

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

Between December 2009 and July 2010, the Evaluation Office of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) carried out a country-level programme evaluation called an Assessment of Development Results (ADR) in Somalia. This report presents the findings of the ADR based on an analysis of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of UNDP interventions implemented between 2005 and 2010. The ADR also addresses the strategic positioning of UNDP. The evaluation relied on documents, interviews with approximately 200 individuals, including beneficiaries, Somali authorities, donors, civil society, representatives of international organizations and independent observers.

## CONTEXT

In 1991, after the collapse of the government, parts of the north-western area of the Somali Republic declared independence as the Republic of Somaliland. To this date, no country has formally recognized it as a sovereign state. In 1998, the leaders of the north-eastern region of Puntland declared it an autonomous state but without seeking secession from Somalia. Most of South and Central Somalia remained in turmoil despite international military interventions mandated by the Security Council between 1992 and 1995. Levels of human security vary significantly across these regions and the assessment of UNDP contributions must reflect this reality.

A United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS) was created in 1995 to promote peace and reconciliation. In 2004, a Somalia National Reconciliation Conference convened in Kenya adopted a Transitional Federal Charter and soon afterwards a Transitional Federal Government (TFG) was formed. In 2006, the takeover of most

of the region by the Union of Islamic Courts was followed by a military intervention by Ethiopia, in support of the TFG. UNPOS facilitated a conference in Djibouti in 2008 that established a broader-based transitional government. The TFG is now installed in Mogadishu, where it controls part of the city with support from AMISOM, a military mission deployed by the African Union. The transition period is due to end by August 2011, but there are growing doubts about the possibility to achieve required benchmarks.

The Recovery and Development Programme (RDP) (2008-2012) is considered the main framework for international support to Somalia. The RDP formed the basis for the formulation of the United Nations Transition Plan (UNTP) (2008-2010) for the UN country team (UNCT) for Somalia and, consequently, of the current UNDP country programme.

## UNDP PROGRAMMES

UNDP support during the evaluation period was delivered through the following main programmes: Governance and Reconciliation; Rule of Law and Security (ROLS); and Recovery and Sustainable Livelihoods (RSL), as well as smaller cross-cutting programmes covering HIV/AIDS, gender and economic and human development. Eighty percent of programme expenditures during the period covered by the ADR concerned Governance and ROLS programmes that have received strong donor backing. In comparison, expenditure related to RSL has represented only some 16 percent, with half that amount covered by UNDP core resources.

**Governance and Reconciliation programme:** Over the years, UNDP has been called, and responded in a timely manner, to engage in activities in support of **national reconciliation, peace promotion** and political processes such as the

organization of the Djibouti Conference (2008) that led to a ceasefire between the TFG and the Alliance for the Re-liberation of Somalia and the formation of a broader-based government. UNDP is currently involved in the payment of salaries for TFG parliamentarians and other officials. Apart from important support for the drafting of a new federal constitution and some efforts to develop government capacities, mainly in Puntland and Somaliland, the value added of UNDP support in this area in terms of the organization's development mandate has been limited. While some of these activities are one-time inputs, others such as the payment of salaries would require a viable exit strategy. Such strategies have been difficult to implement owing to the complex political process, poor security and the general weakness of the federal Government.

Through the UN joint programme (2008-2012) and its preceding projects, UNDP supported **local governance and service delivery** at the district and community levels. The joint programme adopted a much-appreciated participatory process within communities and also mainstreamed gender. UNDP also supported **capacity development of key Somali institutions**. Support to federal institutions, such as the 'start-up package' designed to facilitate the TFG installation in Mogadishu in 2009, has often been administrative more than traditional capacity development. In contrast, governance programmes in Somaliland and Puntland cover more traditional areas of intervention through technical inputs, capacity development and some infrastructural work and provision of equipment, and have produced tangible results and progress in, for example, civil service reform.

**ROLS** is the second largest programme and has attracted considerable donor support. In 2008 and 2009, UNDP shifted the programme's emphasis from the strong institutional-support approach since 2002 to community level interventions and a more assertive rights-based approach.

