



# BUILDING BRIDGES BETWEEN THE STATE & THE PEOPLE

An Overview of UNDP's Recent and Current Interventions in  
Public Administration and Local Governance  
in LATIN AMERICA & the CARIBBEAN

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# INTRODUCTION

This paper is part of a series of regional monographs prepared by the *Responsive Institutions Cluster* within the Democratic Governance Group (DGG), Bureau for Development Policy (BDP). The regional papers aim to capture the volume and nature of UNDP's recent and current work on public administration and local governance.

The five regional stock-takings were prepared on the basis of desk reviews of existing project documents, project briefs, UNDP websites, project databases of individual Country Offices, Regional Centres, the Democratic Governance Trust Fund (DGTTF) database and Atlas; complemented with additional inputs from the field. The monographs focus on UNDP's current and most recent interventions, and provide an overview of what UNDP is currently doing in these service lines. The purpose of these papers is not to evaluate the quality of the outputs or the outcome of UNDP's work in public administration and local governance in specific countries or regions. Such evaluations are undertaken by the UNDP Evaluation Office.

In addition to compiling information on all ongoing civil service reform, local governance and decentralization projects, the regional papers also include information on initiatives in other service lines that touch directly on the public administration at the national and sub-national levels, such as:

- Projects that support strategic policy-making at the centre of government;
- Institutional strengthening projects focused on specific agencies or ministries;
- Anti-corruption projects that include initiatives to address the accountability, transparency and integrity of the public administration and local governments;
- Institutional and capacity development projects, focusing on the public sector;
- Aid coordination and aid effectiveness initiatives that deal directly with budget policy and coordination;
- Projects that support E-government development and ICTs;
- Access to information projects essentially dealing with the supply of government information;
- Projects that support the streamlining of regulations and administrative procedures; and
- Initiatives that address gender policies in public administration and local governments.

The five regional monographs on public administration and local governance constitute one component of a broader corporate initiative aimed at providing direction and support to meet the increasing demand from the field in these two service lines. The relevance and impact of our work in public administration and local governance will not only be of critical importance for the achievement of the MDGs, it is also central to building and sustaining peaceful, inclusive and tolerant societies, and communities.

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# OVERVIEW OF MAIN CHALLENGES

The experience with public administration reform has been diverse across Latin America and the Caribbean, in part because of different political-administrative traditions and constitutions, as well as levels of institutional development. Nevertheless, significant democratic reforms have swept across Latin America and the Caribbean Region in the last couple of decades, and strengthening public administration has been part of this process, largely driven by the need to enhance performance, service delivery, transparency and accountability. It is difficult to judge the overall progress of this reform process, mainly because a majority of the reforms are still being implemented and need to be appraised in the long term. However, in some key areas initial results can already be appreciated, such as: fiscal control and integrated financial management systems; improvement of budgetary rules; alternative forms of service delivery; use of E-government tools; increased capacity for action of civil society; and increased access to information. There has also been some partial progress in civil service reform, particularly at the national level, as well as transparency and accountability.

In many countries in the region, an integral part of this reform process has been the move to decentralize decision making, revenue generation and spending authority to sub-national governments. Furthermore, significant amounts of central-government revenues are now being administered by sub-national governments in consultation with local populations; a new generation of local leaders are serving as catalysts for local development, providing more effective and timely basic services and ensuring that public decision making includes broad citizen participation; and local governments are becoming better at reflecting citizen priorities, providing services more efficiently and developing a greater sense of accountability to citizens.

Latin America and the Caribbean hosts a heterogene-

ous group of over 30 countries, with a combined population of over 500 million. The quality of public administration and government effectiveness varies significantly in the region. Some countries have been able to institutionalize merit-based bureaucracies, transparency and accountability measures and public administration capacity (Chile and Brazil); others are beginning to apply merit-based rules, implementing various public administration reforms and focusing on increasing democratic governance capacity (Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Uruguay, most Caribbean countries); others, however, continue to struggle to consolidate reform processes.

Similarly, there are great differences in local governance styles throughout the region because of varied nature of local government institutions and differences in conditions and populations at the local level. The region has four federal systems (Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela and Argentina), while most of the countries on the continent have different forms of unitary state systems, and the 14 Caribbean states have mixed systems. Altogether there are over 250 sub-national governments (departments, provinces and regions) and over 16,000 local governments, with an average population of 37,000 inhabitants each.

