INTERMEDIATE EVALUATION OF THE UNDP GLOBAL ART INITIATIVE

ANNEX 3 – THE EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

A) Conceptual Framework

Human Development Paradigm and the Capability Approach

If the ART Initiative has elaborated relevant processes and procedures, from a theoretical point of view there is still the need to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework to capture the complexity of ART approach from the Human Development Paradigm point of view (UNDP, 1990; Deneulin, 2009).

There are strong theoretical connections among the Human Development Paradigm and the Capability Approach. Indeed, as stated by the Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen "The Capability Approach provides the intellectual foundation for human development. This approach considers human well being, participation and freedom to be central economic and social objectives." Sen and other human development scholars view development as the "expansion of capabilities" or "positive freedoms" (Sen, 1999). Human beings are thus the ends of economic activity rather than merely means. This is why "the capability approach proposes a change – a serious departure – from concentrating on the means of living to the actual opportunities of living in itself" (Sen, 2009: 17). Resources are indeed important for promoting the functionings and capabilities of persons but only as instrumental means for human flourishing[1]-[2].

Therefore, the development of each human being is the result of a complex interaction between personal 'internal' characteristic, household characteristics and environmental factors. The range of "possible functionings" for persons, their "capability set", may thus be restricted due to their capacity, or be limited by their social and physical environment at the local/territorial and national level. Therefore, the ability to convert resources and commodities into capabilities and functionings depends on conversion factors. The conversion factors can be internal or societal/environmental. The "internal" conversion factors such as personal characteristics (e.g. physical conditions, sex, skills, talents, intelligence) allow individuals to convert resources and commodities (or their characteristics) into individual functionings. The conversion is also related to social factors (e.g. public policies, institutions, legal rules, traditions, social norms, discriminating practices, gender roles, societal hierarchies, power relations, public goods) and environmental factors (e.g. climate, geographical infrastructure).

The essential idea of the capability approach is that social arrangements should aim to expand people's capabilities – their freedom to promote or achieve valuable beings and doings. From a territorial/local perspective the approach points out that the 'functionings' i.e. "working valuable activities expressed by a territorial system" (or local development system) are key conversion factors that give a person the possibility to flourish i.e. expand his/her capabilities. However, the paradigm tends to overlook the meso-level characteristics in relation to achieved and achievable functionings. Therefore, although individual level per-se remains the best way to evaluate the impact of policies (Sen, 1999), a change of perspective is necessary i.e. to focus on the characteristics and functionings of the territorial/local systems themselves where individual human beings live and interact.

The following conceptual framework for Integrated Sustainable Human Development at the Local level responds to the challenge to overcome these limitations all at once maintaining a consistent reference to the Capability Approach.

Integrated Sustainable Human Development ISHD - Conceptual Framework –

The ISHD process is described in the following Figure (3), where at the centre of the diagram instead of the person there is a Local Development System (LDS) within a Region (different stakeholders are not specified here). In order to function in terms of ISHD the LDS deals with several resources and barriers (represented on

[1] "A functioning is an achievement whereas a capability is the ability to achieve. Functionings are, in a sense, more directly related to living conditions since they are different aspects of living conditions. Capabilities, in contrast, are notions of freedom in the positive sense: what real opportunities you have regarding the life you may lead" (1987, p. 36).

[2] "The most basic capabilities for human development are to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living and to be able to participate in the life of the community. Without these, many choices are simply not available, and many opportunities in life remain inaccessible" (UNDP, 1990, p. 11).

the left top) and different institutions and norms (bottom end). The multilevel governance it represented by the presence of different stakeholders at local, Regional, National and International levels. A figure representing the theoretical framework for ISHD processes is included as annex to this document.

The LDS has a set of capacities/abilities (on the right) which can be influenced also by capacity building strategies. The LDS functionings and achieved functionings depend on enabling or disabling factors[3]. In other words, a LDS, given available and existing resources, barriers, institutions and capacities and interaction among these enabling factors and different stakeholders, can function in different ways that can be represented through a vector of achievable functionings or opportunities to function. Throughout the choice process (depending on political committment and the participation of civil society) the functions are activated and the results of functionings are achieved at the LDS level (i.e. ultimately how the LDS performs).

It is important to notice that from a Human Development Paradigm perspective the final outcome at the LDS level correspond to the conversion factors in the standard Capability Approach framework conceived at the individual level by Sen (1999) and other scholars (see for instance, Robeyns, 2003; Ballet et al, 2011). In other words, achieved functionings at the local level - like for instance enabling access to social services and economic opportunities, or a pollution-free environment - are seen as a condition for enabling individual functioning.

