

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Jamaica is a small island developing state located in the Caribbean, with a population of 2.8 million in 2010 and a GDP per capita of US\$8,400. Its main sources of income are tourism and bauxite. Classified as an upper middle-income country, Jamaica is in demographic transition with declining trends in both mortality and fertility. The country faces many development challenges, including persistent budget deficits, high external debt, declining income, increasing poverty, environmental vulnerability, political instability and high levels of violence.

In response to these challenges, the country has embarked on its first long-term development plan, Vision 2030 Jamaica: National Development Plan, with a view to transforming the country from a middle-income developing country to a developed country by 2030. Four strategic goals are: (1) A society empowered to achieve its fullest potential; (2) A secure, cohesive, orderly and just society; (3) A prosperous economy; and (4) Development in harmony with the natural environment. Vision 2030 is being implemented in a series of three-year policy frameworks, referred to as the Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework (MTF).

Early in the decade, bilateral donors were substantial international development partners (IDPs), but their contribution began to decline in 2005. By 2007, multilaterals made a much larger contribution. The UN in general and UNDP specifically are very small players in financial terms. In assessing the contribution of UNDP in this ADR, it is therefore important to highlight that expectations should not be too high and that UNDP can be seen as a 'niche player' in the country's overall international development landscape.

The UNDP Evaluation Office introduced the Assessment of Development Results (ADR) in 2001 as a systematic means of assessing the development results achieved in countries receiving support from UNDP. This is the second ADR conducted in Jamaica, the first having been completed in 2004. It covers the period from 2002 to 2010, which includes two Country Programme Document periods, from 2002 to 2006 and from 2007 to 2011. However, most attention is paid to the period since the last ADR and particularly to the period of the current Country Programme Document.

The Jamaica ADR methodology is consistent with the main directions indicated in the ADR Method Manual and used a variety of evaluation methods. These included a review of public and internal documents such as completed evaluations, audits and reviews; face-to-face interviews with partners in government, parastatal bodies, civil society, international development partners, as well as UNDP staff both at the country office and the headquarters; and field visits. The opportunities for field-level verification of results were limited. This was because, first, many projects were at early stages of implementation or had not started. Second, many activities fell into the category of 'enabling', capacity building or policy support and were not intended to have discernable field-level outcomes, or at least not in the short to medium term. Third, numbers of direct beneficiaries were often small in 'pilots' or demonstrations and locations were dispersed.

The ADR was conducted in parallel with a Country Portfolio Study of the Evaluation Office of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). This gave advantages in terms of personnel, since the team leader and environment specialist were the same for both studies. For national stakeholders, it meant that GEF-supported activities implemented by UNDP could be covered in one

set of interviews rather than two. In terms of study results, the GEF study gave a broader perspective on issues raised with regard to the UNDP-implemented activities, enabling some separation of effects particular to UNDP from those that also affected other GEF implementing agencies.

UNDP IN JAMAICA

For the 2002-2006 period, the CPD focused on three programme areas, namely poverty reduction, improved governance, and environment and energy. There was also a small programme of disaster risk reduction activities. For the next CPD, 2007-2011, UNDP assistance focussed on three key national priorities, namely, HIV/AIDS; environment and poverty; and justice, peace and security. This country programme had two primary areas of focus – crisis prevention and management, and energy and environmental security – through which poverty, governance, E&E-related programming inputs and assistance are being delivered.

In Jamaica, the UNDP Resident Coordinator (RC) has an important role in helping to coordinate the interests and activities of the international development partners, both within the UNCT and outside it. This role becomes critical in the event of national disasters, which occur with some regularity in the form of hurricanes and tropical storms, where direct damage and flood destruction are often very substantial. The RC is also seen to have a key coordinating role in the international response to civil security issues, which have been prominent in recent years in the country; and where the UN values and political neutrality are recognized as giving it a unique capacity to provide leadership.

The Country Programme Documents for the two periods responded well to Government of Jamaica (GoJ) priorities outlined in various national strategic documents and frameworks. The emphasis on poverty reduction and justice, peace and security begun in the earlier CPD was somewhat strengthened during the later programme. This was due to the creation of

separate units for poverty and governance, whereas the two had previously been combined. However, the resources to enable the two functions to operate effectively are still not available, so that the poverty function, in particular, does not yet have a fully viable programme. The emphasis on HIV/AIDS of the CPD 2002-2006, which had been relevant when the programme was devised, did not materialize and gradually faded from the priorities of the country office.

