

EVALUATION

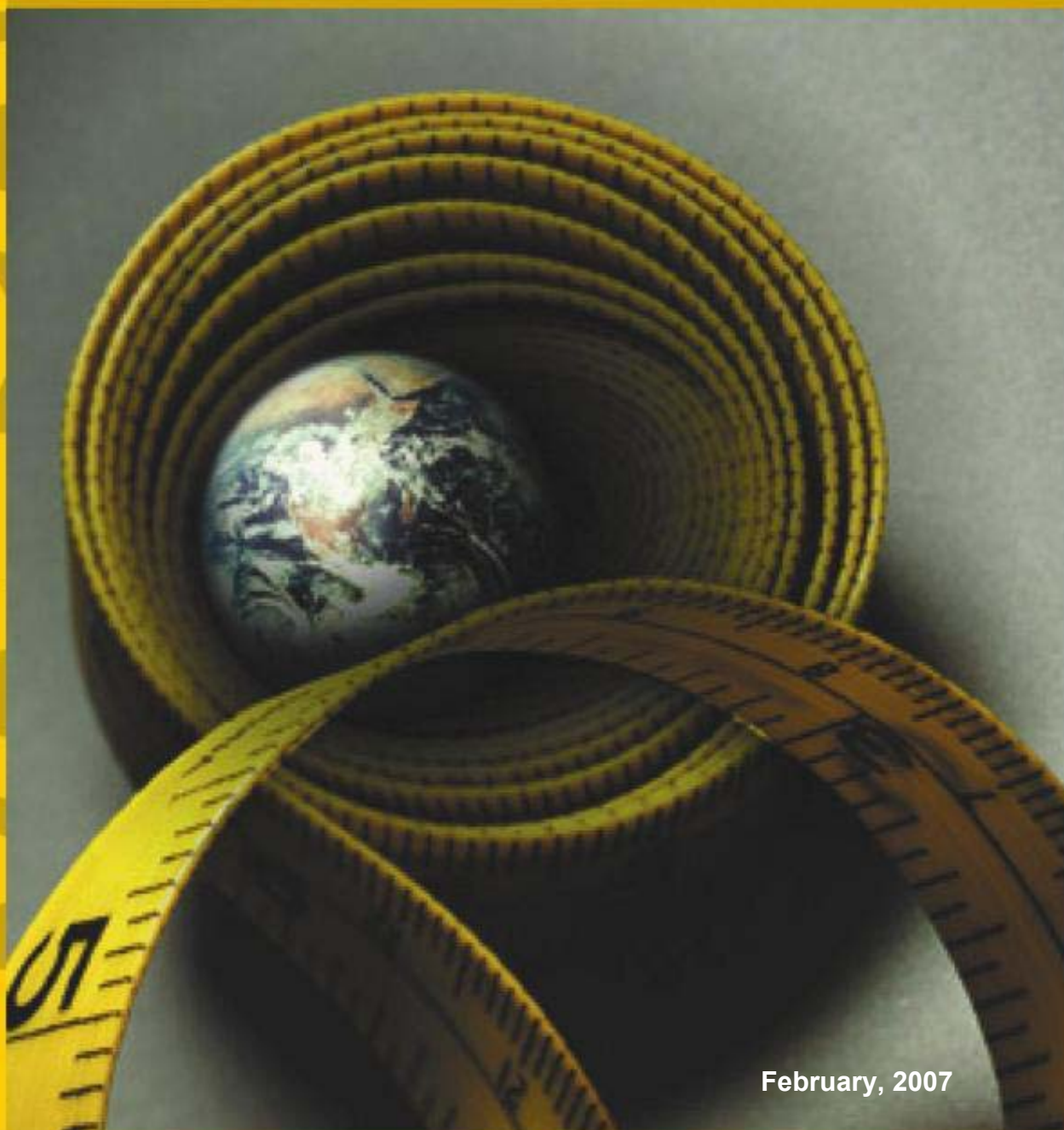


Regional Workshop on the UNDP
Evaluation Policy

Latin America and the Caribbean
17th to 19th January, 2007
Antigua, Guatemala

WORKSHOP REPORT

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME EVALUATION OFFICE



February, 2007

Summary and Recommendations

The Latin America and the Caribbean workshop on the UNDP evaluation policy was the fourth in a series of five regional workshops to launch the policy and discuss its implications at the country level. Held over three days in Antigua, Guatemala between 17th and 19th January 2007, the workshop brought together over seventy representatives from 24 country offices and 19 national governments in addition to three UNDP corporate bureaux and units. The workshop was opened by the UNDP Administrator and the Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The workshop found that development indices have illustrated varying trends across Latin America and Caribbean over the past decade. The region has witnessed widespread economic stability, and almost all countries have experienced a rise in their human development index¹. There have been increases in life expectancy, a decrease in infant mortality, and improvements in literacy rates. This positive pattern, however, masks a number of sub-regional, national, and sub-national variations and inequalities. The unequal distribution of wealth remains an underlying cause of poverty throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. Evidence also points to weaknesses in state institutions in some countries, and the growing demand for democracies to deliver more tangible results for poor people. Likewise, the region's countries have made widely varying degrees of progress towards meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Evaluation in the region has served to reveal some of these developmental patterns, but was not considered to have been applied consistently or effectively in better understanding underlying causes or possible solutions. Relatedly, evaluation was not found to have been democratized in many states, remaining as an instrument of government and donors, assessing particular institutional and sectoral initiatives, rather than acting as an enabling mechanism for the public to be informed and hold decision-makers to account.