The process is dynamic and there are different types of feed-back loops and several processes in action among different actors: private-public, local/regional, National/international, which need to be facilitated in order to foster an ISHD framework. These feed-back loops increase the ownership and 'agency' of the LDS[4].

The process described in figure 2 synthesizes how the ART Initiative enables Local Development Systems to function better, working at the same time horizontally and vertically to induce multiplier effects in channeling resources and/or reducing barriers: improving capacities and processes at LDS level, facilitating access to knowledge and funds, building alliances and harmonizing external support, mainstreaming adopted practices in the international debate.

Eventually, if the local system functions adequately it will increase individuals' wellbeing through the expansion of their capabilities (opportunities and capacities), reducing barriers to participation and facilitating access to services and resources.

In conclusion, the value of multi-level articulation is in the capacity to foster – on one side - endogenous resources including local stakeholders participation and agency, and - on the other side - to integrate them with resources and competences coming from different stakeholders from other territories. The institutionalization and mainstreaming of the processes is in turn an enabling factors for reinforcing and reproducing ISHD at the local level.

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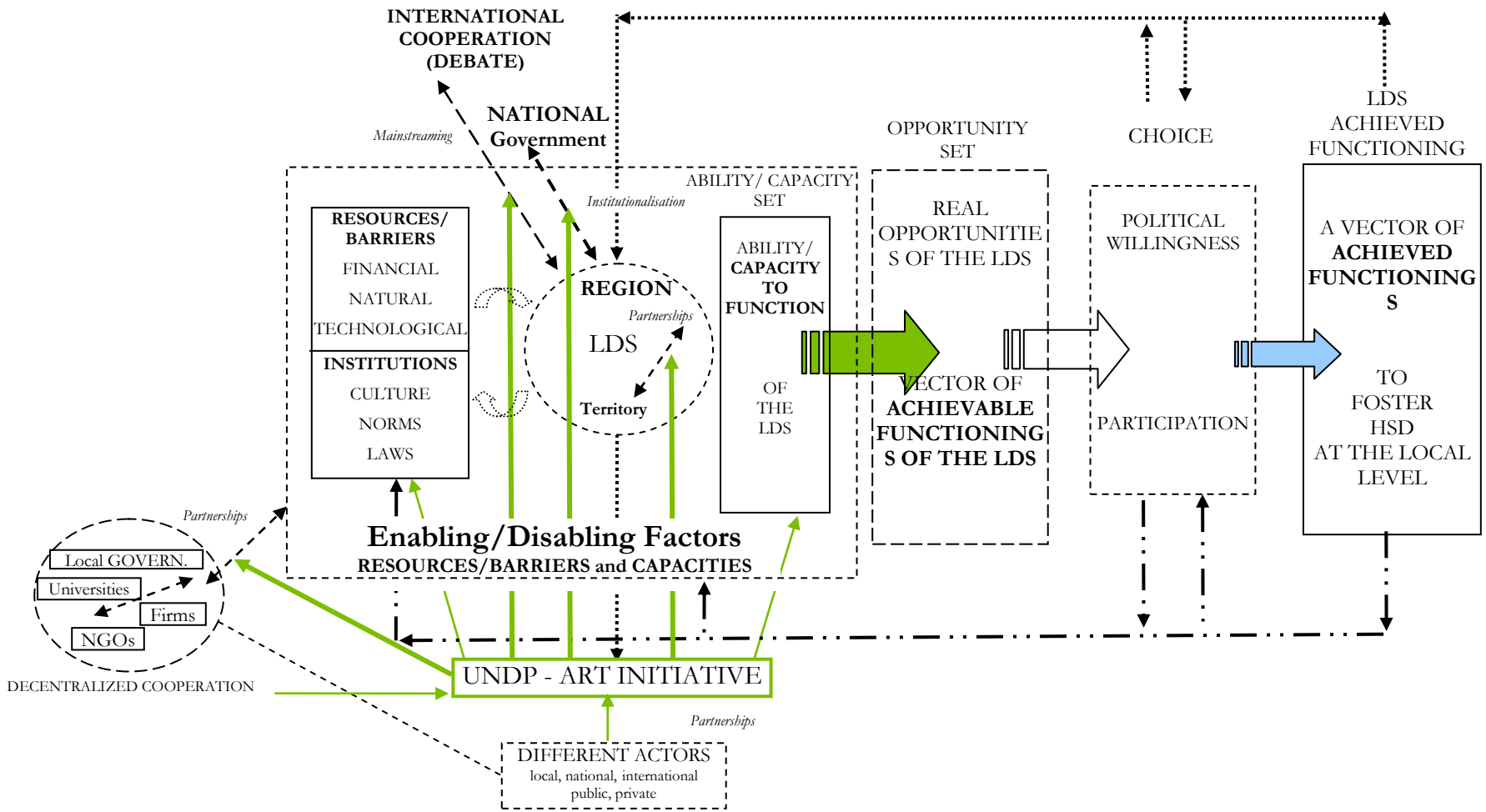
[3] Examples of enabling factors include trust, consensus, dialogue and cooperation between citizens. Disabling factors are for instance a state of conflict and insecurity. Such factors at the level of a local system. Specific mechanisms supported by the ART initiative, like for examples Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDAs), act in this sense as enabling factors, influencing the transformation of opportunities into achieved functionings at the level of local systems.

