

## Chapter 3

# UNDP CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

This chapter briefly reviews the relevance of UNDP activities with regard to major national and international objectives, as well as the organization's capacity to adapt to changes in context and the environment. It provides an overall analysis of operational efficiency, followed by a more in-depth review of the four larger thematic areas in which UNDP is active.

### 3.1 OVERALL ANALYSIS OF UNDP 2004–2007 COUNTRY PROGRAMME

The UNDP country programme is structured around three major themes: good governance, poverty reduction, and environmental and natural-resource management. There are three additional cross-cutting themes, which include gender, HIV/AIDS and NICT. The intent was to build strong synergies between UNDP programme components and components of programmes by other members of the aid community.

In broad terms, the expected results were to:

- Increase the capacity of the principal governance institutions, mainly through support that addresses the needs of parliamentary institutions, local authorities and civil society;
- Improve responsible reporting in public administration;
- Strengthen capacity for reducing poverty and achieving the MDGs on the part of the government and civil society; and
- Strengthen the capacity of national and sectoral authorities to plan and implement integrated approaches to environmental management and energy development that meet the needs of the poor.

The approved country programme was used as a framework to guide country-office activities. The programme was modified as necessary to avoid duplication with non-UNDP initiatives and respond to funding opportunities or government requests.

It is worth noting that crisis prevention and recovery activities were not presented under a separate theme, but were instead—and surprisingly—included under the theme of poverty reduction. The evaluation team was told that the government wished to clearly mark a passage from a post-conflict situation to a development phase and preferred not to emphasize post-conflict activities. Nevertheless, such activities continued to represent an important part of UNDP work and a large share of its resources. For its own analysis, the evaluation team opted to present post-conflict activities separately.

The initial budget estimates for the four-year programme stood at \$11,035,000. Of this, \$2,535,000 (23 percent) was expected to come from UNDP regular resources. Actual expenditures were more than double that amount, reaching \$22,706,934, of which 20 percent was allocated from regular target for resource assignment from the core (TRAC) 1 resources.

#### 3.1.1 PROGRAMME RELEVANCE

UNDP interventions are decided upon in consultation with the government and correspond to national priorities as contained in major national strategy and policy documents. Such documents include the 2002 presidential platform of 'New Hope', the I-PRSP and, in some cases, national sectoral plans, such as the one for the environment. The programme also respects the priorities

defined by the New Partnership for Africa's Development, as well as the global and regional objectives of UNDP.

The consensus among respondents from the government, the aid community and civil society is that UNDP activities correspond to genuine needs in the country. However, not all areas of activity are recognized as being areas of excellence, where the comparative advantages of UNDP are evident. In general, recognized areas of expertise include UNDP interventions in the fields of governance, support to community groups, support to the preparation of national strategy documents and reports, and advocacy for the environment, HIV/AIDS and gender issues.

Some activities are seen as less successful and not entirely relevant to the UNDP mandate and expertise. In particular, this relates to highly operational downstream projects for the rehabilitation of infrastructure damaged by wars. For example, between 2002 and 2004 the rehabilitation of rural tracks was undertaken with deficient technical backstopping by the United Nations Office for Project Services.

As noted in section 3.1, a structural anomaly in the country programme resulted from the decision to present conflict prevention and recovery activities under the theme of poverty reduction. The programme would have benefited from a clearer presentation that emphasized conflict prevention and recovery as an independent programme component.

### 3.1.2 IMPLEMENTING LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PREVIOUS CYCLE

The Country Programme document approved by the UNDP Executive Board in September 2003 noted some lessons learned from past operations in the Republic of the Congo and made corresponding recommendations.

1. **Adopting a programme approach enhancing coherence and synergies.** Although a programme approach was adopted in the planning phase, the realities of implementation have

forced the country office to proceed with projects rather than fully integrated programmes. The necessity to divide the programme into projects corresponding to donor funding mechanisms has meant that the programmes became *de facto* umbrella programmes, each covering a portfolio of projects.

The country office considered that the Country Programme Document constituted a framework that had to be responsive to changed circumstances and priorities during implementation. Thus, UNDP had to forego some of the planned activities when funding them proved difficult or when others had previously engaged in the same field. This was the case for planned activities related to marine and coastal environments and for follow-up on the UNDP-supported survey on corruption and fraud. On the other hand, certain activities were incorporated into the programme without being planned from the outset. These included, for example, the rehabilitation of primary schools, undertaken in consideration of the UNDP comparative advantages in community action and at the request of both the government and The World Bank.

UNDP successfully developed synergies between different projects and activities. This was particularly visible in the Pool Department, where a project for youth at risk was used to support disarmament of former combatants and primary-school rehabilitation activities. Another example of synergies, this time at the upstream level, concerned UNDP support to parliamentary institutions. In this case, the access and goodwill generated by the project allowed UNDP to conduct more effective advocacy and enlist the active support of parliament on a number of issues, including gender, HIV/AIDS and the environment.

2. **Strengthening and deepening partnerships with NGOs and associations.** A second lesson called for further development of relationships with NGOs and associations as a proven mechanism of delivering assistance

in areas that remained insecure. As mentioned in section 2.6, relations with NGOs and associations have been less intense during the current programming cycle than in the immediate post-war period, when national implementation capacity was particularly weak. In the new cycle, UNDP has correctly placed more—and continues to gradually increase—emphasis on national execution.

3. **Improving national ownership, ensuring sustainability of the outcomes of projects and actions, and fostering national capacity-building in the area of economic management.** Unfortunately, full national ownership and the resulting sustainability of results remain the weak points of several UNDP activities carried out under the programme. In many cases of both upstream and downstream interventions, the planned outputs were delivered, yet anticipated results could not be achieved due to the national or local authorities' failure to devote the human and financial resources necessary to sustain such results. This important issue is further discussed, and concrete examples are provided in the thematic sections of this ADR.
4. **Deepening and broadening partnerships with the private sector, particularly in the context of fighting poverty and HIV/AIDS, as well as environmental and natural-resource preservation and management.** As discussed in section 2.6, this recommendation has largely been implemented.

### 3.1.3 FINANCIAL ASPECTS OF THE PROGRAMME

The UNDP country office has succeeded in redressing its rate of delivery,<sup>29</sup> which was particularly low at the beginning of the period under review. For 2004 and 2005, the delivery rate stood at only 66 and 65 percent, respectively. Following stricter controls introduced by the country office management and an increased reliance on an office-based service centre responsible

for procuring goods and services, the rate of delivery increased to 78 percent in 2006 and 87 percent in 2007. According to the 2007 performance ranking by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa, the Republic of the Congo's country office achieved second place among 44 countries, due in part to the improvement in programme delivery.

Programme funding demonstrates a heavy reliance on non-core resources and, therefore, a reliance on additional fundraising on the part of the UNDP country office. Figure 1 indicates the respective proportions of core and non-core resources expended for each of the four years under review. There are two notable observations. First, UNDP has been increasingly successful in mobilizing and using additional non-core resources, though often at the expense of other management duties. Second, UNDP core resource allocations remained relatively low during the programme period. This phenomenon is due to the methodology applied in allocating TRAC resources to different country programmes.

