

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Independent Evaluation Office (IEO) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducted an evaluation in Zimbabwe during 2014–2015. This Assessment of Development Results (ADR) primarily covers UNDP initiatives undertaken under the current funding cycle since 2011, while also taking into account the context and achievements of UNDP during the previous period: 2007–2011. The ADR is designed to capture and discuss evaluative evidence of UNDP’s contributions to development results in Zimbabwe, and to consider the effectiveness of UNDP’s strategy to facilitate and leverage national efforts to achieve development results.

This is the first ADR for Zimbabwe. It has been carried out with a view to contributing to the enhancement of the ongoing country programme, consistent with the UN Development Assistance Framework for Zimbabwe (ZUNDAF), the UNDP Strategic Plan, and relevant national development plans, including the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socioeconomic Transformation (ZimAsset). The ADR is designed to contribute to the preparation of the new UNDP country programme, scheduled to begin in 2016.

The evaluation analyses UNDP contribution to development results in Zimbabwe based on the planned outcomes contained in the country programme document (CPD), as well as the corresponding country programme action plan (CPAP) that has been agreed with the Government of Zimbabwe. The evaluation team has assessed UNDP’s programming against the criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, to develop evaluation findings and conclusions, from which recommendations for future action have been drawn. To arrive at findings, conclusions and recommendations, the ADR team used data from primary and secondary sources, including desk reviews of documentation, site visits, and interviews with key

informants, including beneficiaries, partners and programme managers.

To the extent possible, the evaluation team used a participatory approach in the design, implementation and reporting of the ADR. This included close engagement with management at the UNDP country office. At the conclusion of the data analysis stage, on 5 December 2014, the evaluation manager presented initial findings and recommendations at a Country Programme Document (CPD) planning workshop organized by the UNDP country office in Harare, which brought together more than a hundred participants from the Government of Zimbabwe, other national partners, and international agency and embassy representatives. A stakeholder workshop will also be held in Harare in October 2015 to discuss the ADR findings, conclusions and recommendations.

KEY FINDINGS

UNDP has aligned its **economic management** support efforts with the priorities set out in the key development strategies established by Zimbabwe (the Medium Term Plan and ZimAsset). In particular, support through the project on Economic Policy Formulation, Strategic Planning and Advisory Services has been important to the Zimbabwe government’s efforts to stabilize the economy. UNDP has helped to strengthen government institutional capacity for the management of debt through several actions, including upgrading the Debt Management and Financial Analysis System (DMFAS). The Project on Support to ZIMSTAT and National Statistical System has had a measure of success in strengthening institutional capacities. However, the office continues to be plagued by data gaps and lacks a real-time system for monitoring and reporting on Millennium Development Goals (MDG) performance.

UNDP intended to help Zimbabwe develop and implement national pro-poor and MDG development strategies. To that end, the achievement of MDG attainment plans at the district level was limited, although some district development committees did utilize the MDGs to help prioritize their goals. The government development plans, MTP and ZimAsset, align with many of the MDGs.

UNDP's work on **environmental protection and sustainable development** is highly relevant. The UNDP-(GEF) small grants programme (SGP) is widely recognized as providing extensive engagement with community-based organizations (CBO) and its particular focus on water management issues is appropriate given the persistent drought and flood problems faced by Zimbabwe. A planned UNDP outcome was to develop and implement a framework for comprehensive land and agriculture reform. UNDP has done little in the way of agriculture reform, and is not the most suitable UN agency to focus on this issue. However, UNDP support to land reform, and strengthening of the Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement (MLRR), is very much within the UNDP skill set and highly relevant to the country's economic and social development. It is difficult to discern the extent to which UNDP's land management support to date has expanded MLRR capacities. Nevertheless, the work to clear up land valuation and compensation backlogs and to prepare for a land audit are technical prerequisites for the government to solve the land reform issue, which is crucial to overall social cohesion, greater food security and expanded economic development in the country.