Brazil is one of the most decentralized countries in the region, mainly because its federal tradition goes back to the birth of the republic at the end of the 19th century. Mexico also shows an interesting decentralizing trend which includes innovative changes, although sub-national governments still depend heavily on the federal government. Bolivia has recently implemented an original decentralizing process that recognizes its multi-ethnic and multicultural character. In Peru, the Constitutional Reform of 2002 placed emphasis on the creation of regional governments. The Central American countries have passed decentralizing laws, and their main challenge now is to implement them.

Most of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean share a common notion of the centrality of the state, framed within the Napoleonic code and the civil law system. These features provide some stability, but they also prevent rapid structural or managerial change and encourage a top-down and executive driven policy-making process. Similarly, most of these countries have presidential systems of government where the executive and legislative branches often share power without solid checks and balances. This is further aggravated when there is an antagonistic relationship between the president and the legislature or where coalition governments hold the power.

Over the past three decades, there has been substantial progress in reforming the state in Latin America, but there is a long way to go and in many countries the process seems frail and unconsolidated. This fragility is reflected in the weak legitimacy of the state, which in turn undermines efforts at further reform, in particular the reform of public administration. Local governance, decentralization and devolution of power and responsibilities have brought new challenges and opportunities for sub-national governments in the region. Greater financial independence, increased discretionary powers and new service delivery responsibilities have created opportunities to enhance local governance. However, they have also created greater risks and an increased focus on institutional vulnerabilities.

There are still many challenges to overcome in public administration and local governance, including the creation of incentives for improved intergovernmental relations and the need for effective institutions open to citizen participation and representation. Lingering patronage-based personnel systems need to be transformed in order to take labour needs and individual merit fully into account, as well as including incentives for good performance. However, achieving a capable public administration staffed by adequately trained, well-motivated and properly managed individuals, requires reforms that go beyond personnel norms and procedures, including simultaneous and coordinated changes in other public management areas such as policy-making, strategic planning, evaluation systems, and transparency and accountability.

Local governance initiatives and decentralization proc-

esses in the region are similarly influenced by the lack of normative frameworks to effectively guide the scope and depth of these processes. Federal systems of government like those in Brazil, Mexico, Argentina and Venezuela usually grant more autonomy to sub-national governments, but this does not necessarily mean that more power is actually devolved to the local level, as sub-national governments in a federal system can also centralise power. Hence, the degree of decentralization and devolution in federal states differs. Similarly, local governance initiatives and decentralization processes vary significantly in countries with unitary systems of government. For example, the scope and depth of decentralization is much greater in Colombia than in Paraguay, in spite of the fact that the latter's constitution recognizes the political autonomy of municipalities.

Despite the progress made in public administration reform, local governance and decentralization, Latin America and the Caribbean is still a region with a high degree of political, territorial and economic centralization and concentration of power in the larger metropolitan areas, which perpetuate long-standing social, economic and territorial disparities. The principal challenges facing the region today are how to promote economic growth and employment and improve social services and public security. These challenges cannot be addressed by public administration reform and central governments alone. They require both better public sector management and a more active participation in democratic governance by citizens from all walks of life. Some of the main challenges in public administration and local governance in the region include:

- Placing institutional development objectives above partisan political ones.
- Increasing local taxing authority and tax collection.
- Achieving consensus for civil service law reforms at the sub-national levels of government.
- Broadening efforts to improve sub-national government capacities, especially for transparent and efficient financial management.
- Developing the capacities of sub-national governments to facilitate and support citizen decision-making and actions to address economic growth and social challenges.

# REGIONAL INITIATIVES

## PROLOGO

PROLOGO is a regional initiative funded by the Generalitat de Valencia, currently being implemented in three municipalities in the region: Cartagena (Colombia), El Cercado (Dominican Republic) and Santa Tecla (El Salvador). This is a collaborative effort between the three Country Offices, the Democratic Governance Practice Area, UNDP's Virtual School, the Regional Centre in Panama, and the Knowledge Management Unit. PROLOGO articulates three main components:

- Three Local Centres that serve, in each municipality, as a meeting place where local authorities and citizens can discuss public policies. The centres will create a network to exchange experiences and share practices with other municipalities.
- A Regional Node under the responsibility of the Local Governance & Decentralization Policy Advisor in the Regional Centre in Panama, providing coordination and technical support to Country Offices.
- A Course in Local Democratic Governance, directed to community leaders and authorities from the three municipalities, which will be offered through UNDP's Virtual School. The course will not only provide conceptual and practical tools, but will also use information and communication technologies such as the learning platform of UNDP's Virtual School, the virtual platform of the Democratic Governance Practice Area and the Regional Centre, and LOGOS.