UNDP has supported **civilian police** through training, capacity development, provision of basic

operational equipment and infrastructure in all three regions. It is now a central element of the programme, in terms of resources allocated and, unfortunately, controversy. UNDP support to civilian police in South and Central Somalia, particularly the payment of stipends since 2007, has affected the perception of UNDP as a neutral partner and the organization's relations with humanitarian actors. In Somaliland and Puntland, UNDP continues to build the capacity of the civilian police services while supporting Special Protection Units for international operations. UNDP support has significantly contributed to improved security in the two regions. For all three regions, UNDP ensured the inclusion of human rights in the training curriculum for police officers and promoted gender considerations, including through innovative interventions such as the establishment of special desks for women and children in police stations, in cooperation with UNICEF.

Through the projects under the **Access to Justice** component, UNDP has supported the drafting of a code of conduct for the judiciary and promoted the harmonization of formal and customary laws; the training of judges, prosecutors and assessors; the creation of legal clinics providing free-of-charge legal aid to the vulnerable and the poor. UNDP support has produced positive results in Somaliland and Puntland, particularly in improving the outreach of the judicial system to rural areas through the creation of mobile courts and mobile legal aid clinics. The cooperation established between the ROLS programme and various faculties of law in all three regions is also a very positive development. This is an area where UNDP can achieve results and has developed a strong comparative advantage.

In the area of **disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR)**, UNDP supported the downsizing of security forces mainly in Puntland and Somaliland. In South and Central Somalia, the fragility of the different political advances and the repeated resummptions of conflict have negated any possibility of effectively implementing a DDR programme. UNDP has gradually moved away from DDR operations in favour of small

arms control programmes in Somaliland and a community safety approach under an armed violence reduction programme. The latter programme has started only recently but has already developed a promising participatory approach with communities.

**RSL** programmes have continued to grow in the past three years, indicating the priority UNDP is giving to activities directly impacting on the lives of the Somali people. Unfortunately, donors have been less forthcoming in their support to this third thematic area.

Income generation through work for the improvement of social and economic infrastructure has been one of the objectives of the **employment generation for early recovery (EGER)**, **area-based early recovery (ABER)** and watershed management projects. For example, during its first year, the EGER project generated a total of 430,000 workdays; 35 percent of the beneficiaries were women and 20 percent internally displaced persons. Infrastructure that was rehabilitated included water catchment areas, rural access roads, irrigation canals and strengthened river embankments. However, most of the income generated is short term in nature, and the emphasis has been more on generating income than leaving behind a sustainable product from that work. The **integrated watershed management** project supports the implementation of a wide variety of community priorities, ranging from infrastructure rehabilitation to vocational training. Its implementation has suffered from a number of technical weaknesses and it calls for UNDP to develop its expertise in watershed management. UNDP has made two very significant interventions in promoting the **private sector**: strengthening the Somali remittance sector to ensure that key remittances companies complied with international standards and supporting the Somali meat export industry. The environment component of the UNDP programme has remained small so far.

Under **HIV/AIDS programmes** UNDP strengthened the institutional capacity of the three AIDS Commissions, developed and tested

a number of training tools for general awareness and worked with populations that are most at risk. By December 2009, UNDP had trained some 1,000 religious leaders in advocacy methods they could use in their communities. Women and youth educators, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and members of the uniformed services received training on behaviour change. In general, the programme is well targeted in its focus on the most vulnerable in society.

UNDP has supported authorities in different regions of Somalia in taking forward the **gender** agenda. A national gender policy was developed by the Government of Somaliland in 2009 and gender focal points are being set up in each ministry. In Puntland, UNDP has supported the development of a gender policy and a gender strategic plan. Gender mainstreaming in programmes has too often been seen as quotas to be achieved in terms of women beneficiaries (30 percent in most projects). While this is a positive step and gives a concrete measure in the short run, a more nuanced and holistic understanding of gender in programming needs to be reinforced.

In general, projects implemented in the more stable northern regions have been more effective. Despite a few good examples of results achieved and sustained, many UNDP interventions in the South and Central region have resulted in inputs such as infrastructure, equipment and even training being lost following the resurgence of conflict. In other cases, it is too early to assess results and sustainability as interventions, particularly for capacity development and institutional building, require a long-term comprehensive approach that has not often been present. The ADR found, however, that UNDP was still often operating in an emergency mode, not paying enough attention to technical quality and longer-term sustainability. The institutional culture of UNDP Somalia needs to be more focused on results.

The internal coherence in programmes has been weak and there has been a 'silo' approach in programme management, but efforts are being made to correct this by promoting more synergy

between projects and programmes. The inclusive and participatory internal process put in place for the drafting of the next country programme is a good illustration of such efforts.

