



UNITED NATIONS SURINAME UNDAF MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

INDEPENDENT EVALUATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK (2007-2011), 2011

Context, Background and Rationale

The United Nations Development Assistant Framework 2007-2011 for Suriname outlines the UN's broad areas of response to the development challenges outlined in the Multi Annual Development Plan, 2006-2011, (MOP). The programme has three core components; (a) By 2011 pro-poor policies are in place to ensure that vulnerable groups in society benefit from growth and have equitable access to opportunities, assets and resources; (b) By 2011 governance systems are enhanced through participatory planning and monitoring, public sector reform, legal reform and protection; (c) By 2011, improved access of the population to quality education, health care, legal and social protection services.

The broad objective of the UNDAF is to improve capacities at the national, regional and local level for achieving the MDGs and the national strategic priorities identified in the MOP.

At the request of the Government of Suriname and the UN Country Team an evaluation of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the period 2008-2011 was carried out between December 2010 and January 2011 to assess the relevance and appropriateness of the UNDAF and to evaluate the UNs comparative advantage in the delivery of stated programmes. The main objectives were firstly: to evaluate in programmatic terms the achievements or progress being made towards the UNDAF outcomes

and secondly; to evaluate the underlying processes for the planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring of the UNDAF. The evaluation focused on all three programme areas, Poverty and Inequality, Good Governance, and Social Security (includes education, health, legal services) and supportive underlying processes.

The evaluation observed that UN system's contributions would have been significant in terms of responsiveness to national priorities and needs, if these contributions centered on very strategic results based programmes and were not spread thinly on the ground. Though substantial outputs were realized, the contribution to long term development results/outcomes was very modest.

The evaluation consultant recommends the postponement of the formulation of the next UNDAF until at least the second quarter of 2011 if this is practically and organisationally possible. The evaluation report presents the following key recommendations for focus during the extension period:

UNDAF Evaluation Recommendation	Management Response
3.1 UNDAF Strategic and Programme Content 3.1.1 Recommendations at the upstream level:	
(a) It is strongly recommended that the next UNDAF should continue to focus on the MDGs and human rights. Outcomes should be formulated around a maximum of 3 core development issues that are also currently important development priorities for Suriname. It is recommended that one core development outcome could be formulated around "Safe Motherhood" in which several UN agencies have an interest. Consideration should be given to including the new areas of climate change and disasters. For the time being, there should be no inclusion of an outcome on Public Administration Reform	Agreed. Outcomes of next UNDAF and will build on the work done on the Common Country Assessment, on priorities outlined by the government and key stake holders and by members of the UNCT.
(b) It is recommended that it should not be mandatory for UN agencies, including the non-resident UN agencies, to try and fit <i>all</i> their activities into the UNDAF. However, it is essential that the UNDAF should remain the <i>coordination and information sharing mechanism</i> for activities outside of the UNDAF to ensure policy coherence, avoid duplication and overlap and create synergies.	Agreed. All resident and non-resident members of the UNCT to participate in the process and ensure all or most activities will be included in the new instrument.

<p>(c) It is recommended that the UNDAF remain a flexible framework within which outcomes and activities can be removed and added according to changing priorities and needs. The mid-term review allows for this</p>	<p>Agree. The UNDAF will focus on broad outcomes and be flexible enough to take on new priorities and /or to revise plans to reflect new priorities and context.</p>
<p>(d) It is recommended that the GoS and UNCT consider piloting another kind of model (within the UNDAF) for a joint UN programme which starts from the “bottom-up” and where each of the UN agencies comes to the drawing board with a certain amount of un-earmarked funds (e.g. the joint UN programme addressing the Avian flu epidemic developed by the UN in Vietnam). The theme groups will be a good source of ideas for such a joint UN programme.</p>	<p>Partially agree. Most UN agencies do not have un-earmarked funds for programming and/or the flexibility to agree to open ended new programming activities. The UNCT agrees to the concept of joint programming and clear leadership of the government to it.</p>
<p>(e) The 4 (+5) theme groups that have been set up over the past 18 months should be revisited to see if they are relevant priorities within the UNDAF and continued only if they have committed and active leadership. If UN agency heads do not have time to lead a theme group they can delegate this task to one of their subject matter programme staff. These theme groups are an ideal mechanism for coordination and information sharing within the UN agencies and could become even more important if the second recommendation above is pursued</p>	<p>Partially agree. Theme groups should be convened to reflect UNDAF priorities and/or cross cutting themes. Group participation requires strong leadership and commitment of all heads of agency to empower and support their representatives in the groups.</p>
<p>3.1 UNDAF Strategic and Programme Content 3.1.2 Recommendations at the downstream level:</p>	
<p>(a) It is recommended that the outcomes be formulated in a specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) way. For example, an outcome could be formulated around out-of-school youth or gender-based violence i.e. focussing on one vulnerable group rather than on several as is the present case.</p>	<p>Agreed.</p>