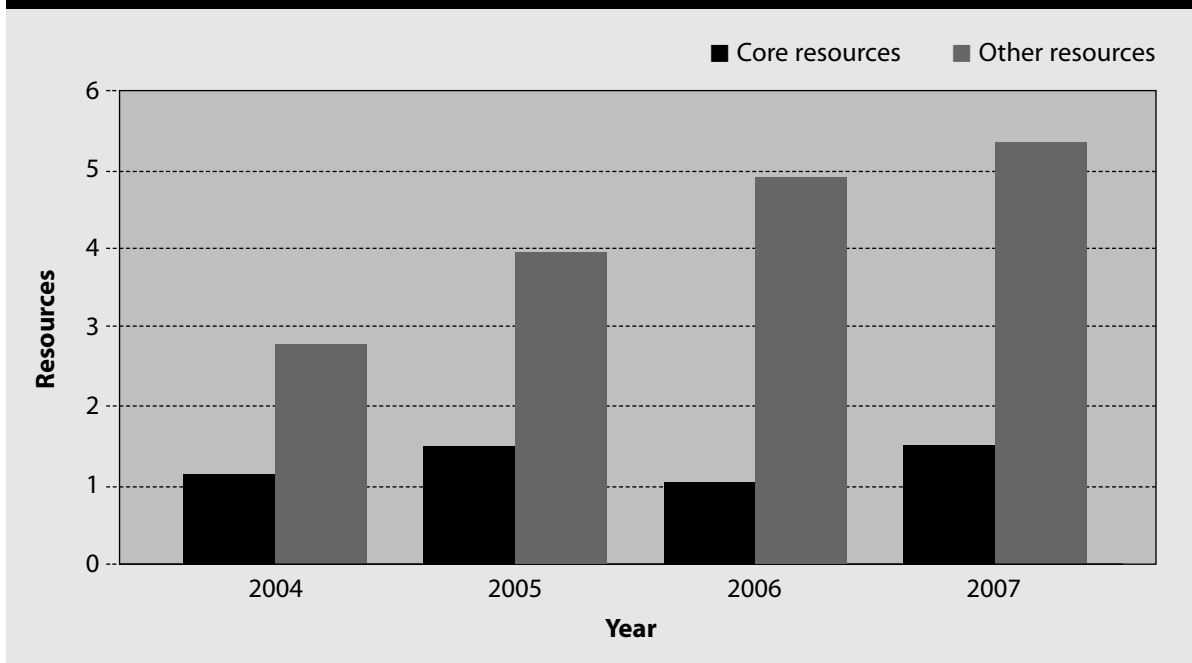
Two factors constitute the principal basis for allocations: the classification of a country on the basis of the gross national income per capita and the size of its population. Oil revenues place the Republic of the Congo in the lower middle-income group. It also does not fall into the category of least developed countries, and its population is relatively small. No special consideration appears to have been given to the structural problems of the country's economy and its poor human-development ranking. This combination of factors has resulted in core (TRAC 1) resources expenditure representing a yearly average of \$1,141,000, which equals only some 20 percent of total UNDP programme expenditure.

This has proven to be limiting in many ways. First, UNDP was restrained in using core resources as seed money to launch new activities

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<sup>29</sup> Expenditure as a percentage of approved budgets. Source: UNDP country office in Brazzaville based on the UNDP ATLAS accounting system.

**Figure 1. Annual expenditure 2004–2007 by core and non-core resources**



and attract additional funding. Second, the country office had to develop an aggressive fundraising strategy that, at times, soured relations with donors. Some of them felt UNDP engaged in activities simply because of funding opportunities; others thought that by engaging with some parts of the government, UNDP was competing for funding.

The current programme cycle marked the beginning of a shift in project execution modalities, in line with a gradual passage from a post-conflict situation into a stabilization period. The previous period had been characterized by cooperation with some international and local NGOs for the implementation of projects, as well as by the extensive use of the direct execution modality (DEX). Progress in moving towards the national execution modality (NEX) has been modest, with less than 30 percent of expenditures occurring under NEX during 2004–2007.

In 2006, the country office commissioned an evaluation of the NEX through both government institutions and national NGOs. The evaluation

concluded that a comprehensive programme for strengthening national capacity was essential for achieving the objective of moving towards increased national execution. In June 2006, the government also requested that UNDP manage on its behalf some of the funds provided under NEX. This request concerned mainly procurement activities and was made in order to improve the rate of delivery for NEX projects, which had previously been alarmingly low. Under some projects, a hybrid NEX/DEX formula emerged; it now needs to be accompanied by a strong capacity-building approach and concrete governmental measures in order to streamline its disbursement mechanisms and render them more transparent. In the meantime, the passage to a pure NEX modality must remain gradual and prudent.

#### **3.1.4 CONSULTATION MECHANISMS**

A number of mechanisms have been put in place to ensure the widest possible participation in the formulation and management of programmes and projects. Local project review committees assess and approve UNDP interventions prior to their inception. During the course of implemen-

tation, programmes and projects have also been monitored and overseen by steering committees that were expected to meet regularly. Both types of committees enjoy large participation that includes not only the immediate government and donor partners, but also civil society organizations and individual experts.

Some committee members felt that their consultations were merely symbolic, as meetings occurred at the end of the planning process, mostly after the project design had been approved by a donor. With few exceptions, such as the governance programme, steering committees met irregularly, and some had not met at all. It would appear that difficulty arose from the designation of chairs at the ministerial level, which placed additional demands on the schedules of people who are already extremely busy. One minister mentioned to the evaluation team that she had asked a senior civil servant to chair steering committees and report to her. This might provide the formula to increase the effectiveness of such committees.

### 3.1.5 INTERNAL MANAGEMENT ISSUES

The country office implemented two initiatives to improve programme management. The first concerned the establishment of outlying offices in four parts of the Republic of the Congo outside Brazzaville. The offices in Kinkala, Pool Department, and in Pointe-Noire, Kouilou Department, have been designated as UN offices. In fact, they are staffed and maintained by UNDP alone and provide *ad hoc* services to visiting personnel from other agencies. The other two offices, Dolisie in Niari Department and Owando in the Cuvette Department house UNDP project staff. The location of the four offices demonstrates the balanced UNDP approach to addressing the needs of people in all parts of the country.

UNDP made a bold gesture by opening the Kinkala office in the troubled Pool Department.

It constituted a powerful signal of the return to peace, normalcy and reconciliation. This positive public-relations effect could have been amplified, had senior office personnel been present on a more regular basis or had other UNDP staff been more mobile in the whole Department. However, UN security rules continue to limit access to a number of districts in the Pool Department, though such rules are considered excessively prudent among some locally active non-UN organizations. They should also be allowed to benefit from the services of UNDP field offices, which should endeavour to play an increased role in providing a forum for coordination among development and humanitarian actors in their regions.

As part of the 2007 restructuring, country office senior management decided to create a Centre for Project Execution and Support (CEDAP).<sup>30</sup> It was launched in September 2007, following the finalization of a business plan and the recruitment of a manager and an assistant. CEDAP is a merger of two former entities: the DEX Unit and the Service Centre. Its main objective was to boost the delivery of UNDP programmes. Its services included support to UNDP projects by procuring goods and services, support to government partners requesting services within CEDAP capabilities, and management and assumption of full responsibility for procurement-only UNDP projects executed under DEX.

The Centre is experiencing increasing demand among government institutions wishing to outsource their procurement activities, even in cases where such activities are not financed through UNDP. This interesting development underscores the unit's excellent performance. However, it would be prudent not to overstrain the capacity of CEDAP. While this service has already demonstrated its capacity to accelerate procurement and reduce costs, a full evaluation of its activities should take place in late 2009, after two full years of operation.

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30 Centre d'exécution et d'appui aux projets.

Despite a significant improvement in the rate of programme delivery in 2006–2007, the efficiency of UNDP financial management continues to suffer from negative perceptions among its partners, particularly with regard to disbursement speed. One partner complained about the lack of quality and delayed delivery of financial reports on the use of contributions to UNDP. This should send a clear signal that UNDP needs to energetically pursue efforts to streamline procedures, avoid over-centralization and better reward superior staff performance.

### 3.1.6 MONITORING AND EVALUATION

During the period of 2004–2007, the UNDP country office undertook four formal evaluations: evaluation of the community action project, evaluation of the HIV/AIDS prevention project, a mid-term evaluation of the youth at risk project, and an unfinished final evaluation of the first phase of the weapons collection project.<sup>31</sup> As previously mentioned, an evaluation of NEX was conducted in 2006 and, in the beginning of 2008, an outcome evaluation of the environment and energy programme was underway and close to completion. In total, this effort fell only slightly short of the objectives of the original evaluation plan.

