**Outcome Evaluation of UNDP Country Programme 2006-2011 in Ukraine**

# LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation identifies a number of lessons learned. UNDP projects have the highest impact and are the most effective when they are:

* realistic, do not have inflated expectations and pragmatic in terms of technical feasibility and time required to successfully implement them;
* flexible and responsive to national circumstances and Government’s needs;
* aligned with top Government priorities;
* rely on support of committed national partners who assume ownership of the projects and their outcomes;
* strategic and address sustainability aspects from the beginning of a project cycle;
* results-oriented on CP outcomes through all stages of a project cycle;
* based on effective partnership strategies; and
* led by results-focused project managers with strong leadership competencies who establish and maintain trusting relationships with national project directors and diverse stakeholders groups.

The next CP is being developed in different political circumstances and is driven by more realistic expectations.[[1]](#footnote-1) The Government of Ukraine, formed in February 2010, has actively engaged in the formulation and adoption of a set of social and economic development plans, strategies and policies. Whether the political will to implement them is credible and sustainable remains to be seen. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditionalities and a desire of the political leadership to consolidate power may create a favourable environment for a number of significant reforms. There are some important development priorities that have to be addressed by the Government that are directly linked to 4 CP Outcomes examined in this report.

In the area of democratic governance and human development, the country has to strengthen its public sector governance. Central and local government mandates and responsibilities should be clearly delineated with the goal of improving public services delivery. Participatory decision-making processes and practices should be strengthened at the national and local levels.

The legislative framework in the area of civil society should be modernized and reflect the best international practices. CSOs should strengthen their institutional capacity and become more sustainable and less dependent on donors’ funding.

Significant efforts should be undertaken to reduce poverty and eliminate barriers to social inclusion. Although Ukraine managed to reduce absolute poverty from 9 percent in 2005 to 4.5 percent in 2009, the relative poverty measure according to the nationally defined poverty line has remained stable at the level of 27 percent. The poverty level in rural areas is almost twice as high as in urban areas (38.2 percent against 21.5 percent).

Progress of the Government towards achieving MDG goals is uneven. There is a clear need to strengthen the Government practices of monitoring the MDG targets and strengthen capacities of various institutions to implement MDG-based policies and human development strategies.

The goals of gender equality should be actively pursued. Representation of women in the Parliament at 8% is very low and well below the nationally set MDG target of 30%. The gap between incomes of women and men remains significant, at around 25 percent.

UNDP aligned its assistance and programming with the Government priorities, programmes and policies. The discussion below was informed by this evaluation exercise. It identifies specific potential areas of UNDP interventions and provides some suggestions how programme design, implementation and management can be further enhanced.

## 5.1 Potential areas of interventions

UNDP has considerable influence in the area of 4 CP outcomes covered by this evaluation. UNDP enjoys a reputation of being responsive to Government needs in implementing both upstream and downstream interventions. It has demonstrated flexibility and responsiveness to the needs and circumstances of its development partners. UNDP’s solid management practices and effective and transparent procurement procedures secured trust of both the Government and the donors for funds administration.

UNDP cannot be the most capable agency involved in multiple sectors and areas at the same time. There are some areas in which it has clear competitive and comparative advantages. The analysis below may inform UNDP comprehensive competitive and comparative advantages assessment, but it is limited in its scope as it is based on the evidence from 6 projects.

**UNDP’s comparative advantages in the areas of 4 CP outcomes include:**

* Expertise and solid experience of working in such politically sensitive areas as strategic policy advice, agricultural policies, civil society development, public administration reforms, human rights and WTO accession.
* Leadership positions in promoting MDGs and MDG-focused policies and strategies.
* Well institutionalized relations with such lead ministries as the Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Agrarian Policy and the Main Department of Civil Service that play a crucial role in advancing initiatives addressing economic development, poverty reduction and administrative reforms.
* Extensive experience in implementing local community development interventions. Effective partnerships established at the regional level.
* Extensive expertise in designing upstream and downstream interventions promoting human rights.
* Solid expertise and experience in promoting gender equality through integrated and systematic approaches combining policy advice, awareness building, and education interventions at the national and local levels.
* Extensive experience of working with civil society organizations and promoting the interests of CSOs at the levels of policy and legislation.
* Ability to mobilise high quality local expertise.
* Capacity and solid experience in effective implementation of multi-million projects.
* Significant corporate expertise in such areas as MDGs, social inclusion, gender rights, public administration reforms and civil society. Ability to quickly identify and deploy internationally recognised experts in various development fields.
* Innovations, flexibility and orientation on results in building effective partnerships.