UNDP Zimbabwe has endeavoured to help build the **institutional capacity of government**. UNDP's governance programmes were significantly revised during the period under review, due to the establishment of the Global Political Agreement (GPA) and subsequent Inclusive Government (IG), which came into being in 2009, half-way through the previous ZUNDAF and CPD. UNDP rapidly responded to the power-sharing arrangement by making major

adjustments to its portfolio to support key GPA provisions, such as the constitution-making process, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission, and the establishment of the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission.

UNDP has been a key contributor to the successful formulation of the new Zimbabwe **Constitution**, in particular through its facilitation of the work of the Constitutional Parliamentary Select Committee (COPAC). UNDP made a positive contribution through increased collaboration with civil society organizations (CSO), and by helping to build mutual understanding between CSOs and government. A lack of government capacity to carry forward necessary steps, such as legislative alignment for the Constitution, may pose a threat to the sustainability of results so far achieved. A true measure of sustainability will be discerned in the government's efforts to enact legislation for the new Constitution in a timely manner.

UNDP's governance work included support to the establishment of the constitutional bases for five independent commissions—gender, human rights, media, peace and reconciliation and elections—and to building the capacity of those commissions. Capacity strengthening of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) has shown important results, despite a prolonged period when UN strictures limited UNDP engagement. UNDP is acknowledged to have helped build ZEC into a functional electoral body and its public image has improved. In the case of UNDP's work with the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission, a four-year delay in the establishment of the Secretariat, following the creation of the Commission in 2010, has meant that a well-structured capacity development programme is not yet in place, and more effective organizational systems, policies and procedures need to be developed.

Since 2009, UNDP has been the implementing agent in Zimbabwe for the **Global Fund for Aids Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM)**. The Fund transferred this fiduciary responsibility to UNDP from the Government of Zimbabwe

following economic upheavals in 2008–2009. Under UNDP’s stewardship, major achievements have been recorded in all the three disease areas as well as in a strengthened health system. Key interventions that contributed to positive results include the establishment and operationalization of robust monitoring and evaluation systems in the NAC and various health institutions, through upgraded health information management systems. The introduction of an Electronic Patient Management System (EPMS) was critical for capturing information on antiretroviral therapy patients and is now being used widely across the country. One of the most effective components has been UNDP’s support to the Harmonized Health Worker Retention Scheme (HHWRS). Donors and Ministry of Health and Child Care (MoHCC) officials agree that this has been critical to the GFATM programme’s achievement of positive results.

Some concerns have been raised by government partners that UNDP’s management of GFATM has been expensive, that its costs for managing the grants are too high and that the opportunity costs of continuing with UNDP as the principle recipient (PR) may be too high for Zimbabwe. The transfer of the PR role for TB and malaria to the MoHCC represents a challenge to UNDP’s capacity development programme for sub-recipients (SR), as it is evident there are critical capacity gaps that need to be filled for MoHCC to seamlessly assume this responsibility, and to prepare for the expected return of the HIV/AIDS PR role in 2017.

UNDP’s **gender programme** was developed in response to national policy and planning frameworks, including the National Gender Policy (2004 and 2013-revised). It is aligned to the UNDP Corporate Gender Equality Strategy 2008–2013 and 2014–2017 and is consistent with the United Nations-System Wide Action Plan (UN-SWAP). UNDP has contributed substantially to national efforts to accelerate the equal participation of women, including young women and marginalized groups, in decision-making. UNDP’s institutional capacity building support

has contributed to advancing gender equality and women’s rights in the Constitution, helping to achieve the inclusion of 75 percent of women’s constitutional demands, including the removal of several discriminatory provisions. UNDP’s support has contributed to the economic empowerment of women by developing women’s entrepreneurial skills and to improved access to finance and markets.