The evaluation team found that outcomes of programmes and projects were often merely outputs. In addition, outcome indicators were at times defined in a purely qualitative way, making monitoring and assessment more subjective than factual. No human or financial resources were allocated to the systematic production of baseline data or to monitoring indicators throughout the life of each project. This proved to be another weakness, which rendered the evaluation of outcomes extremely difficult. According to information given to the evaluation team, this can be explained by the fact that many donors did not wish to accommodate costs that, in their view, are administrative in nature. However, the

importance of being able to properly illustrate the results of programme interventions, UNDP should insist that donors accept and cover realistic monitoring costs—or, alternatively, use its own allocated regular resources for the purpose.

The draft UNDAF document for 2009–2013 goes a long way to defining measurable outcome indicators for each of the programme components, as well as potential sources of information to monitor these indicators. In designing its next country programme for the Republic of the Congo, UNDP should draw extensively on this excellent inter-agency work and align its own outcomes and indicators on those of the UNDAF. It would then be conceivable to go a step further in inter-agency cooperation and undertake joint multi-agency programme evaluations. Such evaluations should be external, independent and could be funded through the funds for coordination at the disposal of the Resident Coordinator.

### 3.2 IMPROVING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

Table 4 details the major components of the democratic governance programme and the underlying areas of activity. The intended outcomes of the programme, as defined in the country programme document of 2003, were:

- Increased efficiency and representativeness of Parliament in discharging its legislative and governmental oversight duties;
- Ratification, implementation and monitoring of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- Involvement of local authorities and community members in planning and managing development and public service activities; and
- Enhanced efficiency, responsibility and transparency in public administration.

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<sup>31</sup> The country office rejected the draft report on the weapons collection project, on the grounds that it did not fully respect the Terms of Reference and was generally biased.

<b>Table 4: Governance Programme 2004-2007: components and activities</b>			
<b>Component / activity</b>	<b>Execution</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Budget US\$</b>
<b>Component 1: Democratic Governance</b>			
Strengthening Parliamentary Institutions	NEX <sup>32</sup>	2001-2006	300,000
Support to the new democratic institutions	NEX	2004-2007	
Strengthening Civil Society Organizations and promotion of human rights	NEX	2004-2007	
Strengthening the capacity of political parties and support for their legal framework	DEX/NEX	2005-2007	
<b>Component 2: Administrative Governance</b>			
Support fight against corruption and strengthen capacity in transparency and ethics	AGEX (shifted to DEX)	2003-2007	
Improvement of public administration performance	NEX	Starting in 2008	
Strengthening consultation and coordination at the ministerial level	Not started		
<b>Component 3: Local Governance</b>			
Support to the decentralization process	DEX	Ongoing	3.7 million <sup>33</sup>
Support to local development	NEX	Ongoing	
<b>Component 4: Economic Governance</b>			
Strengthening national capacities in financial and economic management	NEX	Ongoing but limited	
Support to private sector development	Left to The World Bank, IMF and ADB		
<b>Component 5: Support preparation of national framework for good governance</b>			
	Not started		

Source: UNDP Republic of the Congo country office.

The overall objective of the programme was to strengthen the democratic process and the rule of law for sustainable human development.

Good governance is at the centre of the strategy formulated by the government, with strong

encouragement and support of the international community, for achieving sustainable growth while improving the livelihood of populations. It is also a pre-condition for successfully completing the political, economic and social transition started in 1991. Almost all members of the

32 Shifted to NEX/DEX.

33 A single umbrella project has been created to cover most of the activities related to governance.

international aid community are involved in helping the government improve governance, and UNDP is part of a common effort that could benefit from increased coordination.

No significant changes were required to the initial programme, as governance remained an overwhelming priority throughout the period and is still one today. The only changes occurred when planned UNDP interventions were superseded by programmes of international financial institutions as part of wider discussions on economic and administrative governance. This concerned support to private-sector development and the follow-up to the survey on fraud and corruption. During the course of implementation, additional intended outcomes were identified, corresponding to new operational opportunities, particularly regarding support for legislation on political parties and the role of women in politics.

Although some activities had to be initiated prior to the 2005 launch of the larger umbrella project, particular efforts were made in this area of intervention to ensure that a comprehensive and coherent programme was developed. The programme was divided into different projects for execution and financing purposes. Some activities, such as support to parliamentary institutions and support to the cooperation framework and NEX, were continued from the previous phase and received additional resources under the new programme cycle.

The projects were submitted to a local project review committee.<sup>34</sup> In the case of the governance programme, oversight by the steering committee was quite satisfactory. The acting director of the national management unit prepared a progress report for the period of 2005–2006. *Ad hoc* progress reports were also prepared for some sub-components, such as the initiative for the organization of Department Parliamentary Conferences or for the promotion of women in politics. The French Parliament and

the Inter-Parliamentary Union conducted a joint evaluation of the effectiveness of support to parliamentary institutions.

### 3.2.1 REVIEW OF RESULTS

#### **Strengthening democratic governance**

A number of activities were undertaken to foster democratic governance. Two activities selected as representative of interventions under this programme component are analyzed in more detail in boxes one and two.

Human rights were another area of significant activity. With the involvement of government representatives, CSOs, minority groups (Pygmies) and UN system representatives, UNDP conducted public awareness campaigns, trained police officers on the rights of citizens and organized the celebration of the International Day for Human Rights. UNDP also supported NGOs in establishing several legal clinics in response to the acute need of a population without easy or free access to justice. However, as these clinics rely largely on volunteer services, the absence of regular and independent public or private income for operating costs and essential permanent staff renders their long-term sustainability questionable.

Another meaningful UNDP contribution was the support given to formulating legislation on political parties, as it provided a much-needed legal framework for multiparty democracy. UNDP combined such support with a programme for training political parties, which included training for opposition parties. Training took place mainly in a South-South framework. The project helped establish a consultative framework, as well as behavioural norms for interactions among parties, associations and the government.

The planned support to new democratic institutions, such as the Human Rights Commission and the Higher Council for Freedom in Communications, could not be implemented due to lack of funding.

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34 Comités Locaux D'évaluation des Projets.

### Strengthening administrative governance

Under this component, UNDP intended to support the fight against corruption and fraud, contribute to improving public administration performance and support enhanced consultation and coordination at the ministerial level. Only the first activity could be started during the 2004–2007 period. The planned activity of improving public administration performance was delayed until 2008 due to lack of funding, and more recently, due to a misunderstanding in which the counterpart ministry was expecting only the provision of equipment, while UNDP was considering institutional, rather than only material, support. In addition to the anti-fraud project (see Box 3), UNDP provided institutional support to the Official Journal, which electronically records all official documents.

### Strengthening local governance

UNDP backed governmental decentralization efforts, mainly through institutional support to the technical committee for the evaluation of decentralization, which included representatives from all ministries. A training programme based on a needs assessment of locally elected officials was being finalized in March 2008. The positive role played by UNDP in the organization of Departmental Parliamentarian Conferences (see Box 1) led to the decision of the Ministry in charge of decentralization to request the office's assistance in that sector. The Conferences also convinced the government to allocate resources to local authorities. In 2008, support to local development programmes will start in two regions on a pilot basis.

#### Box 1. Strengthening Parliament

The programme organized workshops and study tours for the staff supporting the secretariats of both the National Assembly and the Senate, as well as for parliamentarians. Training for parliamentarians was aimed at improving their knowledge on organization, processes, parliamentary diplomacy and budgetary issues.

The programme helped create the Centre of Information and Legislative Research of the Parliament by providing equipment, computers and documentation. Unfortunately, access to the Internet never materialized, as the Parliament Secretariat failed to earmark resources to finance the service.

Computers were also provided to the Finance Committee and the Brazzaville office of the Central African Network of Women Parliamentarians. The programme supported some initiatives to open the dialogue between the Parliament and civil society and to improve the image of the Republic of the Congo in the international parliamentary arena.

Major results of the programme included:

■ **Successful advocacy leading to policy formulation.**

UNDP made extensive use of the parliamentarian platform to advocate and raise awareness of a number of cross-cutting issues, such as HIV/AIDS, the environment, climate change, poverty alleviation, gender and new information technologies. The Parliament adopted official statements on most of these subjects.