It is within this development context that the UN system, UNDP and the evaluation of its contribution to national and regional human development has been charged to respond. UNDP conducts evaluations against development objectives set by the UN member states, and UNDP's new Evaluation Policy reflects the multi-dimensionality of the organization's human development approach. Delegated noted that evaluations must add-value through focusing on improving and sharing development knowledge and experiences, and informing national policy development processes. It was further considered paramount that UNDP's evaluation activities are guided by the paradigm of capacity development, supporting the ability of national actors to drive and sustain the development process.

The endorsement of the Evaluation Policy by UNDP's Executive Board signals a shift to address these issues. To ensure a contribution to development, over and above assessing discrete projects, participants highlighted the required shift towards considering development outcomes in evaluations. Democratizing evaluation through engaging key development actors from civil society and grassroots movements, as well as UNDP's usual and direct partners, is necessary to improve evaluation. Hence, methods, benchmarks and results must be transparent and disclosed. Public disclosure of the results of evaluation is also considered vital. The particular challenges for evaluation in UNDP were noted as ensuring greater national ownership in the planning, process and use; the need for improved coherence in evaluation for UN reform; greater effort to place the evaluation results in public domain for public use, and in fulfilment of the requirement for accountability for the use of evaluation results.

¹ UNDP Human Development Report, 2005

In support of this, the workshop participants made the following specific recommendations:

To Country Offices together with Governments:

- *Strengthen associations and networks.* Support the democratization of evaluation through engaging more fully in regional and national evaluation networks. Such engagement should be seen as an active effort to strengthen the overall basis and quality of evaluation in the region, and also provide a source of evaluators to improve the quality of evaluations commissioned by UNDP.
- *Engage non-traditional partners.* UNDP's evaluation commissioning record demonstrates a preference for evaluation firms, but UNDP has an opportunity to focus more on the contributing potential of academia. Partnerships at the country level should also be built with other non traditional actors, such as the private sector and the media to strengthen dissemination.
- *Facilitate south-south cooperation in evaluation.* UNDP's country presence and legitimacy provides the platform for it to act more strongly as a motor for south-south cooperation on evaluation between countries in the region. It is through acting as a conduit between countries that UNDP can support the sharing of experiences and lessons between governments, strengthen associations and networks and build the engagement of non-traditional partners.

To the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean:

- *Conduct a regional review of budget and human resource practices in evaluation.* Conduct a review of the rationalization of budget and human resources for evaluation in UNDP at the country level. This should address the differential requirements and options in larger and smaller offices, and alternatives for budgeting evaluation plans, including cost-sharing with government and other partners in the conduct and capacity development in evaluation.
- *Establish an inventory of existing good practices and systems for results management and evaluation.* The workshop revealed a variety of practices and systems used for results management and evaluation across country offices. It was recommended that an inventory is drawn-up of best practices in different contexts. This should include a review of how and where ATLAS can better serve as a corporate results monitoring platform (Regional Bureau with Bureau of Management and Evaluation Office).
- *Establish regional and/or sub-regional capacity in monitoring and evaluation.* Establish regional/ sub-regional capacity in evaluation through the placement of a monitoring and evaluation adviser in the SURF. This position would seek to, inter alia, identify evaluation resourcing options, enhance programmatic evaluability through advisory work, provide training, and training of trainers, and establish a regional community of practice.

To the Evaluation Office:

- *Develop an evaluation roster.* Establish or enhance the existing roster(s) of evaluation with consultants from the sub-regions. This should provide the breadth expertise that reflects the variations found across LAC, the associated UNDP programmes, and thus demands (with Regional Bureau)

- *Promote joint evaluation.* Promote the conduct of joint evaluations with other agencies of the UN. This should include the harmonization of concepts and methodologies, and the standardization of lessons coming from UNDAF and other joint evaluations. (Evaluation Office through the UN Evaluation Group, UN Country Teams)

To other Headquarters Bureaux and Units:

- *Enhance incentives for evaluation.* Consider options to enhance the incentives for conducting quality evaluation by country offices, including establishing performance indicators in scorecard and/or results competency assessment (RCA) of managers (Bureau of Management and Regional Bureau with Evaluation Office).
- *Harmonize evaluation capacity development efforts.* Given the number of agencies already providing technical and advisory assistance to government and others in the field of monitoring and evaluation, include evaluation in UN System harmonization and donor coordination mandates, agendas and activities in the field (Bureau for Development Policy/ Operations Support Group, UN Development Group, Country Offices)
- *Strengthen training opportunities to improve evaluation.* Roll-out UNDP Learning Resource Centre distance learning courses to programme countries to address staff needs, and reach-out to government, private and NGO sector personnel (Learning Resources Centre with Evaluation Office).

The Evaluation Office would like to express their sincere thanks to the staff of UNDP Guatemala and to the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean for their considerable support in organizing and running the workshop.

1. Introduction

In June 2006, the Executive Board endorsed a new [Evaluation Policy](#) for UNDP. The policy reaffirms the central tenets of evaluation in UNDP, the guiding principles and norms, the requirements, and the roles and responsibilities at all levels of the organization.

To launch the implementation of policy, and discuss its implications with national counterparts, a series of regional workshops were planned by the Evaluation Office in collaboration with the Regional Bureau. The workshops were intended for Country Office and national government staff responsible for planning or making decisions on evaluation. The fourth such workshop was focused on the Latin America and Caribbean region, and was held in Antigua, Guatemala between 17-19th January, 2007.