The evaluation includes, as a cross-cutting discussion, UNDP’s various **resilience**-related efforts that are designed to support the government in responding to economic, social and climate-related shocks. These efforts mesh well with the government’s strategic goals. For example, UNDP’s conflict and dispute resolution work was especially pronounced during the previous decade and up through the GPA period 2009–2013. Support was provided through several programmes, in particular the Conflict Prevention and Recovery Project (2005–2008) and the Dialogue Financing Facility (2013). Disaster management support has likewise been provided through a series of programmes and projects. While the work of UNDP, through the Support to Peacebuilding and Increased Access to Sustainable Livelihoods (PBSL) project and precursor projects, has enhanced disaster preparedness and risk reduction planning, it has yet to make an appreciable difference in the effectiveness of the government to avert, mitigate, prepare for and recover from future natural disasters. It can be discerned that substantial improvements to disaster management will require considerably more financial support as well as legal changes governing land use, especially in flood-prone areas.

CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion 1: The UNDP country programme is well-harmonized with the development planning of the Government of Zimbabwe and its successive development strategies: MTP and ZimAsset.

Conclusion 2: One of UNDP’s signature achievements in Zimbabwe during this period

has been its support to the Constitution-building process, and facilitation of COPAC.

Conclusion 3: UNDP is well-positioned to establish and manage the planned Resilience Building Fund, which can help improve the absorptive, adaptive and transformative capacities of at-risk communities in Zimbabwe.

Conclusion 4: UNDP has made useful contributions to peacebuilding and conflict resolution, helping to increase individual community and government capacities for peacebuilding, and to counter various drivers of conflict in Zimbabwe.

Conclusion 5: Much of the capacity development carried out by UNDP during the study period appears incidental to other governance-related support, and not planned and implemented strategically, across multiple ministries, agencies and commissions, as a foundation for long-term development effectiveness.

Conclusion 6: UNDP support to land management, and strengthening the Ministry of Lands and Rural Resettlement, is highly relevant to the country's economic and social development, although achievements to date have been modest.

Conclusion 7: UNDP has been an effective manager during its tenure as the PR for the GFATM in Zimbabwe and has contributed significantly to the positive results achieved in Zimbabwe across all three disease areas during this period.

Conclusion 8: UNDP support has contributed to potentially transformative changes in the rights, opportunities and resources of women in Zimbabwe.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: UNDP should develop and implement with the Government of Zimbabwe a transition strategy that ensures the Ministry of Health (MoHCC) has the capacity, human resources and system controls in place to take full man-

agement control as PR of all GFATM accounts in Zimbabwe by 2017.

Management Response: The recommendation is well noted. As part of the new implementation arrangements for the New Funding Model (NFM) for TB and Malaria Grants, Global Fund has appointed UNDP CO to provide support services to MoHCC as the new PR for the two grants. A roadmap for the smooth transition of the two grants to MoHCC has been developed and is being implemented. In line with the roadmap, and in consultation with MoHCC and with technical support from the HIV Support Team, a three-year Capacity Development Plan (2015–2017) has been developed and jointly funded by UNDP and the Global Fund. Implementation of the CD plan will help to strengthen the capacities of the MoHCC and other potential partners in the areas of financial management, supply chain management, (including procurement), monitoring and evaluation, policy development and overall grant management. UNDP is also monitoring the Programme Coordinating Unit (PCU)—established at the MoHCC to coordinate grant implementation—in grant management as part of the transition process.

Recommendation 2: UNDP should position the Resilience Building Fund at the leading edge of a recalibration of its engagement in Zimbabwe, balancing the current emphasis on central government ministry capacity with significantly greater engagement through pilot programmes at local government and community levels.

Management Response: The recommendation is well noted and has been taken on board. UNDP has been supporting the establishment of a Zimbabwe Resilience Fund, in line with the new CPD's holistic approach to poverty reduction, hereby adopting a sustainable balance between 'upstream' and 'downstream' support.

Recommendation 3: UNDP should develop close linkages and synergies between its

support to resilience and disaster management, and its support for environmental protection and sustainable development. UNDP should consider working with the relevant government ministries to pursue additional GEF funding that can reinforce and extend its planned resilience-building work.