**UNDP has strong comparative advantages to implement EU-funded projects.** EU remains the largest funding source for development activities in Ukraine. The EC cooperation with Ukraine is framed by a Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), which entered into force in 1998, and the EU-Ukraine Action Plan adopted in 2005.  The PCA established an institutional framework for EU-Ukraine policy dialogue. The Association Agreement is currently under negotiation and its adoption will significantly deepen Ukraine’s political association and economic integration with the EU. The EU signed with Ukraine a Memorandum of Understanding on the National Indicative Programme for Ukraine for €470 million Euros for the period of 2011-13. It focuses on Good Governance and the Rule of Law, on the preparations for the entry into force of the Association Agreement and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, and on Sustainable Development.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Although the EU may move towards budgetary support and provide funds directly to the Government and its institutions, UNDP should consider actively exploring the areas where it can be involved in implementation of projects funded by the EU. As this evaluation demonstrates, UNDP has a number of comparative advantages in competing for EU funded projects:

* Good working relations established with the Government to operate in such politically sensitive areas as human rights, strategic economic planning and public administration reforms.
* Solid experience in community development and supporting civil society.
* Solid corporate and Ukraine-based expertise in Good Governance and the Rule of Law areas that are the focus of the EU’s National Indicative Programme for Ukraine for the period of 2011-13.
* Extensive expertise in the area of social inclusion in Ukraine that is an important area in EU’s agenda.
* Operational capacity to effectively and transparently implement EU-funded projects. UNDP has transparent and effective management practices and procurement rules that both the EU and the Government may find attractive in executing EU-funded projects. As public procurement system is still weak in Ukraine and is perceived by many as inefficient or corrupt when less quality products or services are procured and firms invest into building “connections” instead of improving their economic performance. If EU-funded projects are implemented by UNDP in cooperation with the Government, it will eliminate risks to integrity in public procurement for EU-funded projects.
* Expertise in complying with EC internal procedures such as project monitoring and verification.

Although UNDP has numerous comparative advantages, there is a range of factors that can hamper scaling up of UNDP activities in Ukraine in the areas of 4 CP outcomes:

* Ukraine is a middle income country. Although the total official development assistance (ODA) to Ukraine, excluding debt increased from 618 million USD in 2008 to 668 million USD in 2009, it is unlikely that this is a long-term trend. As income levels in the country will increase, access to larger financial resources will become more restricted.
* Total ODA, excluding debt from EU institutions to Ukraine declined from 242 million USD in 2008 to 177 million USD in 2009.[[3]](#footnote-3) As EU institutions are important UNDP’s partners, it negatively affected the organization’s ability to scale up its activities.
* The global recession pressures donor countries to cut their aid budgets and may result in lower than anticipated ODA earmarking and allocations to Ukraine in the future.
* Facing the consequences of the global economic crisis and extent of development problems Ukraine is facing, both the Government and donors are looking for possibilities to achieve more with less funding. They are open for collaboration with various partners who can deliver effective support and value for money.
* Some donors in their external assistance delivery modalities are moving towards budget support as their trust in the public financial management system of Ukraine grows.
* Many donors prefer to deliver their programmes in cooperation with companies and organizations with headquarters in their countries. For example, the Government of Canada announced in October 2010 that it is contributing over $36 million in support of six projects aligned with the Government of Ukraine’s reform plan. Five projects are focussed on creating a climate for sustainable economic growth, while a sixth project will help improve juvenile justice services and programs. These projects are implemented by Canadian agencies and companies.[[4]](#footnote-4) The recent Sweden’s Strategy for development cooperation with Ukraine also indicates that there are Swedish actors with preparedness and capacity to help Ukraine meet its undertakings and to harmonise its judicial sector and law enforcement with the EU’s regulatory framework such as the Swedish Police.[[5]](#footnote-5)
* Main competitors of UNDP Ukraine in the reviewed programme area are numerous and diverse.In addition to traditiondevelopment partners, national and international CSOs and consulting firms compete with UNDP for funding. Over the course of the last years, these players significantly strengthened their skills and positions and are capable to compete with UNDP for funding.

**Potential CP outcomes and groups of interventions to address them**

**Expand a section of CP addressing social inclusion**. UNDP supported the Government of Ukraine in establishing a system for collecting, analyzing and monitoring the social inclusion indicators. Extensive analytical and awareness raising work in the area of social inclusion in Ukraine was conducted. Social groups vulnerable to exclusion and specific barriers to their social inclusion were identified. Specific policy recommendations to advance social inclusion were developed. One of potential approaches is to work with the relevant ministries and support them in implementing a range of policies and interventions addressing social inclusion. Regardless of the focus area, the projects can combine downstream and upstream interventions to achieve the maximum impact. Two examples of potential areas of UNDP interventions addressing the goals of social inclusion are provided below.