Objectives of the Workshop

The overall objective of the workshop was to establish a basis for the implementation of the policy in the context of regional and national priorities and challenges. The specific objectives were to:

1. Develop a comprehensive understanding of the UNDP evaluation policy and its implications for implementation.
2. Enhance understanding of how the UNDP evaluation function provides a basis for accountability, performance improvement, learning, and knowledge development.
3. Seek to enhance an effective and rational approach in carrying out roles and responsibilities in evaluation in partnership with government and other key stakeholders.

The workshop also addressed a number of cross-cutting issues including: the alignment of the policy with national evaluation systems and institutions; the contribution of evaluation to programming; identifying ways of enhancing collaboration in evaluation with national partners, and UN reform.

Participation

The workshop was attended by 73 persons, representing 24 country offices, 19 national governments, the headquarters units of the Executive Office, the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Evaluation Office, and the regional representative of the Office of Audit and Performance Review. In particular, the workshop participants were gratified to have the participation of the Administrator of UNDP, Mr. Kemal Derviş, the former Vice President of the Executive Board Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, Mr. George Talbot, the Director of RBLAC, Ms. Rebeca Grynspan and Deputy Director, Mr. Martin Santiago. (See Annex 2 for the full participants list)

Overview of sessions

The workshop was divided into five sessions running over two-and-a-half days (see Annex 1 for the full agenda). The workshop was delivered via plenary presentations and discussions, country case presentations, group analyses and practical exercises.

The opening session set the context of evaluation by addressing key development issues in the region, challenges and recommendations for the role of evaluation in development.

The second session *evaluation in the national and regional context* provided an opportunity for governments, civil society, associations and academia to present self-directed solutions, approaches and systems in addressing regional and national challenges and in contributing to accountability, learning and improvement across the board at the national level

The third session *UNDP Evaluation Policy and its implications for the way UNDP works* sought to establish a clear understanding of UNDP Evaluation Policy. It highlighted key parameters of the policy, roles and responsibilities for evaluation across the organization, and the existing support systems and mechanisms at the corporate level to support the implementation of the policy at the country level.

The fourth session on *quality assurance and oversight in implementing the Evaluation Policy* sought to provide an overview of existing trends on coverage and quality of evaluation in the region, clarify the existing quality assurance and oversight mechanisms at the corporate level and discuss issues for enhancement.

The fifth session on *UN reform and evaluation* engaged the participants in a discussion of the implications of UN reform for evaluation and on the key issues and challenges in evaluation in the context of the UN reform agenda.

The final session *the way forward* provided an opportunity for UNDP staff and government counterparts to identify measures and actions to be carried out in their particular national situation in implementing the policy.

Evaluation of the workshop by participants

The workshop was evaluated by participants against the achievement of the stated objectives overall, for each session, and in terms of the modalities used (presentation and group work). In aggregate, 91 per cent of participants rated the workshop as having largely or completely achieved its objectives. Of the sessions, those addressing the evaluation policy (S3), quality assurance and oversight (S4) and the implementation of the policy ‘moving forwards’ (S6) were considered the most effective by participants.

The modalities of the workshop were also well received, with 90 per cent of participants feeling that the use of plenary presentation, plenary discussion, group work and group feedback were largely or completely effective in helping achieve the workshop objectives. The plenary presentation modality was rated the highest, while in the plenary discussions it was sometimes felt that the facilitation could have been stronger. Qualitative feedback from participants outlined the importance of the strong and active participation of national government representatives, providing lively and open discussion and exchange. It was recognized that a lot of issues were covered, proving interesting and useful in terms of implementing the policy at the national level.

Participants comments included:

"Very useful workshop, I have learned a lot with all and every presentation and group discussion. The issue is of extreme relevance and we addressed it together with the government representatives "
"There was some repetition of issues" and "a two-day event may have been possible"
"Resident Representatives should get involved in the follow-up!"

Annex 3 provides the overall findings of the workshop evaluation.

2. Implementing the Policy – Issues and Recommendations

The following section summarizes the key issues, their implications, and the recommended actions made during the workshop, drawing on case examples. Where appropriate, this is prefaced by relevant sections from the evaluation policy. Recommended actions are supported by an indication of who may act upon the recommendation. Annex 4 provides full case material presented at the workshop.

Evaluation in national systems

Relevant sections of the Evaluation Policy

Evaluation should be guided by national priorities and concerns. It should be inclusive and take into account diverse national interests and values. Evaluation should strengthen partnerships with governments and key stakeholders. It should build the capacity of national institutions to implement, monitor and evaluate.

Success in carrying out development evaluation requires partnerships in evaluation, with national and international actors. UNDP will promote joint and country-led evaluations to respond to the expanding sectoral and programmatic nature of development cooperation.

Country offices should nurture a collaborative relationship with national evaluation institutions and associations. Such partnerships enhance the relevance, quality and utility of UNDP evaluation and its contribution to development, and can help build national capacity for evaluation.

Key issues and implications

The role of evaluation in supporting public sector governance was noted to have been quite different in Latin America and the Caribbean from its antecedents in Europe and North America. Institutional, bureaucratic and conceptual approaches distinct to the region were found to have restricted the demand and structure of evaluation, and affected its use.

While evaluation has served as an instrument for increased levels of management autonomy within the public sphere, and as a basis for enhancing public sector accountability, it has rarely done so in a unified way. Rather, there was found to have been a lack of synchronicity between policy development-oriented planning models in which evaluation has served primarily to improve political decision making, and the resource allocation-oriented planning models in which evaluation has served to improve budgetary decisions². Further, the emphasis on evaluation for internal accountability, in addition to the low quality of information generated, was seen to have resulted in a loss of public confidence.