Poverty Reduction: Five projects were included in the ADR cohort. All of the projects were relevant to Jamaica's anti-poverty strategies, as outlined in Vision 2030 and the Medium Term Plan. UNDP's stated outcome of this portfolio of projects, 'reduction in the incidence of poverty', was directly supported by only one of the five projects, covering rural youth employment, an important focus of government policies. Three of the other four projects offered support for public policy. The final project, Support for the National Statistical System, is intended to strengthen the GoJ in the areas of policy-making and project and programme monitoring.

In terms of efficiency, projects were affected by delays, sometimes considerable. The two main reasons for these were: delays in the granting of permission to open special bank accounts to receive project funds and difficulties in recruiting consultants or getting studies completed.

Since only one project, Response to the Economic Crisis, was completed in the ADR period, it is difficult to assess the overall effectiveness of this portfolio. That project is viewed as effective in terms of meeting its direct goals, since it made a valuable contribution in enabling the government to ease the difficulties it faced in servicing the national debt repayments. The two projects that are well underway are both judged effective within the perspective of their goals. However, both have primarily contributed to 'upstream' activities, such as studies and development of policy documents and their contribution to poverty reduction cannot be realistically assessed.

The current UNDP country office leadership and programme staff are positively regarded by development partners in the field of poverty. The UNDP Jamaica office is recognized as flexible, facilitating, cooperative, supportive, in tune with the needs of the GoJ, and efficient. The sustainability of the results of the projects targeting the GoJ's capacity for managing the economy, implementing the MDGs and formulating and monitoring social policy depends on how well the gains from these projects are maintained and enhanced by the GoJ's management of its fiscal resources, and the extent to which any increased funds are used for poverty reduction purposes. Clearly, there is considerable scope for UNDP to increase its support for poverty-related activities in the country.

Democratic Governance: The democratic governance projects have been highly responsive to national priorities, both in terms of the government's long-term strategies of Vision 2030 and, even more particularly, in response to various national crises.

With regard to efficiency, there has been consistent difficulty in getting local partners to meet their reporting obligations in a timely manner and in accordance with UNDP procedures. The effect of this deficiency has been to retard the progress of projects since committed funds cannot be advanced to partners until each pre-established requirement has been met. The UNDP country office responded to this adverse situation by developing processes to encourage compliance and by brokering agreement with its partners on more effective enforcement mechanisms. In the short to medium term, UNDP has addressed the issue by requiring NGOs to bid competitively with other applicants for project support.

UNDP projects seem to have gradually acquired more focus in the period since 2007. The programme has built on previous country office work in the governance field and has reached the point where the main challenges now concerns ways of cementing, expanding and replicating or taking to higher levels the governance policy

commitment; achieving technical gains in building greater capacity; and achieving consistent accountability from local partners.

Environment and Energy: The E&E portfolio for the UNDP country office contains sixteen projects (including in disaster management) that were active, particularly during the later years of the period under review (2002–2010). All project activities were in line with development goals outlined by the GoJ in the Medium Term Framework, as well as with Vision 2030 Goal Number 4, 'development in harmony with nature'. They were therefore relevant to national needs. The project activities also contributed to UN values in Jamaica as evidenced through supporting the development of policies, Laws and several UN Conventions and Protocols.

By far the largest contributor to the E&E portfolio in terms of funds is the GEF and the few larger projects are financed from this source. Otherwise, there is a broad spectrum of small activities, rather than a cohesive programme.

It cannot be said that the E&E portfolio has operated efficiently. Many projects have experienced some form of delay, which frustrates partners and may reduce effectiveness, since projects often have to take short cuts to try to get back on schedule. Most of the challenges to efficiency cannot be directly addressed by the E&E programme staff. Few projects seem to avoid contracting delays, because of limited national and regional availability of qualified environmental expertise, as well as administrative hold-ups.

Overall, the ADR effectiveness assessment of the environment portfolio is that several projects have produced results that may contribute to the sectoral outcome of 'integrated land, coastal zones, and water and energy management practices improved'. UNDP's main contributions to the outcome have been through its support for capacity development and policy-making, partnership building, awareness raising and piloting innovative approaches that inform policy and are in principle replicable.