**1. Support social inclusion of the youth**. UNDP has developed some expertise in the area of youth acquired through its YSI project. In the next CP cycle, UNDP may consider supporting development of a comprehensive Strategic Framework for Ukraine’s National Youth Policy. The state’s investments in youth are considerable, but they are made within a variety of different fields, including education, healthcare, cultural activities, and employment and often lack a strategic focus. The existing youth policies are often too broad to effectively address the specific needs of different youth groups. That is why youth policy remains ineffective, poorly targeted, and formalistic, and is treated as a low priority among the state’s domestic policies. This can be explained by uncertainty in the conceptual approach to youth policy.

Although targeted interventions addressing the needs and obstacles to social inclusion faced by the orphans, street children and other vulnerable groups of the youth should be implemented, Ukraine’s national policy should be not only problem-oriented but future-focused. It can address multiple needs of the youth to ensure a quality upbringing. It can address such areas as promotion of healthy lifestyles, aligning education and training with the needs of the labour market, promotion of job opportunities in the public administration for the youth, promotion of youth entrepreneurship. The issues of poverty, prevention of HIV/AIDS and other areas as they relate to the youth can be addressed as well. In supporting the Government to develop and implement its youth policy, it is advisable for UNDP to build partnerships with such institutions as the Ministry of Education, Science, Youth and Sport, State Service for Youth and Sports, Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, and youth work placement centres. Particular focus can be made on strengthening CSOs representing the youth and supporting their dialogue with Government decision makers at the national and local levels.

It is recommended to continue supporting existing and creating new youth centres and strengthening partnership with schools to promote educational and social opportunities for youth in rural areas. Effective partnership with Intel and other IT corporations can be extended as IT skills are critically important for human development of the youth. Trainings to rural youth in such areas as employment, money management and entrepreneurship skills can be delivered to decrease the gaps in opportunities between rural and urban youth.

Several donors are providing funds for specific youth projects in Ukraine. UNFPA and USAID are working with reproductive health and safe behavior issues for youth; UNICEF is working on children’s health and protecting children’s rights; ICF «International HIV/AIDS Alliance», UNDP and other donors are working on combating HIV epidemic which is spread mainly among youth; several donors are working with youth in the sphere of education and international cooperation – in particular, the Delegation of the European Union has several youth programs. Except for UNDP, the only donor that promotes educational and social opportunities for youth is Peace Corps Ukraine but it is not focused on rural communities. The partners do not promote the state youth policy that opens a window of opportunity for UNDP to engage with the newly created Ministry of Education, Science, Youth and Sport.

**2. Support inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWD).** Another vulnerable group that face numerous barriers to social inclusion are the persons with disabilities (PWD). Ukraine ratified the *International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* in 2010.The Convention is a comprehensive document that contains fifty articles. It encompasses such issues as the unique needs of women and children with disabilities, access to law and its protection, liberty of movement and right to a nationality, independent living and community integration, opportunities for a meaningful education, access to adequate health care and the right to equal opportunity in employment. The Government would have to introduce changes to sector-specific legislation, regulations, and policies to improve access of persons with disabilities to education, employment, information, and social and health care systems to comply with the Convention. In addition, the Government will have to establish the mechanisms necessary for ensuring compliance with the *Convention*.

UNDP is well positioned to support social inclusion of PWDs. The barriers to social inclusion of PWDs were identified in UNDP’s *Social Inclusion in Ukraine: European Choice and Social Sector Institutions* and forthcoming National Human Development report. Practical recommendations how to address them were developed as well. UNDP has practical experience in implementation of interventions supporting PWDs obtained through its *Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities through Access to Employment* project*.* Potential interventions can support the Government in meeting the requirements of the Convention and provide technical support in all areas, including accountability mechanisms, sequence of reforms, sector-specific policies and programs and public reporting requirements.

**Promote MDGs and support more systemic integration of MDGs into Government strategies, policies and programs.** Although full integration of MDGs into Government policies requires a strong and long-lasting political will, there are some positive developments in this area and UNDP is well positioned to continue to be a leader in promoting MDGs in Ukraine. UNDP should continue promoting MDGs and support the Committee of Economic Reforms to integrate MDGs into the President’s Program of Economic Reforms and design the quality of life indicators that will be based on MDGs. Specific advice on how to incorporate MDGs into sectoral policies can be provided as well. Capacity of line ministers to prepare Cabinet policy submissions that will incorporate MDGs can be enhanced. Skills on how to analyze policy issues through the prizm of MDGs, develop alternative policy options, conduct inter-ministerial consultations can be strengthened. Training on how to effectively communicate economic analysis to top decision-makers and wider public in plain and user-friendly language can be provided as well.