As the location and function of evaluation has been broadened, notably to include the evaluation of large social programmes, there has been a positive diversification of evaluation actors and goals. This has led to a demand to democratize the evaluation process as well as enhance the use of evaluation to strengthen democracies in the region. This democratization, has, in some cases, created a platform for social demands towards the state. In this context, adequate evaluation practices have made a difference, enhancing the process of identifying the actors, the

² Cited examples over the period 1990 to 2000 of the former planning-based models included the cases of SINE, Costa Rica, SINERGIA Colombia and SISER in Bolivia; and of the budget-based approach in the management control system in Chile, NEP Mexico and SEV Uruguay.

clients and the nature of social change. Nevertheless, civil society participation levels were found to be still weak, voluntary and informal.

In support of this diversification, and in advancing the professionalization of evaluation, many countries³ in the region have begun establishing evaluation networks or associations of academics, NGOs, community-based organizations and government employees. Such associations, supported by regional networks⁴, seek to provide a platform for standard setting, sharing experiences, and engaging key actors, including central and sub-national levels of government and the private sector in the expansion and democratization of evaluation practices. Of these actors, it was noted that there is potential for academia to become further involved in national evaluation, particularly in the areas of curriculum development and training for capacity development and the professionalization of the sector.

A number of participants expressed the need for the function to be normatively driven towards the creation of independent national evaluation systems that are nationally owned, and provide input for rational policy debate and the representation of public values. To achieve this, sustainable financing options would need to be considered, the needs to standardize policies and procedures, and capacity development at national and sub-national levels of stakeholders. Capacity development was seen as a prerequisite for civil society to enhance its representational role through increasing access to information and financing strategies.

Recommended actions

The following actions were recommended to UNDP in working with partners at national and regional levels:

- *Support capacity diagnosis.* Several participants suggested that there was a need for national assessments to determine what evaluation capacity existed, as many countries have already adopted systems proposed and supported by a wide range of international agencies, notably the World Bank, ECLAC and others. Such assessments would determine where gaps exist and whether it would be appropriate and feasible for UNDP to provide inputs to address identified constraints (Regional Bureau with input from Evaluation Office, Country Offices with Government).
- *Improve planning of evaluations with national governments.* Evaluation planning should be conducted as part of programmatic planning, conducted and reviewed periodically with government and other key partners. In the case of sub-national interventions of UNDP, sub-national authorities should also be engaged in the planning process (Country Offices with Government)
- *Engage non-traditional partners.* UNDP's evaluation commissioning record demonstrates a preference for evaluation firms, but UNDP has an opportunity to focus more on the contributing potential of the academia. There is a stronger profile and record of academia in research activities (e.g. NHDRs) but not in evaluation. Partnerships at the country level should also be built with other non traditional actors, such as the private sector, who's potential expertise and reach should be exploited, and the media to disseminate and use knowledge (Country Offices).

³ As of 2006, 10 countries in the region have established or are in the process of establishing national evaluation networks.

⁴ Such as the Latin American Network of Independent Evaluators (ReLAC), established in 2002.

- *Strengthen associations and networks.* UNDP should support the democratization of evaluation through engaging more fully in regional and national evaluation networks. Such engagement should be seen as an active effort to strengthen the overall basis and quality of evaluation in the region, and also provide a source of evaluators to improve the quality of evaluations commissioned by UNDP (Country Offices)
- *Facilitate south-south cooperation in evaluation.* UNDP's country presence and legitimacy provides the platform for it to act more strongly as a motor for south-south cooperation on evaluation between countries in the region. It is through acting as a conduit between countries that UNDP can support the sharing of experiences and lessons between governments, strengthen associations and networks and build the engagement of non-traditional partners. It should build on and promote learning activities from the existing, strong capacities of countries such as Brazil, Panama, Argentina, Uruguay and other COs in the regional network of countries, both at country level and amongst UNDP offices (Regional Bureau with Country Offices)

Evaluation and managing for results

Relevant sections of the Evaluation Policy

Senior management of Country Offices, regional bureaux, practice and policy bureaux and the associated funds and programmes will ensure the evaluability of programmes by identifying clear results, developing measurable indicators, and establishing performance targets and baseline information. In collaboration with national stakeholders and partners, [they will] ensure the effective monitoring of implementation and performance of programmes to generate relevant, timely information for management for results and evaluation.

Evaluation supports UNDP to manage for results by assessing the extent to which UNDP's processes, products and services contribute effectively to development results affecting people's lives. Through this, evaluation highlights the need for quality in the design of programmes so that results are clear, measurable and can be monitored and evaluated. Through the generation of evidence, evaluation enables more informed management and decision-making for strategic planning and programming.

Senior management of Country Offices, regional bureaux, practice and policy bureaux and the associated funds and programmes will establish an appropriate institutional arrangement to manage evaluation.

Senior management of Country Offices, regional bureaux, practice and policy bureaux and the associated funds and programmes will ensure adequate resources for evaluation. Country Offices, regional bureaux, and practice and policy bureaux will be required to prepare an evaluation plan, cost this plan, and allocate the requisite funds from appropriate project and programme budgets.

Directors of Regional Bureaux, in their exercise of line oversight should support and guide Country Office capacity in evaluation, including establishing regional expertise and evaluation support systems. Country Offices, regional bureaux and practice and policy bureaux require technical and managerial expertise for commissioning and using evaluation for their programmes.

Key issues and implications

The organization of offices around managing, monitoring and evaluating for results was found to vary considerably case by case. A presentation by the Office of Audit and Performance Review, and evidence from offices themselves, revealed widespread weaknesses in the design and implementation of the framework for managing for results at different organizational levels. The lack of a corporate system at the country office level to guide the collection, analysis and management of results information was identified as a key constraint. While the ATLAS system addresses some dimensions, it currently lacks some functions required, notably in the interface between outputs and outcomes, to operate fully in this role.