Management Response: The recommendation is taken on board and UNDP is working towards this objective. The hazard mapping exercise conducted under the resilience building work will also serve as a baseline for some of the projects, while the CO is exploring pursuing additional GEF Funding.

Recommendation 4: While support to the operationalization of the NPRC should be a priority, UNDP should also carry out a situation analysis to inform future UNDP programming and strategies for peace-building and conflict resolution, and to ensure this work reflects changing circumstances in Zimbabwe.

Management Response: The recommendation is noted, with the following observations:

- National healing and reconciliation is a key national process with the constitution making a provision for the establishment of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission.
- The anticipation of sustained support to Peace-building and social cohesion in the country takes cognizance of the changing development and social landscape.
- The 2014 Governance Outcome Evaluation outlined that the constitutionalization of the peace architecture and the country wide civil society run peace project which is laying the infrastructure and processes for peace making at community level were two important achievements.
- The 2016–2020 ZUNDAF identifies the need to further foster co-existence and social cohesion in the country, by supporting the development of policy frameworks and institutional mechanisms

for the peace architecture at both national and sub-national levels. In line with the ZUNDAF and new CPD (2016–2020), the CO is designing a new programme focusing on deepening the foundation for peace, dialogue and social cohesion.

- In the design of the new programme, UNDP will engage the services of a senior peace building expert to support participatory and inclusive stakeholder consultative processes leading the design of the new support framework on peace and reconciliation.

Recommendation 5: UNDP should consider whether an enhanced IRBM programme could be used to establish broader capacity development goals that can drive institutional strengthening across the civil service, rather than through ad hoc, small-scale capacity building efforts showing minimal results. It should also consider phasing out general support for capacity building in the economic and financial management agencies.

Management Response: The recommendation is well noted. UNDP recognizes the need to strengthen IRBM processes and capacities of Government partners. Given the limited resources, and the support provided by other development organizations in that regard (e.g. ADB), the CO will not be in a position to develop a stand-alone IRBM programme.

Recommendation 6: UNDP should follow up with the United Nations DPA and Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to smooth the process for UNDP reengagement in provision of technical support. Technical support for electoral process improvement is an area where UNDP has carved out a globally-strong reputation that can be put to good use in Zimbabwe.

Management Response: The recommendation is noted and has already been taken on board. At the request of the Government of Zimbabwe, the UN carried out an electoral needs assess-

ment mission (NAM) in May 2015. The NAM assessed the capacity needs of ZEC and other election stakeholders as well as the electoral environment and legislative framework governing elections in the country. A preparatory assistance project to operationalise the NAM's recommendations for short term support to ZEC is being initiated, while a comprehensive support programme is being developed.

Recommendation 7: UNDP should make the land management support programme with MLRR a top priority during the next programme cycle, providing necessary support to the Government of Zimbabwe to adopt and implement land tenure security policies and regulations, streamline land administration structures and regulations, complete the backlog on land valuation and compensation, and strengthen dispute and conflict resolution systems, structures and procedures.

Management Response: The recommendation is well noted and already being addressed. A support programme for the Ministry of Land

is currently being implemented for the period 2014-2017. The programme looks at issues related to land tenure policies and regulations, land administration, land dispute and conflict resolution mechanisms amongst others.

Recommendation 8: To improve its capacity building efforts on gender mainstreaming, UNDP should consider employing a gender specialist to work directly with the Women Caucus, the Gender Committee and forge effective linkages with government (MWAGCD). This is particularly important now, as Zimbabwe develops and enacts legislation in support of the new Constitution.

Management Response: The recommendation is noted and taken on board. Upon the CO's Gender Seal Committee's recommendation, a gender specialist position will be established. The gender specialist will not only provide internal gender mainstreaming support, but will also work directly with the Ministry of Women Affairs, Gender and Community Development.