(b) It is recommended that each UNDAF outcome should be funded or technically supported by at least 2 UN agencies, otherwise it cannot be considered a "joint UN support programme".	Agreed.
(c) There are too many small projects under the UNDAF and it is recommended that the participating UN agencies make concerted attempts to merge their future activities into bigger projects. This will enhance the focus of the UNDAF and reduce transaction costs for both sides	Partly agree. The size of the UN projects reflects the realities and programming of the country. UNCT agrees to look for more synergies and better M&E to ensure projects contribute to broader UNDAF outcomes.
Evaluation recommendation or Issue 3.2 Government Engagement and Leadership	
(a) It is recommended that the UNCT continue their efforts to raise awareness about the UNDAF and the DaO among the newly elected policy-and decision-makers and strengthen the capacities of the staff of the UN Desk that are operationally responsible for the UNDAF	Agreed. UN to work closely together with the GoS coordination mechanisms .
(b) Consideration should be given to exposing senior officials and operational staff to other UNDAF/DaO countries to learn about the different models in order to gain an understanding of what is expected of them.	Agree. The office of the RC is committed to sharing experiences on the DaO with government officials and to disseminate to key stake holders the advantages of coordinated approaches to joint programming.
(c) Joint Government/UNCT visits to interesting UN-supported projects should be organised once a year	Agreed.
(d) The UN needs to find a new way of working with the Government at national and sectoral levels, to strengthen the engagement in the UNDAF and CCPAP (this will be further elaborated in the recommendations on underlying processes)	Agreed. Recommendation to be discussed with UN counterparts in the Government.

3.3. Capacity Building	
(a) It is recommended that all the UN agencies need to take a more <i>holistic</i> approach to training by discussing with government partners the enabling environment factors that will impact on its usefulness and finding solutions to deal with these challenges	UNCT agrees on need for more structured approach to capacity building based on human resource needs in line with policy priorities.
(b) Efforts should also be made to group similar trainings into one package and to have reiterative training activities as an element of long-term capacity building. More consideration should also be given to on-the-job training and regional/international exposure to best practices	Same as 3.3 (a) Above.
3.4 Sustainability	
(a) The UNCT should continue to lobby for the funding commitment made by the Government for the implementation of the CCPAP	Agreed. UN assistance and partnership includes knowledge practice, experiences and some funding. Joint funding of programmes is essential for their success and demonstrates a commitment by the government towards UNDAF goals.
(b) The UNCT should collectively continue looking for innovative new sources of funding for example, from the private sector, other friendly countries e.g. China, India Venezuela, Malaysia and Brazil and other development partners e.g. the World Bank and the Islamic Development Bank	UNCT recognizes the role of the GoS to initiate and lead bilateral and multi-lateral Aid Coordination efforts and to foster greater dialogue and collaboration between all partners.

