsive development policy frameworks and programmes for poverty eradication.

Output 1.3. National institutions in charge of economic diversification have the capacity to promote local content development and value addition to national resources.

Outcome 1 articulates UNDP support to gender-responsive development and inclusion of marginalized groups. Two projects fall under the Outcome 1 portfolio, with a total expenditure of \$2.1 million against a budget of \$3.1 million from January 2019 to July 2022⁴¹ and a resource target of \$4.2 million.

Finding 1 (relevance). The UNDP inclusive development and poverty eradication programme in Namibia is adequately aligned with, and responds to, the priorities in the country as defined in the fifth National Development Plan, the Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication, and persisting socioeconomic challenges such as unemployment and inequality.

The two projects under this outcome contribute to Output 1.1 and Output 1.2 as they aim to diversify employment, support pro-poor income and sustainable livelihoods for women, youth, persons with disabilities (PwD) and marginalized populations and strengthen the institutional frameworks for inclusive growth. Under this focus area, the two main projects consist of: an intervention to promote access to services for PwD, implemented through the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare, and another that extends the EMPRETEC initiative of the United Nations Conference on Trade and

⁴¹ Atlas project data as of 27 July 2022.

Development (UNCTAD)⁴² to Namibia through the technical lead of UNDP. EMPRETEC Namibia seeks to promote entrepreneurship to steer economic growth amid a contracted economy. There are no projects aligned to CPD Output 1.3.

While the programmes are relevant and generally aligned to the CPD outcome, the logical framework of the projects does not link to the output indicators of the CPD, thereby making it difficult to track the project's contribution to CPD and UNPAF outcomes. For instance, the CPD output indicators include: "1.1.2.1. Number of livelihood options created to increase 'vulnerable/disadvantaged' women, youth, PwD and marginalized groups' empowerment", which does not correspond clearly with project-level indicators. These can be reconciled in the broader theory of change of UNDP; however, it is not conducive to tracking results.

Finding 2 (effectiveness and sustainability). UNDP has successfully piloted new models to promote entrepreneurship development, which though small, have demonstrated their effectiveness and have been adopted by the government for replication and scale-up. Other contributions to Outcome 1, such as the establishment of the National Disability Forum and strengthening government systems for collecting data around disability, have made modest contributions to development outcomes.

One of the government's strategies to promote employment and economic growth is through the development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), by strengthening their capacities and improving the enabling environment for their growth (e.g., through links to financing and business advisory services). These objectives are articulated in various development strategies, particularly the NDP5, the Blueprint on Wealth Redistribution and Poverty Eradication and the MSME policy of 2016. UNDP has aligned to this agenda and has focused its resources on the development of a training model, founded on behavioural change and rooted in the UNCTAD entrepreneurship training model.⁴³ Monitoring data on trainings do not allow for a comprehensive picture of the programme's achievements against its targets. However, qualitative data indicate that delivery of trainings has been mostly in line with the programme's intentions and amounts to between 100 and 200 people trained under different programmes. Trainings included an equal share of men and women, and included youth, poverty-affected persons and persons with disabilities. Follow-up after the trainings is limited, and there is limited and anecdotal information on the utilization of the newly acquired skills to establish or expand businesses. The quality and relevance of the trainings is well recognized by various stakeholders. However, MSMEs face multiple challenges in their development: for instance, several trainees indicated that when seeking financing from commercial banks for their businesses, they faced prohibitively high interest rates and were therefore not able to make use of their newly acquired skills.

The programme was severely affected by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which limited the possibility of in-person trainings and did not allow the planned visits to Namibia by trainers from the EMPRETEC training centre in Ghana. In addition, the Namibian government's planned contribution to the programme of \$250,000 was re-directed to emergency COVID-19 support.

Despite these challenges, the entrepreneurship model introduced by UNDP has been taken up as one of the flagship programmes under the president's Harambee Prosperity Plan. It now has cabinet approval and will subsequently be funded through government resources.

⁴² <https://unctad.org/topic/enterprise-development/Empretec>

⁴³ <https://unctad.org/topic/enterprise-development/Empretec/entrepreneurship-training>

UNDP has made modest contributions to the advancement of the rights of PwD in Namibia. In partnership with the Ministry of Gender Equity, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare (MGEPEWSW) and other United Nations entities such as the United Nations Partnership on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), UNDP provided technical assistance⁴⁴ for the establishment of the National Disability Forum and strengthened its advocacy capacity vis-à-vis government partners, including the NSA, in 2019. The forum is expected to be the main multi-stakeholder platform for the advancement of the rights of PwD across all government policies and programmes, and comprises several government agencies and CSOs. Using this platform, UNDP provided technical assistance to the NSA to review the 2022 national census tool to include Washington Group questions that identify PwD. The results from this engagement include the generation and collation of disability data, which can now be used for policy planning. In addition, as a result of this engagement, the upcoming national census survey questionnaire has disability-specific questions that will help build data on the status of disability in Namibia.

2.2. Biodiversity, climate change and renewable energy

CPD Outcome 2. By 2023, vulnerable populations in disaster-prone and biodiversity-sensitive areas are resilient to shocks and climate change effects (and benefit from natural resources management).

Related outputs:

Output 2.1. Relevant policies, regulatory frameworks and institutions enabled to ensure the conservation, sustainable use, access and benefit-sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, in line with international conventions and national legislation.

Output 2.2. Scaled-up, integrated and innovative action on climate change adaptation and mitigation across priority sectors that is funded and implemented.

Output 2.3. Inclusive and sustainable solutions adopted by renewable energy technology suppliers and industries to achieve increased energy efficiency and universal modern energy access (especially off-grid sources of renewable energy).

Outcome 2 articulates UNDP support to Namibia’s environment and climate targets. Nineteen projects fall under the Outcome 2 portfolio, with a total expenditure of \$17.3 million against a budget of \$23.9 million from January 2019 to July 2022⁴⁵ and a resource target of \$45.5 million.

⁴⁴ Consisting of the funding for consultancy services, facilitation and organizational expenses and advisory services by UNDP CO staff.

⁴⁵ Atlas project data as of 27 July 2022.

Finding 3 (convergence with Namibia’s needs and priorities, and subsequent structure of the programme). The current Outcome 2 portfolio is very convergent with environmental and climate change needs and priorities in Namibia, building on the previous country programme cycle. Five projects have made up almost 90 percent of the portfolio effort, with a focus on natural resource management and climate resilience, intended to benefit local communities that are dependent on natural resources and vulnerable to climate change. However, the performance indicators for Outcome 2 do not accurately articulate community benefits, and the programme has been challenged in observing and documenting such benefits. Expected initiatives addressing renewable energy have not materialized.

The current UNDP programme for Outcome 2, addressing environmental management in general and climate resilience, has been informed by the NDP5 and the CPD (for the current programme period: 2019-2023; responsive to the UNPAF for the same period). Environmental sustainability is one of four pillars in the NDP5. In general, the national development plan is weighted towards economic progression with social transformation, linked to good governance and recognizing the need for environmental sustainability. The current CPD weaves all these themes into the various environment, natural resource management (NRM) and climate change initiatives, to varying degrees.

The last Namibia ICPE (2018) was intended to inform the current programme for Outcome 2 initiatives. It noted that the environment and energy programme up to that time had been generally effective in achieving its primary objectives (notably the Benguela Current Commission and protected areas system strengthening) as well as contributing to policy development, awareness-raising, and testing and proving pilots and models (which reflects the typical project structure of GEF-funded initiatives). However, several design and management-related issues reduced the effectiveness and efficiency of initiatives. These included unrealistic targets, inadequate stakeholder engagement and limited use of strategic partnerships. There was also general concern with the risk of unsustainable initiatives after projects ended. The ICPE noted a challenge for the next country programme to be more relevant beyond NRM and climate/environment projects funded by GEF. The ICPE also noted that management plans for protected areas tended to be deferred to the future and were expected to be linked to the gazetting process (thus diluting accountability for the original goals). Another significant observation was in relation to the demise of a solar power plant project; it was deemed too ambitious and was not further pursued. Finally, the 2018 ICPE noted that work on the Benguela Current large marine ecosystem has been ongoing since 2002 (advancements over the last 20 years would therefore be of interest, if well documented).

Outcome 2 of the current CPD is very closely linked to the themes in the NDP5, with a focus on improved enforcement of laws, policies and regulations leading to strengthened natural resource management and improved resilience of vulnerable communities to climate shock and disasters, in turn supporting sustainable use and equitable access to natural resources, contributing to strengthened ecosystem services.⁴⁶ As noted above, three outputs were articulated, with the following performance indicators:

- **Output 2.1.** Relevant policies, regulatory frameworks and institutions enabled to ensure the conservation, sustainable use, access and benefit-sharing of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, in line with international conventions and national legislation. **Indicators:** natural resources that are managed under a sustainable use, conservation, access and benefit-sharing regime; number of existing state-protected areas under improved management (target – 8 new ones); number of hectares burned by veld fires in conservation areas (target – 1.3 million hectares); regions assessed for trends in land degradation (target – 1); number of shared water ecosystems (fresh

⁴⁶ UNDP Namibia Country Programme Document, 2018.

or marine) under cooperative management (target – 3); number of gender-sensitive legal and policy instruments on natural resources and environment to improve access to and control over assets and services (target – 4); number of functional intra-governmental coordination mechanisms improved to achieve targets as set out in various United Nations conventions (target – 3).

- **Output 2.2.** Scaled-up, integrated and innovative action on climate change adaptation and mitigation across priority sectors that is funded and implemented. **Indicator:** number of national accredited systems in place to access, deliver, monitor, report on and verify use of climate finance (target – access = 3; deliver = 1; monitor = 1; report = 3; verify =1).
- **Output 2.3.** Inclusive and sustainable solutions adopted by renewable energy technology suppliers and industries to achieve increased energy efficiency and universal modern energy access (especially off-grid sources of renewable energy). **Indicator:** Number of new development partnerships, including South-South cooperation, with funding for improved energy efficiency and/or sustainable energy solutions targeting underserved communities/groups and women (target – 2 underserved communities; 2 women’s groups).

None of these targets and performance indicators articulate clear benefits to communities, as change ‘on the ground’. They tend to express systems, processes, mechanisms, land areas or funding, without being clear on what improvements these might bring to the quality of life or economic wellbeing of beneficiaries.

In response to the previous ICPE observations, the CPD 2019-2023 referred to using strategic partnerships to optimize resources and maximize results, including linking up with civil society and academia. There was also reference to exploring opportunities with the private sector (as well as continuing to target the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund – no results with the latter). The CPD noted geographically targeted initiatives in biodiversity-rich, sensitive and disaster-prone areas and wildlife corridors (only some of which were subsequently supported by UNDP projects), with a focus on building resilience through adaptation and reducing disaster risk by strengthening the technical and functional capacities of inter-sectoral environmental coordination bodies. There was also reference to transformative interventions such as the Windhoek Managed Aquifer Recharge System (not done) and the Namibia Integrated Landscape Approach for Enhancing Livelihoods and Environmental Governance to Eradicate Poverty (started two years ago), so that poor communities and marginalized groups living in and around biodiversity-rich and sensitive areas can benefit from ecosystem services. With regard to energy initiatives, the CPD noted an effort to ensure universal access to modern energy services, doubling the rate of improvement in energy efficiency, and doubling the sharing of renewable energy in the national energy mix (certainly ambitious over a five-year period; in fact, no renewable energy initiatives were implemented).⁴⁷ Prominence was given to results-based management, with a strong monitoring and evaluation system in place.

The Outcome 2 programme, as it materialized over the period 2019 to date, includes 19 initiatives. Project types include contributions to Outputs 2.1 and 2.2 (none allocated to Output 2.3), either as project preparatory grants or actual implementation of activities (mostly national projects; four as regional projects dealing with ocean governance, sustainable mining and transboundary water management). Most projects are funded by the GEF. Ten of the initiatives (preparation and implementation) in the Outcome 2 programme address Output 2.1 (policies and regulatory frameworks for natural resource management and biodiversity conservation) and nine address Output 2.2 (scaled up action on climate change adaptation and mitigation). Under both 2.1 and 2.2, there are linked initiatives: project preparatory grants (PPGs) that progressed into full projects.

⁴⁷ There was solar panel installation at five clinics, and use of electric vehicles by UNDP, but these were not contributions to energy policy and overall scaling up per se.

Fourteen initiatives are being implemented as NIM (national implementation modality) and five are DIM (direct implementation modality, handled by UNDP). Gender has a significant profile in some of the Outcome 2 projects (beneficiary communities involved in the projects involve women and marginalized people). Five initiatives are categorized as GEN1, 10 are GEN2, and one is GEN3 (the higher the numerical classification, the more the project is expected to contribute to gender equality or women's empowerment). Two projects are listed as GEN0 and one does not have a gender classification. The GEN2 and GEN3 projects normally require a gender assessment and action plan, to tailor the projects to increased engagement of women.

Five projects account for 87 percent of project expenditures over the period January 2019-July 2022. These projects are focused on ocean governance (the Benguela Current Commission work), integrated landscape and forest management and building up community resilience to climate variability. As noted previously, there are no initiatives in the current Outcome 2 programme that are directly involved with energy efficiency, conservation or uptake of renewable energy. A notable feature of many Outcome 2 projects is their longevity; as GEF projects, some have been underway for 4-9 years, and some of these (such as the ocean governance project) are now into a third phase.

The temporal trend in project expenditures (generally assumed to be a proxy for project activity, and possibly results/outputs) does not obviously reflect the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with expenditure rates of 86 percent and 94 percent in 2019 and 2020, respectively, and 91 percent in 2021 (the first full year of COVID impacts and restrictions). Expenditure as of mid-2022 is about 43 percent.

The UNDP Outcome 2 portfolio was handled at the beginning of the programme cycle by seven staff: a head of portfolio, who was designated as a programme specialist, a programme analyst, project coordinator, project manager and three interns. In the past year, however, staffing has been reduced to the head of portfolio and three other staff (associate, assistant, intern). The head of portfolio position has been filled by three different individuals over the last 12 months. According to many respondents of this evaluation, this situation has resulted in UNDP shifting to a more administrative function, rather than providing technical support as was previously the case.

Finding 4 (programme balance). The Outcome 2 portfolio reflects a good balance of effort between marine spaces, important landscapes, urban interventions and climate change reporting obligations. However, the various initiatives are not functionally linked and they still need to make the jump to full community uptake and benefits for communities, in order to effectively address land degradation and natural resource management issues.