Inter-agency collaboration in this area within the UNCT was found to be at a low level. UNCT meetings do not appear to focus on inter-agency collaboration or joint implementation in this sector. Outside of the UNDAF exercise there seems to be little discussion or information sharing on programme matters. The UNEP-Regional Coordination Unit, which is located in Kingston, is currently not formally made aware of UNDP country office programmes or vice versa, although this occurs at the informal level through programme officers.

Indicators linked to the E&E outcomes and outputs were found to be highly detailed and quantifiable. In view of the absence of baselines and of systematic monitoring data, any evaluation exercise would be largely dependent on stakeholder perceptions and secondary data analysis. Even if more realistic indicators were utilized, it is doubtful whether the mechanisms and resources needed to verify them would be available. Urgent attention should be given in future UNDP and UNCT planning exercises to developing only a few key indicators, which can be collected within the resources available.

For sustainability and replication of the benefits of E&E initiatives to be viable, substantial follow-up actions are needed to expand their outcomes, demonstration value and policy effect. However, the ADR found that, outside of the immediate circles involved with UNDP E&E activities, they are not well known.

Sustainability of results in this area need not be restricted to continuation of what has already been done. Adaptation to climate change presents itself as a major area of opportunity for UNDP in Jamaica.

Disaster Risk Reduction: The intended outcome of activities in this area is: 'national capacity enhanced to reduce the risk of natural and human-induced hazards'. However, to date, the programme has been too small to make any serious contribution towards this result. In collaboration with the UK Department for International Development (DFID), UNDP implemented a

programme of school roof repairs late in 2007, following damage inflicted by Hurricane Dean. It also committed TRAC funds to conduct damage assessment, relief work and prepare a recovery plan. In 2008, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) funds were used for early recovery and damage assessment work following Tropical Storm Gustav.

National bodies and UNDP developed these projects jointly. They were all satisfactorily completed and were assessed as effective, within the limitations imposed by small budgets and the lack of continuity in the country office's approach to disaster management.

The disaster risk reduction concepts developed by these projects were an important input into the development of approaches towards watershed management to reduce flood damage, particularly in urban areas such as the Hope River Catchment. However, institutional stakeholders contacted did not recall the contribution of UNDP to these projects, indicating that the results of the intervention have not been adequately followed up or publicized.

Overall, the team found that the disaster management portfolio (currently described only in terms of disaster risk reduction) needs to be more fully developed, not just with emergency response activities but also to assist with national disaster preparedness needs (such as capacity building and equipment).

UN Values and Cross-Cutting Themes: Gender and human rights are UN values, which are expected to be mainstreamed throughout the work of UNDP and may also be addressed through targeted projects or programmes. The projects completed by UNDP from 2002 to 2010, were relevant to national priorities in gender and human rights.

Overall, it was found that UNDP's approach to gender has not been effective. On human rights, some important, but small, interventions have been effective within their limited objectives.

CONCLUSIONS

PROGRAMMING AND PERFORMANCE

Conclusion 1: Regarding the relevance of its activities, the UNDP Jamaica programme has performed well, particularly in responding to changing national priorities.

Most of its activities can be clearly located within the National Development Plan: Vision 2030 and the Medium Term Socio-Economic Policy Framework of the government. In the environment and energy field, UNDP assistance has helped the country prepare for and meet a substantial set of commitments made under international agreements and conventions, and has contributed to the development of a national energy policy.

Conclusion 2: The programme in governance has been substantive, particularly in responding to urgent issues in the areas of peace, security and justice.

Support from the UNDP governance function is well regarded, and the country office has built effectively on its advantages as seen by international and national partners and has delivered results, despite limited resources. However, the programme could benefit from a Flexible Funding Facility similar to that available to the poverty programme.

Conclusion 3: The area of poverty reduction has made relevant and valuable interventions, but has so far received limited resources in the country programme.

Other IDPs see scope for UNDP to play a larger role in this area, particularly in leading the coordination of support to Jamaica's efforts to meet its targets for poverty-focused MDGs.

Conclusion 4: With regard to the energy and environment portfolio, UNDP has provided valuable support to the government and other partners to strengthen environmental management in the country.