■ **Promoting decentralization through organizing Departmental Parliamentarian Conferences.**

These gatherings aimed to initiate a dialogue, outside the capital city, between locally elected representatives and national parliamentarians, in order to discuss global issues, identify local needs and pave the way for decentralizing the political and administrative systems. Six conferences were organized from 2003 to 2006, but none were held in 2007 due to a lack of funds. The Parliament did not take over this initiative though its own financial resources.

■ **Successful introduction of gender considerations in programme execution.**

UNDP provided training to

women parliamentarians and supported the formation of the Central African Network of Women Parliamentarians.

The numerous achievements of this programme highlight it as one area of excellence for UNDP in the Republic of the Congo. The programme delivered the planned outputs; however, the anticipated results did not fully materialize. For constitutional and political considerations outside the programme's influence, parliamentary capacity to submit legislation proposals and exercise its legislative and governmental oversight functions remained weak. National ownership exists, but the sustainability of results is most often not guaranteed in the absence of budgetary allocations to pursue activities.

The strengthening of parliamentary institutions is not limited to building technical and administrative capacity. The process also requires strong national political will and support. The results of the programme should be examined from a longer-term perspective, and UNDP should continue its support, while insisting on concrete measures to ensure national ownership.

### Strengthening economic governance

UNDP has only just begun activities related to economic governance. These remain limited to training initiatives for members of the Economic and Finances Commission of the National Assembly and the Senate.

#### 3.2.2 MAJOR PARTNERSHIPS, COORDINATION AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

UNDP participates in consultations and coordination on governance issues through a Thematic Group and a National Community on Best Practices. For the preparation of the I-PRSP, the final PRSP and its supplementary documents, as well as for the ongoing preparation of the UNDAF, coordination with donors and the UN system was strong. The European Union, France and The World Bank are involved in support to many oversight and control institutions, including the General Inspectorate, the local equivalent of a general accounts office,<sup>35</sup> Economic and Financial Commissions and the National Commission against Corruption and Fraud. UNDP is or plans to be involved in

programmes with some of the same institutions and would also benefit from increased coordination with other actors.

Donor interest in strengthening parliamentary institutions facilitated the mobilization of resources. For other programmes, the UNDP country office used some of its regular resources and appealed for additional UNDP resources from the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund. Major donor partners in the area of governance included Italy, Sweden, the Netherlands through the Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa, the African Capacity Building Initiative and the ADB. UNDP also worked with international NGOs, such as the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation.

UNDP succeeded in raising awareness and enlisting the active support of the Parliament on a number of issues. UNDP was also able to provide advice through the use of South-South

#### Box 2. Promoting women in politics

The Centre for the Promotion of Women in Politics, an NGO receiving technical and financial support from UNDP, trained women on various topics. These included advocacy for political change, leadership and management, entry of young women in politics, access to decision-making institutions, women and democracy, and best practices in governance. These training sessions targeted individuals and representatives of associations. Most were held outside the major cities of Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire.

This project also developed a manual for women considering running for public office and helped women develop a

subregional network to exchange experiences in accessing political positions.

The Centre is recognized as a successful institution for its intellectual capacity and its active advocacy programme for promoting women in politics.

Such efforts, combined with strong advocacy with the Parliament, led to the revision of the electoral law to introduce a quota of 15 percent women candidates for parliamentary elections and 20 percent for local elections. The number of women parliamentarians, unfortunately, did not increase with 2007 elections (of a total of 137 seats, 12 seats in 2002 and

only nine in 2007). In anticipation of upcoming local elections, the electoral law is under revision to avoid positioning women only in unfavourable places on electoral lists.

In all political parties, there is still resistance to women's entry into politics, under the pretext that there are not enough qualified women.

This programme illustrates what one could term a 'dormant success'. Despite the absence of immediate results in the representation of women, conditions for a real success in the future exist. The programme is on the right track and requires sustained UNDP attention.

35 Cour des Comptes.

### Box 3. Support to anti-fraud and anti-corruption initiatives

The programme began in 2003 with a survey that produced a comprehensive and clear picture of the extent of fraud and corruption in the country. As a result, a National Plan against fraud and corruption was prepared and approved by the government in 2004. This was supplemented by an operational plan, and a National Commission against fraud, misappropriation and corruption was also established in 2004. In addition, the Republic of the Congo ratified the UN and African Union Conventions against corruption in 2005 and 2006, respectively.

The IMF and The World Bank took over this area of intervention from UNDP, as it related to one of the major conditions for the eligibility of the Republic of the Congo under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative. A new National Council and a National Observatory against corruption have been established. The discussions related to the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiative also meant that a new survey on corruption and fraud had to be undertaken and the National Plan of Action revised.

The results of UNDP interventions have been limited, although the findings of the UNDP-sponsored survey have

been used as important inputs and statistical base for the recently launched National Human Development Report on the theme of governance.

Similar to the strengthening of parliamentary institutions, combating fraud and corruption is not only a technical and administrative operation. It should also be accompanied by strong national political will and support. UNDP opened the door to others, and its involvement in this area remains valid for the future—particularly for the provision of training to members of the new National Council and Observatory.

expertise, national and international NGOs and eminent personalities.

#### 3.2.3 MAIN FINDINGS

The UNDP democratic governance programme was relevant in the context of a country intent on completing its transition to a multiparty democracy after widespread internal conflicts. The programme was comprehensive and touched upon several aspects of governance. It was conceived to address highly sensitive issues, while also looking downstream to address social needs at the same time. The selection of DEX or NEX modalities was appropriate and reflected the comparative advantage of having UNDP directly involved in critical and sensitive areas, such as surveys on corruption and support to political parties. The change in the programme largely reflected the transfer of some interventions to the Bretton Woods Institutions or project cancellations for a lack of funds.

The programme was designed to balance upstream and downstream activities for almost all interventions. This was particularly useful for gaining goodwill through a combination of

support at the level of strategic and policy development, combined with concrete material assistance in the same sector. For example, UNDP support to formulating legislation on the participation of women in politics was accompanied by support to an NGO actively promoting that goal.

The most effective interventions were in the area of support to parliamentary institutions, political parties and the promotion of women in politics. The organization of decentralized Department Parliamentary Conferences constituted a particularly innovative approach that should be evaluated further. Most of the achievements, however, must be seen as dormant successes in the absence of the necessary national political will to follow-up such initiatives by devoting human and financial resources.

Such political will, combined with the allocation of national resources, is often absent in governance programmes, as well as other areas of intervention, resulting in the abandonment of promising initiatives. This was the case of Departmental Parliamentarian Conferences,

discontinued in 2007, and the still-lacking Internet connectivity in the documentation centre created for parliamentarians. In contrast, the Centre for the Promotion Women in Politics is likely to become a self-sustained NGO through direct support from its members and elected women. UNDP will need to provide additional support to some of these activities in order to consolidate achievements, but should do it on the basis of government partners making an unambiguous and concrete commitment to assume full national ownership going forward.

For each of the activities falling under a broader component, outcomes with indicators were formulated, and outputs and annual targets were identified. Linkages between activities, outputs and outcomes were clear. Unfortunately, indicators and related baseline data were most often defined in a qualitative way, making measurement difficult and subjective.

### 3.3 POVERTY REDUCTION

The country programme approved in 2003 defined the goal of UNDP poverty reduction activities as “furthering governmental efforts in the formulation and implementation of the poverty reduction strategy.” The intended outcome was a “strengthened capacity for poverty reduction and achievement of the MDGs on the part of the government and civil society.”

As previously mentioned, the initial programme merged activities related to conflict prevention and recovery into the poverty reduction area. Most of these programmes are now considered part of a peace consolidation approach and are under the management of the UNDP local Governance Unit. For the purpose of this review, activities conducted under different themes are presented separately. Table 5 details poverty reduction activities.

The PRSP and the MDG strategy are important governmental priorities, both as part of the

country’s development policy and ongoing discussions with international financial institutions regarding economic restructuring and debt-relief programmes. Similarly, and despite operational difficulties encountered, the two community development programmes have been timely interventions in the aftermath of disruptive internal conflicts. These programmes were in line with two major thematic areas of the I-PRSP: the consolidation of peace and security, and rural development.