The current Outcome 2 portfolio is relevant to natural resource management and climate change priorities in Namibia. With the main effort in ocean governance, integrated landscape management in areas especially vulnerable to climate change, building informal food systems in urban areas, and addressing Namibia's climate change planning and reporting obligations, the Outcome 2 portfolio targets critical habitats and natural resources that many Namibians depend on, either directly or indirectly. These main initiatives correctly align with the expected outcome of supporting vulnerable populations subject to the effects of climate change. However, with ocean governance, which is a regional programme (requiring Namibia, South Africa, and Angola to agree on harmonized actions), despite significant investment in terms of effort and financing, there are challenges in translating institutional support into concrete actions that will benefit coastal communities—especially relevant after 20 years of donor support (for more on this see Finding 5 below).

The integrated landscape initiative and work on informal food systems in urban areas (both relatively new) have more traction with communities, and have already started to engage them in activities on the ground. These initiatives have incorporated lessons about community engagement and learned from earlier relatively unsuccessful projects (relating to community resilience to climate variability and forest management; both ended in 2019). While evaluation respondents were optimistic about community continuity and sustainability with the integrated landscape initiative and Build Back Better project, they were also concerned about lack of time to develop effective sustainability mechanisms.

The other initiatives in the Outcome 2 portfolio are relevant, but mostly address climate change planning and reporting requirements,⁴⁸ or are quite small investments in a patchwork of environmental management actions (like mining governance, COVID-19 response and support to other projects through the Sustainable Environmental Management and Enhanced Resilience Project). Two other projects are underway which are very relevant and important to Namibia's climate and natural resource management efforts: a transboundary water security initiative with Angola (awaiting GEF approval) and a project relating to management of human/wildlife conflict and crime.

Finding 5 (overall Outcome 2 effectiveness). UNDP support has been effective in maintaining institutional structures and processes in Namibia responsible for climate change analyses and reporting, reflecting the experience and relationships developed over previous programme cycles. Earlier initiatives addressing forest management and community climate resilience (now completed) were generally unsuccessful in gaining traction with local communities and were not sustained. Current initiatives dealing with landscape management and informal urban food systems have more traction with beneficiary communities, but outcome-level changes (improved habitats and beneficiary conditions) are not yet evident.

Project actions, outputs (results) and outcomes are evident in the UNDP results-oriented annual reports (ROARs), specific project progress reports, mid-term reviews, and terminal evaluations. Some projects are well-documented and others are small, sporadic, or part of regional projects and not specifically reported on at the national level. Overall Outcome 2 performance is tracked by UNDP for the specified indicators. There are challenges, especially for the longer-term projects that started in the last programme cycle (before 2019), in separating apparent results in the current programme cycle from the activities and results in the previous cycle.⁴⁹ There were also PPGs that were not expected to have development results, but were intended to produce project documents.

The "Improving Ocean Governance and Integrated Management" (BCLME III) project is a regional initiative with Angola and South Africa that has been underway since about 2002 and is now in its third phase, with expected completion in March 2023. The expenditures for this project alone account for almost half of the total Outcome 2 project expenditures since the beginning of 2019. Clearly, the long duration of the initiative and the well-established operations of the Benguela Current Commission (BCC) – the key partner in the initiative, responsible for management of the Benguela Current large marine ecosystem (BCLME) – have set a firm platform for the development of guidance, standards and management tools for the three countries. For Namibia, the main output in the current programme period has been the draft Blue Economy Policy (still to be validated).⁵⁰ This is intended to help Namibia manage its marine space with increased economic benefits in a sustainable manner. This initiative is supported with various guidelines (applying to

⁴⁸ A standard analysis and consultation/report writing process defined for BURs and NDCs; also, project design for a carbon market initiative (just started and progressive, but with only one year of funding).

⁴⁹ UNDP ROARs do not always clearly indicate timeframes for activities and results; there are frequent aspirational comments (mention of activities that "will" be done) that are not actually results, but show intended trajectories.

⁵⁰ UNDP provided support to the BCC as it engaged consultants to develop the policy, and also supported consultations, workshops and information dissemination in Namibia. The Blue Economy Policy is waiting for validation, and the Namibia Integrated Coastal Zone Management Bill is also pending.

the whole BCLME) addressing oil spill risk, mining, invasive species in ballast water and unsustainable fishing – certainly relevant and important. There has been extensive problem identification and awareness-raising related to these issues, and a lot of effort and expense associated with the development of BCC institutional capacity as well as that of linked agencies and institutions, including in the areas of diagnostic analysis and strategic plans, training plans and development of specific legislation (for example, ballast water management). Support has also been provided for development and implementation of monitoring and information systems (mostly the monitoring and evaluation framework for the current strategic action programme for the BCC).

Specifically in Namibia, project results closer to the ground include plans for a ‘fish shop’ (artisanal fishers) in Swakopmund, which has been supported by a socioeconomic baseline survey of these fishers and the development of a training plan. There is however a concern that the fish shop will not be constructed and supported before the end of the project (in less than a year). Coastal biodiversity studies of Namibia have been completed (eco-sensitive areas defined), and there has been a port baseline survey in Walvis Bay (for ballast water and MARPOL compliance). Plastic has been monitored sporadically at the mouth of the Orange River, and support has also been provided to Namibia’s inter-sectoral working group.⁵¹ In general, however, project activities in the last year have been more concentrated in South Africa and Angola, and still mostly focused on meetings, workshops and targeted training.⁵²

In general, much of the effort seems to have been somewhat internal to the BCC and national agencies, with development of management tools, standards, systems, etc., but actual engagement of the communities that depend on the BCLME is still limited in Namibia, as suggested above.⁵³ The same is true of environmental and natural resource quality in the BCLME itself (habitat and marine water quality). Project staff have acknowledged that a fourth phase is required to consolidate gains from previous phases, and the search for new funding support is a significant line of effort for the programme manager. It is acknowledged that complicated regional projects, which strive for harmonization of approaches, will always be slow-going. With only nine months left in this phase of the project, the fact that the majority of activities are listed as “ongoing” rather than “completed” is a concern.

The “Integrated Landscape for Enhancing Livelihoods” project (NILALEG) has been underway for a few years, and has had limited success in delivering activities and results, despite quite significant funding⁵⁴ (although the pace has picked up in 2022 in some landscapes). The main outputs to date include surveys, forest inventories and draft management plans, some legislative review, and consultations in the five selected landscapes to support community nature-based enterprises (to increase incomes in a sustainable manner), as well as a proposal process for community grants. Quite a bit of effort has gone into institutional capacity and organizational structures and mechanisms (what can be called ‘staging’ work), along with operational guidelines and associated training (e.g., in fire management strategies, site monitoring techniques, gender training, etc.). University scholarships have also been awarded. Actual change on the ground is very modest at this early stage, with some solar-powered pumps at four locations, water infrastructure,⁵⁵ and attempts at addressing land degradation. It seems that there may be challenges in getting community activities

⁵¹ BCLME III supported Namibia in establishing the National Intersectoral Committee on Ocean Governance, which is a platform for the four main sector ministries to address cross-sectoral marine issues. This structure further serves as an apex body for overseeing implementation of the BCC strategic action programme at the national level.

⁵² Recent activities in Namibia have included stock assessment training, an oil spill response field visit and a marine geo-science validation workshop.

⁵³ BCLME III has been hampered somewhat by staff changes within the project, and the fact that the Executive Secretary position at the BCC is still only ‘acting’. This situation has apparently caused delays in project implementation.

⁵⁴ More than \$3.5 million in 2020 and 2021.

⁵⁵ Addressing water supply and storage seems to be the most important need in many conservancies.

fully up and running within the remaining time and budget (one landscape is doing quite well;⁵⁶ three are satisfactory;⁵⁷ and one will need a change in implementing partner).⁵⁸ In Nkulivere, there is certainly increased political support, as the council office wishes to help implement activities and be associated with a 'winning' initiative.

It is important to note that there are various other donor-funded initiatives in the conservancies⁵⁹ covered by NILALEG; a coherent picture of what exactly is going on is difficult to obtain.⁶⁰ Further, there are some initiatives funded by the SDG Impact Facility (SDGIF) (such as a lumber exporting operation) which need to be reconciled with some of the livelihood initiatives to be supported by NILALEG. There are also Small Grants Programme projects scattered throughout the area that are not monitored or documented by UNDP (rather, these are implemented by the United Nations Office for Project Services). Some of these conservancies also benefitted from grants from the Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilience Facility. In particular, game rangers had their salaries maintained when tourism collapsed in the first year of the pandemic.

The project "Sustainable Management of Namibia's Forested Lands" (NAFOLA) was a substantial forest management project that was mostly completed in the previous programme cycle, with 2019 being the last year of project activities. Both the mid-term review and terminal evaluation of this project indicate generally unsatisfactory delivery of the project and a moderately unlikely chance of sustainability (there was a pervasive reluctance to talk about this project during the evaluation). The project focused on policy, strategy, institutional development and management plans (mostly fire management and bush control) in support of initiatives in 15 community forests, nine of which were eventually gazetted, for a total land area of 4.1 million hectares (about 5 percent of Namibia's land area). However, with implementation by the Department of Forests, there was too much focus on forest production and not enough attention given to alternative livelihood development. Efforts at bush control and regeneration of forests and pasture land were unsuccessful, and animal feed initiatives could not demonstrate a net benefit to communities. There were modest infrastructure and equipment investments (tractors, and a livestock auction facility, the latter requiring ongoing management support). Generally, there was no specific evidence that land degradation and fire risk had been reduced as a result of the project.

The "Environmental Governance for Sustainable Mining" initiative is part of a Swedish-funded regional project implemented by the Ministry of Mines and Energy. The current phase started in 2019, and had annual expenditures of about \$50,000-55,000, guided by annual work plans reviewed by UNDP. While the Ministry of Mines and Energy reports quarterly on the initiative, UNDP reports annually on this initiative within the bundled Sustainable Environmental Management, Energy and Resilience (SEMER) projects (results of those projects, including the mining initiative, are noted below).

⁵⁶ Namibia Nature Foundation implements the project in Nkulivere Landscape (Kavango West). Quite a bit is evident as of July 2022 (based on their latest report and a site visit during the evaluation): work on defining the conservancy area; Devil's Claw programme; harvesting; 186 people trained, with new harvesters; 33 youth de-bushing and digging a well (Mpungu); solar pumps, tanks, troughs and taps, a water point committee; 2 earth dams for water storage; 6 grazing restoration sites; work on a community cooperative; 10 schools with fruit tree planting.

⁵⁷ The Okongo Conservancy Wildlife Area has had ongoing wildlife patrols and monitoring; improved water provision for wildlife; upkeep of cut lines around the Okongo Conservancy wildlife area to prevent the spread of wildfires; plans for conservation hunting to reduce the currently overstocked land; and the Okongo Programme for Communal Land Development (PCLD) Auction Kraal incentivizes livestock offtake, which reduces pressure on rangelands. This community group raised almost NAD\$2 million at their first auction in July 2022, which supplies livestock to abattoirs, which in turn will supply supermarkets, restaurants and shops. The other two "satisfactory" conservancies are Zambezi and Ruacana (in Omusati).

⁵⁸ That CSO apparently has too many initiatives on the go (Omaoipanga, in Kunene), and is stumbling with NILALEG.

⁵⁹ Conservancies in Namibia are areas with defined borders and governance and management structures outside of parks, where communities have the right to manage and benefit from their wildlife.

⁶⁰ For example, the EU is funding at least five initiatives in the conservancies, not obviously linked to NILALEG.

The project “Proactive Management of Human Wildlife Conflict and Crime” has been supported by UNDP in the design phase (as a PPG). At this point, there are no actual project activities (the project is just getting underway), but project engagement tools have been produced, including a gender action plan, an environmental and social management framework and a stakeholder engagement plan.

The initiative “Sustainable Environmental Management and Enhanced Resilience” is a four-year project that started in 2020, and is nested within the new SEMER portfolio. There are four sub-projects that address COVID-19 issues, waste management, environmental governance for mining, and tourism issues, but their connectivity and the overall plan are very unclear (reporting does not explain the trajectory of the project so far; some sub-projects address Output 2.1 and one addresses Output 2.2). Cumulative expenditures to early 2022 total almost \$500,000 (UNDP TRAC funds).⁶¹ Project support included solar installations for lighting in vending markets, revision of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) report (through the Climate Promise), support to small-scale mining, procurement of elephant collars (still to be delivered), and support to International Biodiversity Day. These seem to be disparate initiatives, lacking coherence; nevertheless, visible results were delivered, notably with the mining initiative. These included environmental impact assessments, environmental management plans and heritage impact assessments for five hotspot small-scale mining sites in Erongo Region⁶² and provision of infrastructure (signs and latrines, shade nets, waste bins), at four of those sites, including health and safety equipment and associated training. Some of this appears transient, with miners moving away from at least one site, and most not wearing protective equipment. There has also been support provided to the Ministry of Mines and Energy regarding mine closure plans, with associated training (to about 50 people).

The initiative “Water Security and Community Resilience Building” is a GEF PPG being implemented by UNDP as a regional project with Angola (addressing transboundary watershed management). Preparatory work on stakeholder analysis and project design has been completed, and a project document is in hand for further development and eventual approval and funding by GEF.

Initiatives supporting Output 2.2 have been expected to scale up integrated and innovative action on climate change adaptation and mitigation across priority sectors. The main themes in this part of the portfolio include building community resilience to climate variability, with a focus on food systems, and addressing Namibia’s reporting obligations regarding climate change. The latter tend to be *pro forma* processes that have been underway for the last few country programme cycles, developing and clarifying Namibia’s aspirations with regard to climate change management (mitigation and adaptation) and supporting associated reporting obligations.

The project “Scaling up Community Resilience to Climate Variability” (SCORE) was a six-year project that had its last year of activity in 2019 (therefore, most of the accountability in the previous programme cycle). The terminal evaluation for this project indicated moderately effective project delivery (about 42,000 individuals engaged with climate-smart farming activities), but significant challenges with sustainability due to lack of clear net benefits (especially with community gardens) and lack of commitment and community ownership of initiatives. Micro-drip irrigation was a significant part of the project, with ancillary work on wells and earth dams (to address a general water insufficiency; these are now being taken up in NILALEG, sometimes referred to as the next phase of SCORE).⁶³ There was a sense of increased awareness of climate-smart agriculture approaches and technologies, and some demonstration of such, but issues with water payments

⁶¹ Target for Resource Assignment from the Core; UNDP regular resources.