[4] In general, 'agency at local level' can be seen as the capacity to affect the processes at work in their own territory or as general rules in the national and international arena (throughout dialogue, cooperation and alliances).

ISHD Process

Integrated Sustainable Human Development Process



Process of Integrated Sustainable Human Development expansion / reduction

- Opportunities to function (Empowerment)
- Achieved functioning (Advancement)
- Processes (dialogue/articulation/capacity building)
- LDS Feed-backs Loops
- Feed-backs loops
- ART Initiative on processes/dialogue, capacity building
- ART Initiative (resources and skills catalysers)

Biggeri (2012)

The articulation of the ART Initiative

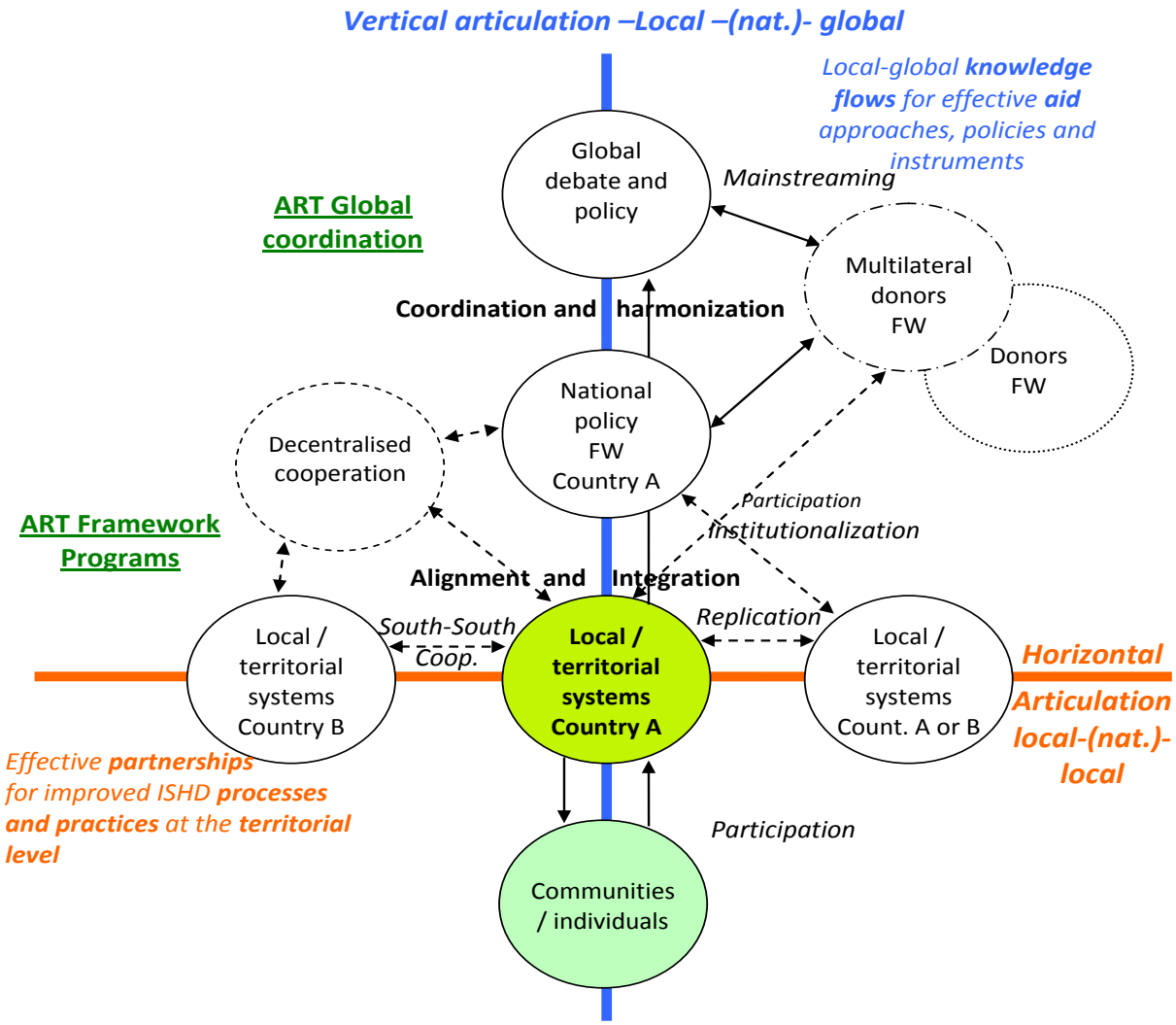
The ART initiative aims at empowering and advancing local development systems (LDSs) from an Integrated Sustainable Human Development (ISHD) perspective, through dynamic and iterative processes based on dialogue between actors within and across territories. The focus is on the territorial level, but the national and the global dimension are addressed as part of an integrated process.[5]