In addition to policy advice, more awareness and orientation seminars at the regional level on MDG localization can be delivered. Targeted interventions enhancing skills and capacity of local government officials to integrate the MDGs into local development planning can be expanded and cover all regions. The establishment of the Presidential Committee on Economic Reforms opens new opportunities to expanding MDGs and social inclusion analysis and monitoring to regional level. The regional committees for economic reforms have been organized at the oblast level. Within regional committees, working groups for different direction of reforms are organized. One of the working group is responsible for social sphere reform and improving quality of life.[[6]](#footnote-6) UNDP can support these working groups by analyzing their needs, providing trainings and establishing mechanisms to monitor quality of life indicators within MDG framework at the regional level.

In the areas supported through the MDG project, the World Bank provides supports to the Ministry of Economy in capacity building for macroeconomic forecasting, and these interventions complement the work of the MDG project. The development partners provide extensive support of the Ministry of Finance in the area of budget planning. Such areas as MDGs and MDGs-focused policies and interventions, consultative processes in elaboration of government programmes, forecasting, strategic planning and capacity building in planning across the Government are the areas where UNDP maintains comparative advantage.

**Promote strong civil society at the level of policy and through grass roots capacity building interventions.** UNDP developed expertise in strengthening civil society and facilitating the dialogue between CSOs and decision makers at both national and local levels. CSDP, for instance, has developed significant experience in facilitating cooperation of CSOs with the Government at the community level. It is advisable to continue and expand interventions supporting CSOs as achievement of CP outcomes could be accelerated through participation of grassroots communities and local champions. Particular focus can be made on building capacities of civil society organizations in fundraising as they need to compete effectively for funding in a crowded marketplace. It is unlikely that the Government will be able to afford sustaining large numbers of CSOs on its own.

Core areas that can be supported by UNDP include:

* make the legal framework for CSOs consistent with the international standards so that the establishment of new CSOs would not be hampered by an obsolete normative framework;
* conduct a series of interventions to support financial sustainability of CSOs;
* promote collaboration among CSOs; and
* strengthen CSOs’ capacities to participate in public consultations and advocate the interests of its members.

Broad based participation of CSOs in the national policy process should continue to be supported as it can improve design of policies and strategies, make them better informed and targeted. It will empower CSOs by fostering a sense of inclusion and by strengthening the voice and influence in decision making. It may be beneficial for CSDP to collaborate in this area with such UNDP projects as Community Based Approach to Local Development, Crimea Integration and Development Programme, Municipal Governance and Sustainable Development Programme, and Chornobyl Recovery and Development Programme.

Capacities of the Government in the field of public consultations with CSO should be strengthened as well so. Civil servants should be trained on how to collect and use the information obtained through consultations to improve the information base and assess all potential consequences of government decisions, including the fiscal impact and evaluate whether the policy/program addresses the actual needs of the target groups.

There are multiple partners promoting access to justice and human rights and supporting civil society. CSDP has regular contacts with such multiple partners as the European Commission Delegation, USAID (UNITER Project), International Renaissance Foundation (more with Civil Society Impact Enhancement Program than with Rule of Law Program), SIDA, OSCE, East Europe Foundation, and Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation. The close cooperation is established only with the UNITER Project in the area of promoting draft legislation concerning civil society development. CSDP developed good working relations with the Ministry of Justice of Ukraine. As UNDP’s CSDP project established good working relations with multiple partners operating in the area of supporting CSOs, UNDP is well positioned to continue implementing downstream and upstream interventions supporting development of civil society in Ukraine.

**Promote gender equality.** As UNDP gained reputation as a leader in promoting gender equality opportunities, it is advisable to continue working in this area. Moreover, UNDP continuous involvement is needed because a change of the Government put in decision making positions individuals with insufficient awareness and knowledge of the importance of gender issues. Long-term interventions are needed to ensure a shift of gender stereotypes and improve gender sensitivity – within both the government and the Ukrainian society.

UNDP may continue supporting gender mainstreaming into public policy and legislation as well as educational system; focus on improving the system of prevention of domestic violence; and conduct public awareness campaigns on gender equality. It may be beneficial to expand cascade trainings of civil servants to oblast/rayon levels, focus on practical aspects of their work and incorporate gender-related issues into the educational programmes for civil servants. As the interventions strengthening the system of prevention of domestic violence proved to be highly relevant and effective, it is recommended to promote legislation and infrastructure improvements in the areas of punishment of perpetrators and protection of victims; continue cascade training of police officers; support incorporation of gender-related issues into the educational programmes for police officers; communicate success stories on police help to the victims of domestic violence to general public; and facilitate horizontal coordination and integrated response to domestic violence of different governmental agencies (law enforcement institutions, social and medical services institutions, educational establishments). Such issues as gender balance in the civil service and in retrenchment, gender stereotyping in public service employment, and performance and training opportunities of women in the public service can be addressed as well.

