

Governance Programme in Suriname

Final Report

Presented by Claudia Pineda. 7 may 2013.

Executive summary

The objective of this Outcome Evaluation is to review the UNDP Suriname Governance Programme (United Nations Development Assistance Framework-UNDAF 2008-2011), the status of the outcome and the key factors that have affected its achievement. Also seek to assess the performance and effectiveness of the implementation arrangements, partnerships, and relation with stakeholders. At the same time this document provides recommendation to improve the implementation of the Democratic Governance Programme and its contribution to the outcomes under the UNDAF 2012-2016.

The subject of this outcome evaluation is selected projects implemented within the framework of the Democratic Governance portfolio. The evaluation assesses the overall result and contribution of the projects towards the UNDAF, Country Programme Action Plan -CPAP and Country Programme Document -CPD. For the period 2008-2011, the democratic governance portfolio was based on UNDAF outcome 2: **“Good governance through decentralized, participatory policy planning and monitoring, legal reform and effective protection system will be enhanced”**. The rationale for this basis lies in the fact that the multi-annual development plan identified effective public sector administration as a key to sustainable human development processes.

The evaluation assessed the design, performance and the capacity of each project to fulfill their objectives and their contribution (positive or negative) to the correspondent outcome. So this evaluation is based on an inductive process, putting the emphasis on the assessment of results at output and outcome levels.

According to the CPD 2008 – 2011, and the projects associated with the Outcome 2, the priorities for this period were, i) Support the formulation of a national public sector reform programme and enhancing the capacity of government and non-state actors to formulate and implement policies that ensure effective public services; ii) Strengthened participatory planning and monitoring are national priorities in the area of good governance; iii) Supported building capacity for promotion and protection of human rights and strengthening democracy; iv) With special funds received, UNDP Suriname started the implementation of a programme aimed at reducing disparities in access

to information between the coastal and hinterland areas through the use of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies).

The outcome is based on two pillars: reform of the public sector and the institutionalization of participation mechanisms in decentralized planning. None of the processes took place and both pillars were not materialized, and therefore governance wasn't strengthened, based on these two elements.

So, the real portfolio associated with the Governance Programme consists of four projects completed or in progress

No	Project	Period	Budget 2008-111	Expenditure	%
1	Implementati on of the Human Rights, Legal Aid and Anti- Corruption (HR Project)	01/2009- 12/2011	617,801.21	329,383.64	54%
2	Strengthenin g of the Electoral Process 2010 (Elections Projects)	03/2010- 12/2011	330,066.00	273,780.31	83%
3	Reduction of disparities of the access to information and services through ICT (ICT Project)	04/2011- 12/2013	100,000.00	31,975.00	32%
4	Strengthenin g of the Parliament	08/2011- 07/2015	50,000.00	23,142.00	46%

1) Budget and expenditure for the period 2008-2011.

Failing the attempts to push the public sector reform and participative planning, the real implementation was based on politically possible speaking initiatives and the compromise was achieved for the two most recent initiatives, the strengthening of the Parliament, convened with its Speaker, and the project aimed at reducing disparities through the use of ICTs, also an offer from UNDP which was taken on by the MTCT (Ministry of Transport, Communication and Tourism) and the MDR (Ministry of Regional Development).

The HR Project and the Elections Projects were implemented quite well during the former government, but the HR Project suffered stagnation when the current government came into the power. The late implementation of two of the Parliament and the ICT projects hinders the assessment of their real contribution to the evaluated outcome.

It is recognized that all projects were in line with the national priorities and were also in line with important governance processes. UNDP was a fair partner for its programme counterparts and its

major contributions according to its counterparts were: provision of high level technical assistance, inclusion of human rights approach, and innovative ideas.

UNDP is not perceived as a financing agency, it is recognized a role for technical support in sustainable human development themes and of human rights. This recognition gives it an opportunity for advocating for United Nations unique themes, beyond a relationship within the framework of the project's implementation. Some of the interviewed stakeholders expressed that UNDP should advocate for specific human rights themes in front of public actors.

Although the planned program was not executed as expected for reasons beyond the control of the office of UNDP Suriname, there are windows of opportunity to continue supporting Governance processes in this country, for which the UNDP has comparative advantage, based on the recognition of professionalism, capacity and seriousness that the actors identified in the UNDP.

The evaluator wants to thank the personnel of the UNDP Office in Suriname and wants to thank interviewed stakeholders for the time and information provided.

Lessons learnt

Due to the observed setbacks in the negotiation of projects that didn't had good success, it could be affirmed that in the political culture of Suriname, real politics constitutes a strong practice, which hinders that the agreements last, or that they last as long as they are useful to the officers.

Temporary windows of opportunities exist while the commitments between the official political actors and of opposition last. These political moments cannot be lost in very lengthy preparations, because the political opportunity is lost.

Without the compromise of different relevant political entities it is not viable to initiate structural reforms or political reforms. This makes reference to the fact that it is necessary to have the approval of the council of ministers and of the President of the Republic, knowing beforehand that they are not willing to pay the reform costs.

A good experience has been the co-financed projects, because the participation of the government is guaranteed and with little resources, financial resources are mobilized in the country, in sustainable initiatives and definitely in line with the priorities of the country.

All initiatives have been based on previous studies, which provide solidity to the interventions.

These studies have been coordinated and accepted by the public institutions and represent a heritage of knowledge and strategies to follow for the different selected themes.