⁶² Otjimbojo, Otjakatjongo, Omapyu, Tubussis and Goboboseb.

⁶³ The Ministry of Environment and Tourism sees sequential projects as ‘next phases’, rather than projects with substantially different objectives and approaches.

and over-crowded use of communal farm land has threatened project sustainability. Furthermore, there were no compelling cost/benefit analyses to make the case for uptake of climate-smart approaches in communities with little disposable income.

The project “Resilient Informal Food Systems” (funded by the Government of Japan) is new, and now almost over, with one full year of activities. The project focuses on urban food production in four municipalities in Namibia (Windhoek, Swakopmund, Hardap and Rundu). One cooperative (Daweb) has already cleared land and has been trained in soil preparation and urban horticulture. A greenhouse is being installed and solar water pumps are in operation. In Windhoek, five allotments have been prepared (by marginalized communities) and crops selected for production (the land was already available and gardening was going on informally). There have been similar activities in Swakopmund, although with some challenges in finding suitable contractors for shade nets and drip irrigation systems. Rundu Town Council seems to have advanced further than the other municipalities, with 45 beneficiaries using 34 hectares of fertile land, and apparently already producing crops. (Latrines, cold storage facilities and a tractor have been provided). All of these initiatives have been supported with training activities. An e-voucher system was also implemented, and the Accelerator Lab supported internet marketing of surplus produce. While it is too early to gauge sustained change on the ground and with the gardeners, in Rundu municipality, produce is already being sold to a food retailer. Trickle-down effects of these new systems in the four municipalities will need to be carefully assessed against time and funding inputs. The latest tally of jobs supported by the project is as follows: 59 in Erongo; 58 in Kavango East; 47 in Hardap; and 25 in Khomas (most being women). Discussions have started on the need for water service payments and people ‘graduating’ out of the programme – though this has been resisted by some project beneficiaries.

Three projects in the current programme cycle have addressed Namibia’s climate change reporting obligations (the Biennial Update Reports and the Fourth National Communication). UNDP brokered GEF funding for the Ministry of Environment to undertake analyses and consultations required to complete these reports. These have followed a similar pattern of studies, consultations and greenhouse gas inventories that have informed and updated Namibia’s plans for climate change management. All three initiatives were successful in producing and submitting the required documents (although they were delayed due to COVID-19 constraints). They involved consultations, specific-sector studies and development of analytical tools with associated training (such as dealing with enteric fermentation, HFC and PFC greenhouse gases and medical waste), elaboration of the domestic measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) system, and a gender assessment. In general, institutional capacity for developing Namibia’s mitigation and adaptation plans has been much improved. However, implementation of adaptation and mitigation plans is a separate challenge (especially funding the increased commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which will require about \$5.3 billion).⁶⁴ It is encouraging that the climate change team in Namibia is apparently still in place and ready to be mobilized for additional tasks; they have been supported with many workshops and training sessions. A new carbon market project is expected to help develop Namibia’s strategy to sell carbon credits in the global market (Namibia is a net carbon sink); this was developed with support from UNDP Ghana, which has experience with carbon markets.⁶⁵

The “Namibia Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (Climate Change)” is a new project, started in 2021, with modest expenditures.⁶⁶ The project is expected to increase transparency in the MRV process, for better accountability of the climate change plans in Namibia. At this point, there are plans to engage

⁶⁴ Noted in Namibia’s Nationally Determined Contribution Report.

⁶⁵ However, the project has secured only one of year of funding, so it will be a challenge to get a system up and running.

⁶⁶ This is also funded by GIZ; apparently these funds were needed to get started, given a delay in receiving GEF funds. The pace has picked up in 2022, but is still constrained by consultant delays.

consultants to work on information technology and quality assurance and control. There has also been training on greenhouse gas abatement cost modelling, consultations to collect data on adaptation actions, and work with NamPower to collect data from various power stations around the country.⁶⁷ There is also the Climate Action for Millennials Programme (CAMP; mentioned in a press release and briefly in the 2021 Results-Oriented Annual Report). With UNDP support, this programme was implemented by the Gobabeb Namib Research Institute, with training of 37 university graduates (mostly unemployed) in climate change concepts and approaches, who went on to provide climate change awareness-raising to 5,000 students throughout Namibia. Some of these university graduates have now found jobs.

As noted previously, UNDP has its own assessment of progress against performance indicators for the overall Outcome 2 portfolio (outcomes and outputs). The latest system reporting yields some notable observations, first about the performance measurement system itself, and secondly about portfolio contributions to outputs and outcomes. In the first instance, there are many examples of absent baselines (“no data”) and also lack of clarity about targets. Without these key pieces of information, it is difficult to actually measure performance (and especially attribution), or even to determine whether project targets and designs are appropriate. In terms of what is noted as output performance over time (to the end of 2021), there is some actual progress documented: 20 protected areas apparently under improved management (but no expression of a baseline for comparison); reduced area burned by veld fires (apparently a positive output); some progress in assessing regions for land degradation, but then regression in 2020 (from five to one); three shared water ecosystems under cooperative management; development of gender-sensitive legal and policy instruments; some development of accredited systems for climate change management and reporting; and some obscure information on progress with renewable energy. No outcome-level change was noted by UNDP (these would be recorded as synoptic data on land/habitat quality that could be attributed to UNDP support).⁶⁸

Finding 6 (logic and internal coherence). Individual Outcome 2 project designs are logical and reflect ongoing institutional experience with previous UNDP projects. However, these projects are implemented by various ministries with different levels of capacity. Staff turnover and downsizing in the CO, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic, have also affected overall coordination among the projects. Attempts to promote a portfolio approach, underway for about a year, are intended to bring internal coherence to the Outcome 2 programme, but the results of this effort are not yet evident.

To a large extent, the current Outcome 2 portfolio is a legacy of previous GEF projects and follows the expected trajectory of Phase 2 and Phase 3 initiatives, with involvement of key national implementation partners such as the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Tourism, the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform, and the Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (each with their own project management units). These key ministries are involved in the same discussions and themes, but tend to have their own separate priorities and approaches, which reinforces a ‘silo’ approach to projects (for example, the Department of Forests has been challenged to address land degradation issues that go beyond traditional productive forest management).

⁶⁷ Work in 2022, so far, has included formalizing institutional operations (so they are not so ad hoc); development of the prototype measurement, reporting and verification portal (to be hosted by NSA); workshops on the Greenhouse Gas inventory; and an NDC validation workshop.

⁶⁸ Actual performance indicators included: percentage of land covered under structured natural resources management (45 percent by 2023); percentage of degraded land (proportion of land degraded over total land – 18 percent by 2023); annual revenue generated from protected areas and CBNRM (in million NAD) (296.3 by 2023); and share of renewable energy (70 percent by 2023).

The institutional isolation has also apparently constrained the building of bridges between ministries, programmes, different community groups, and different entities in various regions in Namibia.⁶⁹ NIM ministries apparently tend to maintain ownership and control of initiatives; institutional capacity for project management, however, is sometimes lacking, and efforts to improve this capacity utilize funding that would otherwise be used for actions on the ground. UNDP has tried to use its convening power to keep partners working together towards unified goals, but has at times been constrained by its own lack of human resources, with high staff turnover in key positions leading to a lack of continuity and institutional memory. The recent SEMER portfolio approach (with one board providing oversight to all Outcome 2 projects) is a good concept, but the results of the first board meeting, in which bridges between projects were still elusive, and the lack of engagement of two key ministries point to the difficulty in overcoming silo approaches.⁷⁰

The Outcome 2 portfolio is generally responsive to the ToC, but the latter is also overly simple and lacking expression of benefits to communities (people experiencing positive change as a result of UNDP support). While the theory of change is overall valid, it cannot guide programme development and articulation of associated performance indicators, and therefore is not used by UNDP as a management tool. Further, the Outcome 2 portfolio is still very much defined by funding opportunities (mostly GEF); it is unlikely that UNDP would turn down funding that was not connected to a ToC theme.

Finding 7 (external coherence). UNDP has had a key role in brokering GEF funding and helping with project design, and GEF support has been substantial and continuous over the last four years, with acknowledged technical support from regional UNDP offices. With project implementation, it has an ongoing responsibility for administrative support and setting up partnerships and consultations, as well as knowledge management. However, there are few actual project implementation partnerships, especially with NRM and climate resilience work in the conservancies, where initiatives funded by various donors are not tracked and synergized by UNDP or government partners.

UNDP, especially with its role brokering GEF funds and helping with project design (with the benefit of regional UNDP expertise),⁷¹ has developed a solid partnership with the Government of Namibia.⁷² In general, UNDP has effectively assumed responsibility for the PPGs (managing the consultations, consultancies, project design/risk analysis and development of the project grant as well as Direct Implementation Modality initiatives). These have successfully led to full projects. The various ministries in the appropriate sectors (environment, agriculture, forests, marine resources, etc.) have then assumed project implementation responsibility, with UNDP continuing to be involved in procurement, support to project steering committees and monitoring and evaluation, occasionally taking responsibility for project financial management (although in the last two years, UNDP has assumed a more administrative role).⁷³ The organization's role with environment, natural resource management and climate change initiatives is a longstanding one,

⁶⁹ For example, there are quite a few initiatives in the northern conservancies, and they are not obviously linked. One simple example is the SDGIF support for Miombo Forest Products, Katwitwi, Kavango West Region, established in 2017, which may constrain any similar development in other parts of the region, expected with NILALEG.

⁷⁰ The portfolio approach helps UNDP communicate a unified and holistic development approach, but the reality is that government partners do not yet see their development priorities in the same way; they are slow to alter the sector-based institutional structure. The silo problem is also evident in multiple projects being implemented in the same area: for example, CRAVE (Climate Resilient Agriculture in three Vulnerable Extreme northern crop-growing regions), implemented by the EIF, is working in the same area as NILALEG, yet joint activities are not mentioned. There is a related issue with the SGP being implemented by UNOPS – UNDP does not articulate links to these initiatives, often in the same areas where UNDP-supported projects are being implemented.

⁷¹ For example, UNDP Ghana helped with development of the carbon market project, and regional UNDP expertise has helped with the transboundary water project (CUKVUN, with Angola and Namibia). The latter builds on existing commissions and also community water committees, so it has a reasonable foundation to build on. This project will be supported by UNDP and UNOPS, and will be implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Land Reform (the recent consolidation of sectors in one ministry is a significant move). There was support from South Africa for the human/wildlife conflict project design.

⁷² Other sources of funding have been Japan and Germany.

⁷³ A perception noted by various government staff, especially with staff changes in the CO.

and it has partnered with other United Nations agencies in implementing its projects, such as working with the Food and Agriculture Organization on the forest management project (NAFOLA) and on the BCC ocean governance project.⁷⁴

Project monitoring has not taken full account of other implementing partners and stakeholders involved in similar sectors and locations (for example, the various CSOs operating in the conservancies in the north); potential partnerships and synergies that might create better coherence of efforts are not articulated.

Finding 8 (UNDP roles, performance and efficiency). The agency's strength with Outcome 2 projects has been in project design (especially targeting disadvantaged and vulnerable communities) and setting up partnerships for project implementation. As most of the larger projects have been NIM, UNDP has not been able to exercise full control over decision-making, budgeting and activities; as a result, some projects have been inefficient and ineffective. Government partners and UNDP have been challenged in maintaining pertinent monitoring and evaluation systems, and therefore fully understanding success and failure factors.

Performance and efficiency of projects in Outcome 2 varies, depending on the project and the timelines (which would in turn reflect a combination of CO staffing and external circumstances). The larger NIM projects that spanned 5-7 years mostly reflected government partner capabilities and capacities.⁷⁵ For large projects that were unsuccessful, UNDP has struggled with changing project direction. Some projects were overly ambitious: significant funding did not materialize, as government co-funding was often lacking. As a result, project effort was quite dissipated and some initiatives did not produce significant results. For example, in the forest management project, UNDP was not successful in convincing the Department of Forests to sharpen the focus to a few possibly successful actions. On the other hand, short-term projects such as Build Back Better, some of which were highly relevant and had a chance of replication and scaling up, were implemented with only one year of funding, forcing quick decisions, actions and outputs.

UNDP has played a key role in targeting disadvantaged and marginalized communities in climate vulnerable areas, and helped to create a broad sweep of community engagement in many of the larger projects. UNDP has also been effective in helping deliver pertinent training to many project beneficiaries (well documented in the recent climate resilience-type projects).⁷⁶ On the other hand, efforts at engaging the private sector in several projects have faltered as a result of lack of government interest in pursuing such partnerships. CSOs, while being involved in several projects, are interested in expanding their contribution to design and implementation; however, this can generate tension with the lead government agencies responsible for overall implementation.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ However, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations notes that there is little project bridging between UN agencies.

⁷⁵ Project Management Units (PMUs) are usually separate entities within a ministry, and this in itself can reduce traction between the project and the responsible ministry. PMUs are also subject to the skills and competencies of specific individuals. There are also challenges with low-ranking PMU staff asking higher-level government staff for data; better communication protocols are required. Other PMU reflections include the same people showing up at workshops, people not reading and providing feedback on reports, and misunderstandings about procurement processes.

⁷⁶ Having some community infrastructure already in place provided good leverage for quick starts: e.g., urban gardens already in place in Windhoek and Rundu for the Build Back Better project. On the other hand, in Swakopmund, land is available, and services will be provided by the municipality for artisanal fishers, but bureaucracy appears to be hampering progress with this initiative.

⁷⁷ The Government-CSO-UNDP dynamic is complicated: Government relies on CSOs to fill breaches and deliver projects, but does not want to relinquish too much control; CSOs are critical of government competency; UNDP cannot engage directly with CSOs on NIM projects; government is critical of UNDP/GEF rules and procedures (but some feel that GEF projects perform better than routine government operations, even with the annual budget/funding delays). On the other hand, beneficiaries are being engaged, despite this complicated dynamic. The prevailing policy of CBRM, promoting community ownership of action on the ground, helps to create a sense of common purpose. Effective community governance structures may also serve as a conduit for delivery of a range of social and environmental services.