Several donors and international organizations are involved in the area of gender equality and women’s rights in Ukraine, and the UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, ILO) are among the most active, dealing with the gender issues within their respective mandates. UNDP has been working with gender issues since 1997, and was involved in policy development, awareness raising, and capacity building. SIDA is the major donor in the field, having funded most of UNDP’s activities on gender issues.

OSCE implements some activities aimed at building capacity of the local authorities in gender mainstreaming and working with domestic violence perpetrators; IOM is dealing with human trafficking problem in Ukraine; IRF is at times supporting limited number of projects on various gender-related issues (e.g. Public Monitoring of the State Program on Gender Equality till 2010 project). Other donors (for instance, CIDA, SDC and USAID), though not financing gender projects, are mainstreaming gender approach into programmes and projects they fund – taking account of both the differences and the inequalities between men and women in programme planning, implementation, and assessment.

Currently Women’s and Children’s Rights in Ukraine Action launched by the EU is the most large-scaled intervention in the area of gender equality. It has reasonable distribution of function between its components: UNDP is focused on state policy, education and domestic violence, ILO - on promoting gender equality on labour market, Council of Europe - on adapting legislative framework to European standards, UNICEF - on helping children in difficult life circumstances (pilot project in Khmelnytsky region), Safege – on informational and awareness campaign. However, the Programme’s functions partially overlap with the functions of the Council of Europe (in the area of improving legislation framework) and Safege (in awareness campaign against domestic violence).

The important advantages of the UNDP’s EOWR is its long-term integrated and systematic approach to gender mainstreaming. It has the strongest working relations with the authorities among all donor projects in the field to work on policy level. The project has significant expertise in implementing effective awareness campaigns among the general public and civil servants, teachers, and police officers. UNDP is well-positioned to continue and expand its interventions in the field of gender equality.

**Support the Government in the area of public administration reforms**. In December 2010 the Presidential Decree envisaging reduction of the number of ministries from 20 to 16, as well as reduction of the number of central government agencies almost in half was adopted. The second stage of administrative reform will focus on reducing the number of civil servants in local administrations.

One of the reforms of the central Government bodies should ensure clear division of responsibilities among ministries and agencies. As UNDP has some corporate expertise in functional reviews, it can support the Government in restructuring of ministries that could address such problems as lack of strategic focus, operational inefficiencies, weak accountability for results, coordination problems and sub-optimal use of resources. The scope of functional reviews could be wide ranging and include assessment of systemic and structural constraints, organization structures, establishment and staffing levels, and management systems.

As UNDP has conducted some work with SIGMA in the context of its CSR project, it may be beneficial to explore the opportunities for further collaboration with SIGMA. SIGMA expertise may be needed to support all aspects of Government public administration reforms.

UNDP may also promote its positive experience with the model of the School for Senior Civil Servants and support development of in-service training centres with such key ministries as the Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Finance. In the Ministry of Economy the in-service training centre can constitute a part of the MDG Project as it has been successful in conducting seminars on strategic planning for Ministry and oblast administration staff. In supporting in-service training centres, UNDP may consider establishing partnership arrangements with the National Academy of Public Administration that will allow targeting a wider audience of public servants, alignment of the relevant curricula and sharing successful practices.

The areas supported by the CSR are targeted by multiple partners. When UNDP’s CSR project was completed, the School for Senior Civil Service Officials managed to secure funding from such donors as CIDA, Danish Government, USAID and UK Department for International Development (DFID) that demonstrates the School’s ability to manage donors’ funds and execute projects. Pre-service and some in-service civil service training interventions targeting broader audiences are implemented by the National Academy of Public Administration through its Twinning project funded by EU. CIDA-funded project implemented by a Canadian company "Ukrainian Civil Service Human Resources Management Reform (UCS-HRM)" supports MDCS in reforming of the classification system in connection to the remuneration system for civil servants; introducing of new approaches to the annual evaluation of the performance of civil servants; and reforming of the system of professional training for civil servants.

UNDP may explore the possibilities for potential cooperation in various areas of PAR with all partners. Once the areas are identified, UNDP may consider approaching potential donors to support the necessary interventions.

**Support the Government in establishing an effective policy lifecycle at both central and line ministries levels.** UNDP interventions contributed to building consensus on reforms so that many politicians, civil servants and experts share the common beliefs and ideas on what should be implemented to advance human development of the country.