Except for the Support to PRSP and MDG Strategy programme, which focused on elaborating poverty reduction strategy documents, all activities were financed under the DEX modality. The Community Action project and the Emergency Programme for Rehabilitation and Support to Communities<sup>36</sup> were initiated soon after the end of the civil wars, and, in view of the severe disruptions caused by armed conflict, the prevailing opinion was that NEX would have been premature and unrealistic. In addition, the two projects heavily relied on implementation through NGOs, local associations and community groups.

#### 3.3.1 REVIEW OF RESULTS

The main UNDP poverty reduction effort at the national level has been in supporting the preparation of the PRSP and the National MDG Strategy. UNDP provided financial support, equipment and technical assistance. The country office financed some of the thematic studies required to prepare the final documents and provided support for the distribution of the Information Bulletin of the National Committee on the Reduction of Poverty. UNDP was also instrumental in organizing consultations in all regions of the country, ensuring that strategy documents benefited from the widest possible participation.

UNDP supported the preparation of the 2004 National MDG Report and is currently helping finalize a National MDG Strategy. The second

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36 *Projet d’Urgence de Relance et d’Appui aux Communautés.*

**Table 5. Projects related to poverty reduction and achieving the MDGs, 2004–2007**

Project	Execution	Duration	Budget (US\$)
Community Action	DEX	2000-2007	2.4 million
Emergency Programme for Rehabilitation and Support to Communities	DEX	2003-2007	4.6 million
Support for the Reintegration of Vulnerable Groups	DEX	2007-2011	153,632 (2007)
Support to Poverty Reduction (PRSP and MDG strategy)	NEX	2005-2007	0.8 million

Source: UNDP Republic of the Congo country office.

National Human Development Report, launched in March 2008, also benefited from UNDP support and inputs. Through the support from UNDP and other actors, the government is now equipped with tools needed to guide the implementation of poverty reduction programmes. The actual results of these actions will take time to assess and will largely depend on the sustained political will of the government to implement strategies and policies, as well as the government's continued cooperation with the international community to put in place the reforms needed to support the strategies.

The Community Action project, started in 2000, addressed the needs of communities' victims of the civil wars in the four worst hit rural departments of Pool, Niari, Bouenza and Lékoumou, as well as four neighbouring departments. It was conceived as part of the UN humanitarian and reconstruction effort in the aftermath of civil wars, and it was more akin to an emergency response than a development programme. The project set out to repair dispensaries and classrooms, rehabilitate wells and other social infrastructure, and work towards the reintegration of former combatants and war-affected communities. Local partner NGOs and associations were chosen hastily, and their performance was often sub-standard. Security restrictions and logistical difficulties made monitoring erratic at times.

Nevertheless, the project shows positive results, mainly on two accounts. First, the number of

indirect beneficiaries of rehabilitated social infrastructure is estimated at approximately 800,000. Close to 180,000 persons benefited from improved health faculties, and nearly 30,000 children benefited from rehabilitated schools. In addition, UNDP conducted rigorous information and training campaigns on peace, reconciliation and human rights. Second, the project emphasized a community-based approach with local project selection committees to review and approve proposals for rehabilitation and community participation in the implementation of activities. That community approach helped reduce local tensions and contributed to reconciliation and the consolidation of peace.

The Emergency Recovery and Community Support project was a component of a much larger programme, financed under a \$41 million credit and a grant from The World Bank/International Development Agency. The component entrusted to UNDP aimed to (i) strengthen the capacity of local NGOs and associations for the formulation of development projects and their monitoring and evaluation; (ii) promote partnerships at the local level between authorities and the population through the creation of consultative mechanisms on local development; and (iii) create employment through the implementation of small projects. Partners in the programme, in addition to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development/International Development Agency, were the Ministry of Finance and the Agency for

#### Box 4. Support the socio-economic reintegration of underprivileged groups

The recently started Support to the Socio-economic Reintegration of Underprivileged Groups project illustrates the services now offered by UNDP through the CEDAP service centre.

In July 2006, the Ministry of Social Services, Solidarity, Humanitarian Affairs and Family\* turned to UNDP for management assistance for a programme financed through a \$22.1 million grant from the African Development Fund, a contribution of \$6.6 million by the Government of the Republic of the Congo and \$100,000 by UNDP. Under the partnership agreement between the Ministry and UNDP, the country office is designated as responsible for procuring all goods and services under the

programme. During 2007, the first year of operation, UNDP procured \$153,632 in goods and services.

Established in 2007, the CEDAP has already shown positive results in accelerating delivery and reducing costs of UNDP-managed projects. The partnership agreement for the reintegration project is illustrative of a new area of intervention for the CEDAP. It is the first time that such a large and exclusively-procurement government programme was entrusted to the unit. At the beginning of 2008, discussions were underway with other ministries that were potentially interested in using the same services.

The advantages for ministries include speed and lower cost of procurement, compared to a heavier and less reliable governmental procurement and disbursement mechanism. There is, however, a twofold risk. First, should demand exceed capacity, the CEDAP could become over-extended, thereby losing some of its comparative advantages. Second, the approach needs to be balanced by stronger national capacity development and support to procedural and management reforms, so that CEDAP is not perceived as a simple substitute for management deficiencies in the civil service.

\* Maintenant, Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux.

Technical Cooperation and Development, an NGO responsible for the implementation of most of the approved projects. The Government of Italy and two members of the private sector also contributed to the UNDP-managed component. The Government of the Republic of the Congo participated with a contribution of \$200,000.

The programme covered all regions of the country, except the cities of Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire. It contributed to improving socio-economic infrastructure through 37 separate projects. The agricultural production and fishery sectors implemented 153 projects, and 190 local development committees were put in place. There are no evaluations available of the impact of the programme.

#### 3.3.2 ADVOCACY AND COORDINATION

UNDP support to the development of national strategic documents allowed the country office to develop consultative groups on various themes. Such groups were useful instruments for an advocacy role on a number of issues related to good governance, the role of women, and the

need to mainstream HIV/AIDS or environmental considerations into all sectors.

The usefulness of UNDP support in this field is broadly recognized within the aid community and in the civil society. According to a prominent member of a large industrial union, the consultations organized under the auspices of UNDP provided unique opportunities for people from different horizons to exchange views and establish useful contacts, going far beyond the immediate purpose of the meeting. It should be noted that UNDP and The World Bank worked very closely on preparing the PRSP, co-chairing the donor consultative group in the process.

#### 3.3.3 EFFICIENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The poverty reduction programme, developed by the UNDP country office to support the formulation of major strategic documents while also engaging in activities such as community development, is an illustration of the sensible approach of combining up- and downstream interventions.

However, for the two projects related to community development, too little attention was

paid to sustainability during the design and implementation phases. For reasons related to security and transport difficulties, monitoring has been generally insufficient. Furthermore, no mechanisms appear to have existed to monitor the continued sustainability over the medium term, either for the maintenance of rehabilitated infrastructure or the continued viability of small income-generating projects for individuals or groups.

Throughout the implementation of the more operational projects, UNDP has developed partnerships with several local NGOs and committees. However, there is no evidence that UNDP has capitalized on this advantage by pursuing cooperation in the framework of other activities and programmes. Finally, the projects were planned and implemented during the immediate post-conflict phase under a sense of emergency. While quite appropriate at the time, the projects' structures were not completely in line with a development approach.

### 3.4 CONFLICT PREVENTION AND RECOVERY

As mentioned elsewhere in this report, several activities from 2004–2007 were inherited from the previous period. UNDP continued to assist

ex-combatants and victims of violent conflict and addressed the rehabilitation of infrastructure damaged by war. Given the specificity of such projects and the relative size of their budgets, the evaluation team chose to present them separately in this report (see Table 6).

Of all interventions, the only activity specifically mentioned in the approved 2004–2007 country programme is Collection of Small Arms for Development (PCAD),<sup>37</sup> with an outcome indicator of “improved public security.” Outcomes were defined under the individual projects, but too often in terms of what are really outputs.