In turn, in the ART conceptual framework the local and the global dimensions are connected and integrated along two main coordinates based on the articulation of the initiative at the horizontal and the vertical level. Finally, two levels of intervention are combined in order to address such multidimensional and multi-level complexity, i.e. a global coordination mechanism and different framework programs at the country (and territorial) level.

The following figure attempts to summarise and visualise such complexity, presenting **ART as an enabling factor of Integrated and Sustainable Human Development (ISHD) at the territorial level within a multi-level governance framework.**

[5] In this perspective a local development system cannot be isolated from the rest of the world, the relational dimension based on dialogue with national and international stakeholders is therefore key to the approach.

Figure 2: The ART multilevel intervention logic



At the local level, the ART Initiative supports the empowerment of local stakeholders through improved institutions, capacities and processes. This constitutes the basis for the alignment and a 'demand-driven' integration between internal and external actions and functions within a territory.

At the global level, the ART initiatives facilitate harmonised and coordinated actions in support of locally identified priorities, in order to expand local stakeholders' opportunities to 'function', through the mobilisation of resources, competences and skills from other territories. At the same time, the initiative works to mainstream tested practices and approaches within national policy frameworks and within the global debate on international aid policies and practice.

The horizontal articulation of the ART Initiative reflects – along a local-(national)-local sequence supported by country framework programs in combination with the global coordination mechanism - the dialogue and interaction between actors within a territory and from other territories within decentralized and South-(North)-South cooperation frameworks. This dialogue is aimed at facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experience for improved processes, practices and functions of local development systems at given territorial levels. Partnerships within and across territories facilitate in turn the replication and institutionalization of introduced practices.

The vertical articulation reflects – along a two-ways local-(national)-global and global-(national)-local sequence – the flow of knowledge and resources for improved policy and aid frameworks at the national and global level, on the one hand - and the provision of relevant, effective support at the local level on the other. The vertical articulation aims at mainstreaming effective approaches and tools as a basis for improved coordination of different actors' strategies and interventions, and is mainly facilitated by the ART coordination mechanism in combination with country framework programs and decentralized partners.

An adequate conceptual framework has to address at once the effectiveness of the ART initiative in enabling improved local development functions (given local and international processes in action) as well as in fostering – starting from the local practice - improved policy making and mainstreaming processes as a basis for further effective support on local systems.

The key theoretical issue is how to reconcile this 'circular complexity' with the Human Development paradigm. This academic exercise is central not just for the evaluation conceptual framework but for the mainstreaming process of the ART Initiative.

Further elements of details on the conceptual framework adopted for this evaluation in relation to a human development and capability approach is presented in annex to this document.

b) Methodological framework

Focus of the evaluation:

The main focus of the evaluation was on capturing the multi-level articulation and integration of actors and resources for territorial development, looking at the ART Initiative[6] as:

-an 'enabling platform' for a two-ways/mutual feeding relation and linkages between global and national policies, on the one hand, and improved processes and practices at the local level, on the other.

-a vector of systemic change in local functions through dialogue within and across territories in support to mandates and capacities of local actors and institutions.