It is a common belief of experts and stakeholders that the effectiveness of policymaking institutions and processes as well as capacity of public administration should be enhanced to implement these reforms. One of the first priorities identified by stakeholders through the interviews, is a need to enhance state’s capacity in effective policymaking and coordination so that it will be able to implement a series of reforms on which there is a consensus. Core steps of a typical policy cycle existing in OECD and EU countries are presented in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Core Steps of the Policy Cycle**:[[7]](#footnote-7)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Political Agenda Setting** | 1. defining the government’s priorities; 2. annual policy and legislative planning; |
| **Policy Development** | 1. preparation of policy proposals (including policy analysis, impact assessment, consultations with civil society); 2. preparation of legal drafts[[8]](#footnote-8); 3. inter-ministerial consultations; 4. submission of items to the government office; 5. review by the government office; 6. review by ministerial committees; |
| **Legitimation** | 1. decision by the government (Council of Ministers); 2. parliamentary process and passage; |
| **Implementation and evaluation** | 1. implementation; and   12. monitoring and evaluation |

To support the institutionalization of the policy cycle or at least its key elements consistent with OECD and EU models, UNDP may focus on two areas of support:

1. Provide technical support and help the Government in establishing a policy cycle consistent with the best international practices. Strengthen capacity of the Cabinet of Ministers’ staff to maintain standards of effective policy cycle. The Government can be supported in developing internal administrative regulations on key steps and requirements of the policy cycle. Supporting training materials and templates can be developed and widely disseminated among central agencies and line ministries. Technical support can be provided in developing of guides and protocols to ensure consistency in policy products and processes. Regular Government-wide training on how to prepare policy submissions could be delivered as well. The central Government agencies such as the Cabinet of Ministers’ staff and staff of the President’s Administration can be also supported in promoting practices of horizontal inter-ministerial coordination.Horizontal coordination should be enhanced because many issues, particularly in strategic policy or complex policies, do not fall within the mandate of one ministry and requires integration of diverse expertise and perspectives.

2. Support a few line ministries with implementation of specific strategies on which a consensus among stakeholders and experts has been reached.Practical and hands-on support could be provided on how to assess policy alternatives relying on solid evidence (e.g., distributional effects of policy reforms on the well-being or welfare of the targeted groups or poverty), identify policy instrument(s) to be used, and outline sequence of steps. Training could focus on such key elements of developing effective Cabinet of Ministers’ submissions as how to present decision sought**,** describe context for action, present recommended course of action, identify results to be achieved, including performance measures, outline fiscal implications, present economic and business impact analysis, risks assessment and mitigation strategies to address these risks, and present other options considered. Support can be provided also in the areas of policy implementation. For example, line ministries may be supported in developing policy implementation plans that include specific targets, performance measures and indicators measuring policy success. Particular attention could be paid to promoting participatory approaches to policymaking. Civil servants should be properly trained to engage into constructive dialogue with the public and NGOs and be capable to proceed beyond the policy formulation stage to encompass policy approval, implementation and the ongoing evaluation of change initiatives.

**Provide targeted policy support in the area of agricultural policy.** UNDP through its BRAAC project established very good working relations with the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and positioned itself as a reliable provider of high quality advice and support in the field of agricultural policies. BRAAC’s experts participated in internal meetings at the level of deputy minister and always promptly responded to Ministry’s requests. BRAAC project clients in the Ministry highly valued the support provided by the project, especially in the area of WTO accession.

The Government plans to introduce a number of reforms in this sector, including creation of a transparent market for agricultural land based on a unified land cadastre system and harmonize the system of standards and technical regulation of agricultural products according to EU standards. As UNDP is well positioned in the field of agricultural policy, it should continue providing policy and technical support in this area. As the market of agricultural land will be introduced in 2013, rural residents will be significantly affected. UNDP’s involvement in this sector is critical to ensure that the interests of rural vulnerable groups are taken into consideration in the process of reforms. As UNDP is a neutral organization, free of lobbying of any specific country interests, it is very well positioned to expand its supports in the area of agricultural policies.

## 5.2 Programme Design, Implementation and Management, including Coordination and Monitoring of Outcomes

The evaluation team suggests a number of strategies and changes that can further enhance UNDP positions and improve projects’ effectiveness, impact and sustainability. Core recommendations are provided below, while specific project-level analysis and suggestions can be found in respective individual evaluation reports and summaries (see Annexes 6.1-6.6).

**As a number of strategies were adopted and commitments made, the Government needs extensive support in practical implementation of reform measures**. More practical interventions helping the Government to achieve its goals can be considered. The Government may benefit from technical assistance on how to prioritize, sequence policies, interventions, and other measures, produce budget estimates, adopt transparent and effective management processes to implement the existing and forthcoming policies as they relate to human development and social inclusion.

