Management response to the evaluation of *Assessment of Development Results*

**Context, background and findings**

1. The evaluation team’s appreciation of the context during the period covered, transitioning from early recovery to development was evident in the analysis and in the relevance of the recommendations, most of which had resonance with the CO’s insights on strategic positioning.

2. The Assessment was very timely: it provided useful guidance on efficacy and relevance of the Country Office (CO) support to the Government and in turn to the design of the new country programme (CPD). It also triggered a reorganisation of the internal structure of the CO to be more responsive.

3. As an independent evaluation carried out by professional individuals knowledgeable of UNDP’s ways of working, it provides a useful tool for defining together the best role for UNDP in Sierra Leone in alignment with global corporate priorities.

4. The Assessment process was found very useful especially the validation workshop which provided a very constructive opportunity for engagement with key state and non state stakeholders. The substantive feedback reaffirmed that UNDP’s value addition was in its strategic and catalytic approach.

Annex: Assessment of Development Results

Key recommendations and management response

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| **Evaluation recommendation 1**. UNDP should take on a lead role in the governance and security sector reform areas as an integral part of the One UN team. The UNDP Programme is at a critical juncture in terms of the transition taking place within Sierra Leone with the departure of UNIPSIL |
| **Management response 1:** The Country Office (CO) has taken action on this recommendation by continuing its work on governance in its new Country Programme Document (CPD) starting 2015 including recruitment of a Governance Team Leader which is ongoing. UNDP has commenced a new Security Sector Reform (SSR) Project with support from the peacebuilding fund and BCPR. These are in the area of SSR Governance and Border Management as recommended by the Technical Assessment Mission (TAM) report as areas of focus for UNDP once the mission has drawn down. The CO has started implementation of the Security Sector Reform Project having taken over the responsibility from UNIPSIL. UNDP is also the convener of the UNDAF coordination mechanism. A new civil registration project has started, a media strategy and PRODOC have been approved and a conflict prevention proposal have been submitted for approval. |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking\*** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 1.1 UNDP have established an SSR Programme which commenced in October 2013 focusing on improved SSR Governance and oversight and border management  | October 2013 – March 2015 (duration of new programme) | SSR Programme Unit |  | On-going |
| 1.2 The ERSG has convened high level donor meetings on SSR. This will continue under the leadership of the new RC | End of Q2 | SSR Programme and RC Office |  | On-going |
| 1.3 Developing a media strategy and media development project document | December 2013 | Governance |  | Completed |
| 1.4 Supporting capacity building scoping exercise at the National Electoral Commission | December 2014 | Elections Programme Manager |  | Ongoing |
| 1.5 Develop and implement a conflict prevention programme  | Duration of the programme cycle 2015-18 | Country Office |  | Completed |
| 1.6 Recruitment of Governance Portfolio Team Leader | End of Q3 | Country Office |  | On-going |
| 1.7 Continue its lead role in supporting Parliament on strategic issues | 2014-18  | CTA, Support to Parliament  |  | Ongoing |
| 1.8 Parliament Assistance Coordination Office (PACO) created by UNDP should be supported further to strengthen development programme assistance coordination & technical advisory services | 2014-18 | Programme Support, Support to Parliament |  | Ongoing |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Evaluation recommendation 2.1**: UNDP should also prioritize carefully and not spread itself too thinly by taking on a full range of activities that could fall within its mandate |
| **Management response** **2.1**: The CO volunteered itself as a pilot country office of the strategic plan alignment exercise. As part of this exercise, the CO sharpened it focus and reduced work in Solid Waste Management, Land and Public Sector Reform where it has no clear comparative advantage, where previous investments have been catalytic and where resources are insufficient |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 2.1.1 Overall Country Office portfolio diagnosis to identify project synergies and establish programme clusters | January – March 2014 | Country Office |  | Completed |
| 2.1.2 Participate in HQ Alignment exercise to ensure full alignment with the new strategic plan that served as a useful input for the new CPD  | February – May 2014 | Country Office |  | Completed |
| 2.1.3 Move work on Aid Effectiveness to Governance Programme Portfolio from Inclusive Growth and combine the work with support on New Deal | January – March 2014 | Country Director |  | Ongoing |
| 2.1.4 Phasing out support on Public Sector Reform, Land Reform and Waste Management | End 2015 | Country Director and Programme Managers |  | In progress |
| 2.1.5 Ensure the above message is incorporated in the RC’s messages during DEPAC Meetings  | End July 2014 | Country Director |  | In progress |
| **Evaluation recommendation 2.2:** The UNDP Country Office should take an inventory of current projects and programmes within the next 12 months, review progress and ensure that exit strategies over the forthcoming 3-5 year period are well planned for and implemented  |
| **Management response 2.2:** Actions on this recommendation are already taken in the Country Office’s new programme planning process. The CO has completed implementation of the recommendation as part of the Country Programme alignment exercise |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 2.2.1 Prepare project and programme reviews and inventory and define exit strategies for all projects | October – December 2013 | Country Office |  | Completed |