Subsequently, proactive offices have sought their own localized solutions, while many remain without effective practices. In the case of Argentina, for example, the system for monitoring and evaluation has been divided into three inter-related tiers, development effectiveness, supported by results management, institutional effectiveness, driven the office's strategic plan focusing on efficiency and partnership measures, and UN coordination. Through this framework and associated data collection and analysis, it is expected that the office will have a clear basis for determining what is and isn't working, and enable it to account for its performance and contribute to national development results.

Where UNDP is operating in support of national development results, the implication of evaluation and results management is also that of partnership with government and other stakeholders in decision making, implementation and use. The need to link UNDP evaluation to the assessment of national development results, such as through the tracking of MDGs at national and sub-national level, was highlighted. The case of UNDP Panama was presented as a strong example of where the emphasis is placed firmly on the coordination mechanisms established between UNDP, the Government and other partners in coordinating the strategic selection, implementation and use of evaluation. This has included establishing a strong relationship with local academia in the understanding and conduct of outcome evaluation. In this context, the relevance and application of evaluation stands out against a regional backdrop of insufficient number and coverage of outcome evaluations in line with programme focus and resources.

The allocation of responsibilities for evaluation, and the capacities that exist within the offices to manage this function, were generally considered to be inadequate. The majority of offices have evaluation as a focal point responsibility, often lack institutionalization and support in terms of the requisite financial and human resources. In response to this, a number of offices were found to be building in-house evaluation capacity. For small offices with already stretched human and financial resources this has presented diverse challenges. These include the percentage of the office budget that should be allocated to the development of evaluation systems in the light of competing programming demands. In small offices, the recommended 3-5% of programme allocations was considered to still be insufficient, and would require extensive regional and global inputs, at least in the short term.

Recommended actions

- *Links to policy frameworks.* Establish better links between UNDP results monitoring, evaluation, and national development frameworks. For Trinidad & Tobago and Jamaica Country Offices this was considered to be vital in the context of the links between UNDP evaluations and national MDGs targets and associated monitoring systems (Operations Support Group, Evaluation Office, Regional Bureaux, Country Offices)

- *Conduct a regional review of budget and human resource practices in evaluation.* Conduct a review of the rationalization of budget and human resources for evaluation in UNDP at the country level. This should address the differential requirements and options in larger and smaller offices, and alternatives for budgeting evaluation plans, including cost-sharing with government and other partners in the conduct and capacity development in evaluation⁵. (Regional Bureau with Evaluation Office, Country Offices)
- *Establish an inventory of existing good practices and systems for results management and evaluation.* The workshop revealed a variety of practices and systems used for results management and evaluation across country offices. It was recommended that an inventory is drawn-up of best practices in different contexts. This should include a review of how and where ATLAS can better serve as a corporate results monitoring platform (Regional Bureau with Bureau of Management and Evaluation Office).
- *Establish regional and/or sub-regional capacity.* Establish regional/ sub-regional capacity in evaluation through the placement of a monitoring and evaluation adviser in the SURF. This position would seek to, inter alia, identify evaluation resourcing options, enhance programmatic evaluability through advisory work, provide training, and training of trainers, and establish a regional community of practice. (Regional Bureau)
- *Develop an evaluation roster.* Establish or enhance the existing roster(s) of evaluation with consultants from the sub-regions. This should provide the breadth expertise that reflects the variations found across LAC, the associated UNDP programmes, and thus demands. (Evaluation Office with Regional Bureau)
- *Develop a more refined set of indicators.* Establish or refine a set of measurable indicators of results in UNDP practice areas, particularly in democratic governance. (Bureau for Development Policy with Regional Bureau and Evaluation Office)
- *Enhance incentives for evaluation.* Consider options to enhance the incentives for conducting quality evaluation by country offices, including establishing performance indicators in scorecard and/or RCAs of managers (Bureau of Management and Regional Bureau with Evaluation Office).

UN Reform and Evaluation

Relevant sections of the Evaluation Policy

Evaluation draws on and contributes to collaboration within the UN system to improve effectiveness and reduce transaction costs for development cooperation. UNDP advocates strengthened professional collaboration under the aegis of UNEG and country-level coordination in evaluation under the Resident Coordinator system.

Senior management of COs will promote joint evaluation work with the United Nations system and other partners and, in the case of country offices, contribute to the UNDAF evaluation.

⁵ To illustrate, the Government representative from Jamaica proposed the development of an Evaluation Unit, within the Government's External Cooperation Unit as one way of implementing UNDP capacity building support.

The EO will ensure that evaluation in UNDP contributes to and remains consistent with UN policy and reforms including supporting and participating in joint evaluations; support the harmonization of the evaluation function of UNDP and its associated funds and programmes; contribute evaluative evidence to system-wide evaluations, and use the experience of UNDP and its partners, including through working with UNEG, to advance the science, practice, quality and usefulness of evaluation.

Key issues and implications

UN reform has already begun to have a profound impact on the way UNDP operates, and this will increase as the reform process takes hold globally and in the region. The expansion of joint evaluation activities across the system were cited as evidence of this. The Evaluation Office alerted participants that UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) in each country will be subject to evaluation, with the first tranche of evaluation scheduled for 2007. In some regions, programme staff are mobilizing around evaluation issues, with, for example, the Regional Directors Team in South Asia establishing an inter-agency evaluation support group. Amongst the UN agencies evaluation offices, the UN Evaluation Group (the chair and secretariat of which rests with UNDP) has established a strong foundation over the past two years, with principles for working together, norms, standards, quality, self assessment, peers review, organizational function of evaluation, capacities, competencies and certification, joint evaluations and position papers on emerging issues.