The main characteristics of the UNDP post-conflict portfolio include:

- Projects are implemented under the direct execution modality (with the exception of the project to assist the integrated management of natural disasters);
- Projects are highly operational and demand a higher level of field presence than is normal for UNDP interventions;
- The total project value exceeds \$18 million, with a much larger average per-project allocation than in other country programme themes; and

**Table 6. Projects related to conflict prevention and recovery, 2004–2007**

Project	Execution	Duration	Budget (US\$ millions)
Collection of Small Arms for Development (PCAD I)	DEX	2004-2007	2.7
Collection of Small Arms for Development (PCAD II)	DEX	2007-2008	2.1
Rehabilitation of Rural Tracks	DEX/AGEX	2002-2004	3.1
Community Action for the Rehabilitation of Communities and Reintegration of Youth at Risk (PRESJAR)	NEX	2005-2007	3.8
Rehabilitation of Primary Schools (PRAEBASE)	DEX	2005-2008	8.7
Integrated Management of Natural Disasters and Risk	NEX	2006-2007	0.5

Source: UNDP Republic of the Congo country office.

37 Projet de Collecte des Armes pour le Développement.

- Significant synergies have been developed between different projects, particularly among PCAD I, the Basic Education Support Programme (PRAEBASE),<sup>38</sup> and the Community Action Project for Community Recovery and Social Reintegration of Youth at Risk (PRESJAR).<sup>39</sup>

Two projects are closely related to larger programmes financed by The World Bank. PCAD I, financed entirely by the European Union, is the UNDP-run disarmament programme. It is complementary to the government-led demobilization and reintegration programme financed by The World Bank-operated regional Multi-Donor Trust Fund for Demobilization and Reintegration. For its part, PRAEBASE is one of four components in a \$20 million World Bank programme for support to primary education. All other components of PRAEBASE are implemented through the relevant Congolese line ministry.

Using the DEX modality for the portions of these programmes under UNDP responsibility has resulted in minor tensions, as some members of national institutions felt strongly that funds should have been channelled through them. One senior civil servant even expressed surprise that UNDP appeared to be competing with the government for resources.

Most of the projects that belong to this category have been planned and are being executed in an 'emergency mood', characteristic of post-conflict situations. Insufficient attention has been devoted to technical backstopping and to the initial mainstreaming of cross-cutting themes during planning. Important gender and HIV/AIDS considerations were introduced only later, during the course of implementation. As an example, the manual for PRAEBASE implementation had to be revised to ensure that

schools would be equipped with separate latrines for girls and boys.

In these projects, there is often confusion between outcomes and outputs. In PRAEBASE, for example, the outcome is defined as rehabilitated schools and the formation and training of a number of local community management committees. It is only at the level of The World Bank-sponsored programme that genuine, measurable outcomes are formulated. The UNDP project could have adopted the general outcomes, but could also have defined new ones, particularly in terms of the sustainability of the community management committees.

#### 3.4.1 REVIEW OF RESULTS

Although conflict prevention projects did not form a part of an integrated programme, they have certain anticipated results in common.

The first is the restoration of a secure environment, particularly as related to Collection of Small Arms for Development. The general security situation in the country has vastly improved since 2000, to the extent that the government is now present and active in all but one small part of the country. The continued presence of illegal weapons,<sup>40</sup> not only with former members of the militia but also with other civilians, still poses a threat to security and stability. Some government officials think that the issue is now that of general public order rather than that of acute post-conflict emergency. This may be an indication that future emphasis of UNDP interventions should be more upstream. For instance, assisting the authorities in the development of legislation on arms possession and improving the management of national arms depots are two activities envisaged by UNDP for the next programme cycle.

38 Projet d'Appui à l'Éducation de Base.

39 Projet d'Action Communautaire pour le Relèvement des Communautés et la Réintégration Sociale des Jeunes à Risque.

40 The NGO Small Arms Survey, in a survey dated December 2007, estimated the number of small arms in circulation at some 34,000. Most of these arms are no longer possessed by the remaining militia groups.

The second expected result is the restoration of a favourable economic environment in areas devastated by war. Despite difficulties and the increasing gap between the poor and the rich, there are signs that economic activity is picking up in many areas of the Republic of the Congo. Unfortunately, this affects mostly urban areas, while the benefits of increased economic opportunities are substantially less in regions that remain under the control of militias. However, steps are being taken to improve access into and from certain areas. The rehabilitation of National Road One between Brazzaville and Kinkala is already changing prospects in the Pool Department.

It is difficult to assess the extent to which UNDP interventions influenced these achievements. Too many actors and factors are at play to isolate one particular initiative as dispositive. It appears that the major contribution of UNDP in restoring security and economic activity is more one of impact on mindframes and attitudes than actual measurable results.

There is no doubt that some successes were achieved. Arms have been collected, although the numbers collected were much fewer than planned. Some former combatants succeeded in establishing viable income-generating ventures. Schools have been rebuilt, and children are back in the classrooms, despite the continuing difficulties facing the primary education system. When asked to identify the single most significant UNDP contribution to the Republic of the Congo in recent years, a group of NGOs concluded that the much-publicized public ceremonies of burning collected weapons had the most profound effect on the minds of people and constituted a strong signal of return to normalcy.

However, many projects were plagued by serious operational flaws. The rural tracks rehabilitation project, operated by the United Nations Office for Project Services, is an almost textbook-like example of a failure. The project rehabilitated two of three roads, but fell short of completing the third by three kilometres, making it totally unserviceable. Furthermore, the two rehabilitated

roads, along with most of the national network, have not been maintained and have since fallen into disrepair. Two years after the formal end of the project, the donor and UNDP are still in disagreement regarding eligible expenditures and reporting.

The support given to building national capacity for the management of natural disasters is the only programme implemented under the NEX modality. While successful in establishing a national structure, the programme needs to be revisited in order to ensure that the results have not been affected by a recent change in ministerial responsibility for that portfolio.

The PRESJAR project, started in 2004, moved away from addressing only the needs of ex-combatants to also include youth at risk. It remains, however, very much linked to the conflict, as the rationale for inclusion of other young people is to prevent them from taking up arms. The aim of the project was to reinforce the integration of displaced rural communities, particularly youth and women. A mid-term evaluation highlighted high levels of participation by the local authorities and population, as well as the positive synergies developed between PRESJAR and other projects. It also noted, however, that the free distribution of materials, equipment and start-up funds could reduce the sense of ownership on the part of beneficiaries, consequently reducing the project's sustainability.

#### **3.4.2 MAJOR PARTNERSHIPS, COORDINATION AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION**

The projects benefited from generally active steering committees and a well-structured community approach. Coordination aspects were of crucial importance for the primary education project that forms part of a larger programme, and for the small arms collection that runs parallel to a larger project supporting the national demobilization and reintegration programme for former combatants.

With regard to the primary school project, coordination has been efficient. However, it was

markedly less successful for PCAD I. Despite the co-location of PCAD project management with the High Commissioner for ex-Combatants, the commonality of purpose and the synergies between the two related activities could have been improved.

For some of the activities reviewed, the country office benefited from allocations from the UNDP central Conflict Prevention and Recovery Trust Fund. Most of the resources, however, have been mobilized through the efforts of the country office. UNDP benefited from its previous experience in the Republic of the Congo and

elsewhere in the areas of disarmament, reintegration and community development approaches. However, operational and managerial issues have generated occasional tensions with two important partners and donors, The World Bank and the European Union. At issue with the former was the increase, during the course of the project, in the overhead percentage charged by UNDP against The World Bank contribution under PRAEBASE. The latter friction concerned serious misunderstandings between the European Union and UNDP regarding the management of the projects for the rehabilitation of rural tracks and PCAD I.

#### Box 5. Collecting small arms for development (PCAD I and II)

The PCAD programme is a follow-up to a joint UNDP/ International Organization for Migrations project conducted during 2000–2002.