| 2.2.2 Continuously advocate greater government cost sharing and involvement of resident and non-resident donors in new projects and ensure clear plans for takeover are in place  | In progress | Programme Team |  | In progress |
| 2.2.3 Public Sector Reform exit (phasing out) | End 2014 | Senior Management |  | In progress |
| **Evaluation recommendation 2.3:** The UNDP’s programme needs to have new emphasis on institutional sustainability. While operational support was vital in a post-conflict reconstruction context, the dependence it created is debilitating and should be phased out. The transition from operational support to programming should focus on the transfer and exchange of expertise and technology while ensuring capacity building and national ownership. In this connection it would be appropriate for UNDP to take a lead role in coordinating donor policies with respect to salary supplements and other incentives with the ultimate objective of raising the sustainability of the capacity created in key institutions and reducing dependence on ODA. |
| **Management response:** UNDP is already negotiating all its new projects or extension of ongoing projects for the counterpart to progressively absorb all recurring costs. In addition, in few of its large programmes such as Elections, UNDP is also undertaking serious capacity assessment which will not only inform a focused capacity building for institutional sustainability but also in turn help to devise an exit strategy |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 2.3.1 Eliminate operational support and ensure support is based on institution building and national ownership using a phasing out approach  | September 2013 – March 2015 | Senior management |  | In progress |
| 2.3.2 Uniform policy on DSA agreed with Government | End December 2013 | Senior Management |  | Done |
| **Evaluation recommendation 2.4:** UNDP should also assess the various South-South interventions that were undertaken during the review period with the goal of documenting instructive practices and developing new areas of intervention for the upcoming country programme. |
| **Management response 2.4:** This recommendation is well noted and implementation has started for all projects. The CO will develop a more systematic approach to South South Cooperation particularly in identifying instructive practices and useful knowledge, which were sporadically documented in the past In the current programme, the entire approach is more structured and South-South Cooperation will be seen as an objective in itself. |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
| **Comments** | **Status** |
| 2.4.1 Documentation of lessons learnt from all projects in the last two programme cycles 2008 - 2014 | June 2014 – September 2014 | Senior Management |  | In progress |
| **Evaluation recommendation 3:** The Resident Representative and the Country Director should take on a higher profile advisory role that was previously filled by the ERSG. In this connection, it is recommended that, using programme funds, the UNDP Country Office constitute a team of 5 senior advisers working in close proximity to the Country Director to undertake essential analysis, liaise with relevant officials in the ministries, judiciary and parliament and provide policy advice to the Country Director and Resident Representative as necessary. These advisers would be expected to prepare concept notes, policy papers and advise on programme strategy on a regular basis and support UNDP’s interventions in key policy forums. It is suggested that these advisers include the following: i) General governance strategist (with a strong background in government finance, decentralization, democratization, human rights or other area of relevance); ii) Security sector reform specialist; iii) Employment generation and poverty alleviation specialist; iv) senior economist/MDG adviser; and v) an adviser on gender issues. Provision should also be made for a resident Evaluation Adviser at least for the first few years of the new country programme, who could then return at key points during the mid-term and final reviews of the country programme implementation. |
| **Management response 3:** The recommendation is currently being implemented. The CD’s office now has two advisers, the Senior Economist and Peace and Development Advisers, in addition to the two deputies. The advisers were selected based on their ‘non direct involvement in programme, thus ensuring necessary independence and impartiality. Additional advisers will be consulted as required. The CO has nominated a Gender Focal Point and is now exploring resources available in the wider system at Policy Bureaus as well as the regional centres. UNDP Sierra Leone will also explore the Mutual Support Facility (MSF) in the sub-region on various support/advisory areas. |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |  |
|  |  | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 3.1 Selection of a Gender Focal Point and recruitment of a Gender Specialist and any other adviser deemed necessary | January 2014 – December 2016 | Senior Management |  | In progress |
| 3.2 Utilization of the available human resources in the wider system through the mutual support facility | Continuous | Senior Management |  | Not started |
| **Evaluation recommendation 4:** UNDP needs to urgently undertake an internal strategic analysis and review of the current situation in Sierra Leone with a view to determining the key areas which are most likely to present threats to stability in the medium term and help devise preventive development interventions that can be funded and approved during the course of 2014/2015. For the new CPD programme, the ADR recommends that UNDP Sierra Leone build on the strategies of streamlining and focus that was initiated with the 2012-2013 CPD. In this UNDP should carefully assess where it is best positioned to provide support in alignment with the directions contained in the new Strategic Plan of the organization. Governance and Access to Justice as well as Poverty Reduction activities that target youth employment in a more comprehensive manner, appear to hold promise. The environment portfolio, a key area of growing importance, was somewhat overshadowed by the more pressing priorities such as the conduct of elections during the CP period 2008-2014. Should UNDP decide to engage more comprehensively in this sector, it will need to ensure a longer-term commitment and more substantial partnerships to ensure meaningful results |