The following 'qualifying dimensions' contribute to define the ART Initiative, which is inherently:

Territorial	**The territory as the 'natural' context for a dynamic and people-centered approach to sustainable human development, as the place where 'relations' between actors take place and develop**
Knowledge and partnership based	Knowledge as the main – unlimited – resource that can be generated through exchange and dialogue between and within territories as a basis for cost-effective aid processes and mutual learning
Demand-driven	The articulation of local needs through participatory and locally owned planning processes as the basis for mobilizing and align support by external actors, building synergies and complementarities around identified priorities. At the opposite end of supply-driven and

[6] From here onwards, indistinct reference to 'ART' will include both the global coordination mechanism and the different framework programmes at country level.

	project based cooperation
Integrated and holistic	As alternative to vertical/sectoral approaches and fragmented interventions: structural, sustainable improvements in specific thematic areas derive from the integration of socio-economic and environmental dimensions and different actors' functions and mandates
Multi-dimensional	The (horizontal) integration between actors, resources, and functions within and across territories and (vertical) between territories and national and global frameworks, entails a dynamic and multi-layer framework, based on different levels (local, national, global), different stakeholders (public, private, civil society), different sectors and disciplines (economic development, social services provision, governance, environmental management etc..)
Catalytic	The key thrust of the ART Initiative is to act as a facilitating platform, favouring the interaction of local actors between them and with external partners (decentralized cooperation actors, donors, other local and national governments...) in order to strengthen their capacity in fulfilling respective mandates

The evaluation questions

In order to capture and reflect the articulation of the ART Initiative, linking the conceptual framework with the implementation process, the evaluation framework was completed with the introduction of core evaluation questions. In turn, core evaluation questions were organized within an evaluation matrix, where an indicative set of sub-questions, indicators, methods and sources of information collection is associated to each core question.

The evaluation matrix was the instrument for operationalizing the evaluation framework, and served as a guideline and checklist through the different steps of the information collection process. It was therefore declined and adjusted as a basis for the use of specific tools at different levels of the process: (i) in relation to the specificity of framework programmes for use during in-country missions; (ii) in relation to the specificity of the interlocutor as a basis for consultations with different international partners and (iii) in relation to the specificity of the instrument as a basis for the elaboration of a standard questionnaire for all other country framework programmes.

The following table present the core evaluation questions (1) and their relation with standard evaluation criteria. The full matrix is presented in annex to this report.

Table 1: The proposed core evaluation questions

EQ 1	**To what extent is the ART framework evolving and consolidating in accordance with international and national strategic development priorities?**
-More descriptive, overall ART context analysis and profiling. Provides a general profile in relation to the evolution and core results of the initiative in terms of coverage, access to resources and partners, approach. Focus is also on the responsiveness of the current and prospective evolution of the ART Initiative in relation to strategic priorities at national and international level, and to the expectations of some of its key stakeholders	
EQ 2	**To what extent is the global ART Initiative contributing to the establishment of improved systems of actors for Integrated and Sustainable Human Development (ISHD) at the territorial level?**
-Focus on the empowerment of local systems, following the core sequence structures-capacities-processes (or enabling factors) as reflected in the theoretical framework for human development applied to the meso-level. Focus at outcomes level (advancement) is on aid effectiveness at the local level, in terms or ownership, alignment and harmonization, and the effects of innovative thematic practices on the functioning of local systems – as part of an integrated/holistic approach to systemic change (as opposed to project-based intervention)	
EQ 3	**To what extent is the ART Initiative contributing to improved coordination and access to shared knowledge and resources for ISHD at the territorial level through dialogue and articulation of actors across territories?**
-Focus on the horizontal integration between actors across territories, as a basis for channelling and exchanging – facilitating access to - resources and knowledge. Analysis of effective coordination mechanism for allowing the match-making between local needs (demand-side) and the provision of expertise and support to address them (supply-side) -Focus on decentralized and South-(North)-South cooperation frameworks as vectors of a demand-driven and integrated (as opposed to supply driven and fragmented) approach.	
EQ 4	**To what extent is the ART Initiative contributing to improved policy frameworks for decentralization and local development?**
-Focus on the bottom-up (vertical) integration between local and national dimension, or the extent to which locally tested	

practices constitute an input for improved decentralization and local development policies	
EQ 5	**To what extent is the ART Initiative showing an added value in the evolution of the international development cooperation framework?**
-Complete the analysis of the vertical articulation through a focus on the relation between ART programmes (field practices) and coordination mechanism, and progress in the international development cooperation framework, including debate, partnerships, policies and tools.	