## **OPERATIONAL ISSUES**

Like most of the organizations assisting Somalia, UNDP has its head office in Nairobi. Until 2008, UNDP had a sub-office in Mogadishu (with a liaison office in Baidoa) in South and Central Somalia, and sub-offices in Hargeisa, Somaliland, and Garowe, Puntland. The grave security incidents of 2008 and the subsequent revision of security phases resulted in the closure of UNDP offices in South and Central Somalia. UNDP now operates under severe security restrictions with a security phase V in Mogadishu and a phase IV in the rest of the country. To address accessibility issues, UNDP has engaged NGOs and commercial firms to conduct monitoring of projects, and whenever possible, UNDP staff members also try to monitor progress through field visits, telephone interviews and the use of photographic evidence. This remote management formula has allowed UNDP to continue some activities despite the difficulties of the situation. For UNDP as for all organizations operating in Somalia, the cost of delivering assistance is extremely high, owing mainly to expenses linked to remote management and to security.

During the period covered by this ADR, the programme cycles have been limited to two years with the last CPD extended for a third year to 2010. This has been a reflection of the unpredictability of the situation in Somalia and the fragility of political advances. As most programmes are national in their design, programme documents do not reflect sufficiently the vast differences that have emerged since 1991 among the three regions that were part of the pre-1991 Somali Republic. In addition, this short planning horizon was accompanied by the development of single-year workplans, a situation not conducive to the longer-term approach needed for development work nor to the predictability sought by partners.

The ADR also found that UNDP corporately had been somewhat inadequate in providing support to the Somali programme. There is insufficient written institutional guidance for programmes operating in special and complex circumstances, such as failed and fragile states with security classifications as high as the ones applied in Somalia. The country office itself was perhaps not proactive enough in seeking guidance and tapping all possible institutional resources. More recently, a very useful strategic partnership agreement was concluded with the headquarters Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR), bringing both resources and technical support to the programme.

## **STRATEGIC RELEVANCE, POSITIONING AND PARTNERSHIPS**

UNDP is often seen as the ‘provider of last resort’ and some major donors as well as UNPOS expect the organization to support the political process or dispense administrative services on their behalf. For many observers and organizations involved mainly with humanitarian assistance, this association with the political process has damaged the image of the organization and reduced its capacity to fully deploy some of its traditional development activities.

UNDP has often responded with nimbleness to requests to undertake new and unforeseen activities in response to requests from donors or from UNPOS. It has not displayed, however, the capacity of analysis of the Somali context that would have helped guide strategic choices or reorient some activities when needed. UNDP has been relying too exclusively on its own staff and partners, without sufficiently reaching out to independent and more varied sources of information such as human rights, advocacy or women NGOs and professional associations with a broad constituency.

UNDP has maintained good partnerships with government authorities in the various regions and the organization’s long presence in the country make it a trusted interlocutor. Government



partners would be eager, however, to participate more fully in the development of programmes although they understand that they cannot be the sole implementers. Relations with NGOs and civil society have concerned mainly the implementation of programmes and have therefore been of a contractual more than of a partnership nature.

## CONCLUSIONS

1. UNDP has been pushed – and has allowed itself to be pushed – into assuming responsibility for certain tasks and services that have reduced the credibility of the organization as a neutral and impartial development agent. This has resulted in a loss of ‘development space’. Understandably, UNDP is committed vis-à-vis some donors to pursue the activities that have brought about this negative image. The organization cannot simply walk out of such commitments. UNDP will need to find means, however, to develop exit strategies that would enable the organization, with support from donors, to gradually concentrate more of its resources and energy on core mandate activities.
2. The term ‘dealing with a virtual Somalia’ is often used to describe a situation where most of the international community handles all interventions related to Somalia – whether they are of a political, humanitarian or developmental nature – from the comfortable distance provided by operational bases in Nairobi. Working from a distance or applying ‘remote management’ to a situation such as the one in Somalia means not only reduced access, but more importantly reduced information, a more limited capacity of analysis and an increased exposure to operational risks regarding effectiveness, cost efficiency and accountability.
3. UNDP is generally perceived as displaying a weak capacity to analyse the Somali context and apply in a comprehensive manner conflict analysis and risk management methods. Conflict analysis methods, however, have been emphasized in the formulation of the next country programme, a clear indication of progress in the right direction. On the other hand, for risk management, the focus so far has been almost exclusively on operational risks during implementation as opposed to the institutional risks involved in making strategic decisions about whether or not to enter into new areas of activity. The sources of information of the country office are considered too limited, based mainly on staff and implementing partners and often neglecting independent sources, such as human rights NGOs, academics and the websites flourishing in Somalia and among the diaspora.
4. The UNDP contribution to development results has varied considerably depending on the region where activities were implemented. This regional diversity is not reflected sufficiently in programming instruments. South and Central Somalia has immense difficulties emerging from a protracted conflict situation and still faces a severe humanitarian crisis. In Somaliland and Puntland, relative stability and improving governance allow for genuine development support to take place. While it is fully understood that UNDP cannot develop separate programme documents, instruments such as workplans could adopt a pragmatic approach and reflect the reality more adequately.
5. Despite some of the problems described above, UNDP continues to enjoy a privileged position in Somalia based on its long-term presence in the country, on the trust it has established with authorities and donors, as well as on results achieved over the years in many areas of intervention. The country office has also initiated a process of change that should transform its institutional culture by emphasizing more cohesion and synergy between programmes, a results-based management, as well as the mainstreaming of a rights-based approach. The ADR team strongly endorses these recent efforts and approach, and would argue that more intensive support from UNDP headquarters