It is important to reiterate that UNDP Outcome 2 performance indicators cannot actually be measured and verified by UNDP (they generally depend on government synoptic data). In addition, the measures of quality of life and livelihood improvements for project beneficiaries are absent or unclear. There is anecdotal information about project participants having increased awareness of various things and being engaged in project activities and training generally, but little hard evidence is available to back up these claims. UNDP and the project partners have done fairly well in developing and disseminating project information, but UNDP and project reports mostly focused on activities and outputs, still lacking clear and compelling evidence of outcome-level change.

Further, despite the organization's important performance monitoring role, several project reviews have indicated that field monitoring of outputs and incipient outcomes has been lacking, resulting in delivery problems on the ground. This was the case, for example, in the forest management project and the community resilience initiative, even before COVID-19 curtailed field trips and consultations. These two large initiatives, in particular, could not be course-corrected in time for successful project delivery.

Finally, UNDP has been quite effective in securing and maintaining funding for Outcome 2 initiatives (mostly through GEF funds), but there is a growing awareness that government co-funding needs to be boosted, and there is a need to strategize and secure more funding from the private sector.⁷⁸

Finding 9 (sustainability, replication and scaling up of initiatives). There is little evidence of replication, scaling up or sustainability of pilot activities in projects involving communities and the private sector. One key factor is the lack of business cases that demonstrate the net benefits of new initiatives. A more holistic approach to landscapes and associated livelihoods, which is just becoming evident in the NILALEG project, is promising. In general, however, there is a pervasive reliance on further vertical and donor funds, and government support for communities engaged with UNDP-supported projects tends to wane over time. Initiatives need to be embedded within routine government operations and funded as such.

The Outcome 2 initiatives focused on community-level work have little chance of sustainability when it comes to the replication and scaling up of approaches and technologies that have been demonstrated to communities. This occurs despite the stated goal of having communities experience and take up change without further project interventions or funding. All mid-term reviews and terminal evaluations that were examined for this evaluation expressed concern about sustainability, and this was echoed in all evaluation meetings. Various reasons were noted, including the lack of clear business cases (showing net benefits in time or money), lack of local government and community leadership,⁷⁹ lack of community ownership, overwhelming externalities (such as migration, weather extremes, etc.), misunderstanding of the purpose of training, and lack of widespread training and dissemination of workable concepts (for community resilience, for example).

UNDP has rightly focused on marginalized and disadvantaged communities in most of its projects, but the factors that disadvantage these communities are precisely the factors that constrain uptake, scaling-up, and replication (e.g., lack of capital, lack of governance structures for decision-making and cooperative sharing of risks and benefits, poor literacy, inadequate land ownership/access to land, lack of commitment to management of communal lands, theft and vandalism, externalities driving their survival agendas, etc.).

⁷⁸ The CO articulates a plan to re-direct corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives to development causes, rather than actually securing private sector funds for UNDP projects. Further, there is a growing sense that the private sector, which exploits Namibia's natural resources, should be paying more for environmental governance: e.g., marine mining operations. There is a Green Bond in Namibia, but apparently this attracts little investment.

⁷⁹ There is an underlying but serious reality in the conservancies: that traditional leaders are involved in projects, but also skirting the rules about land ownership and land sales, enclosing lands without clear ownership. Poaching also still occurs, with community knowledge of what is going on.

A pervasive problem is lack of funds to cover operational costs. Provision of water infrastructure (probably the most critical need in many communities, and serving as a catalyst to spur other livelihood development) is important, but effective structures and processes to pay for operation and maintenance, in the absence of project funding or solid government services,⁸⁰ are elusive.⁸¹

It is encouraging that the NILALEG project has directly addressed this issue, with establishment of a financing technical specialist position and a plan to develop business cases to encourage replication and scaling up of initiatives.⁸² On the other hand, BCLME III is only articulating general concepts for revenue generation in the marine sector (such as marine space payments and marine quality credits),⁸³ but in the meantime, the operation of the BCC itself is not fully sustained.

Projects that have focused on government institutions and agencies such as the climate change office in Namibia have demonstrated better sustainability potential, as the capacities developed are more streamlined in the work of those institutions, helping them function better.

2.3. Governance

CPD Outcome 3: By 2023, government institutions at national and regional levels are accountable and transparent, engaging citizens in participatory decision-making processes.

Related outputs:

Output 3.1. Government institutions (e.g., ACC, parliament, Office of the Prime Minister, Office of the Ombudsperson, Ministry of Justice at national and regional levels) enabled to perform core functions for improved accountability, participation, representation and reporting.

Output 3.2. Capacities developed across the whole of government to integrate the 2030 Agenda, especially gender equality, into development plans and budgets.

Outcome 3 articulates UNDP support to more transparent, accountable and participatory institutions. Eight projects fall under the Outcome 3 portfolio, with a total expenditure of \$2.5 million against a budget of \$3.8 million from January 2019 to July 2022⁸⁴ and a resource target of \$4.6 million. However, some of the projects formally included in Outcome 3 are cross-cutting and contribute to all outcomes; these include the Accelerator Lab and the support to SDG financing. Furthermore, the UNDP response to the Hepatitis E outbreak and technical support to Namibia's pharmaceutical supply chain are also placed under this outcome.

⁸⁰ Government is often limited by lack of funds for field visits or extension work.

⁸¹ UNDP is aware, of course, of the need for self-financing of initiatives, but the government still tends to look for "next phase" funding to keep things going.

⁸² These could examine, for example, the harvesting and sale of Devil's Claw and livestock kraals and auctions (Nkulivere) or wildlife tourism (Okongo).

⁸³ The same concept as with wildlife credits, or carbon credits, where global funds can be attracted to environmental services provided by Namibia. However, there is a significant problem in the lack of baseline data (land and marine) which would be needed to help monetize benefits provided by better management.

⁸⁴ Atlas project data as of 27 July 2022.

Finding 10. UNDP has a comparative advantage in supporting Namibia’s governance systems to be more accountable and to engage citizens, but it has not been able to fully capitalize on this role due to limited resources. Its support to the anti-corruption agenda and in strengthening gender-responsive budgeting have made positive but limited contributions to the advancement of improved governance.

Anti-corruption

UNDP support to the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) has been a longstanding commitment towards more transparent and accountable government institutions. UNDP initiated this area of work in 2008 and contributed to the establishment of the directorate of public education and corruption prevention, which it continues to support today. During the previous CPD cycle, UNDP assisted the ACC in creating the country’s first national anti-corruption strategy, which covers the period 2016-2019, and in establishing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to monitor its implementation. This was accompanied by training and capacity development of ACC staff. As a result of that support, a series of results have matured in the current CPD cycle, which can be attributed to continued UNDP engagement with the ACC. Through the previous strategy (2016-2019), the country has supported legislative policy reform and established integrity committees⁸⁵ within government ministries and local government to help identify and attenuate potential corruption. Committee members have been trained by the ACC in collaboration with the Office of the Prime Minister, and they are now coordinated by the latter (the ACC serves as a secretariat). New legislation on whistle-blower protection and witness protection in the public sector has been approved and signed in 2018; however, the necessary institutional structures are not yet in place. In the current CPD cycle, UNDP provided technical assistance to the ACC for a series of consultations around the implementation of the previous strategy and for the formulation of a new strategy covering the period 2021-2025. This support is well recognized and appreciated by the ACC, which also noted its greater capacities to provide training and awareness-raising to line ministries, and improvements in monitoring and reporting of corruption allegations. However, a full assessment of progress in this area is lacking, as the only national corruption survey dates back to 2016. Transparency International’s assessment of corruption perception has been stable overall since 2013.⁸⁶

The UNDP response converges with the needs articulated in the CPD, including the limited institutional accountability and oversight capacity to counter corruption. However, CPD performance indicator 3.1.1: “Number of institutions which have adopted (and report on) effective measures at national, regional and sectoral levels to mitigate corruption risks” does not align with the progress reported in project results or from stakeholder interviews, and therefore could not be fully ascertained.

UNDP has been successful in attracting new funding for this area of work from the European Union, which will commence in 2023. The design of the new programme is in its finalization stage, and is expected to build on the previous progress and expand the role of UNDP with the ACC and other institutions with an anti-corruption mandate. Moving forward, there is a need for UNDP to ensure consistent monitoring of progress in this area to demonstrate its results.

With regard to indicator 3.1.2: “Number of national and sub-national institutions with effective, innovative mechanisms for civic engagement, including the participation of women and marginalized groups”, UNDP supported CSOs to engage in public dialogues on various governance issues, including the SDGs, electoral processes, gender inclusion, anti-corruption and inclusion of gender non-conforming communities.⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Integrity committees became part of the revised PSSR E.X/II – Public Service Code of Conduct, Integrity and Ethics.

⁸⁶ <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi/2021/index/nam>

⁸⁷ Gender nonconforming communities here refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex communities (LGBTQI).

Through provision of catalytic grants and capacity strengthening to CSOs such as the Namibia Institute for Democracy, Wings to Transcend Namibia and TIAMON Namibia, among others, civic engagement with government institutions including the ACC, parliament, the Office of the Ombudsperson and the Ministry of Justice, was enhanced. However, the extent to which these civic engagements resulted in 'effective, innovative mechanisms' for women and marginalized groups, as anticipated in the CPD, is less clear. The activities completed provide process indicators but do not point to the actual results, and thus how they cumulatively realized the overall result in the CPD could not be confirmed. This was attributed to limited resources and short programme timeframes.

UNDP strengthened the capacity of Wings to Transcend Namibia to engage at the policy level and to uphold a push for observation of human rights for trans communities. This amplified the voice of these communities in articulating their concerns and initiating repeal of the Sodomy Law.⁸⁸ Grants from UNDP to address human rights violations and sexual and gender-based violence concerns culminated in enhanced access to health services for trans communities, who had previously struggled to access these services due to stigma and discrimination.⁸⁹ The human rights report generated from this work is currently being used as a source of evidence in court during hearings on sexual and gender-based violence-related violations. These activities make a contribution to CPD indicator 3.1.3: "Number of human rights cases/complaints investigated and resolved by the Office of the Ombudsman within the year of submission". However, the actual results in terms of numbers of cases and complaints, as anticipated in this CPD indicator, could not be ascertained by the ICPE.

Gender-responsive budgeting

UNDP partnered with UNFPA, UNICEF and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung to support the function of the parliament to deliver crucial legislation and oversight services to the public through induction of new parliamentarians on gender-responsive planning and budgeting (GRPB). The skills built also included integration of the 2030 Agenda in order to accelerate progress towards achievement of the SDGs. The GRPB training sessions were done in partnership with the Namibia Institute for Public Administration and Management. A total of 65 newly-elected members of parliament were trained to enhance their capacity to promote gender equality principles and employment within national budgets. The training sensitized parliamentarians with national-level oversight to the benefits of designing interventions with a gender lens. In addition, the establishment of a technical working group within MGEPEWS was intended to support the development of a GRPB module (UNFPA sought a consultant to do this, reporting to the Acting Deputy Director, Gender Directorate in the Ministry of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication and Social Welfare). While this was generally appreciated, there is limited evidence on whether the initiative has made a meaningful impact on the work of the targeted parliamentarians. There were bottlenecks within government partners to the operationalization of gender-responsive budgeting, thereby rendering the training of limited use as the skills and tools cannot yet be fully implemented.

Finding 11. UNDP in Namibia has a comparative edge on governance, in light of its apex positioning as part of a global organization with access to best practice knowledge on decentralization and other political economy concerns. As such, UNDP can play a significant role in supporting Namibia's decentralization programme. There is a potential for UNDP to support Namibia's decentralization in the next programming phase, including supporting South-South learning.

⁸⁸ Consultations with WTTN representatives.

⁸⁹ Consultations with TIAMON Namibia.

UNDP support to Namibia's decentralization was conceived through a partnership with the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development (MURD). Decentralization has not gained any serious traction since 2002, when its implementation started in a phased approach, guided by the Decentralization Policy of 1997. During the first phase, selected functions were identified for delegation and the process commenced. Functions that have been delegated include the following: adult education, arts and culture; maintenance of government infrastructure; land reform, including land use planning; rural water supply; gender equality and research; agricultural and livestock extension services; and primary health care, among others.

The initial areas identified for partnership between UNDP and MURD included reviewing the current decentralization model as a first step, which is in the form of delegation of selected functions from the central government. The second step would involve development of the inter-governmental fiscal transfer framework, including the formula for revenue transfer. The third step would include review of the local economic development framework, to address regional inequalities. Finally, partnership with UNDP would focus on reviewing the rural development policy and strategy. This has, however, not advanced for various reasons: due to resource limitations within UNDP, the partnership was designed as a cost sharing intervention between the two parties, with UNDP providing the technical expertise, while MURD would contribute resources to support the intervention areas defined above. There seems, however, to have been a misunderstanding around what the 'cost sharing principle' entails. UNDP has initiated various discussions on the 'cost sharing principle' with the government at the highest level. Unlocking this impasse will require further discussions with key parties including the National Planning Commission (NPC), the attorney general's office, the Ministry of Finance and MURD.

MURD prioritizes decentralization as a core area that would still require UNDP technical assistance, and hopes that it will form part of the next CPD. A study on how decentralization has fared to date is a priority for the government, in order to inform the policy and implementation plan. As currently designed, the decentralization process also lacks a robust M&E framework, which would be a critical component of its success; this has been flagged as another area for future engagement with UNDP. In addition, drafting the inter-governmental fiscal transfer framework, including supporting learning through a South-South (or ideally pan-African) perspective on how other similar jurisdictions have managed their own decentralization, will be an important future contribution from UNDP for Namibia.

Finding 12. The UNDP Accelerator Labs initiative has produced multiple attempts at introducing information and technology solutions to development challenges. Some of the initiatives have gained traction and have been successfully scaled up, while others have not been successful. A degree of failure is expected when piloting such initiatives, and is an indication of the innovative nature of the Acc Labs. Based on these experiences, there is a need for greater reflection of lessons learned on what works, as well as continued efforts to link Accelerator Lab initiatives to other UNDP programmes.