Implementation process

Data collection methods and tools

- Documentary review

The evaluation has been based on an in-depth review of relevant documents provided by ART coordination and country teams, covering the International, Regional, and National/local level (with reference to ART Framework Programmes in Morocco, Ecuador and Colombia). Additional documents have been collected from different stakeholders and analysed during the implementation of the evaluation.

- Interviews with key informants at different levels

Semi - structured / open-ended interviews with key informants were conducted (i) during in-country missions and through a (ii) wider consultation of different groups of international stakeholders. Beyond discussing specific issues in the wake of the matrix, interviews followed an open-ended, iterative approach, in order to stimulate at once a retrospective and prospective analysis and capture the general perception and appreciation of consulted stakeholders in relation to the broader standing of the ART Initiative, its current and prospective evolution, related challenges and implications.

- Structured Focus Group Discussion (SFGDs)

During in-country visits, the evaluation team implemented seven SFGDs exercises at the local level (2 in the Tangier Tetouan region in Morocco; three in the Department of Nariño, Colombia; one in the Municipality of Montufar, El Carchi Province, and one in the Municipality of Playas, in Ecuador) and one at the national level in Quito, Ecuador. The SFGD served as specific qualitative impact evaluation exercises in the framework of ART programmes. The table below presents a snapshot of the methodology applied in conducting SFGDs.

Box 1 : methodology for pilot qualitative impact analysis

The applied methodology is based on the human development paradigm and the capability approach, and the ensuing theoretical framework elaborated and adopted for this evaluation, as presented in the methodological report and in annex to this document. The main idea is to assess the contribution of ART to improved local systems, which are defined as sets of capacities, functions (for example institutional functions, or professional/private functions) and relations (interaction, coordination, etc..) between local actors and with external interlocutors.

The methodology applied is based on a qualitative procedure with participatory methods. The methodology presents a retrospective analysis and the impact of ART is assessed thanks to a "perceived counterfactual" (how the level of functioning of the system could have turned out without the intervention of ART). This enables us to capture the role of UNDP\ART and the relevance of the impact of his actions at the local, national and international levels.

The core of the analysis is a Structured Focus Group Discussions (SFGDs). This method can involve different stakeholders according to the level of the analysis (individual beneficiaries, community stakeholders, national stakeholders, international stakeholders). A Crucial step of the procedure is the preparation of the dimensions and sub-dimensions of the SFGD including related tools and materials, based on desk review and interviews with different stakeholders. The training of the local experts/facilitators, the standardization of the different steps of the procedure and the heterogeneous selection of the different stakeholders for each level is essential in order to ensure a rigorous evaluation (Biggeri et al., 2012). The time needed for each structured FGD varies from 2 to 4 hours according to the number of outcomes dimensions analysed and the different stakeholders involved.

The FGD procedure used is defined 'structured' since the steps of the procedure (sequence of actions and sequence of questions), are fixed while the content of the evaluation (that is the dimensions) may change according to the stakeholders involved. The evaluation for each step brings to a score and it is based on collective decisions or group answers with a minimum of four participants[7]. The final step is the definition of a "perceived counterfactual" and is aimed at attributing the hypothetic level of functioning of the system in the absence of ART.

This method has some specific features that make it particularly suitable for the analysis of specific local dynamics associated to the facilitation of ART (through framework programmes and the global coordination mechanim). First

[7] Anyway, individual opinions especially if there are divergences will be kept and preserved in FGD acts and there is a persons in charge of taking note of the main points in the discussion.

of all it is more rigorous than traditional FGD and other qualitative methods; secondly it is flexible enough to capture the complexity of the program and thus adaptable to different contexts and levels; thirdly it is replicable and applicable with limited resources compared to other methods. Lastly, this methodology is particularly relevant for assessing immaterial outcome variables. This allows creating a synergy with other sources (the notes taken during the discussions and the final matrix of data) and thus to triangulate findings.

- Direct observation of specific initiatives at the international, national and territorial level (global events, TWG sessions, project sites..)
- Standard Questionnaire for Framework Programmes: This tool was aimed at gathering additional standard information from selected framework programmes, as a way of complementing, confronting and systematizing the information obtained through the direct observation of three of them. The questionnaire has been derived from the Evaluation Matrix – as a simplified version of country-relevant sub-questions and indicators.