and understanding from international and national partners will be helpful in enabling the country office to manage a comprehensive change process. Some of these changes have to go beyond introducing or changing systems and procedures, and will involve changes in the institutional culture of the office.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

**Recommendation 1:** UNDP Somalia needs to re-anchor its country programme to areas which build on its core competence and are central to its mandate. It should work towards finding an alternative ‘provider’ or mechanism to take over activities related to providing services to political processes or for simple administrative functions which are not central to its mandate.

**Recommendation 2:** The next country programme for Somalia should strike an appropriate balance between interventions in support of building capacity of government institutions and initiatives to help address, in the short and medium term, the chronic development needs of the vulnerable groups of population, with a view to achieving progress towards MDGs, including on pressing issues related to environment.

**Recommendation 3:** UNDP Somalia needs to reassert overall leadership on development issues within the UN community and ensure that development needs of the Somali population and support for achievement of MDGs receive increasing attention from authorities as well as development agencies, NGOs and the donor community.

**Recommendation 4:** In line with the decision to present for approval a five-year cycle for the 2011-2015 country programme, UNDP Somalia should develop three region-specific five-year operational workplans in full consultation with relevant partners. This should be accompanied by a system of annual participatory reviews in order to increase ownership of the planning process and to address

issues of predictability and transparency in UNDP planning and budgeting processes.

**Recommendation 5:** UNDP Somalia needs to engage with a wider range of actors, including independent observers, researchers, academics and civil society in order to sharpen its analysis and understanding of the complex context of its operating environment.

**Recommendation 6:** UNDP Somalia needs to ensure greater coherence within and between programmes and establish mechanisms that promote coherence, complementarity and synergy as key elements of the institutional culture.

**Recommendation 7:** UNDP Somalia should increase the presence of Nairobi-based staff in the field by making full use of existing possibilities, including slots, and increase interaction with Somali counterparts by using temporary proximity hubs easily accessible for the authorities with the aim of ensuring timely decision-making and resolution of problems.

**Recommendation 8:** UNDP Somalia should pursue a conscious strategy to enhance the quality of programme planning and the delivery of results and financial resources by:

- Securing necessary technical inputs in design/implementation and monitoring processes
- Mainstreaming a results-oriented culture through monitoring and evaluation by ensuring that all programme staff are trained in monitoring and evaluation, seeking the necessary monitoring and evaluation technical expertise, and assuring adequate institutional arrangements and incentives
- Undertaking a review of existing programme management capacity and taking corrective actions to enhance quality and ensure good financial management
- Undertaking a systematic capacity assessment of implementing partners and monitoring contractors to ensure that they are capable of delivering to quality standards.

**Recommendation 9:** UNDP Somalia needs to develop a gender strategy and implementation framework. There is a need for dedicated staff resources to ensure that the necessary structures, systems and institutional culture are in place to promote gender mainstreaming.

**Recommendation 10:** UNDP headquarters needs to provide more active and timely support to UNDP Somalia, to develop guidance for offices

operating in conflict environments with restricted access and to facilitate sharing of knowledge and best practices between offices operating in similar environments around the world. Additional guidance would be needed inter alia on the application of the notion of ‘provider of last resort’ and on operations run through remote management, including quality programming and monitoring and evaluation of related interventions.