In each municipality, several community and civil society organizations are actively participating and, together with municipal authorities have identified the following priorities: (i) expanding democratic participation amongst under-represented groups (El Cercado); (ii) fostering afro-descendants' political participation in public policy-making (Cartagena); facilitating and pro-

moting women and youth's participation in security related policy matters (Santa Tecla).

## SIGOB

The regional "Administrative Capacity for Democratic Governance (SIGOB)" initiative aims to strengthen the administrative and institutional capacities of government policy-making spheres and structures. It is an approach and methodology that is supported by a unique technological application, offering a variety of modules to:

- Promote external transparency (based on citizens' demand) and internal transparency (based on public administration demands).
- Contribute to the implementation and effectiveness of public policy through early warning systems and scenarios for operative solutions.
- Promote interaction with citizens through access to information and mechanisms to give voice and encourage participation.
- Provide strategic programming and planning inputs.
- Encourage governmental political action in the context of rights.

SIGOB has focused on supporting the centre of government (Presidential and Prime Minister's Offices), but has also contributed to strengthening local public administration by developing and implementing key initiatives relevant to the strengthening of sub-national governments, such as benchmarking, communications, citizens' forums, bureaucratic processes and access to information<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> More information is available in Spanish at: <http://www.sigob.org>.

# MAIN AREAS OF INTERVENTION

## Public Administration & Civil Service Reform

In **Colombia**, the “Reform of the Public Administration (PRAP)” programme (2004-2010, US\$ 7 million)<sup>2</sup>, supports the public administration by: (i) working with the National Planning Department (DNP)<sup>3</sup>; (ii) strengthening the Public Employment Programme in collaboration with the Administrative Department of Civil Service (DAFP); (iii) working with the Ministry of Interior and Justice to strengthen horizontal management systems; and (iv) working with the Ministry of Communications to implement access to information measures. While none of the components explicitly targets sub-national governments, the outputs will be of benefit to all sub-national governments in Colombia.

In 2007-2008 UNDP **Haiti** implemented a project to assist the public administration reform and decentralization processes in Haiti (US\$ 450,000). The project supported the Office for Management and Human Resources (OMRH) and the Interministerial Commission on Decentralization, two bodies specifically created for this purpose. Key outputs included: (i) sensitizing the population on the relaunching of the public administration reform; (ii) identifying a cooperation framework for the public administration reform; (iii) identifying priority initiatives in the area of public administration, deconcentration and decentralization; (iv) improving government information and E-government applications; and (v) support to the establishment of the OMRH.

UNDP **Panama** supported the “National Authority for Public Services” project (2003-2007, US\$ 1.5 million), aimed at strengthening the National Authority for Pub-

lic Services, whose role is to control, monitor and supervise public service delivery.

The “Human Resources Management” project in **Paraguay** (2009, US\$ 46,000) aimed to strengthen the institutional capacity of the Department of Civil Service for the efficient management of Human Resources. It included training of public servants, definition of areas of research, and the creation and dissemination of information and knowledge.

UNDP **Uruguay** implemented the “Technical Assistance to the Civil Service Reform” project (2006-2009, US\$ 1 million), a joint initiative with the government and the IDB, which aimed to support the implementation of the civil service reform programme. The main objective was to achieve the flexible, merit-based and integrated management of human resources by implementing a legal and institutional framework. The project’s main counterpart was the National Office of the Civil Service, Office of the President.

The “Modernization of the Public Sector Project” in **Venezuela** (2002-2008, US\$ 5 million) supported the Ministry of Planning and Development to modernize the public sector, by focusing on new organizational, managerial and territorial modalities.

## Support to the Centre of Government & Strategic Policy-Making

In **Argentina**, UNDP’s project to “Support the Government’s Strategies for Quality Public Management” (2008-2010, US\$ 330,000), is executed by the Cabinet Department of Public Management<sup>4</sup>. The project’s ob-

<sup>2</sup> Financed by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB1561/OC-CO).

<sup>3</sup> The DNP is an administrative department that belongs to the Executive Branch of government and answers directly to the office of the President of the Republic.

<sup>4</sup> *Secretaría de Gabinete y Gestión Pública (SGGP).*



jectives include: (i) promoting public management innovations through ICTs; (ii) designing a proposal to create a National System of Monitoring and Evaluation of Public Policies; and (iii) improving the National Contracting System.

The “Project in Support of the State Observatory and the Institutional Revolution” (2008-2009, US\$ 136,000) directly executed by UNDP in **Bolivia**, promoted the development of information tools to monitor and evaluate the quality of public services. The project also included a knowledge management component, focused on the analysis of international experiences in this field. A particular initiative to Bolivia is the “Strengthening of Management Capacities for a Plurinational and Intercultural State” project (2009-2010, US\$ 500,000), which aims to strengthen the public administration’s capacities for streamlining the integrated development approach of the “National Good Living Plan”. It focuses on the design and implementation of public policies and norms on pluralism and interculturalism, as articulated by the New Political Constitution of the Bolivian State<sup>5</sup>, and is implemented by the Unit for the Analysis of Social and Economic Policies<sup>6</sup>.