The Accelerator Lab Namibia (Acc Lab), though placed under Outcome 3 for reporting purposes, is relevant to all three outcome areas. The CPD under review is not explicit about the Acc Lab, but prioritizes and gives prominence to innovation in the UNDP programme approach, supporting "innovation at all levels for equitable access to public services".⁹⁰ The Acc Lab is a three- to four-year global initiative to drive innovation based on cutting-edge knowledge and technological advancements. In partnership with this global initiative, UNDP initiated the Acc Lab in Namibia in 2020, involving the government, CSOs, private sector actors and entrepreneurs. The aim was to spur experimentation, identify solutions based on proven practices, and build collective intelligence by combining knowledge from all actors, including traditional

⁹⁰ UNDP CPD, 2019-2023, p.7.

knowledge and big data, to solve local challenges such as poverty and inequality, unemployment and poor public service delivery. An initial diagnostic study on the informal economy was done in order to identify challenges and opportunities available to entrepreneurs in the informal economy.

The concept of the Acc Lab is centred on research and development, exploring innovations to address complex challenges, and documenting what works, the lessons learned and options for scaling up. UNDP contributions included provision of upstream policy support, particularly related to review of the information and communication technology (ICT) and digitalization policy, and grants. The Acc Lab is implemented through cycles of 90 days, when innovations are initiated and nurtured through partnerships, after which they should be documented and knowledge products developed and disseminated.

A variety of innovations were explored during the period under evaluation. Some of the successful innovations included the Public Sector Innovation Toolkit, which was explored by innovators through partnership with the Office of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, the Ministry of Home Affairs and other stakeholders. One result from this intervention was the government-initiated ICT centres, which were established in remote rural regions. These are designed to ease access by decentralizing services such as birth and death registration in previously underserved regions. UNDP provided grants for various interventions including digital skills training, internet infrastructure, skills for automating citizen feedback processes, e-suggestion boxes, an e-document tracking system, and a toolkit for ethics and integrity. Another successful innovation is the Tambula Initiative, which was launched in 2020, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was designed as an online trading platform to enable trading by players in the informal sector at the 'bottom of the pyramid', where vendors sell groceries such as fruits, green leafy vegetables, and arts and crafts. UNDP provided training to facilitate digital design skills for the platform, and grants to pay for branding materials and merchandise. One outcome from this initiative is inclusive economic development for the poor in the informal economy through the vibrant online market. New jobs were created along the fresh foods supply chain for motorcycle riders, call centre operators, farmers and vendors. The actual number of new jobs created has, however, not been quantified.

Less successful Acc Lab innovations include the *Fabrica Initiative*, which focused on the creative industry, including fashion, poetry and the written word, but had not posted any positive results by the time of reporting. UNDP provided grants that facilitated branding materials and brainstorming meetings. Innovators reported protracted processes of engagement occasioned by UNDP internal bureaucracy and inadequate clarity on what the Acc Lab intended to achieve. Under '*software and digital applications for marginalized groups*', the Acc Lab, in partnership with the University of Namibia and the Namibia University of Science and Technology, generated several innovations with mixed success. One of these is the 'Homeless Peoples' App', developed in 2020 and innovated in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Social Services (MoHSS), to support digital systems for the ministry. While the app was completed, the process of handover to the MoHSS faced bureaucratic challenges, and hence the innovation was not operational by the time of reporting. Another innovation that sought to achieve crowd-funding and informal banking with the support from MTC⁹¹ also struggled to gain traction. The idea was to respond to the high levels of unemployment, but without money from the crowd-funders it could not move forward.

Challenges experienced in the Acc Lab programme included inadequate clarity among the innovators on what the broader goals of the programme are. Acc Lab grant recipients indicated that fragmented coordination and inconsistent communication from UNDP led to delays and loss of momentum, while some of the innovations stalled mid-way. Some innovations were not fully thought through, and this led to the

⁹¹ MTC 'Make the Connection', a Namibia cellphone and internet service provider.

feeling that high expectations raised by the Acc Lab processes were often not met. For example, although the public service ICT centres were effective in decentralizing core services closer to the users, the fact that they were operated by volunteers who did not receive a salary from this work meant that they were only periodically functional, as the volunteers often needed to look for income-generating opportunities elsewhere. Examples such as these and evidence collected through this ICPE suggest an overall picture of innovations with varying levels of success that were not adequately packaged into knowledge products that showcase ‘what works’ (and ‘what does not work’) in addressing the original set of challenges. A synthesis of lessons learned, critical success factors and ‘proven’ practices or innovations is missing from the Acc Lab as presently implemented. This missing step should inform the design of the Acc Lab in the next programming phase.

Finding 13. UNDP was effective in providing an emergency response to a Hepatitis E outbreak during the period under review. UNDP was also entrusted by the government to strengthen national institutional systems for pharmaceutical supply chains. Partnerships built with other United Nations agencies and government institutions successfully pooled technical expertise and resources to secure a quick response. However, for a more enhanced outcome, there is a need to deepen the level of innovation and stakeholder engagement, particularly with government counterparts.

UNDP support to Namibia’s health services has been provided under Outcome 3, as it relates to accountability and institutional strengthening in the health sector. In close partnership with WHO and UNICEF, UNDP supported the MoHSS in health systems strengthening to respond to the Hepatitis E Virus (HEV) outbreak of December 2017. The outbreak rapidly spread to 12 regions in the country, a factor that was attributed to low access to safe drinking water, poor sanitation facilities, unhygienic environmental practices and crowding in informal settlements in urban areas.⁹² The UNDP contribution, funded through regular resources and funding from the Government of Japan, amounted to \$886,506 and focused on the provision of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) structures, support to laboratory and testing services and procurement of at least 200 HEV testing kits.

Several innovations were explored during the response, including deploying both the community-led and the school-led total sanitation approaches, which proved effective in targeting of beneficiaries and ensuring implementation. The eight WASH demonstration centres in Windhoek were also effective and are now being scaled up by individual citizens. In terms of programme design, the initial WASH response had resulted in installation of short-term solutions such as ‘tippy taps’ – a low-cost technology for hand hygiene in resource-constrained settings – rather than longer-term, more reliable water supply structures. This was attributed to the emergency mode of response that did not allow for a deeper reflection on more sustainable response options. However, the shift to more sustainable water supply generated long-term gains and was particularly useful during the COVID-19 pandemic, which also required efficient WASH. Understandably, there was initial hesitation in UNDP to respond to the health situation, which may have contributed to a fragmented approach, although the Regional Bureau for Africa later affirmed that health systems strengthening was firmly within the ambit of UNDP. In March 2022, following the full implementation of the four-year outbreak response, the government declared Namibia to be Hepatitis E-free.

UNDP support to accountability and health systems strengthening also led to improvements in Namibia’s pharmaceutical supply chain. The MoHSS approached UNDP in 2020 seeking support for the country’s central medical stores, to make pharmaceutical supply chains more accountable, agile and responsive to

⁹² UNDP. 2020. Improving the health response system to contain Hepatitis E Virus outbreak in affected health districts in Namibia. Project Narrative and Financial Report.

the country's procurement needs.⁹³ MoHSS was concerned about poor health sector service delivery and ineffective pharmaceutical supply chains, exacerbated by geographical and demographic concerns related to large, sparsely-populated regions. Only 18 percent of Namibia's population had adequate access to health care, with the remaining 82 percent facing limited and uncertain access to health care and insurance.⁹⁴ Challenges included procurement delays, low quality and low volume thresholds of pharmaceutical stocks, supply-chain accountability and logistical gaps and an inadequate pharmaceutical information management system. The UNDP intervention aimed to strengthen public pharmaceutical supply chains, enhance capacity of pharmaceutical staff, expand storage facilities and digitize the supply chain with real-time tracking.⁹⁵ The intervention was effective in re-designing the stock ordering system and digitalization of handling and pooling of pharmaceutical procurement, thereby making the procurement system more accountable and efficient. Challenges reported include slow government response and confusion around coordination, roles and responsibilities, leading to delays and frustration. Funding limitations and staff capacity issues in UNDP may have further compounded this situation. Addressing these challenges could potentially improve the organization's effectiveness in its coordination role.

2.4. COVID-19

Finding 14. UNDP demonstrated responsiveness and flexibility in meeting the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, by rapidly diverting funds for the COVID-19 response, developing socioeconomic impact assessments and supporting the government's planning and response efforts.

UNDP Namibia was the technical lead in drafting the UNCT "Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Namibia" and the associated socioeconomic recovery plan, in collaboration with the University of Namibia, the Namibia University for Science and Technology and the International University for Management. The SEIAC-NAM examined the effects of the pandemic on key economic sectors such as agriculture, tourism, services and manufacturing. The report also examined the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic on poverty levels, inequality and unemployment, and its impact on the health and education sectors, while taking into consideration vulnerable populations most at risk. Building on the SEIAC-NAM, the Socio-Economic Recovery Plan prescribed specific key strategic interventions under each pillar and articulated UNCT activities in support of the national government in its response to and recovery from the pandemic.

There is strong evidence that the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted project delivery, hampering partner consultations, field visits and the hiring of international consultants. This was due to pandemic-related restrictions as well as project partners and beneficiaries being personally affected by COVID-19. UNDP established work-arounds to keep activities and meetings going, mostly shifting to virtual meetings. There was also some re-direction of project funds to COVID-specific actions, such as procuring the personal protective equipment for some project beneficiaries.⁹⁶

UNDP supported the MoHSS in the procurement of testing kits, oxygen concentrators and personal protective equipment for an estimated 3,000 frontline health workers. UNDP also supported the ministry in the establishment of an emergency operation centre, which included a toll-free number to enable the public to access information on COVID-19. In addition, UNDP played a role in social mobilization and risk

⁹³ UNICEF and WHO were also involved in the problem analysis and development of solutions.

⁹⁴ United Nations Development Programme, 'Request for Country Allocation of UNDP COVID-19 Rapid Financing Facility', UNDP, Windhoek, 2020.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ The impact of re-direction of funds from projects to the COVID-19 response is still unclear, as this requires a forensic check on all affected projects, which may not be done.

communication to raise awareness on curbing the spread of the virus. Risk communication materials were designed for people who are visually and hearing-impaired. The UNDP Accelerator Lab launched a social media campaign together with the online business WilHit for behavior change communication to combat disinformation about COVID-19. Together with other stakeholders such as WHO, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the University of Namibia, the Namibia University for Science and Technology, development organizations, the private sector, and the national government, the COVID-19 Communication Centre was launched to engage the public on the COVID-19 lockdown guidelines.

UNDP also played an important role in increasing access to water and sanitation facilities in order to reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission in high-risk areas. Through the Rapid Response Finance Facility, UNDP in partnership with WHO supported improvements in sanitation through the provision of 12 water points in informal settlements, and ablution blocks and handwashing facilities in high pedestrian areas such as clinics and police stations. UNDP also distributed 26,000 emergency ‘tippy taps’ for household use in the regions of Khomas, Erongo, Kavango East and West and Zambezi. These interventions were built on the work that was already underway to tackle the Hepatitis E virus outbreak. Through partnerships with WHO, UNICEF, the Government of Japan, and community-based organizations such as the Development Workshop Namibia and Namibia Red Cross Society, volunteers were trained through the community-led total sanitation taskforce to raise awareness on handwashing to reduce the spread of the virus. As noted above, while the short-term ‘tippy taps’ were a low-cost, rapid intervention, the installation of water points proved to be a more durable and sustainable intervention to address sanitation challenges. Additionally, shared ablution blocks installed in informal settlements were being damaged or vandalized at high cost to municipalities. UNDP has pivoted and is supporting home sanitation solutions.

UNDP also provided financial support in the form of bridge funding to micro, small and medium-sized enterprises and to institutions in the tourism sector, which was among those hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. UNDP financed 35 MSMEs through the SDGIF to support them through the economic challenges of COVID-19. Most of these MSMEs are still in operation today. Another noteworthy financing intervention was UNDP support to the Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilience Facility, a multi-donor fund established to provide financial relief to community-based natural resource management institutions affected by the pandemic.⁹⁷ UNDP invested \$152,000 (NAD 2,503,069) of a \$365,000 (NAD 6 million) fund, which directly supported 19 conservancies in six regions: Oshana, Zambezi, Kunene, Karas, Otjozondjupa and Hardap. This enabled the retention of staff and continuity of operations such as field patrols by game rangers in areas at high risk of poaching.

Finally, as described above, UNDP pursued innovative partnerships with the municipalities of Windhoek, Swakopmund, Rundu and Mariental to establish urban gardens as a response to rising food insecurity due to the pandemic; 258 beneficiaries were reached through the project. The urban garden in Rundu was already growing vegetables on 34 hectares of land, and UNDP complemented existing activities with a borehole to supplement irrigation, water storage tanks and cold storage facilities at Tandaveka market. This project also had a sanitation component that built ablution blocks, toilets and handwashing facilities near informal vending areas.

⁹⁷ The CRRRF was a partnership with organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund, KfW Development Bank, GIZ, NEDBANK Namibia, and non-governmental organizations such as Community Conservation Fund of Namibia, Namibian Association of Community-Based Natural Resources Management Support Organizations, Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation, Namibia Nature Foundation and the Nature Conservancy.

2.5. Overall CPD design and implementation

Finding 15. Implementation of the three main recommendations from the previous ICPE has been uneven. Institutional capacity development with a focus on poverty eradication is occurring, but more attention to factors affecting sustainability of interventions is required. CO staffing levels remain insufficient. UNDP has expanded its partnership base, but coherence and synergy with other implementing partners remain a challenge.

The previous ICPE made recommendations as follows: 1) continue support in institutional capacity development, while also developing in-depth causal analysis of UNDP pilot initiatives to facilitate scale-up; 2) align and adjust UNDP global human resource strategies to the needs of a middle-income country; and 3) expand strategic partnerships.

Institutional capacity development featured clearly in the new CPD and has remained a focus of the programme. Causal analysis to document progress and make the case for scale-up has however been modest. Most activities in the area of environment (the largest of the portfolios) have limited potential for sustainability and scalability. A positive exception is UNDP work in entrepreneurship skill development, which has triggered interest from the government and has led to its adoption in the national system.

Staffing remains a critical issue for UNDP in Namibia, and a significant risk factor for maintaining or expanding its portfolio. UNDP has made good use of temporary assignment arrangements to leverage experienced staff from other country offices; however, this strategy is not sustainable. Limited resource mobilization opportunities also weaken the rationale for UNDP to invest core resources to kickstart a larger programme. Given the constraints and limited funding opportunities, there is a need for the CO and the regional office to strategize around human resource investments, tailoring these to the programmatic priorities and planning conservatively for what financial resources can be mobilized.