| **Management response 4:** UNDP Sierra Leone has undertaken strategy analyses for each of the CO programme priority areas and re-strategizing under its new CPD and supported special assessments such as the fragility assessment and a proposed conflict prevention analysis. The energy, environment and natural resource management portfolio is being scaled up, and programming is informed by lessons learned from the 2012-2013 CPD as well as strategic analyses carried out by UNEP, the World Bank, and the extractive industry.  |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
|  |  | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 4.1 Support to the new Fragility Assessment | End August, 2014 | Government of Sierra Leone | The document has been updated. Public dissemination of key results to commence  | In progress |
| 4.2 Support to a comprehensive conflict prevention analysis | September 2014 – December 2015 | RC’s Office |  | To be started |
| 4.3 Support assessment for entry points of UNDP interventions in the extractive industry | May 2014 | Country Office | A PRODOC is being developed | In progress |
| **Evaluation recommendation 5.1:** In the access to justice sector, it is strongly recommended that UNDP supplement its current heavy emphasis on the prosecution of SGBV to improve access to justice more generally, to ensuring due process with sufficient and trained representation for both plaintiffs and defendants and increasing the pool of trained members of the judiciary. |
| **Management response 5:** It is recognized that Gender Justice has been an area of strong focus for the A2J Project and will continue to be so as reflected in the new CPD. The Programme will also prioritize interventions focusing on systemic issues within the Justice sector, particularly with regard to pre-trial detention and corruption, institutional reforms  |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
|  |  | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 5.1.1. Broaden donor base to enable focus on systemic issues to commence with the launch of the new CPD | January 2015 | A2J Project | New funds sourced to develop a 2 year programme focusing on sentencing guidelines  | In progress |
| 5.1.2. Continue its focus on Gender Justice  | January 2015 | Country Office |  | In progress |
| 5.1.3. Utilize catalytic funding from BCPR to start new initiatives and attract new funding | December 2015 | A2J Project | Funds received to support the Law Officers Department’s capacity in developing legislation and capacity development of their staff  | In progress |
| **Evaluation recommendation 5.2:** It is also recommended that UNDP support any proposals to: i) compile and analyse existing laws and cases in order to ensure at least one full set of laws and cases is available to the judiciary; and ii) any proposals to review and codify traditional law practices throughout the country. |
| **Management response 5:** The CO recognizes the need to support publication of laws, reports, improvement of online legal database and training of local court personnel. With respect to Customary Law, the Project is supporting the implementation of the Local Courts Act including court personnel. This Act seeks to regulate and oversee the provision of Customary Law. UNDP is also supporting the Constitutional Review Process which may look at amending Customary Law practices. The CO will wait for finalization of this process before carrying out further work in this area.  |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
|  |  | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 5.2.1 Support publication of law reports and improvements to an online database of Sierra Leone Laws. | End of Q4 | A2J Programme |  | ongoing |
| 5.2.2 Support the Judiciary to provide training to local court personnel (who apply customary law) on best practices including general legal practice and also support legal assistance programmes that represent clients before Customary Law Courts. | End of Q4 | A2J Programme |  | ongoing |
| 5.2.3. Support local courts who apply Customary Law and provide training to justice officials on general legal practice and procedure | End of Q4 | A2J Programme |  | Ongoing |
| 5.2.4 Providing support to development of the land policy which is one key area where Customary Law decisions may adversely impact clients particularly women | End of Q4 |  |  | Ongoing |
| 5.2.5 Support legal aid providers who advice users of Customary Law | ongoing | A2J Programme |  | Ongoing |
| **Evaluation recommendation 6:** In the critical area of youth employment, UNDP should, working closely with the ILO, work on bringing together potential employers (particularly large multinationals with investments in Sierra Leone), the World Bank and African Development Bank as well as key ministries and commissions to develop a more systematic and coherent strategy for the creation of jobs in the country while ensuring safety and standards. This should be accompanied by a systematic analysis of current practices and approaches to training, economic policies and involvement of the private sector with a view to propagating best practices that have been tried and tested in the country and regionally. |
| **Management response 6:** The CO agrees with the need for close collaboration among operators in bringing together key stakeholders. The CO will support development of comprehensive programme to guide all interventions and sector coordination and is now working in close collaboration with all donors to introduce a mechanism for sector working groups within DEPAC. Further to this recommendation, Sierra Leone has developed a Blueprint for Youth Development: Five Years Youth Employment and Empowerment Strategy Document that will address lapses in current practices and approaches to targeting youth in the country. Lastly, the CO will support the formulation and implementation of policies on CSR and Local Content in line with international best practices. |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