Under the PCAD I project (2004–2007), UNDP defined the following objectives:

- The collection of 10,000 small arms voluntarily surrendered in exchange for a kit chosen by the beneficiary from a menu of options;
- A component aimed at promoting economic and development activities as an alternative to a livelihood based on violence; and
- A component aimed at reinforcing the capacity of the High Commissioner for the Reintegration of Former Combatants, the national institution in charge of implementing the national plan for demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration.

The second and third objectives were never implemented, essentially due to the absence of financing. As a result, the project concentrated its activities only on the collection of weapons and the provision of goods in compensation.

The intention was for the office of the national High Commissioner to give priority to ex-combatants having surrendered their weapons for the benefits of reintegration assistance.

Unfortunately, disarmament occurred before most of such assistance was available, resulting in a high degree of frustration for the former combatants. Similarly, the small arms collection went ahead without the counterpart goods being available in UNDP stores, thus generating further frustrations. UNDP partly compensated by using the resources of the PRESJAR project to provide reintegration assistance to some beneficiaries and establish its presence in the Pool Department.

The geographical coverage of the project was gradually reduced to only two areas. Furthermore, due to political considerations that prevented the development of operations in the Pool Department during negotiations between the government and the CNR, collections took place only in Brazzaville.

By the end of the project, the activities in Brazzaville had resulted in the collection of:

- 1,308 weapons, falling far short of the target but partly compensated by;
- 626,533 bullets and other ammunition; and
- 2,383 grenades and other explosives.

The project fell short of expectations regarding the number of weapons collected and suffered from operational malfunctioning. Nevertheless, it had a significant impact on the people by giving a clear signal of a return to normalcy, and by contributing to re-establishing a peace and reconciliation climate.

UNDP has used some of the lessons learned through the PCAD I project in planning and implementing its successor, PCAD II. The synchronization between weapon collection and the distribution of material compensation is now assured, at least for the first 1,200 beneficiaries. The project had started its first collection campaign at the beginning of 2008 in some neighbourhoods of Brazzaville. By March 2008, approximately 10 small arms were collected every day.

### 3.4.3 MAIN FINDINGS

UNDP interventions corresponded to expressed national priorities, the broad corporate parameters of the organization, and genuine needs felt by the Congolese population at large. Education, livelihoods and the restoration of a secure environment remain high priorities for all Congolese people. However, questions remain as to whether or not UNDP should engage in activities such as the rehabilitation of roads or the rebuilding of schools where the experience of the organization and its comparative advantages are limited. On the other hand, UNDP has a recognized expertise in the area of small weapons and disarmament, but usually links those activities more forcefully with reintegration and community development.

An additional and related question is the long-term prudence of continuing programmes directly linked to the conflict. The wars that ravaged large parts of the country have now been over for nearly 10 years. Relative security has returned to most previously troubled areas, leaving only parts of the Pool Department under the control of a faction that has not yet accepted participation in the emerging democratic process. Most observers recognize that the situation in the Republic of the Congo is no longer one of post-conflict, typically characterized by the need to engage in emergency programmes mainly benefiting former combatants and their victims. Still, the majority also recognizes that the state of affairs remains fragile, and that upcoming local and presidential elections of 2008 and 2009, respectively, will be critical benchmarks in the return to normalcy. UNDP should develop clear exit strategies from the remaining activities of a post-conflict nature early in the next programming cycle.

Most conflict recovery projects only partly relied on a government structure for long-term sustainability. Small arms collection and accompanying integration activities, school rehabilitation and future maintenance, and group integration measures promoted under PRESJAR all rely mainly on committees arising from their own communities or on individual entrepreneurs.

The means to verify the long-term viability of small businesses or individual income-generating activities are almost non-existent. The vast majority of local management committees, put in place for primary-school development and maintenance under PRAEBASE, have not succeeded in securing independent sources of income that would enable them to effectively help their primary school. As such, the absence of a realistic exit and sustainability strategy creates a strong risk of jeopardizing the benefits of programmes. Such considerations should become an important feature in future planning.

Despite numerous operational problems, linked mainly to the technical nature of some projects and the difficulties of operating in areas where access was limited for security or logistical reasons, UNDP projects have contributed to the return of security and to the fostering of reconciliation. These interventions have benefited from the recognized competence of UNDP in disarmament programmes linked to community development and from the expertise gained by the organization through integrated community programmes. However, many activities suffered from poor technical backstopping, weak management and a light field presence. There are encouraging signs that UNDP has been addressing these weaknesses since the beginning of 2007.

### 3.5 ENERGY AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

The larger umbrella project for environment and energy was approved in 2005. With a budget of nearly \$7.7 million, it constitutes a comprehensive picture of activities undertaken by UNDP in this area, as it incorporates all projects started earlier, as well as pipeline projects. Various project components and activities are detailed in Table 7.

Although the specific outcome identified in the initial 2004–2007 country programme mentioned both environment and energy, activities listed in the initial programme omitted energy. In its

**Table 7. Environment and energy programme 2004–2007: components and activities**

Activity	Execution modality	Progress	Budget (US\$)
<b>Component 1: Preparation of referential framework and capacity building</b>			
Support for the preparation of government communication on climate change	NEX	Approved 2006; ongoing	\$420,000
Support for the preparation of national strategy and action plan on biodiversity and capacity building	NEX	Approved 2004; completed	\$188,600
Support for the preparation of national strategy and action plan for protection of soils	NEX	Approved	\$10,000
Support to national self-evaluation of environmental capacity	NEX	Approved 2004; started 2006	\$230,000
Control of refrigerants	NEX	Approved 2006; ongoing	\$118,070
<b>Component 2: Protection of forest ecosystem / observatory on climate change</b>			
Agro-forestry community development programme	DEX or AGEX	Pipeline	
Conservation of cross-boundary biodiversity (Cameroon, Gabon, Congo)	DEX	Project approved and just started	(\$44 million approved)
Establishment of an observatory and network on climate change	DEX	Pipeline	
<b>Component 3: Promotion and production of renewable energy</b>			
Distribution of improved cooking stoves	DEX	Pipeline	
Building of micro-dams	DEX	First phase completed; second phase being finalized	(Second phase, \$21 million under discussion)
Production of renewable energy through solar kits	DEX	Cancelled	
<b>Component 4: Reduction of marine and coastal pollution risks</b>			
Measurement of impact of pollution on resources and health	DEX	Pipeline	\$5 million
Study of water ecosystems biodiversity	DEX	Pipeline	
Establishment of a map database	DEX	Pipeline	
Preparation of a long-term policy and strategy to protect marine and coastal ecosystems	DEX	Pipeline	
<b>Component 5: Urban environment and living standards</b>			
Evaluation of urban pollution	NEX	Ended in 2007	\$90,000
Capacity-building for urban waste management	NEX		
Support to eliminate river pollution and land erosion	NEX		

Source: UNDP Republic of the Congo country office.

comprehensive programme of 2005, the country office corrected the omission and introduced an energy component. This also corresponded to an emerging government priority for the develop-

ment of renewable energy. In contrast, the planned environmental education and awareness activity was dropped from the 2005 programme and remains a pending proposal.

The anticipated outcome of the environment and energy programme was defined as “a strengthened capacity of national and sectoral authorities to plan and implement integrated approaches to environmental management and energy development that meet the needs of the poor.”

The programme developed by UNDP corresponds to national priorities as defined in:

- I-PRSP and the final PRSP;
- 1994 National Action Plan for Environment;
- 1995 National Action Plan for Forests;
- Relevant international conventions, sub-regional agreements and the New Partnership for Africa's Development; and
- UN strategies as contained in the UNCT CCA, the draft UNDAF and UNDP corporate and regional strategies.

It should also be noted that the Congolese population at large is becoming increasingly concerned about environmental issues and the need for alternative sources of energy. Together with the Amazonian region, the 200 million hectares of forests in central Africa constitute the ‘lung of the world’ and its biodiversity needs to be protected.

The programme was strengthened through systematic advocacy efforts. Advocacy through parliamentarians and public awareness-raising were particularly successful. The UNDP programme manager effectively provided advice to the Ministry of Tourism and Environment and helped prepare official position papers.

