

## MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

Independent Country Programme Evaluation, UNDP Namibia

**Evaluation Recommendation 1:** The next country programme should build on the efforts of the current programme and continue support for institutional capacity development, particularly in the priority area of poverty eradication. Pilot initiatives need to be proven and costed to facilitate scale-up. The country programme should also ensure in-depth causality analysis to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of interventions.

The findings of the evaluation suggest that interventions seen as more successful benefited from well-designed strategies that address the systemic or root causes of problems. They also applied a longer-term, multi-pronged implementation strategy and were complemented by the interventions of government and development partners. This suggests that UNDP should ensure adequate time is invested in causality and stakeholder analysis and engagement. This was not required when the country programme was developed. However, it is now mandatory for all new country programmes to undertake and present a causality and theory of change analysis.

Furthermore, consistent with the position of the United Nations in middle-income countries, the country programme should continue to pursue piloting and demonstration of model initiatives that, if proven successful, are presented to the Government for replication and scale-up. However, the next country programme should be more intentional about pilots by articulating plans for documenting evidence from them. Specifically, the country office and UNDP more broadly should establish guidelines for pilots that include criteria for proving.

In addition, the country programme should channel limited funding for gender equality and democratic governance interventions on areas that show greater potential to achieve results.

**Management Response:** The importance of in-depth causality and stakeholder analysis and engagement is well recognized. UNDP's new country programme in Namibia for the period of 2019-2023 has been developed through causality analyses with stakeholders, such as the theory of change workshop held in September 2017. New challenges and opportunities will be identified and discussed throughout the implementation stage of the new country programme and especially at the mid-term review. UNDP will ensure core funding for the new country programme will focus on gender equality and governance-related interventions.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking*	
			Status	Comments

1.1 Conduct causality and stakeholder analysis and engagement such as the theory of change workshop with stakeholders	September 2017	Country office	Completed	
1.2 Conduct Mid-Term Review of the Country Programme Document (CPD) 2019-2023	August 2021	Programme Management Team of the country office		
1.3 Ensure core funding for the new country programme will focus on gender equality and governance-related interventions	March 2018	Programme Management Team of the country office	Completed	
1.4 Ensure that the core funding programming focusses on strengthening institutional development of the newly created Poverty Ministry and others (MITSMED) contributing to poverty eradication	March 2019	Programme Management Team of the country office	Ongoing	
1.5. Operationalize the UNDP partnership with academia, think tanks and research institutions, in line with Key Action 3.2 in this Management Response. Particularly, for developing the guidelines for pilot initiative that include criteria for proving.	December 2019	Programme Management Team of the country office	Ongoing	

**Evaluation Recommendation 2: UNDP global human resource strategies need to be made more responsive and aligned to the country-office demands of a middle-income country.**

The primary role of UNDP, as defined in the Strategic Plan 2018–2021, is to support countries to achieve Agenda 2030. UNDP recognizes that many middle-income countries face challenges in implementing the agenda and require multisectoral action that combines high-level technical advice and capacity-building. Given declining resources, UNDP is required to ‘do more with less’ in resource-constrained settings such as Namibia. The Organization is responding and has introduced human resource strategies to maximize limited resources, such as sharing of expertise among countries at the regional level.

However, as seen with the economic analyst post shared between the Namibia and Malawi country offices, such an arrangement has limitations. These include the competing priorities of different offices and the limited time that can be allocated to each country. There are indications that

other countries have faced similar challenges. The Organization should review these strategies, building on lessons learned and introducing further innovations in human resource policies, such as re-profiling staffing competencies and creating a cadre of staff who can combine multiple functions such as management and substantive technical support. This strategy can help small offices like Namibia to become more effective and efficient by filling two posts (which do not necessarily have the same priority level) through one expenditure/post.

The country office succeeded recently in leveraging government funding through cost-sharing agreements. To do more of this, the office needs catalytic funds to kickstart interventions and leverage more funding. In the context of the new Strategic Plan's Country Investment Facility, UNDP should prioritize more flexible funding to countries such as Namibia. As a small middle-income country with a positive enabling environment and early socioeconomic successes, Namibia presents the potential to be an incubator for UNDP and UN reform and effectiveness.

Such changes will require greater support and direction from the UNDP corporate level.

**Management Response:** The country office agrees that, in middle-income (MIC) countries like Namibia, UNDP needs to take multi-sectoral actions combining high level technical advice and capacity building. To conduct such actions, the country office recognizes the critical role that economist can play in the MIC environment. Moreover, the country office will seek greater support from UNDP corporate level on re-profiling skill sets and receiving more flexible funding flows.

Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
2.1 Ensure high level technical advice and capacity building are incorporated in the new country programme	September 2018	Programme Management Team of the country office		
2.2 Appeal to the UNDP corporate level to seek support on having skillsets of economic analysis in the country office	January 2019	Senior Management Team of the country office		
2.3 Review the organogram in view of implementing the new country programme	January 2020	Senior Management Team of the country office		
2.4 Advocate the UNDP corporate level to increase flexible funding flows to countries such as Namibia	January 2020	Senior Management Team of the country office		

2.5. To enhance the UNDP effective role within the ongoing UN reforms, UNDP country office to enhance the functional, technical and operational capacities to compete/position staff in the new roles	December 2019	Senior Management Team of the country office		
<p><b>Evaluation Recommendation 3: Considering that resources are declining, UNDP should explore strategic partnerships with relevant stakeholders to optimize resources, harmonize efforts and maximize results.</b></p> <p>Partnerships are central to UNDP's strategies at the country level, and the Strategic Plan recognizes collaboration among development actors as being vital in addressing complex development challenges, especially in the context of limited resources. In today's knowledge economy, UNDP should use its comparative advantages as demonstrated by its convening power, neutrality and trusted relationship with government to broker and facilitate strategic partnerships with organizations that have similar mandates in the country and region. One of the country programme priorities constrained by limited resources is provision of high-level economic analysis to the Government. The office should undertake a mapping of academic institutions, private sector organizations and civil society groups in the country and region that have a similar mandate and explore strategic partnerships with them to optimize resources and harmonize efforts to maximize results. Different from financing or implementation partnerships, such partnerships are based on sharing of expertise and knowledge.</p>				
<p><b>Management Response:</b> In the new country programme, UNDP will position itself as the broker/facilitator of strategic partnership in the new country programme by utilizing its convening power. Building upon the trusted relationship with the government, the country office will further enhance strategic partnerships with academic institutions, private sector organizations and civil society groups to share expertise, data and knowledge.</p>				
Key Action(s)	Time Frame	Responsible Unit(s)	Tracking	
			Status	Comments
3.1 Continue to position UNDP as the broker/facilitator of strategic partnership in the new country programme	January 2020	Programme Management Team of the country office		
3.2 Enhance strategic partnerships with academic institutions, private sector organizations, civil society groups and development partners to share expertise, data and knowledge	January 2020	Programme Management Team of the country office		

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\* The implementation status is tracked in the UNDP Evaluation Resource Center (ERC).