Partnership efforts have been made, and UNDP has capitalized on the 'low-hanging fruits' by interacting strongly with CSOs, government agencies and in some cases academia. It has also played a positive brokering role between CSOs and government. This is facilitated by the presence of a strong and highly capable civil society sector in Namibia. Other partnerships, such as those with the private sector, and government cost sharing agreements, have yielded modest results.

The current position of UNDP with regard to the implementation of the three key recommendations is that related actions should be carried over into the next CPD.

Resource mobilization

During the CPD period, UNDP aimed to mobilize a total of \$54.2 million (of which around \$1.9 million would come from UNDP regular resources). As of July 2022, UNDP had budgeted \$4.6 million from UNDP regular resources and \$26.2 million from external resources sources. The resources available to UNDP therefore amount to 57 percent of its expressed need in the CPD. UNDP remains the largest United Nations agency operating in Namibia in terms of financial resources. As in the previous CPD cycle, UNDP funding is dominated by vertical funds, namely from the Global Environment Facility, which constitute around 72 percent of programme expenditure in the CPD period. The main bilateral donor to the programme is the Government of Japan, which has contributed around \$1.2 million to UNDP programmes in the CPD period, mainly towards short-term responses to the COVID-19 and Hepatitis E outbreak responses.

UNDP has made attempts at mobilizing resources from the private sector and from the government of Namibia during the CPD period; however, resources have not materialized to the desired extent. Government cost sharing in the CPD period remained low at \$352,050. The development context of Namibia, including its

UMIC status, its relatively high socioeconomic indicators compared with those of the region, and its small population constitute the main challenges in this regard. However, there are specific areas of work that have shown positive potential for scale-up and replication, which UNDP needs to capitalize on and learn from. UNDP work on entrepreneurship development has been taken up by the government and expanded under the president's flagship Harambee Prosperity Plan, and is funded through government resources. Also, the organization's longstanding work to support the ACC has been identified by the European Union as a highly relevant area in which UNDP has a unique comparative advantage, resulting in a new project worth 1.5 million euros. These examples demonstrate that despite the challenging context, there are opportunities to mobilize resources where the 'business case' for UNDP contributions has been adequately made and results can be demonstrated.

Integrated national financing framework

In view of limited resource mobilization capacity, fragmented financing architecture and limited external financing sources, the UNCT initiated the Namibia Financing Architecture Programme. The outcome expected was that by 2022, Namibia would have a strong national financing architecture to support implementation of the NDP5 and the realization of the SDGs by 2030. Subsequent to the Third International Conference on Financing for Development held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia in 2015, the UNCT initiated a process towards SDG financing in 2019. An inter-agency task force was formed to monitor implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda in Namibia, consisting of the international financial institutions, private sector and CSOs, under the coordination of UNDP. To support and better anchor the process, UNDP coordinated the drafting of a proposal in partnership with UNICEF, UNFPA, the International Labour Organization, NPC and the Ministry of Finance in order to access catalytic funds for the process. This culminated in the establishment of the integrated national financing framework (INFF). Resulting from this proposal, \$1 million was accessed from the catalytic fund and was channelled through the Ministry of Finance.

The INFF as defined had four components: 1) Diagnostics – assessments of financing landscapes (launched in 2021); 2) SDG investor map (launched in 2021); 3) Digital finance ecosystem assessment (completed in 2021); and 4) national SDG financing strategy (ongoing).

The fourth component (national SDG financing strategy) has faced several challenges related to procuring technical expertise for this role. As a result, while the assessments have been done, the initial objective of supporting Namibia to leverage financing from various sources has still not been achieved. The concept may not have been fully understood by all parties involved in the process, with some partners indicating that the INFF concept was "too general and not localized to Namibia", and therefore they were not sure what it intended to achieve. The establishment of the INFF also faced delays in agreeing who would coordinate it. Eventually, the NPC took over coordination of a joint programme that has also designated the the Ministry of Finance as the lead institution. Other stakeholders include the MGEPEWS, the Ministry of Labour Relations and Employment, the president's economic advisor, the Bank of Namibia, and UNDP on behalf of the UNCT. The process is gradually gaining traction and now maintains monthly meetings and quarterly reporting to all the other stakeholders.

Finding 16. Despite strong staff awareness of, and capacities on, gender issues within UNDP, this has not translated into the full integration of gender aspects in all programmes. While specific interventions, such as those in Outcomes 1 and 3, have a strong gender focus, the remaining programmes have generally focused on the lesser ambition of gender parity.

There is still a need for a deeper gender analysis to be carried out prior to programme design and implementation, with the goal of ensuring gender-transformative interventions. At present, where gender integration is still limited and largely aligned to donor requirements, interventions have largely remained at the level of gender-equal targeting. A higher GEN has only been achieved where UNDP had leeway with the design and implementation of the programme, without depending on the donor (as seen with the SDGIF, where UNDP core resources were utilized, and in some environment initiatives, where gender interventions had an explicit budget provided). Gender was otherwise left out of projects where there was no budget for gender-specific activities. With a myriad of seemingly ad hoc programmes, the possibility of addressing a holistic spectrum of gender gaps leading to potentially transformative gender interventions may have been missed in the present programming approach.

Using the gender results effectiveness scale, it was found that UNDP Namibia adopted a **'gender-targeted'** approach, where focus was on the number of women, men and PwD (particularly the case for Outcomes 1 and 3; less evident for Outcome 2 initiatives, some of which had a high level of engagement with women, who influenced the project design and implementation effectiveness). Without the benefit of pre-programme design gender analysis, the differentiated needs of these categories of the population were not captured in the actual design of UNDP interventions. UNDP could consider low-cost modalities of integrating gender into the programme life cycle. These may include collation and synthesis of available data to generate a gender needs assessment, for instance using sex-disaggregated data from national sources. These preliminary data would then be used to guide consultations with partner organizations and beneficiaries during programme design. This would provide useful data to guide the design of gender-redistributive and -transformative interventions; for instance, those that challenge the status quo and seek policy reform. To further secure gender-targeted implementation, gender performance indicators to guide monitoring, evaluation and impact reporting would be a critical component of the M&E framework.

It is notable that most Outcome 2 projects have given due attention to gender aspects in project design and implementation – the latter especially effective in targeting women and other marginalized community members in training and pilot activities. There is a high degree of engagement in projects with gender aspects; most projects are categorized as GEN2 or GEN3, and gender assessments and actions plans have been developed.⁹⁸

Within the biodiversity programmes, there is an emerging trend of more conservancies being led by women, who are demonstrating their effectiveness in guidance and management. This is perhaps an 'organic' outcome of community development in specific areas, but there has also been a transfer of lessons learned between conservancies, which appears to have supported more engagement of women in project activities (for example, NILALEG; some CSOs have regular sessions with community groups and conservancies to share lessons learned and clarify the activities that can be undertaken by women alone). UNDP has been explicit about this inclusionary aspect of all its projects in the current CPD.

The Namibia context presents good opportunities for more ambitious work in pursuing gender equality and women's empowerment. There is an active CSO sector in this area, and evaluation meetings suggest that women are well represented in technical and management positions (in government, CSOs and UNDP itself), reflecting a progressive gender balance in entities responsible for project design and implementation.

⁹⁸ For example, the CUKVUN transboundary project has a gender action plan embedded in the project design. For Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency, a gender report was needed, which Ministry of Environment and Tourism found confusing and perhaps a bit irrelevant.

FIGURE 4. Expenditure by gender marker and outcomes

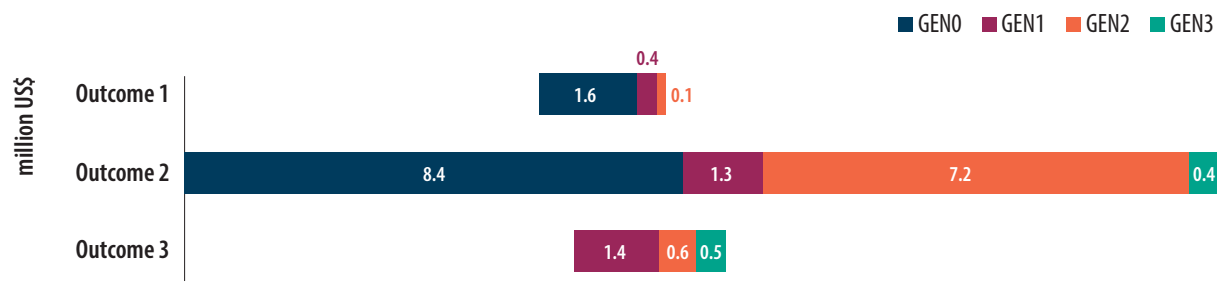
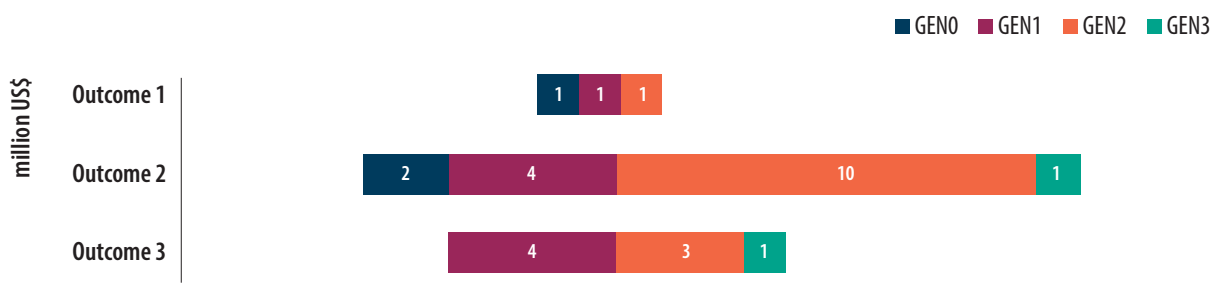


FIGURE 5. Number of projects by gender marker and outcomes



Finding 17. The results framework of the current CPD does not sufficiently describe the linkages between the CPD outcomes and outputs and project-level activities, making it difficult to monitor results or attribute positive impacts to the work of UNDP. Weak reporting on results in many projects indicates the need for overall strengthening of results-based management in the country office.

The CPD indicator matrix complies with UNDP requirements, and links the CPD indicators to those of the UNPAF. However, the matrix has limited internal coherence, as the causal linkages between outputs and outcomes are not sufficiently clear. Furthermore, there is a general disconnect between outcome and output indicators, with no clear causal pathway of how the achievement of the outputs will contribute to the outcomes. Most CPD output indicators are general and high-level, making it difficult to attribute any changes to UNDP work (e.g., “percentage of degraded land”).

At the project level, while the logical frameworks of projects are overall aligned to CPD outcomes, these linkages are not reflected in a single results framework that can track the contribution of project outputs to CPD outputs and outcomes. As a result, the data generated by project M&E systems are not fed upwards in a consolidated way to the CPD framework and cannot be effectively used for strategic decision-making and accountability. For example, with Outcome 2 especially, output indicators focus on numbers of systems, legal and policy instruments, etc., and “improved” aspects of these, without clarifying what is meant by “improved”, and how these improvements bring benefits. Furthermore, government synoptic data do not accurately pick up this information, and the contribution of UNDP-supported initiatives to synoptic-type attributes is impossible to discern. The new CPD would benefit from a more cohesive design of indicators, so that project-level data can directly feed into CPD output indicators, providing valuable insights for programme direction and better demonstration of positive results.

Reporting on project implementation has mostly focused on activity or output levels, with little or no information on outcomes achieved by projects. This was acknowledged by UNDP and its partners, who indicated that the short timelines involved in these projects were not conducive to outcome monitoring. The CO is making efforts to harmonize M&E practices across projects; however, this has not yet been achieved. In addition, the evaluation team noted that project monitoring documentation is mostly incomplete, with several projects not providing the necessary progress reports or mid-term evaluations.⁹⁹

2.6. Country programme performance ratings

The following table provides an overview of the performance of the country programme, using the IEO Country Programme and Performance System.¹⁰⁰ A four-point rating scale is used, with 4 being the highest and 1 the lowest.¹⁰¹ This rating table should be considered in light of the findings presented in the previous sections, which provide more detailed justification for the ratings. Detailed ratings for each outcome area are noted in the annexes.

TABLE 1. Country programme performance ratings

Criteria and key parameters	Rating	Justification
1. RELEVANCE	3	
1.A. Adherence to national development priorities	3	UNDP-supported projects were all relevant to Namibia’s national strategies and policies, as well as the human rights agenda. However, many environment projects were essentially continuing phases of previous initiatives, not yet anchored in new government policies and not yet leading to sustained positive change in beneficiary communities.
1.B. Alignment with United Nations/UNDP goals	3	
1.C. Relevance of programme priorities	3	
2. COHERENCE	2	
2.A. Internal programme coherence	2	UNDP initiatives were mostly reflective of funding opportunities, and these were not internally linked or functionally connected across outcome areas.
2.B. External programme coherence	2	

⁹⁹ GEF-funded Outcome 2 projects were, however well addressed by the required mid-term reviews and terminal evaluations.

¹⁰⁰ <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/ratingsystem.shtml>

¹⁰¹ 4 = Fully achieved/exceeds expectations; 3 = Mostly achieved; 2 = Partially achieved; 1 = Not achieved.

◀ Table 1 (cont'd)

Criteria and key parameters	Rating	Justification
3. EFFICIENCY	2	
3.A. Timeliness	2	Most projects were delayed in starting, and several large projects required time extensions. Much of this was due to slow government processes and decision-making, as well as the COVID-19 pandemic and low staff numbers and lack of continuity in the CO.
3.B. Management and operational efficiency	2	
4. EFFECTIVENESS	3	
4.A. Achievement/ eventual achievement of stated outputs and outcomes	2	Monitoring and reporting challenges limit a full assessment of contribution to outcomes. Limited resources constrained the full achievement of CPD targets. Programmes had varying levels of success; some made small but valuable contributions, for instance to anti-corruption efforts, sustainable land management and health responses. Short delivery timeframes, staffing issues, and delays on the side of government partners were among the main factors constraining effectiveness.
4.B. Programme inclusiveness (especially those at risk of being left behind)	3	
4.C. Prioritization of gender equality and women's empowerment	3	
4.D. Prioritization of development innovation	3	
5. SUSTAINABILITY	2	
5.A. Sustainable capacity	3	Sustainability of project initiatives through demonstrated local capacity and self-financing mechanisms is still limited in environment projects, while in the inclusive growth and governance portfolios there have been successful cases of scaling up. Generally, there is major reliance on donor and vertical fund support.
5.B. Financing for development	2	

CHAPTER 3

CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT RESPONSE



This chapter presents the conclusions of the evaluation, associated recommendations and the country office management response.