The support provided by the UNDP specialists is well regarded among implementation partners. Assistance to policy formulation in the energy

sector has been valuable and is acknowledged in the policy documents. Activities in the portfolio have been broadly effective, although results are restricted by the absence of a clear focus or strategy in the sector. Although this is currently the largest UNDP Jamaica portfolio, it is not well known among IDPs. Linkages between UNDP environment activities and those of other international stakeholders are weak, even where those activities can be seen as building on or related to those of UNDP. Coordination between UNDP and UNEP is inadequate and there is no effective UNCT strategy to maximize activities and results in this operational area, which could have been expected from the UNDAF process.

Conclusion 5: The UNDP Environment and Energy Unit has provided consistent support to the Global Environment Facility portfolio in Jamaica.

By virtue of its in-country expertise housed in the country office, UNDP has provided the most consistent support among the GEF implementing agencies in Jamaica. Together with local partners, it has implemented enabling activities for capacity development and is now moving into full-scale environmental projects.

Conclusion 6: The related area of disaster management is one in which UNDP has made a valuable contribution in terms of response, policy formation and disaster risk reduction.

Although substantive results have been delivered in this sector, and the support from the (part-time) specialist is appreciated, it has suffered from severe under-resourcing, both in terms of personnel and core funding to develop activities.

Conclusion 7: Overall, UNDP project outcomes have in large part been delivered.

However, in many cases the initiatives have been small in comparison with the scale of issues being addressed and of a pilot, demonstration or catalytic nature. Given the financial constraints under which UNDP Jamaica operates, the scope for the country office to expand its operations is likely to remain limited. Furthermore, the resources available to the GoJ are also very constrained.

The ultimate results of UNDP efforts will largely depend on the extent to which the approaches, which it has helped to develop, are adopted by other stakeholders and taken forward in time and scale. The programme during this ADR period has set in motion a number of developmental approaches, which may over time produce substantial results. This situation reiterates the importance of promoting the broadest possible awareness of the outcomes to which UNDP Jamaica has contributed.

STRATEGIC POSITIONING

Conclusion 8: Overall, the UNDP country office has been successful in establishing strategic positions in its areas of activity, in respect of both government priorities and the broader IDP landscape.

However, awareness of the full range of UNDP country office capacities, potential and activities has not reached all relevant stakeholders, despite ‘spinoff’ benefits to the UNDP country office from the activities of the Resident Coordinator. Among IDPs and government agencies, many programme and operational staff have minimal knowledge of the current UNDP programmes and where they are positioned in the sector concerned. This situation reduces opportunities for complementarity and joint working, which has negative implications for UNDP in view of its position as a financially small player in all of its sectors of operation. In particular, the positioning of the portfolios in environment and energy, and disaster management is not widely known.

Conclusion 9: With regard to ‘UN values,’ the effectiveness of positioning has been mixed.

On the one hand, the country office has effectively positioned UNDP with regard to human rights issues through a number of well-focused interventions. On the other hand, a strategic position on gender mainstreaming has not been achieved. More emphasis and resources will be required in this area if any significant contribution is to be made through the country programme operations.

OPERATIONAL MATTERS

Conclusion 10: The planning processes involved in developing the UNDP country programme have been disproportionately large compared to its scale and have not been decisive in terms of shaping activities.

The CPD/CPAP (and UNDAF) procedures show very high costs in senior management and staff time, with relatively little gain in terms of programme quality or coherence. Some important areas, notably environment, energy and disaster management are inadequately included in the plans and documents produced. Others that are included, such as HIV/AIDS, later disappeared from view during implementation of the current CPD/CPAP. Finally, the ADR shows that one of the main advantages of a small player such as UNDP is its ability to respond flexibly to changing national circumstances. The current planning processes do not take account of or contribute towards this.

Conclusion 11: A related conclusion is that the results framework as expressed in the CPAP contains too many targets and indicators.

Furthermore, given the broad absence of baselines and the small scale of many UNDP inputs, most of the indicators would be extremely difficult to measure or interpret. The cost of any serious attempt to do so would be a substantial fraction of the overall programme budget.

Conclusion 12: Despite major progress made during the current CPAP period, the UNDP country office programme is not yet running efficiently.