The original programme document had defined clear outcomes with qualitative indicators for each component and sub-component. A qualitative baseline, a list of outputs and annual targets were also included. Due to the qualitative nature of outcomes and indicators, measuring results is time-consuming and subjective.

The linkages among activities, outputs and outcomes were clear. Activities and outputs were monitored through annual reports. The programme was initially conceived of as an

integrated undertaking. However, due to the need for fundraising in the absence of sufficient UNDP regular resources, it became *de facto* divided into several projects. The projects on biodiversity and climate change were audited in 2005, and all other projects were audited in July 2007, as part of the country office audit. It should be noted that in 2008, the environment programme launched an outcome evaluation by external consultants.

The steering committee established to oversee the programme never met. The minister designated as chairperson had other responsibilities, and was unable to organize, attend or chair the committee's sessions. A special counterpart unit, envisaged to provide the structured national support to the programme, was never staffed: the National Director was left alone to oversee activities with assistance, expertise and funding only from the external UNDP/Global Environment Facility. Despite its formal commitment to the programme, the government provided cost-sharing funds only for the micro-dams project.

### 3.5.1 REVIEW OF RESULTS

As Table 7 demonstrates, many of the activities planned under the environment and energy programme are still in the planning stage, awaiting funding and final approval. Component 1, preparation of referential framework and capacity building, has already started and is reviewed in more detail in Box 6.

Most of the activities under component 5, urban environment and living standards, have been completed, except for the waste management programme where, despite a successful pilot phase and good prospects for financing, the local authorities of Brazzaville were reluctant to accept the plan for unknown reasons.

The pilot phase of the waste management programme was successful in training young unemployed people, providing them with equipment and organizing them in groups to collect garbage and improve the drainage system in some critical neighbourhoods of Brazzaville. The execution of the programme was delayed by lack of funds, but the delivery rate was high.

Sites for the micro-dams initiative have now been selected, and the African Development Bank is expected to decide on final approval of the programme soon.

### 3.5.2 MAJOR PARTNERSHIPS, COORDINATION AND RESOURCES MOBILIZATION

Some donors and parts of the private sector are hesitant to fund environmental activities. In their opinions, the country has sufficient financial resources and should show its commitment to the environment more concretely. However, some members of the private sector now appear more open to funding projects. UNDP has signed a framework cooperation agreement with Total, the largest oil sector operator in the country, and is in discussions with other large firms.

With limited human resources to manage the environment and energy portfolio, UNDP has had to emphasize resource mobilization over

coordination. However, initiatives such as the creation of a community of practices on environment should be commended.

UNDP successfully mobilized important financial resources, mostly from the Global Environment Facility. This in turn increased the interest of the African Development Bank for funding large projects, and allowed UNDP to prepare the ground for exploring financing partnerships with private sector enterprises such as Total, CIB<sup>41</sup> and SARIS.<sup>42</sup> UNDP also balanced its interventions between up- and downstream initiatives, a strategy that proved useful for resource mobilization.

### 3.5.3 MAIN FINDINGS

The programme was relevant to national goals, international conventions and UN objectives. It was also well focussed on minimizing potential negative impacts on the environment from the

#### Box 6. Preparation of referential frameworks and capacity building

Under this programme component, UNDP provided support for the achievement of the following results:

- The production of a first report on climate change that was submitted to the parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. A second report is currently being prepared;
- A national strategy and action plan for biodiversity, to be reviewed by the Council of Ministers and Parliament for final approval;
- A national strategy and action plan for the protection of soils. The follow-up pilot project is now frozen due to political considerations in the selection of the two proposed sites, which in turn has complicated the mobilization of external resources;

- A comparative assessment of carbon dioxide emissions in Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire, which highlighted the responsibility of the energy and transport sectors in urban pollution; and
- A project for the recuperation and recycling of refrigerants implemented in both Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire.

The reports and national plans under this programme were prepared through a participatory approach involving national representatives and consultants. UNDP also promoted the establishment of a 'community of practices' on environment and energy, which helped increase awareness and develop several other environmental study reports.

The expected outcome of national institutions having the capacity to formulate and implement policies and strategies related to the environment was not fully achieved. National strategies have been developed, as well as plans of action, but there is not yet a fully dedicated national agency in charge of environment. The Ministry of Tourism and Environment currently covers the environmental theme, but it lacks the human and financial resources necessary for the task and suffers from a high turnover rate at senior level. The Government is sensitive to environmental issues, but not committed to the point of transforming this awareness into appropriate human and financial resources and the establishment of a dedicated national structure.

41 Compagnie Industrielle du Bois, wood industry.

42 Société Agricole de Raffinage Industriel du Sucre, sugar industry.

exploitation of forestry and the extraction of oil. It was important to re-introduce energy concerns in the programme, including the promotion of renewable energies. The programme is internally coherent, but because it was managed as a portfolio of projects in order to mobilize funds from different donors, it did not fully align with the typical UNDP integrated programming approach.

Capacity-building through networking and consultative processes was the salient point of the programme and can be considered an effective way of ensuring a measure of sustainability. However, due to weak financial government support and high turnover of senior officials in the field of environment, sustainability of the national management capacity and the strengthening of the ministry in charge of environment initiatives were not ensured.

Mobilizing NGOs in support of environmental projects, raising awareness among parliamentarians, the private sector and local communities, and involving national researchers and academics strengthened national ownership.

The mainstreaming of cross-cutting issues, such as gender, was envisaged mainly through a planned project for improved cooking stoves. Unfortunately, that activity had to be abandoned for lack of funding. The combination of up- and downstream interventions provided two levels of entry that were useful in building a positive image of UNDP with the population, government counterparts and parliamentarians.

By their nature, interventions in the fields of environment and energy have important regional and subregional linkages. The programme has effectively integrated a subregional approach and has built bridges with initiatives requiring coordination among countries from the subregion. The technical and financial support from the Regional Centre in Dakar was highly

effective. The country office also intends to promote the streamlining of environmental concerns in all development interventions.

The lack of UNDP core funds resulted in stretching already-limited UNDP capacity in different directions: resource mobilization, partner consultation, and advisory and advocacy services. Consequently, there was little time for UNDP to coordinate with donors.

### **3.6 CROSS-CUTTING THEMES**

The country programme adopted three cross-cutting themes: gender, HIV/AIDS and NICT. All UNDP programme activities were intended to reflect and include these themes.

Although the mainstreaming of cross-cutting themes was initially weak in some projects, efforts were made to re-introduce gender and HIV/AIDS considerations during the course of implementation. In addition, the country office developed a strong advocacy strategy on both issues.

For the theme of HIV/AIDS, UNDP provided support to the formulation of a National Strategic Framework. It also conducted a number of capacity-building and support activities in favour of the Permanent Executive Secretariat/National Council to Fight AIDS and STDs (SEP/CNLS),<sup>43</sup> in addition to providing training to teachers and religious leaders. In cooperation with UNICONGO,<sup>44</sup> UNDP helped some 30 private-sector operators develop a strategy to address HIV/AIDS on work sites. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria provided a large grant to SEP/CNLS, mainly due to the support provided by UNDP country office.

UNDP interventions related to gender took the form of advocacy and support to women in politics described in Box 2 in section 3.2, covering good governance programmes.

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43 Secrétariat Exécutif Permanent/Conseil National de Lutte contre le SIDA et les IST.

44 UNICONGO is the private sector Inter-professional Union of the Congo, grouping manufacturers and national and international industrial firms operating in the country.

Two major activities were undertaken relating to NICT. The first consisted of support given to the formulation of a national strategy on NICT. The second represented direct interventions to help two national institutions, the Parliament and the Ministry of Finance. UNDP helped create an information and research centre for parliamentarians. Unfortunately, the centre is not yet operational due to lack of

funding for an Internet connection. UNDP also assisted the Ministry of Finance with the creation of a Web site designed to facilitate citizen access to information on government projects and programmes. Despite the Web site's creation, the Ministry did not activate the service. In the absence of national follow-up, the two interventions have failed to produce the expected results.