|  |  | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 6.1 Developing the second status of youth report, which is supposed to provide information on the general status of youth in Sierra Leone | August, 2014 | UNDP YEEP | On track | In progress |
| 6.2 Introduce a mechanism for sector working groups within DEPAC | July, 2014 | UNDP YEEP | Donor sensitization in progress | In progress |
| 6.3 Establish a mechanism and support the roll-out of the Five Years Youth Employment and Empowerment Strategy | September 2014 – June 2015 | UNDP YEEP | On track | In progress |
| **Evaluation recommendation 7:** In order to consolidate peace and stability, UNDP should encourage the Government to further strengthen local governance which should be replicated throughout the country. Particular attention should be paid to current issues pertaining to the overlap of mandates and roles of different bodies at the local level reviewed and ironed out as an integral part of the constitutional review process. |
| **Management response 7:** This recommendation is very well taken. To this end, the CO will provide support for the formulation of a strategy for Local Governance and Economic Development countrywide, to enshrine decentralization and local governance in the new constitution and will continue its advocacy efforts for clarity of roles of different functionaries especially on local revenue collection and transfers  |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
|  |  | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 7.1. Support LoCASL to table a proposal to enshrined decentralization and local governance in the new constitution | June-December 2013 | LGED-JP | Proposal submitted to the CRC | Under consideration |
| 7.2Support to MoFED/LGFD and MLGRD to extend the LED experience to all LCs, THE Fiscal Decentralization framework to consider specific grants for LED through the Performance-based Grants system (PBGS) | 2014-2015 | LGED-JP | PBGS to be tested in 2014  | TORs finalized.  |
| 7.3. Careful talks with MLGRD and MoFED/LGFD on the need to review the current roles of Senior District Officers and Chiefdom Administration against the roles of LCs especially on local revenue collection and remittances | Continuous | LGED-JP | Very sensitive issue and involves strong competing interests both at national and local levels. | In progress |
| **Evaluation recommendation 8:** In fresh programming, UNDP should articulate a clear internal country office policy that spells out measures to improve programme design, monitoring and evaluation. This policy should emphasize needs assessments, formulation of theories of change, assess capacity gaps and clearly articulate counterpart commitments. Project Appraisal Committees should be revived which should inter alia ensure that programme designs, results and implementation arrangements are clearly articulated, and that good monitoring and evaluation systems are established and adequately funded. High level attention from senior management- throughout the next CPD programme – will be vital. There may be a need to strengthen the Business Development and Oversight Unit of the country office for this purpose. The country office should actively draw on resources available from all regional service centres, globally, for short-term project design, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation support. |
| **Management response 8:** UNDP Sierra Leone is committed to improving programme design, monitoring and evaluation. In line with this commitment, the CO will strengthen the Programme Management Support Unit in order to ensure systematic quality assurance and oversight, particularly in the areas of data collection, research, capacity building, reporting and donor relations. Further, the Co will also review and streamline local oversight and quality assurance bodies such as Local Project Appraisal Committees and Project Boards to ensure clear terms of reference and functioning for successful programme planning and valuable quality assurance. In addition, the CO has taken an internal decision to establishing a ‘3% Pool Fund’ including a 1% allocation to M&E in order to ensure that programme management and oversight are adequately funded. This has also been captured in the 2014 AWP and the new CPD.  |
| **Key action(s)** | **Time frame** | **Responsible unit(s)** | **Tracking** |
|  |  | **Comments** | **Status** |
| 8.1 Review and re-align programme support through the establishment and strengthening of a Programme Management Support Unit (PMSU)  | April 2014 – December 2015 | Senior Management | On track | In progress |
| 8.2 Review and streamline Project Appraisal Committees with clear terms of reference for effective programme planning assurance  | January 2014 – September 2014 | Senior Management | Currently being implemented | In progress |
| 8.3 Further strengthen programme oversight and assurance by ensuring regular project and outcome board meetings are held and annual reviews and reports are provided | Starting in September 2013 | Senior management | Expected to continue as part of best practice | In progress |
| 8.4 Implement ‘Pool Fund’ and M&E allocations for integrated programme oversight and support | Commenced in December 2013  | Senior Management | A specific CO consideration that will continue  | Done  |
| 8.5 Hire a third party firm to support with programme monitoring, data collection and analysis, research and M&E capacity building | January 2014 – July 2014 | Senior Management | Engaged using a long-term agreements  | In progress |

\* Status of implementation is tracked electronically in the Evaluation Resource Centre database (ERC).

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Clearance routing

*The list below comprises all parties involved in preparing and clearing the management response before final review by the IEO.*

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