Main steps and activities

The evaluation has being carried out through the following steps:

1) An inception phase, which was completed with the submission and approval of a methodological report, and has consisted of a preliminary desk review, a few introductory interviews with key ART and UNDP staff, and a three days kick-off session at the UNDP ART coordination office in Geneva– including an introductory presentation to the evaluation follow-up committee.
2) a field phase, which consisted of visits to three country framework programmes in Morocco, Ecuador and Colombia (Nariño)
3) a wider consultation phase, which has been run before, in between and after the country visits, and consisted of interviews with selected key international partners and stakeholders of the ART Initiative, and the distribution of standard questionnaires to selected framework programmes.
4) a data processing phase, including the re-collection and elaboration of information from questionnaires and SFGDs and the production of related summary notes.
5) A reporting phase, including the presentation of preliminary findings and incorporation of comments as part of a final evaluation report.

Moreover, a methodological paper will be presented at the Annual Conference of the Human Development and Capability Association in Jakarta, Indonesia

The following table presents a summary of the main stages of the process.

Table 2: Stages of the implementation process

Stage	Object/main activity	Output
Inception	Elaboration of a conceptual and methodological framework	Methodological report
Field (Country visits)	Visits to ART framework programmes in Morocco, Ecuador and Colombia (Department of Nariño)	-Missions agendas -Summary mission notes -Mission reports by local consultants -Structured Focus Groups Discussions
Wider consultations with international actors and ART partners	Meetings/interviews with selected partners at the international level	
Wider consultation with ART framework programmes	▪ Elaboration and distribution of questionnaires for ART framework programmes staff and partners ▪ Re-collection and elaboration of information from questionnaires	-Template for questionnaires -Questionnaires summary report (as annex to the main report)
4. Data processing	▪ Re-collection and elaboration of information from questionnaires ▪ Re-collection and elaboration of information and data from SFGDs	- Questionnaires summary report (as annex to this report) - SFGDs analysis (as annex to this report)
Reporting	▪ Recollection and elaboration of information	

	and data ▪ Elaboration and presentation of a draft evaluation report ▪ Elaboration of received comments and preparation of a final evaluation report	-Draft and final evaluation report

In country-visits

ART framework programmes in three countries served as case studies for the analysis, and offered the opportunity of a direct exposure to most of the issues introduced in the conceptual framework and in the evaluation matrix.

A pre-mission consultation with ART staff at the programmes level allowed to define the specific features and focus of each program, as a basis for mapping and screening the most relevant experiences and practices to focus on. The standards steps and sequence of activities during in-country missions included: (i) meetings with institutional counterparts and key institutional actors (including selected donors) at national level, (ii) observation of regional/local planning and implementation mechanisms and meetings/focus groups with key actors and institutions involved, (iii) analysis and meetings/focus groups with relevant actors in relation to specific practices and thematic area(s) identified for each program, including beneficiary communities in relation to specific projects/activities. A detailed agenda for each in-country mission is provided as annex to this document.

The visits to Ecuador and the department of Nariño in Colombia was conducted jointly as part of an eighteen days mission. A local consultant in each of the two countries was selected to assist the team during the mission, and provided a key element of continuity of the information collection and consultation process beyond the duration of the mission itself. Both local consultants elaborated a mission report under the supervision of the evaluation coordinator, which served to systematize the main findings of the mission and constituted a valid input to the main report.

In the case of Morocco, the mission was run jointly with a team of consultants in charge of the evaluation of the ART Framework Program in the country. The two teams worked together smoothly and complemented each other very well during the mission.

A post mission note including the main preliminary findings and observations for each of the three visited countries was prepared and submitted as intermediate product of the evaluation.

Wider consultation with international actors and ART partners

The consultation with a broad and diverse range of international actors and partners has been key for addressing the global dimension of the ART Initiative and its relation with the national and territorial levels. Specific questions were declined from the evaluation matrix according to the specificity of the interlocutor, and addressed to relevant informants through a combination of direct meetings, phone interviews and written exchanges.

A total number of 20 consultations were carried out, including eight senior UNDP officials, one bilateral donor's representative, and eleven among decentralized cooperation partners and networks of sub-national governments. This constituted a reasonable sample in order to provide relevant evidence on the experience, perception and appreciation of key categories of international stakeholders and partners. In some cases (e.g. FAMSI, FELCOS, PACA) it has been possible to run a profitable triangulation international and country level representatives of the same decentralized cooperation partners. A complete list of consulted institutions and individuals is provided in annex.