At the country level, two specific issues were raised by participants that pertain to the reform process in general and evaluation in particular. First, there was a recognized need to address coherence between agencies, notably in terms of norms, policies and methodologies. Second, a need was expressed to enhance collaboration between agencies throughout the system. The experience of developing the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and UNDAF in Uruguay was seen as a valuable collaborative experience between agencies with government. Through identifying joint programming and evaluation opportunities, the relevance of UN assistance towards supporting the national evaluating system development was also highlighted. This raised an important debate amongst participants over the need to articulate evaluation more clearly within the context of national priorities and the commitment to achieving the MDGs, between UN agencies, and amongst other cooperation agencies. Opportunities for strengthening national capacities through joint efforts were also recognized. The Government of Cuba, for example, suggested that UNDP should consider making greater use of other country evaluations conducted.

Recommended actions

- *Promote joint evaluation.* Promote the conduct of joint evaluations with other agencies of the UN. This should include the harmonization of concepts and methodologies, and the standardization of lessons coming from UNDAF and other joint evaluations. (Evaluation Office through the UN Evaluation Group, UN Country Teams)
- *Harmonize evaluation capacity development efforts.* Given the number of agencies already providing technical and advisory assistance to government and others in the field of monitoring and evaluation, it was suggested that Resident Coordinators should be advised to include evaluation in their UN System harmonization and donor coordination mandates, agendas and activities in the field (Bureau for Development Policy/ Operations Support Group, UN Development Group, Country Offices)

Quality and Use of Evaluation

Relevant sections of the Evaluation Policy

All evaluations should meet minimum quality standards defined by the Evaluation Office. To ensure that the information generated is accurate and reliable, evaluation design, data collection and analysis should reflect professional standards, with due regard for any special circumstances or limitations reflecting the context of the evaluation. To ensure this, the professionalism of evaluators and their intellectual integrity in applying standard evaluation methods is critical.

The Evaluation Office is responsible for setting evaluation standards, developing and disseminating methodology and establishing the institutional mechanisms for applying the standards; and for assuring (the quality of) mandatory decentralized evaluations and support the quality assurance of the evaluations conducted by the associated funds and programmes.

Senior management of Country Offices, regional bureaux, practice and policy bureaux and the associated funds and programmes will prepare management responses to all evaluations, and ensure and track appropriate, timely implementation of the agreed evaluation recommendation; draw on evaluation findings to improve the quality of programmes, guide strategic decision-making on future programming and positioning, and share knowledge on development experience, and ensure the transparency of, and public access to, all evaluation reports

Key issues and implications

The Evaluation Office, Office of Audit and Performance Review (OAPR), the Regional Bureau and Country Offices all have a role in assuring the quality of evaluations through direct action and/or oversight. The Evaluation Office is responsible for setting standards, preparing guidance on methodologies, establishing tools and providing orientation to enhance the quality of evaluations conducted at the country level. A number of these instruments were outlined in the workshop, notably the [Evaluation Resource Centre](#) and the draft guidance on [planning](#), [commissioning](#) and [using](#) evaluation. Through review, participants noted the importance of such tools and guidance, but highlighted the need to ensure that they are externally orientated, incorporating national realities and practices, not just UNDP corporate requirements.

Particular emphasis was given to issue of use of evaluations, both the use of findings by management, and the policy's requirement for management response to all evaluations, and the broader dissemination and use of evaluation findings by stakeholders and the public. Participants identified the pressures to independent evaluation, and suggested solutions included a balanced approach, shifting from criticism to identify 'what works well' and recommendations to strengthen weaknesses. The bottom line was clearly that agency evaluations are required to be credible because information is now in the public domain.

The OAPR clarified their role as assuring country office compliance with the UNDP evaluation policy. As a sister office to Evaluation, they noted that many of audit and performance review findings on evaluation planning, monitoring of outcomes and conduct and follow-up to evaluations reflected those identified in EO-led evaluations. Whilst the roles of Audit and Evaluation were identified as complementary, the distinction between Audit's role in overseeing and assuring compliance to policies and procedures and Evaluation's role in assessing results was emphasized. In this regard, OAPR will play a significant role in following-up the implementation of the Evaluation Policy at country level.

The Regional Bureau outlined its broad mandate to support and oversee evaluation at the country office level, including the Bureau Director's overarching responsibility, the support and line oversight role of programme managers to assist COs in evaluation planning, conduct and use, the evaluation focal point as the interface with the Evaluation Office and the role of the Panama Regional Centre in substantive support through expert referral, policy advice and knowledge management. It was recognized that many of these roles have been newly outlined in response to the Evaluation Policy and the increased commitment of the Bureau to support evaluation in the region.

Recommended actions

- *Clarify roles and responsibilities of headquarters units.* While participants appreciated the clarity in the description of the different roles and responsibilities of the Bureau, Evaluation Office and OAPR, it was noted that this communication will need to continue as new opportunities and challenges arise at country level.
- *Strengthen training opportunities to improve evaluation quality.* A number of participants suggested that rolling out of UNDP Learning Resource Centre distance learning courses to programme countries could be one way of developing on the Panama CO model and building outreach to Government, Private and NGO sectors (Learning Resource Centre with Evaluation Office).
- *Enhance dissemination of evaluation findings.* Addressing public information dissemination is critical for all countries and should be considered as a part of the strengthening of the evaluation function (Country Offices)

3. Way forward in implementing the Policy

The final session of the workshop provided the basis for country groups (UNDP Country Offices with national government counterparts) to consider what actions they would be taken in implementing the Evaluation Policy based on the issues and recommendations of the workshop, and what recommendations they may have for other units to support this process. The main issues raised that supplement others presented earlier have been drawn together and summarized below.