3.1. Conclusions

Conclusion 1. The design of the current country programme and subsequent associated projects has appropriately reflected Namibia’s development priorities and needs. However, the country programme lacked an explicit link to the recommendations of the previous ICPE, and was therefore not significantly different from the previous programme efforts in design or implementation, with the exception of a rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

UNDP programmes were designed to address adaptation to climate change, landscape management, trans-boundary water management, anti-corruption approaches, gender equality, and better employment opportunities and health services (especially for marginalized communities), which are still key areas for the country’s development pathway. These themes also defined the previous country programme. Only the planned initiatives for renewable energy were lacking, as they were not funded. The CPD aimed at building a coherent programme out of the multiple interventions in different areas, and this was articulated in a theory of change; however, this holistic approach was not clearly understood by most government partners, who tend to operate in the own sector ‘silos’. Further, the ToC lacked instruction on how to create bridges between portfolios and target sustained benefits to programme participants, and was not apparently used to select (or discard) specific initiatives. Much of the programme from 2019 onwards was defined by funding opportunities, especially the GEF, and these were generally second and third phases of previous initiatives.

While all the programmes noted above are relevant to the needs of the country, the CPD lacked a clear prioritization strategy to most effectively allocate the organization’s limited resources. The CPD also did not sufficiently incorporate a key recommendation of the previous ICPE on documenting lessons and building business cases for small-scale UNDP initiatives, which would increase the potential for scale-up. In particular, the use of causal analysis (problem/solution analysis based on empirical information) to promote replicability and scaling up of pilot initiatives was not evident. Staff changes in the CO and the constraints of the pandemic also disrupted the ‘corporate’ continuity required to maintain key approaches articulated in the CPD.

UNDP was very responsive to the needs of the government and civil society in the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, and supported various initiatives that involved provision of equipment and information where most needed, as well as specific initiatives addressing food supply chain constraints. This involved some re-direction of funds as well as some new funding, and this re-purposing did not appear to have a significant negative effect on delivery of other projects in the various portfolios.

Conclusion 2. The programme has continued to be mostly reliant on vertical funds (predominantly the Global Environment Facility), which have maintained momentum in natural resource management and climate resilience initiatives. However, UNDP has faced significant challenges in diversifying its portfolio to other relevant areas, such as inclusive growth and governance. Government cost sharing has continued to be modest, and efforts to mobilize resources from the private sector have not yet yielded significant programme support.

As in the previous programme cycle, the current programme is mainly supported by vertical environmental funds (GEF accounts for about 72 percent of all UNDP programme funds), implemented through the national implementation modality. Resource mobilization from other sources remains a challenge, due to the country's UMIC status, which has reduced overall ODA. This limited access to donor funding, combined with CO constraints and staff changes and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, have stifled the organization's attainment of its programme resource targets (only 38-50 percent of the resources targets were achieved, depending on the outcome area. This situation has also constrained the organization's achievement of programmatic ambitions.

The worsening macroeconomic conditions in Namibia and the onset of the pandemic have also put pressure on public finances, further shrinking the potential resource options for UNDP. This, in turn, has affected the ability of UNDP to build a team of technical staff to further expand the programme. This has stretched the existing staff, as they have had to cover a high number of relatively small interventions.

Support from the private sector in Namibia has been minimal, mainly consisting of banks engaged to provide loans to project participants as well as some in-kind contributions, rather than grants or project funding. Yet all stakeholders agree that support from the private sector has the potential to address Namibia's resource deficit challenges, both for UNDP and for government programmes. Some initiatives, such as the SDGIF, Environmental Investment Fund, SDG Financing Strategies, the work with the Harvard Growth Lab, the "Solar for Health" initiative and the Acc Lab, have posted positive early results and have set a trajectory for UNDP that can be further pursued. The UNDP programme continues to have significant engagement with CSOs, as these have been essential to creating traction with project participants and beneficiaries (especially for Outcome 2 initiatives). The larger CSOs are funded by government (through UNDP-supported initiatives) and also directly by foreign donors, and some have larger annual budgets than UNDP, which puts them in the position of being both partners and 'competitors'. This unfortunately complicates the resource mobilization strategy for UNDP.

Conclusion 3. Activities implemented under the inclusive growth portfolio have been well aligned with priority needs in Namibia, such as the high level of unemployment arising from slow job creation and low productivity in the agricultural and informal sectors, and the increasing numbers of unemployed women. As such, a major achievement of the UNDP programme was effectively building the capacity of the government partners to re-design the approach towards inclusive entrepreneurship development for vulnerable and often socially excluded groups.

Through piloting and 'proof of concept' approaches, as seen in the EMPRETEC pilot project, Corporate Social Invest and SDGIF (with private sector and Environmental Investment Fund engagement), initial interventions that proved successful then progressed into a second phase, in which sustainability was secured due to government mainstreaming the training programme into its poverty reduction initiatives. These are clear examples of how UNDP can add value in piloting approaches and establishing proof of concept in order to catalyse innovations and new partnerships. However, private sector awareness of these initiatives and clarity about how they benefit, whether in terms of corporate social responsibility, visibility, or actual profits from new end-users, still need bolstering. UNDP is well aware of this need, and intends to take up more private sector partnerships in the new country programme.

Conclusion 4. UNDP has managed to maintain momentum with partners around climate change and natural resource management and to increase the emphasis on community-based actions. However, the sustainability of community-based initiatives continues to be a concern. The next two years will be critical in demonstrating sustainable actions and innovations, to reduce the dependence on donor and vertical fund support and to secure outcome-level change.

The current UNDP programme (coming to the end of the fourth year) has aligned well with the environmental and climate change needs and priorities in Namibia, with expanding partnerships, including with municipalities and private sector entities, and further consolidation of government and CSO implementation of initiatives. The current portfolio has a good balance of effort between marine spaces, important landscapes, urban interventions and climate change reporting obligations. UNDP has maintained support and visibility with all the main natural resource management and climate change stakeholders (at all levels of government and including traditional leaders) and in all sectors affected by NRM and climate change issues (marine, terrestrial, urban areas).

Livelihood development to reduce pressure on natural resources and habitats, with an increased focus on disadvantaged communities (especially unemployed youth and women), is prevalent and was especially evident in the quick responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. The landscape initiative (NILALEG) appears to have learned some performance lessons from earlier projects, and is taking root with community training and various livelihood development actions anchored in local community governance, and there is evidence of increased political support in some conservancies, which will hopefully lead to increased government expenditures. There is also an explicit effort to study and develop financing options for community-based initiatives.

Many Outcome 2 projects have a prominent gender aspect, and gender assessments and action plans have been developed. Generally, there has been a high level of engagement of women in the projects, especially in urban gardens and conservation work in the north, which will increase the chance of success and sustainability of initiatives. On the other hand, renewable energy approaches and options have not figured prominently in Outcome 2 projects, so addressing energy needs in marginalized communities is lagging.

Namibia's climate change reporting obligations and plans have benefited significantly from UNDP support. There has also been significant support from various regional UNDP offices, taking advantage of appropriate expertise throughout Africa (and in the regional thematic groups). This has led to the development of new projects (carbon markets, human/wildlife conflict management and transboundary water management), which, along with the last few years of NILALEG, will keep UNDP engaged in key sectors and areas, as well as supporting implementation of the NDC for the next three to four years at least. The regional ocean governance project is coming to an end within the next year, with future funding unclear and on-the-ground initiatives (in Namibia) not yet evident.

Monitoring of outcome-level change associated with UNDP-supported projects has been challenging. Despite UNDP support and initiatives funded by other donors, habitat improvement and climate resilience in areas where UNDP has been engaged are not yet evident.

Conclusion 5. UNDP has faced internal and external programme constraints that have hampered effective delivery of projects (especially evident with Outcome 2). These have included lack of staff capacity and lack of continuity within the CO, the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, slow and cumbersome processes associated with regional projects, restrictive planning and budget processes of GEF projects, the short timeframes of some projects, and the difficulty in creating linkages between initiatives, mostly due to the ongoing 'silo' functions of various ministries. Despite these constraints, UNDP has maintained a high project expenditure rate (about 90 percent in the last three years). However, the cost efficiency and effectiveness of this high expenditure rate cannot be determined.

UNDP is mostly a broker and facilitator for vertically-funded projects implemented by government partners. As such, it has little control over government operations and can only respond to externalities like the COVID-19 pandemic with the cooperation of donors and partners. Even staff numbers and capacity within the CO are difficult to manage, as the externalities (noted above) and employment decisions of individuals tend to define the capacity and functions of the office.

With regional projects such as BCLME III, there has been a focus on studies, development of guidelines and policies, and institutional support to the BCC, all of which necessitate cumbersome discussions and approvals in three countries (expected to be a risk for the CUKVUN transboundary initiative as well). BCLME III is also distracted by an effort to secure future funding, which may be diverting attention from project activities and results.

Various initiatives that address communities and disadvantaged beneficiaries, within and between outcome areas, are not functionally linked so as to benefit from each other. This mostly reflects 'siloed' government operations and the lack of daily linkages between the PMU and routine ministry functions. The large, multi-year GEF projects have significant issues with slow start-up, lack of budget flexibility, changing PMU staff and annual delays due to slow project fund flows. UNDP has almost no control over this situation, and has had to default to engagement in the project steering committee and pushing the project administrative requirements (plans, budgets, expenditures, reports). There is also a lot of project activity in some areas (notably the conservancies in the north), funded by different donors, that is not coherently tied together to create synergies or gap-filling. These links can and should be created by the various implementing partners, with UNDP support.

Short funding timeframes have made it challenging to bring projects to fruition. On the other hand, UNDP and partners quickly delivered results on the ground, with new partnerships cultivated (partnerships with municipalities in the Build Back Better project is a good example). While initiatives such as urban gardens were quickly supported and community organization was promoted, longer-term sustainability will now be the responsibility of the communities and the municipalities.

Despite these constraints, the Outcome 2 portfolio has been very active and there is a high expenditure rate relative to annual budgets. These funds have mobilized project partners, supported institutional structures and processes and supported project engagement within communities. However, the monitoring and reporting systems do not support cost efficiency analysis; the relative values-for-money of actual outputs and potential outcomes of the various initiatives cannot be determined. Expenditures therefore continue to be proxies for project delivery.

Conclusion 6. UNDP has a comparative advantage in its support to Namibia's governance systems (Outcome 3), but has not been able to fully capitalize on this role due to limited resources. UNDP support to the anti-corruption agenda and to strengthening gender-responsive budgeting has made positive but modest contributions to the advancement of improved governance. Several initiatives included in Outcome 3 reporting were not thematically linked to governance per se, but nevertheless helped to address significant issues. Decentralization efforts did not advance.

UNDP work in anti-corruption has been effective overall, and is attracting additional funding, which is positive. However, it has limited ability to demonstrate outcome-level changes, because there has been no comprehensive assessment of corruption in Namibia since 2016, and therefore no baseline against which to gauge change. Other areas of work have demonstrated the agency's role as convener and facilitator; for instance, its role in assisting the Ministry of Finance in the development of the INFF. Gender-responsive budgeting has involved significant training, but the impact of that training in annual government budget processes is not yet evident.

UNDP support to Namibia's health services was linked to Outcome 3 because it related to accountability and institutional strengthening in the health sector. However, it was an emergency response which was not designed as part of this outcome. Nevertheless, UNDP work in this area has been effective in helping control a Hepatitis E outbreak. UNDP was also entrusted by the government to strengthen national institutional systems for pharmaceutical supply chains. The quick response, and partnerships with other United Nations agencies and with government institutions (despite some coordination issues) successfully pooled technical expertise and resources to secure a quick and effective response to the outbreak.

While the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development prioritizes decentralization as a direction of government, in the current programme cycle, UNDP has not worked with the government on advancing decentralization. As presently designed, decentralization lacks an M&E framework, which would be a critical component of gauging the success of implementation.

Conclusion 7. Establishment of the Accelerator Lab provided a platform where various innovations were tested to address persistent challenges, such as high poverty and inequality, unemployment and poor public service delivery. After some initial stumbles, Acc Lab innovation activities realized modest ripple effects across all three UNDP outcome areas.

The Acc Lab brought together government partners, CSOs, private sector actors and entrepreneurs to initiate experiments, identify solutions based on proven practices and build collective intelligence. The initial diagnostic study on the informal economy illuminated the opportunities available to, and challenges faced by, entrepreneurs, and how actors in the informal economy could be supported. Opportunities for supporting the informal economy, including digitization, enhanced supply and market delivery chains, and optimizing information and communication technologies were highlighted. The Acc Lab faced some challenges, such as inadequate clarity among the innovators on what the broader goals of the programme were, given the fragmented coordination and inconsistent communication from UNDP. Some of the innovations were reported to have stalled mid-way, leading to the perception that the high expectations raised by the Acc Lab process were only partially met. UNDP still needs to build a portfolio of these innovations in a more structured approach, to ensure that all essential components of the Acc Lab (experimentation, implementation, documentation and knowledge-building and dissemination) progress concurrently.

Conclusion 8. The country office results-based management system does not sufficiently link the original theory of change to project-level logical frameworks. As a result, the monitoring system does not allow compilation of the necessary data to track results and determine their contributions to outcome-level change in order to inform management decisions and to bring lessons learned into new project design. The M&E function has also been hampered by inadequate staffing in the CO and pandemic-related restrictions. Government monitoring of NIM projects (Outcome 2) has also been inconsistent with the larger NRM and climate resilience projects, leading to some late awareness of project implementation issues.

The results framework for the current UNDP country programme does not sufficiently outline the linkages between the expected programme outcomes and outputs and project-level activities, making it difficult to monitor and assess the results of UNDP-supported work. As a result, it is very difficult to attribute any positive impacts to the initiatives supported by UNDP. Outcome-level changes (such as natural habitat improvements, quality of life of beneficiaries, etc.) need to be interpreted from both synoptic data collected by the government and detailed beneficiary interviews and field observations specific to project locations, and these have not been matched up in the current annual performance reporting by UNDP. It appears that project documentation is not consistently collected and filtered for performance lessons (reasons for successes and failures); for example, this evaluation only had access to about half of the expected

documentation, such as project documents, annual workplans, progress reports and terminal evaluations. Country office staff who have started in the last year have also struggled with developing and understanding the corporate memory of UNDP-supported initiatives.