Wider consultation with ART Framework Programmes

A questionnaire has been submitted to relevant interlocutors and stakeholders at different levels (national, local, programme staff) through ART framework programmes in four countries: Albania, Mauritania, El Salvador, Bolivia, and recollected with the support of the ART coordinating office in Geneva. The information obtained from 17 questionnaires has been processed and elaborated and is presented in annex to this document.

Reporting and quality Control

The reporting stage consisted of the processing and elaboration of recollected information and data, and was articulated as follows:

- preparation of a methodological report at the end of the inception stage

- presentation and discussion of preliminary findings through (i) submission and circulation of post-country missions notes, and (ii) a second mission to Geneva aimed at discussing advance and fine-tuning the focus of the exercise with relevant ART coordination staff
- preparation and submission of a draft evaluation report
- incorporation of comments to the draft report, elaboration and presentation of a final evaluation report including summary of conclusions and recommendations for follow-up, and a proposal for a communication/dissemination plan

The Internal Quality Check was provided through a peer review between the evaluation coordinator and the evaluators of ARCO. ARCO experts have provided methodological support during the structuring stage, and participated to data collection and elaboration, ensuring the accuracy of the process towards the preparation of the present evaluation report, which has been reviewed and internally validated by the full team before submission.

Follow-up committee

Finally, an evaluation Follow-up Committee composed of stakeholders' of the evaluation[8] played a key steering and supervision function of the entire process, providing specific orientation and contribution in correspondence with key steps of the process (kick-off meeting, presentation of preliminary findings and final report).

Methodological considerations

The following main considerations emerged during the evaluation in relation to the use of the different tools for data collection and analysis.

The evaluation matrix proved a relevant and useful instrument in bridging between the adopted conceptual framework and the process of data collection and analysis at different levels, even though, as it normally happens, not all included indicators were necessarily applied. The matrix was conceived and maintained as a useful reference framework, and applied as a flexible and open-ended guideline in relation to each specific analytical dimension.

As it will be discussed more extensively in other parts of the report, the ART Initiative is undergoing an important effort aimed at introducing and systematizing the application in all country-programmes of an 'Instrument' for measuring its added value for aid effectiveness at the local level. Such Instrument includes many of the indicators that were included in the matrix in order to assess the level of coordination and actors' complementarity at different levels. However, the process is on-going; with the exception of Ecuador, sets of data based on the Instruments' criteria were not available yet for direct use by the evaluation.

Some additional considerations emerged from the analysis. The clear-cut attribution of specific results to the program is not always straightforward for a number of concomitant reasons (complexity of the programmes' activities in relation to a broad set of intervening actors; prevailing focus on multifaceted and lengthy processes; strict relation with complex evolving institutional dynamics at different levels, which entail among others issues of 'political' ownership and reluctance of national partners to attribute innovation to the influence of an external program; a monitoring and information system not fully focused on measuring programmes objectives and expected results). On the other hand, it has been in general possible throughout the evaluation to capture a quite clear and direct reference to the programme role and impact on the basis of the perception and understanding of consulted stakeholders.

The strong and close relation of the program with an evolving decentralization framework and policies entails a risk that expected results are assessed on a scale that transcends the programmes' ambition and legitimate function (which understandably is to bring a contribution to a policy framework through good practices and experiences, not to directly change or steer its evolution).

Further considerations are related to the use of other instruments like Structured Focus Groups Discussions (SFGD) and Questionnaires to country framework programmes in obtaining complementary information for the analysis. SFGDs were carried out at local and (in one case) national level in the three countries visited. The exercise proved extremely interesting and generated active participation of most stakeholders' invited. On the other hand, the depth and width of discussions conducted through the FGDs is only partially reported in this

[8] The follow-up committee was composed of: staff of the UNDP ART coordination office in Geneva; a representative of UNDP BDP; representatives the following framework programmes: ART Morocco, ART REDES Colombia ART Ecuador and ART El Salvador; representatives of the UNDP Regional Center in Panama.

document, in consideration of the broader scope of this evaluation (FGD discussions were very rich and informative but – as it is bound to be the case – maintained a very specific and detailed focus on local/national contexts). A few summary boxes with findings from the FGDs are introduced in this document in order to complement the arguments developed; a more detailed account of the FGD exercise is presented in annex.

Concerning the use of questionnaires for framework programmes (other than those visited directly by the team), some specific punctual reference is included under different relevant sections of this document, while a synthetic, aggregate presentation of the results of received questionnaires is presented in annex. .