Neither the UNDP nor the GoJ planning and administrative systems function in a timely manner. Furthermore, many UNDP partners in government, academia and civil society perceive the cost of doing business with UNDP as high. Specifically, procurement and recruitment procedures are very complex and time consuming. On the other hand, the efforts of UNDP country office staff to help partners through the system are widely regarded as helpful and effective,

and the office has little room to manoeuvre within UNDP-wide systems and regulations. An additional relevant conclusion, derived from the parallel study of the GEF Jamaica portfolio, is that all GEF implementing agencies have experienced problems with procurement and recruitment in the region, often leading to substantial operating delays and extensions of project duration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Establish a flexible fund mechanism in the governance area.

One of the strengths of the UNDP country office, as perceived by its development partners in Jamaica, is its ability to respond flexibly and effectively to changing circumstances. In its poverty portfolio, the Strategic Flexible Funding Facility has been invaluable in rapidly providing modest amounts of funds, which have enabled timely implementation of strategic activities, and have sometimes leveraged substantial follow-up. A similar facility for the governance area would enable it to further strengthen its development contribution, within the limited resources available to UNDP.

Recommendation 2: Target young people through the media they use.

The country office should explore the possible additional benefits of programmes using innovative approaches, such as harnessing the communication potential of texting and social networking sites, to engage young people in issues of governance and human rights. The assessment of this potential could draw on the Community of Practice already established to probe experiences with different approaches in the region.

Recommendation 3: Raise the profile of poverty-related activities.

The country office should explore possibilities to raise the profile of its poverty-related activities, with a particular focus on leading the coordination of support to Jamaica's efforts to meet its

targets for poverty-focused MDGs. UNDP's national and international development partners regard it as having a comparative advantage in this area. Specific activities could include improving IDP coordination around support for effective national poverty policy formulation and the development and scaling up (thematically or geographically) of focused interventions to address the most pressing poverty concerns.

Recommendation 4: Raise the profile of environment and energy activities.

The country office should make renewed efforts to raise the profile of its work in the environment and energy sector. Specific measures could include:

- establishing clear and coherent priorities for country office activities in the sector, both from its GEF support and through collaboration with potential new international partners;
- enhancing incorporation of the sector in the UNDAF/CPD/CPAP process;
- seeking appropriate opportunities to collaborate with the UNEP Regional Office for the planning and implementation of national components of regional projects, to assess possibilities for collaboration within the country and to raise the national profile of UNCT in this sector;
- enhancing collaboration with the GEF focal point to increase knowledge and understanding in the country of the possibilities for development and management of a national GEF portfolio, which have emerged as a result of reform processes in the GEF;
- ensuring maximum dissemination of information concerning its activities and achievements in the sector, to a broad audience of national and international stakeholders.

Recommendation 5: Make strenuous attempts to raise additional funds in the disaster management area.

In the disaster management area, the UNDP country office should take all possible measures

to meet the challenges of severe under-resourcing, both in terms of personnel and core funding. It should develop activities that target complementarity with broader environmental initiatives in such areas as adaptation to climate change and watershed management. These measures should build on the results already achieved and address a broad range of disaster management needs, including preparedness, both to strengthen coherence in the country office programme and to open up additional funding possibilities.

Recommendation 6: Ensure that gender issues are systematically and fully addressed.

The country office should clarify, support and enhance the role of the gender focal point to ensure that gender issues are appropriately incorporated in country office activities. As part of this process, it should map out an active role for the country office in support of national efforts to address MDG 3, 'promoting gender equality and empowering women'. This role could best be developed in collaboration with the broader UNCT, where UNFPA and UN Women in particular have resources and complementary areas of comparative advantage.

Recommendation 7: Effectively disseminate information on UNDP activities and results.

The country office should develop and implement a specific strategy to effectively disseminate information about its current and intended activities, particularly in the areas of environment and energy, and disaster management to targeted stakeholders in international and national bodies.

Recommendation 8: Develop and measure limited set of progress indicators.

Future CPAPs should develop a limited set of indicators, targeted directly at the anticipated contribution of the interventions programmed and with specification of how their baselines and monitoring data will be collected within available resources.

Recommendation 9: Take measures to increase efficiency, particularly of procurement and recruitment.

Given the challenges it faces with procurement and recruitment processes, the country office should explore what additional measures it might take to increase efficiency through, for example, pre-qualifying suppliers and specialist consultants in its main operational areas and calling for specific bids from these pre-established 'pools'.