At the project level, while the logical frameworks of projects are overall aligned to the expected CPD outcomes, these linkages are not reflected in a single results framework that can track the contribution of project outputs to expected CPD outputs and outcomes. As a result, the data generated by project M&E systems (including patchy monitoring information from NIM projects) are not fed upwards in a consolidated way to the CPD framework, and cannot be effectively used for strategic decision-making and accountability.

Conclusion 9. UNDP has demonstrated a high degree of flexibility and responsiveness to the COVID-19 pandemic, shifting resources and staff to respond to emerging national needs and taking a leading role in assisting the government in assessing the socioeconomic impact of the pandemic.

UNDP demonstrated technical leadership in drafting the Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Namibia and the associated socioeconomic recovery plan, which were important contributions to the pandemic response efforts. The re-direction of project resources towards procurement of health equipment and livelihood support (especially in marginalized communities) also demonstrated the organization's flexibility and responsiveness to the crisis.

Conclusion 10. While UNDP effort towards gender and social inclusion in its programmes has been demonstrated in all outcome areas, the present approach has not been effective and has only led to 'gender-targeted' outputs rather than the more intentional gender 're-distributive' and 'transformative' outcomes and impacts. Effective gender programming should be preceded by gender needs analysis that will help identify the right gender performance indicators for gender outcomes tracking.

There is clearly adequate gender awareness within the UNDP team, as demonstrated with the upholding of the principles of Leave No One Behind, the work with the MGEPESW (including technical assistance for the gender-responsive policy planning and budgeting process, and support to the NSA to ensure collation of sex-disaggregated data that also recognize PwD), and the specific targeting of women and marginalized communities in several of the NRM and climate resilience initiatives. The latter, especially, have created some consolidated groups of women entrepreneurs and farmers/marketers, which are on the cusp of self-financing. However, despite these initiatives and internal gender awareness, there is still a need for a deeper pre-programme design gender analysis, in order for the UNDP team to customize programmes that respond more specifically to the gender-differentiated needs at various levels.

3.2. Recommendations and management response

RECOMMENDATION 1.



The new UNDP country programme strategy should better articulate the agency’s comparative advantages and its offer to Namibia, based on lessons learned in this cycle, UNDP areas of expertise (especially natural resource management, climate resilience and social support programmes, with a focus on marginalized communities), and its well established partnerships with government institutions. The use of ‘business cases’ to prove the potential sustainability of innovations and pilots should be part of the routine work of UNDP in the next programme cycle.

This means analysing gaps in the current country programme, the observations of the mid-term review, and conclusions in this ICPE, to clarify factors affecting programme performance. Especially as UNDP articulates the ‘proof of concept’ approach – its ability to experiment without risk to existing government programmes – it needs to collect and understand evidence that actually proves the effectiveness of concepts. This includes identifying, observing and measuring performance indicators that reflect change at the end-user or beneficiary level. There is a rich information base in the pilots and innovations in each of the outcome areas that would sharpen the understanding of what works, what doesn’t, and what is needed to sustain, scale up and replicate new initiatives. This exercise would inform future project design, cultivate collective understanding and expectations of new projects, and help to secure new investment in such initiatives from both government and the private sector (a priority going forward), as project benefits would be clearer and more compelling. By focusing on areas and sectors that UNDP has particular strengths in – natural resource management, climate resilience and social support programmes especially, engaging marginalized communities – UNDP can use this exercise to better leverage its programme experience, expertise and comparative advantages (by better explaining and clarifying the success factors that need to be emphasized during project design).

This exercise could also be facilitated by a third party (during the CPD development phase) and should be undertaken on an annual basis. For example, UNDP may consider procuring the services of academic or private sector institutions to conduct systematic reviews of UNDP programmes to assess their potential social, economic and environmental returns, along with associated stakeholder mapping (to determine who most benefits from interventions and who may present barriers to project/policy implementation, as well as examining the roles of various partners, expectations, common mis-assumptions, viability of institutions and areas of conflict between agencies, ministries and agendas). This exercise would also help UNDP to carefully consider where to allocate its scarce financial and human resources in order to generate maximum impact. This would allow UNDP to move away from its programme being mostly defined by the usual funding opportunities (such as the GEF) and sharpen its advantages as a trusted and objective broker of partnerships in Namibia, which might also help secure more private sector support, as well as help with reconciling staff capacity to meet demands during the next programme cycle.

Associated with this, it would be helpful to develop a compendium of realistic business cases that would support the uptake and scaling up of innovations within projects (especially NRM and climate resilience; it is perhaps a little more difficult to examine the business case of social support programmes, but it can be done, by examining government costs versus net support system or entrepreneurship benefits). This exercise requires sound technical expertise to filter project documents and case studies to clarify all relevant inputs and costs that need to be examined to understand net benefits in defined timeframes. Knowing these details, and being certain about what is compelling and what is not, will greatly improve project design, the roles of partners and the chance of sustainability of initiatives.

Management response: Fully accepted 

The new country programme strategy will articulate UNDP comparative advantage in the country and align to the national development priorities for Namibia.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status
1.1 Undertake a CO reflection session on 'business cases' half-yearly and review of lessons learned drawing from Acc Lab innovations and pilots and programme/portfolio experiences.	2023	Acc Lab		
1.2 Review well established partnerships and identify lessons learned with government partners for upscaling interventions through PSC meetings.	2023	Programmes		
1.3 Conduct meeting with NPC at least once a year to review results and adjust implementation as necessary.	2023	Resident Representative and Deputy Resident Representative – NPC meeting		
1.4 UNDP will engage stakeholders as part of the CPD development process and pitch its comparative advantage and offer – CPD stakeholders engagement meeting planned in Q2 2023.	2023	Programme and Operations		

RECOMMENDATION 2.

UNDP is expected to support government in promoting entrepreneurship in disadvantaged and marginalized communities in Namibia. UNDP should therefore focus its support on market access and demand/supply analysis in different locations and communities in Namibia to fully identify the opportunities and barriers affecting the scaling up of entrepreneurship initiatives.

Transitioned entrepreneurship activities, such as those supported through the African Continental Free Trade Area and export platforms, linkages with the private sector (such as those in the Environmental Investment Fund), and the institutionalization of EMPRETEC (as a flagship of the president’s Harambee Prosperity Plan) all signal potential sustainability mechanisms that may ensure that gains made during the initial phase of implementation are not lost after funding and technical assistance cease. Entrepreneurship development is not only critical to addressing social and economic challenges, such as unemployment and inequality, but is also at the core of Namibia’s economic growth and the broader goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Entrepreneurship is a sound concept for all development areas that UNDP supports, but needs government crafting of appropriate policies (at all levels, national to municipal). Key support from UNDP going forward (especially if economic expertise is housed in the country office) could be analysis of market access and demand/supply factors in different locations and communities in Namibia, to fully understand where the opportunities and barriers exist. This exercise should also target renewable energy use in Namibia – a sector that UNDP intended to support, but did not in the end (needs and opportunities still exist).

Management response: Fully accepted 

UNDP will continue to mobilize resources under the umbrella of the Sustainable Inclusive Green Growth portfolio to promote skills development and entrepreneurship for all countrywide. Trainings will be provided through EMPRETEC with government and private sector. In addition, innovative finance mechanisms will be scaled up, developed and/or leveraged for supporting MSMEs to scale up their businesses.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status
2.1 Under the umbrella of its SIGG portfolio, UNDP will continue in the next CPD cycle to promote skills development and entrepreneurship especially in disadvantaged and marginalized communities working with the government and private sector as appropriate.	2023-2028	Programmes		
2.2 Continue to strengthen the ecosystem of entrepreneurship and enhance productive capacities of MSMEs and informal sector and access to markets to benefit from regional programmes such as the AfCFTA.	2023-2028	Programmes ACC Lab		

RECOMMENDATION 3.



The results chain and theory of change in the new CPD should clearly articulate realistic targets and observable indicators of development change (relevant to communities, end-users and beneficiaries). This is critical in order to accurately track UNDP performance and contributions to national and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework objectives.

The country office monitoring system needs upgrading, to centrally compile and better organize data for decision-making, accountability and knowledge management. At the moment, performance indicators do not correctly line up from the project to outcome level, and lessons regarding project performance are not being linked to specific indicators (what is working, what is not and contributing factors). A more workable and effective monitoring system would allow tracking against the ToC, ‘pinning’ success and failure lessons to specific parts of the ToC, and thus help with more effective project design going forward (note that this links to Recommendation 1). A realistic and functional ToC, and clarity about factors within and outside the control of UNDP, would make the ToC a more effective management tool, used regularly, rather than just a graphic that is developed at the beginning of the programme cycle. It would also help UNDP to decide what funding to seek and accept, and what opportunities should perhaps not be pursued. Of course, the M&E system needs to be founded on ‘SMART’ indicators, which have clearly identified data sources, frequency intervals and collection methods. These indicators also need to be relevant to the change expected at the end-user or beneficiary level. The M&E system also needs to accommodate systematic filing of all project reports, management minutes, MTRs, evaluations, etc. This would help with corporate memory and continuity in the event of staff changes.

Management response: Fully accepted



UNDP will develop a new ToC in Q1 2023 for the new CPD which clearly articulates the targets and indicators and is well aligned to the national development challenges and the UNSDCF.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status
3.1 Develop a new ToC in Q1 2023 for the new CPD which clearly articulates the targets and indicators and is well aligned to the national development challenges and the UNSDCF.	2023	M&E (lead) & Programme unit		
3.2 Integrated results and resources framework for the new CO CPD will be formulated to reflect the results chain in the ToC and indicators and targets monitored and reported on quarterly.	September 2023 and ongoing	Programmes & M&E lead		
3.3 UNDP will contribute results information through the UNSDCF pillars representing outcome areas.	2023-2028	Programmes & M&E lead		

RECOMMENDATION 4.



UNDP should be more ambitious in mainstreaming gender in all its programmes by shifting from gender targeting to a more transformative approach.

There are several low-cost approaches that could be considered for better integrating gender into the programme life-cycle. Some of these include use of existing nationally-available data to generate a gender needs assessment in a particular intervention area, complete with associated stakeholder inputs. For example, existing data may be complemented with stakeholder consultations during the time of programme design, to generate information to guide the design of gender-redistributive and -transformative interventions, and to clarify stakeholder and beneficiary expectations of initiatives. Further, to effectively track gender outcomes, gender performance indicators will need to be integrated into the M&E framework of the new CPD.

Management response: Fully accepted



Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status
4.1 Each portfolio to work with the gender focal team to identify more transformative gender mainstreaming opportunities and incorporate in new projects implemented under the new CPD.	2023-2028	Programmes & Gender focal team		

RECOMMENDATION 5.



The Acc Lab should keep records and document the lessons learned and define options for scaling up and packaging of successful innovations into knowledge products.

The ideal scenario is when the Acc Lab showcases ‘what works’ in addressing challenges (as well as documenting what doesn’t work), the associated lessons learned and the critical success factors. Tools that have been built so far, such as the public sector innovation toolkit, are a good example of documentation that will help take the innovation forward. Resultant knowledge products, written for specific audiences and properly disseminated, will help with uptake of proven innovations, spawn lateral thinking and new ideas (given the increased visibility), and indicate which areas are not so amenable to experimentation and innovation. These in turn may facilitate investor interest in new tools, products, services or approaches.

Management response: Fully accepted



Annually or as and when an experimental, sense-making or innovation phase ends, UNDP through the Acc Lab will make presentations to the CO programme team and produce knowledge products to inform the three portfolios (GRICE, SIGG, SEMER), to support scaling up of innovations in projects.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status
5.1 Annually or as and when exploratory, experimental, or solutions-mapping to inform sense-making ends, Acc Lab will make presentations to the CO programme team and produce knowledge products which include policy recommendations to partners. The innovations and organizational knowledge to be used to define and create new portfolios for the CO.	2023	Portfolio leads, Operations & Acc Lab	Oversight of Resident Representative	

RECOMMENDATION 6.



UNDP should further explore and institute the portfolio approach to strengthen functional linkages between initiatives in all outcome areas.

While it is easier said than done, it is important to further promote and activate the portfolio approach that has been started with Outcome 2 (the SEMER portfolio). This is still mostly conceptual, and as the government sees it, involves perhaps two board meetings per year and an overall discussion of individual projects (most of which retain their project steering committees in any case). The portfolio approach can perhaps be activated with the other outcomes in the country programme (1 and 3), and then areas of synergy between social goals, governance and environmental management and climate change resilience can be identified. To the extent UNDP can see the whole picture and create functional linkages between initiatives, it will be more effective in encouraging a parallel approach in government. The portfolio approach and creating more functional linkages between initiatives will certainly require more staff within the country office (this is clear to UNDP, and being addressed to the extent possible). It will be important for both the government and UNDP to get a better grip on the entire ecosystem of initiatives funded by different entities, especially those being implemented in rural areas.

Management response: Fully accepted



The CO has adopted the portfolio approach and the new CPD will have portfolios. Necessary review of portfolios, to ensure linkages and synergies are pursued, will be done at annual planning and review meetings.

Key action(s)	Time frame	Responsible unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Comments	Status
6.1 Three portfolios have been designed and synergies have been well articulated. Necessary review of portfolios to ensure linkages and synergies are pursued will be done at annual planning and review meetings. Project/portfolio reports will also have a section on synergies with other portfolios for easy tracking.	2023-2028	Programmes	Oversight of Deputy Resident Representative	
6.2 New projects will indicate the functional linkages to other portfolio outcomes – review the project document structure to strengthen synergies narrative.	2023-2028	Programmes	Oversight of Deputy Resident Representative	

* Status of implementation is tracked electronically in the Evaluation Resource Centre database (ERC).

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/15145>

Annex 1. Terms of reference

Annex 2. Country at a glance

Annex 3. Country office at a glance

Annex 4. Project list

Annex 5. People consulted

Annex 6. Documents consulted

Annex 7. Status of CPD indicators and status as reported by country office

Annex 8. Performance ratings




Independent
Evaluation
Office

United Nations Development Programme

Independent Evaluation Office
United Nations Development Programme
One UN Plaza, DC1-20th Floor
New York, NY 10017, USA
Tel. +1(646) 781 4200

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