Way forward for Country Offices with Government

- Assess existing M&E systems used by Governments, donors and UNDP Country Offices as well as specific data needs and collection methodologies as a basis for harmonizing and integrating approaches.
- Ensure that evaluation plans are developed in partnership with government and other actors as part of the preparation of the country programme.
- Enhance monitoring practice through the improved collection and use of data.
- Establish evaluation committees between UN and government, to enable joint planning, conduct and use of evaluation, taking into considerations political timeframes.
- Enhance the use of outcome evaluations.
- Identify and assign resources, specify personnel, train and replicate workshops for discussions on the policy and experiences sharing.
- Built partnership at the country level and networking with non traditional actors as media to disseminate and use of knowledge.

- Make better use of the media and popular culture to enhance the culture of evaluation and use of knowledge.

Recommended Actions to Support Country Offices

Recommended actions to be taken by the Regional Bureau

- Review, with country offices, the way in which resources are allocated to evaluation at the programme (outcome) and project level.
- Review the incentive structures for the conduct and improved quality of evaluation at country level. Consider options for incorporating measures into the performance appraisal systems.

Recommended action to be taken by the Evaluation Office

- Work with Country Offices and the Bureau in establishing a roster of consultants for each of the sub-regions, reflecting the difference requirements and thus demands.

Recommended action to be taken by other Bureaux and Units

- Bureau of Management should review the expansion of Atlas to address results monitoring and evaluation, and to enable partners to access and use the system.
- Learning Resources Centre to work with the Evaluation Office and others in addressing the regional demands for training in monitoring, evaluation and related knowledge management issues. This should be expanded to government and other stakeholders, both through direct training and distance learning via an expanded Virtual Development Academy.

Annex 1. Agenda

Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Workshop on the UNDP Evaluation Policy

Antigua Guatemala

17-19 January 2007

DAY 1	Wednesday, 17 January
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7:30 - 8:15 **REGISTRATION**

OPENING SESSION

8:30 - 10:30 *Chair: Rebeca Grynspan, Director, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean*

Welcome Beat Rohr, UN Resident Coordinator, Guatemala

Opening address Kemal Dervis, Administrator, UNDP

Development priorities and the role of evaluation in the region Maria Castro Mazariegos, Under Secretary for Global and Sector Policies, Secretariat of Planning and Programming of Presidency, Guatemala

Directions for development evaluation in UNDP Saraswathi Menon, Director, UNDP Evaluation Office

Discussion in Plenary and Panel Response Panel: Kemal Dervis, UNDP Administrator
George Talbot, former Vice President of the Executive Board Bureau
Rebeca Grynspan, Regional Director LAC
Saraswathi Menon, Director Evaluation Office
Martin Santiago, Deputy Regional Director LAC
Maria Castro Mazariegos, Under Secretary, Secretariat of the Presidency, Guatemala

10:30 - 11:00 **Break**

11:00 - 11:10 Presentation of the workshop agenda Sukai Prom-Jackson, Evaluation Adviser, Evaluation Office
Oscar Garcia, Evaluation Adviser, Evaluation Office

SESSION 2: EVALUATION IN THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Chair: George Talbot, former Vice President of the Executive Board Bureau

11:10 - 13:00 *Session Objective:* To identify regional and national development challenges and share national experiences in evaluation.

Public sector reform and evaluation capacity development across Latin America Nuria Cunnil, Director, Latin American Centre of Administration for Development, Venezuela

Evaluation in the public sector, experience from Colombia Berta Briceno, Director of Evaluation of Public Policy, National Planning Department, Government of Colombia

Civil Society monitoring of public policies, experience from Bolivia Javier Gomez, former Director of Centre of Labour and Agrarian Studies, Bolivia

Role of independent evaluation associations
in Latin America

Gloria Vela, Coordinator of Latin American Network of
Independent Evaluators

Q&A and Discussion in Plenary

13:00 - 14:30 **Lunch**

14:30 - 15:30 *Small group work*

Issues and challenges in relation to regional and national systems and practices in evaluation

15:30 - 16:00 **Break**

16:00 - 17:00 *Reporting in Plenary*

18:00 - 20:30 **Dinner Reception (meet in hotel lobby at 18:00)**

DAY 2

Thursday, 18 January

8:30 - 8:40 Introduction to Day 2

Oscar Garcia, Evaluation Adviser, Evaluation Office

SESSION 3: UNDP EVALUATION POLICY AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE WAY UNDP WORKS

Chair: TBD

8:30 - 10:30 *Session Objective:* To establish a clear understanding of UNDP Evaluation Policy, including roles and responsibilities across the organization.