3.5 UNDAF Underlying Processes	
3.5.1 Upstream Recommendation	
(a) The UN needs to find a new way of working with the Government which reflects a more contemporary, updated approach in line with Suriname's current level of development and future aspirations. This particularly applies to the three ExCom agencies that are located in Suriname: UNICEF, UNDP and UNFPA.	Agreed
(b) Finding a balance between taking on board government/national priorities and needs and the UN's responsibility to advocate internationally mandated norms and standards of human development	Agreed
(c) A closer connectivity with the partner ministries. PAHO/WHO seems to have an approaching model by being physically next to the Ministry of Health and being able to respond quickly to requests for specific technical assistance	This may not be applicable for all agencies.
(d) All UN programme staff should spend more time in <i>substantive</i> discussions with their government partners and not only on processes. This should involve obtaining detailed information about current policies, programmes, funding, target groups/areas, capacities (staffing etc.) and even visiting programme/project sites together.	Agreed.
(e) Rather than the UN's traditional "project approach", the UN should move increasingly to a <i>facilitating role</i> by creating mechanisms for the sharing of best practices within and outside of the region. One such example is the South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange System launched by UNDP in May 2006 (SS-Gate) and the Global South-South Development Network also administered by UNDP. Suriname is very interested to learn about the development experiences of many Asian countries e.g. China, Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia and some African countries e.g. Botswana, south Africa, Malawi, through various means	Agreed
3.5.2 Downstream Recommendations:	
(a) The principle of inclusive participation is a positive element of the AWP mechanism as it enables the sharing of common problems and common solutions. Given that they have	Partly agreed. Coordination mechanism for the new UNDAF to be

not been very active in 2010 it is important that they be reactivated in 2011 which is the final year of the UNDAF. It is therefore recommended that UNCT staff be more proactive in 2011 to ensure that the AWP teams meet regularly (at least quarterly).	discussed and agreed to by all parties (UN, GoS, key stake holders). AWP mechanism to be reviewed and adjusted as needed.
(b) In this last year the AWP teams <i>must</i> give attention to obtaining programmatic results and discussing how to sustain key activities.	UNCT agrees that we focus on result and sustainability during this current UNDAF .
(c) Organise a joint government/non-government/UN staff project monitoring visit once a year.	Agree.
Evaluation recommendation or Issue 3.5.2 : Operational Issues	
(a) Since there are so many stakeholders involved in the UNDAF and there is a constant turn-over of both UN and government staff, UNCT staff need to continue their coaching and mentoring of government and non-government partners in the many operational aspects of UNDAF implementation	UNCT recognizes importance of continuous learning, both internally and externally.
Evaluation recommendation or Issue 3.5.2: Monitoring and Evaluation	
(a) It is recommended that the M and E tool developed in March for monitoring the AWP teams be used from January 2011 and that an M and E plan be established for Health and HIV. In connection with this, the AWP teams will need further training in the tool and it is recommended that an M and E specialist be brought in to assist with this. This should be organised in January 2011.	UNCT considers that we should not create parallel systems where they already exists.
(b) Strong efforts will need to be made by both the UNCT and their staff and the AWP teams to focus on <i>programme results</i> as opposed to monitoring the implementation of activities. This will require a major shift in attitude on the part of all stakeholders, UN and government/non-government implementers alike	UNCT agreed to the monitoring of progress towards results.

Evaluation recommendation or Issue 3.5.2: : <i>Non-Resident UN agencies</i>	
(a) Even though some non-resident UN agencies may not participate in the next UNDAF it is very important, however, for the UNCT to be kept abreast of any policy or sectoral analysis work that they may do. In order to promote improved information sharing on their missions and activities in Suriname it is recommended that the Coordination Analyst in the RCO be assigned the task of designing a simple matrix to collect and circulate this information once a month. This mechanism may identify opportunities for joint survey or analytical work, including from a regional perspective	Agree. UNCT and RC encourage non resident agencies to get more involved and take to inform other UN partners of its activities in the country.
Evaluation recommendation or 3.5.2: : <i>Collaboration with NGOs/CSOs, Development Partner and Private Sector</i>	
(a) It is recommended that the UNCT consider setting up one joint fund for NGO support with a focus on addressing the problems of vulnerable groups in the urban and rural interior and on capacity building	Disagree. Most agencies do not have un-earmarked funds, and funds in general are very limited and to be used strategically as seed money to mobilize more resources.
Evaluation recommendation or Issue 3.5.2: : <i>Resident Coordinators Office</i>	
(a) It is recommended that a national “logistics assistant” be recruited to support the work of the Coordination Analyst and the Communications Analyst. This position could be co-funded among the 4 resident UN Agencies and RC funds	Disagree. UN coordination funds are very limited and no longer cover costs of core team (coordination analysis and communications officer). Expansion of the UN Coordination team will be determined by the size and scope of the programme and commitment of agencies to contribute to funding.