**Enhance strategic long-term focus of interventions and remain flexible.** It is beneficial for UNDP to become more strategic in developing interventions to achieve CP outcomes. Sustainable change requires a long-term, multi-faceted approach that seeks to strengthen institutional, policy, capacity and other foundations in respective CP areas. While the importance of UNDP maintaining a strategic, long-term focus is fundamental to achieving CP outcomes, equal need exists for its interventions to have greater flexibility and enhanced capacity for rapid response to better address emerging issues and changing circumstances especially in upstream interventions where political and economic circumstances may rapidly change.

**Combine downstream and upstream interventions in projects, where appropriate.** The application of upstream and downstream approaches can be an effective mechanism to build and/or strengthen horizontal and vertical networks and links and achieve sustainable impact at the national and local levels. For example, UNDP projects targeting local development have developed significant expertise and knowledge about local human development needs, and their success should be supported by strong policy dialogue and knowledge sharing work at the national level. If these lessons are not translated into a policy area, there is always a risk that downstream interventions can become narrowly oriented at regions and municipalities with limited impact on national level CP outcomes. UNDP has strong capacities and good relations with the Government to pick up knowledge and learning from its downstream interventions and translate them to good policies and replicable programmes. It could also use the knowledge acquired through downstream interventions to encourage policy dialogue between the central and local governments, government and civil society and private sector. The knowledge acquired through upstream interventions can be used to inform local government actions and promote dialogue of CSOs and decision makers.

I**ncrease external visibility and actively promote UNDP achievements and capacities**. UNDP should continue promoting itself as a strong partner who can be trusted with implementation of a wide range of initiatives. Public relations campaigns and targeted dissemination of information can be implemented. UNDP projects’ results and achievements should be more widely disseminated, including amongst the direct beneficiaries, so as to increase the level of national and local ownership and the sustainability of the projects’ results.[[9]](#footnote-9) These activities will further enhance partners’ trust and credibility of UNDP and will help in attracting funding.

**Enhance results management practices.** UNDP has to demonstrate how and where the organization is making a measurable contribution to human development. Strengthening of results-based management (RBM) practices would help managers to achieve these goals by learning from results and empirical evidence and use that evidence to adjust either the projects under their control or the composition of the portfolio of projects to maximize the contribution of UNDP to CP outcomes. In addition to improved management and more strategic allocation of resources, strengthening of focus on results would allow to better demonstrate the effectiveness, impact and sustainability of UNDP’s interventions on development outcomes to all relevant stakeholders that is critically important in promoting UNDP among its partners. RBM in UNDP is based on four main pillars:

* the definition of strategic goals which provides a focus for action;
* the specification of expected results which contribute to these goals and align programmes, processes and resources behind them;
* on-going monitoring and assessment of performance, integrating lessons learnt into future planning; and
* improved accountability, continuous feedback performance.[[10]](#footnote-10)

The focus on results in project design, approval, implementation, and reporting processes should be strengthened.

**Align monitoring and evaluation processes and practices with the RBM**. Quantifiable baseline data along with indicators should be identified in measurable terms and by date. Effective monitoring and evaluation cannot be provided without this data and are not only important for monitoring and evaluation requirements but also for providing data for programme guidance and determining the contributions of partners. Additionally, they are valuable in building internal morale through measurable evidence of UNDP’s performance and achievements.

UNDP Ukraine has to capitalize on what has been achieved and promote a stronger culture of results. The Country Office can develop an internal system of outcome monitoring through results-based performance measures on the basis of a new CP. The performance measures would help the projects to stay focused on CP outcomes and monitor their performance from the beginning of the projects. These measures should reflect the contribution of UNDP’s interventions to the achievement of CP outcomes; measure the projects’ effectiveness and avoid excessive focus on outputs and activities; provide, in combination with other measures, a complete picture of a cluster contribution to outcomes; be practical and provide information needed to make decisions about the project; and provide an accurate and timely information about the projects. For example, the measures for upstream policy interventions can include a number of specific policy recommendations adopted by the Government, satisfaction of clients with the quality and timeliness of analytical work provided by UNDP project as well as independent experts’ reviews of projects’ analytical products. In addition to meeting UNDP accountability requirements, ongoing project monitoring is an effective measurement mechanism to assess projects’ performance that reduces the need in independent evaluation.

As this evaluation demonstrates, rapidly changing circumstances, emerging challenges and opportunities require an RBM framework to be flexible enough to review and adjust measures and expectations over time. This process is often evolutionary and advances through a trial and error through all stages of the project cycle.