Key parameters of the UNDP Evaluation
Policy

Saraswathi Menon, Evaluation Office

Q&A and Discussion in Plenary

10:30 - 11:00 **Break**

11:00 - 12:30 Country Office arrangements and practices in evaluation

First Country Office presentation

UNDP Argentina

Second Country Office presentation

UNDP Panama

Q&A and Discussion in Plenary

SESSION 4: QUALITY ASSURANCE AND OVERSIGHT IN IMPLEMENTING THE EVALUATION POLICY

Session Objective: To present existing quality assurance and oversight mechanisms at the corporate level and discuss areas for enhancement

12:30 - 15:30 Quality Assurance and Oversight in evaluation

Role of Evaluation Office

Sukai Prom-Jackson, Oscar Garcia, David Rider Smith,
Evaluation Office

13:00 - 14:30 **Lunch**

Role of Office of Audit and Performance

Guillermo Munoz, Office of Audit and Performance Review

Review

Role of Regional Bureau

Marielza Oliveira, Regional Bureau for Latin America and Caribbean

Q&A and Discussion in Plenary

15:30 - 16:00 **Break**

16:00 - 17:15

Small group work

Group 1: Institutional Arrangements and Resources for Evaluation

Group 2: Evaluation Planning and Using Evaluation

Group 3: Outcome Evaluation

17:15 - 18:00

Reporting in Plenary

DAY 3

Friday, 19 January

8:00 - 8:10

Introduction to Day 3

Oscar Garcia, Evaluation Adviser, Evaluation Office

SESSION 5: UN REFORM AND EVALUATION

Chair: TBD

Session Objective: To discuss how UN reform affects evaluation, and how evaluation can contribute to UN reform.

8:10- 10:00

UN Reform and Evaluation

Saraswathi Menon, Evaluation Office

Regional perspective on UN reform

Beat Rohr, UN Resident Coordinator, Guatemala

Country perspective on UN reform and evaluation

UNDP Uruguay

Q&A and Discussion in Plenary

10:00 - 10:30

Break

SESSION 6: THE WAY FORWARD

Chair: Saraswathi Menon, Evaluation office

Session Objective: To identify next steps and recommendations in implementing the policy at the corporate level, and at the country level together with partners

10:30 - 11:00

Key issues, lessons and outcomes from Days 1&2

Rapporteurs

11:00 - 13:00

Implementing the Policy

Group Work

13:00 - 14:30

Lunch

14:30 - 16:00

Implementing the Policy

Reporting back

16:00 - 16:30

Break

16:30 - 17:30

Response and Closing

Panel: George Talbot, Executive Board
Saraswathi Menon, Evaluation Office

Annex 2. List of Participants

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Panelists, other Presenters and Chairs

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Annex 3. Workshop Evaluation

UNDP Regional workshop on the Evaluation Policy Latin America and the Caribbean, January 2007 End of Workshop Questionnaire- responses

1. Did the various sessions help you achieve the workshop objectives?

	Not at all	Partially	Largely	Completely	% Largely and Completely	# Rsp's
Session 1: Opening Session	1	5	25	18		49
Comments:	2%	10%	51%	37%	88%	
- set the context and allowed us to understand the urgency of strengthening the evaluation function						
- understanding the position of UNDP's high level management was useful						
Session 2: Evaluation in National and Regional Context	1	6	25	17		49
Comments:	2%	12%	51%	35%	86%	
- presentations gave the foundations to identify evaluation possibilities and the state of the art in the region						
- presentation of Nuria Cunill was of such substance and length that it could have substituted for the others						
Session 3: Evaluation Policy and its implications on the way UNDP works	0	4	25	17		46
Comments:	0%	9%	54%	37%	91%	
- there is clarity in the purpose of evaluation but not in how it is implemented						
- seems that there is a well thought process but not enough clarity on how to put it into practice						
Session 4: Quality assurance and oversight for the evaluation policy	0	4	29	14		47
Comments:	0%	9%	62%	30%	91%	
- a bit rushed and some more time could have been spent here						
Session 5: UN reform and Evaluation	1	6	23	18		48
Comments:	2%	13%	48%	38%	85%	
- it could have been integrated into opening session						
- useful presentation on how UNEG is structured and how the agencies work together						
Session 6: Moving Forward	0	2	26	15		43
Comments:	0%	5%	60%	35%	95%	
- low energy levels at third day						
- specially important (one by one) discussion on country situation						
				Mean	91%	

2. Was the way the workshop was structured and delivered useful in achieving the objectives of the workshop?

	Not at all	Partially	Largely	Compl- etely	% Largely and Completely	# Rsp's
Plenary presentations	0	2	30	17		49
Comments:	0%	4%	61%	35%	96%	
- well ordered with each section building on the other						
- clear, concrete and sufficient number of presentations						
Group work	0	6	24	18		48
Comments:	0%	13%	50%	38%	88%	
- useful to exchange opinions and experiences and to identify challenges						
- sufficient time was allocated here and the experience of sharing was enhanced						
Reporting back from groups	1	3	30	12		46
Comments:	2%	7%	65%	26%	91%	
- good rapporteurs						
- adequate						
Plenary discussions	0	7	27	13		47
Comments:	0%	15%	57%	28%	85%	
- facilitation sometimes weak						
					Mean	90%

3. Other comments, suggestions and recommendations

Strengths

- very good workshop, group work made it more dynamic
 - very useful workshop for the importance of the issues and the relationship with government counterparts
 - excellent logistics
 - the workshop covered a large amount of information in a short timeframe
 - excellent government participation, whole thing has enhanced national ownership
 - many thanks to Guatemala Country Office
 - excellent preparation and organization of the workshop
- "Very useful workshop, I have learned a lot with all and every presentation and group discussion. The issue is of extreme relevance and we addressed it together with the government representatives "

Weaknesses

- internet facilities could be improved
- two day event would have been possible
- some repetition of issues
- summing up conclusions and areas of consensus would have improved the final result
- a bit long

Suggestions and Recommendations

- be careful with translations
- provide plenary presentation material to participants in advance
- Resident Representatives should get involved in follow-up

Annex 4. Workshop Presentations

A full set of presentations made in each session of the workshop can be downloaded from the [workshop website](#).