**One of the practical and effective tools of the RBM is logic models** that help the management and staff to stay focused better on outcomes, connect outputs to long-term outcomes and link activities and processes to desired outcomes. It is advisable for the projects to develop a project’s logic model that will provide a roadmap of UNDP project, highlighting how its elements will work, what activities will come before others, and how desired outcomes will be achieved. As the project is being implemented, logic models help to measure each set of events in the model to see what happens, what works, what doesn’t work, and for whom.

**Introduce a Knowledge Management system.** There is no clearinghouse mechanism for the UNDP existing or closed project portfolio. It is beneficial for the Country Office to develop a knowledge management system that is able to collect, synthesize, and disseminate knowledge and make it more readily accessible to staff and partners. One of the common knowledge gaps in most organizations is the lack of capturing experiential learning for key processes within the organization. Thus, the staff often expresses the frustration of “reinventing the wheel”. Knowledge management tools can capture institutional memory and promote effectiveness, sustainability and synergy of UNDP projects. The Country Office can establish a document database for UNDP Ukraine projects portfolio, which would codify and capture all materials produced by the projects.

**Utilise effective partnerships strategies developed through the 2006-2011 CP cycle.** As UNDP has developed extensive partnership networks through its projects, it should continue to explore innovative approaches to partnerships through joint programming, cost sharing and other arrangements, where possible. This evaluation found that multi-stakeholder partnerships currently play important roles both at the operational and policy level. A number of strategies that made partnerships effective and efficient was identified. They can be used by UNDP through the next programme cycle:

* Continue utilising Project Boards that comprise multiple stakeholders. Their involvement helped to adjust the projects to changing political and socio-economic circumstances to benefit from opening windows of opportunity.
* Maintain continuous dialogues with key stakeholders to gather their feedback on projects’ performance, identify areas for improvement, explore potential partnership arrangements and sustainability measures as well as build their ownership of projects’ outcomes.
* Encourage experimentation with various partnerships arrangements.
* Continue exploring innovative strategies of building partnerships with the private sector.
* Keep partnerships goals oriented and focused on delivering practical results. Without tangible results, many partnerships would not be sustainable.
* Be flexible and accommodating as partners come with different sets of priorities, views, resources and practices.
* Review all partnership strategies used by UNDP projects. As this evaluation demonstrates, six projects reveal some lessons and effective practice, but a more systematic analysis and evaluation of partnership experiences across programmes can be conducted.
* Strengthen collaboration among UNDP projects. There is a clear room for improvement in creating better synergies among relevant UNDP projects.

**Enhance focus on sustainability and employ a range of instruments that proved to be successful in ensuring sustainability of programme results.** This evaluation identified a number of successful strategies that helped UNDP to ensure sustainability of programme results. It is recommended to utilize these strategies through the next CP cycle:

* Pay more attention to the question of exit or possible follow-on project at the early stages of the project cycle.
* Build strong relations with the national partners to ensure their ownership of the project and its outcomes. It increases their commitment to ensuring project’s sustainability.
* Address the goals of ensuring project sustainability through all stages of the project cycle.
* Design local level interventions with the goal of ensuring that they can be upscaled in support of broader policy and programmatic development results.
* Support CSOs by strengthening their sustainability through such interventions as capacity building in fundraising.
* Ensure that upstream interventions have a significant capacity building element with such beneficiary-focused measures as hands-on practical training opportunities for civil servants on how to conduct analysis, draft policy documents, and develop results-based budgets. Regular training needs assessments can be conducted to accurately define gaps between existing staff competencies and the required competency levels.
* Use resources of National Project Directors more proactively and seek their input into identifying the areas of potential follow-on projects and sustainability-building measures that are relevant to their ministries/agencies.

1. The CPD is based on development challenges identified in the UN CCA, and its response as outlined in the UN UNDAF. See, Government of Ukraine – United Nations Partnership Framework, 2012-2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Statement by Commissioner Štefan Füle following the Signature of the Memorandum of Understanding on the National Indicative Programme for Ukraine. 02/03/11, http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/11/133&format=HTML&aged=0&language=en&guiLanguage=en [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Source: OECD. StatExtracts. http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=ODA\_RECIP [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Canadian support in Ukraine. http://www.pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=3744 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden. 2009. *Strategy for development cooperation with Ukraine. January 2009-December 2013*. Stockholm. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See <http://www.president.gov.ua/content/ker-regions.html> for a list of regional committees for economic reforms. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. OECD Sigma, *The Role of Ministries in the Policy System: Policy Development, Monitoring and Evaluation*, Sigma Paper no. 39. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. In the case of YSI project, for instance, many experts who were interviewed identified limited project visibility as one of its weaknesses. Project’s communication officer join the team only in July 2010. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. UNDP. 2002. Results Based Management. Concepts and Methodology. http://www.undp.org/evaluation/documents/RBMConceptsMethodgyjuly2002.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-10)