In **Brazil**, two projects in support of the “Modernization of the Federal Executive Power” (PMPEF: 1998-2007, US\$ 65.8 million; and PMPEF II: 2005-2008, US\$ 27 million) were implemented with the Planning, Budgeting and Management Ministry. The first worked to: (i) decrease costs through the review of institutional targets and new structures; (ii) achieve higher levels of effectiveness and efficiency in the provision of services; (iii) decentralize or transfer responsibilities to non-governmental entities; and (iv) improve human resources management and communication capacities for a better public service. The second project was aimed at strengthening the capacities of the International Cooperation Programmes / Management Department. It focused on capacities linked to the design, monitoring and evaluation of public policy processes, management and resource mobilization at the federal level. The project also encompassed the modernization of information systems and the implementation of an institutional strengthening plan.

<sup>5</sup> *Nueva Constitución Política del Estado Boliviano (NCPE).*

<sup>6</sup> *Unidad de Análisis de Políticas Sociales y Económicas (UDAPE).*

UNDP **Chile** implemented the “Support to the Implementation of the Government’s Agenda” project (2007-2009, US\$ 570,000), aimed at assisting, providing inputs and following-up on the implementation of the Government’s Agenda. The project included four main components: (i) quality of democracy and strengthening of political institutions; (ii) state reform, including probity and transparency; (iii) social protection policies and the social welfare state; and (iv) socio-cultural changes in Chilean society and the evaluation of public opinion.

In **Guatemala**, UNDP supports a number of projects to strengthen presidential institutions, such as the “Establishment of a Strategic Support and Political Relations Centre” project (2008-2010, US\$ 620,000), which supports the Presidency and Vice-Presidency of the Republic. Other examples include the “Institutional Reform” project (2008-2009, US\$ 220,000), which contributed to the reform of the Presidency, through the provision of diagnosis and analysis. In addition, through the support received from the “Basis for an Integrated Planning” project (2008-2009, US\$ 367,000), the Secretary of Planning and Programming of the Presidency (SEGEPLAN) initiated a process of capacity-building as specified in the 2008-2012 Strategic Plan. This project supported the implementation of the Strategic Plan in 6 key management areas: (i) public policy; (ii) information and knowledge sharing on development issues; (iii) planning; (iv) public investment; (v) international cooperation; and (vi) institutional development. As part of the regional SIGOB programme, UNDP Guatemala implements a “Civil Society and Citizen Consultation” project (2008-2010, US\$ 68,000), aimed at defining Presidential and Cabinet / Citizens’ agreed targets and the introduction of software for budget analysis.

In **Mexico**, UNDP supported the Office of Mexico City’s Chief of Government through the SIGOB initiative (2008, US\$ 393,000). During this stage, 430 public servants from different levels were trained in the implementation of 3 key methodologies and tools: (i) System of Goal Programming and Results-based Management of Priority Projects of the Chief of Government; (ii) Management Center of the Chief of Government; and (iii) Interinstitutional Agenda System. The methodologies and tools implemented succeeded

in identifying 80 priority goals for institutional follow-up in 2008 and 60 goals in 2009. These actions assisted government efforts to highlight priority issues to high level public servants. In addition, through the Interinstitutional Agenda System, many of Mexico City's Government offices were able to create synergies and generate an effective and timely response from the Chief of Government's office. The aim of working in these three areas was to improve government indicators, implement a result-oriented approach, and enhance the government's ability to communicate its midterm and long term achievements. SIGOB Modules in Mexico also provided useful mechanisms to give more voice to citizens and promote their active participation in the public policy debate as well as to support the fulfilment of campaign promises, hence increasing the level of trust at the local level.

UNDP **Panama's** "Capacities for Government Management" project (2004-2007, US\$ 100,000), aimed to strengthen the administrative capacities of the President's Office through the implementation of efficient management systems (including results-based systems to evaluate government policies) as well as the monitoring of the relationship between civil society and government. Through technical assistance and capacity-building the project sought to support the implementation of management systems which incorporated democratic governance and accountability principles in public management.

In **Paraguay**, UNDP supported the "Consolidation of the Government Programme" (2008-2009, US\$ 79,000), in collaboration with the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation for Development<sup>7</sup>. The project focused on providing technical assistance in public policy design and programme formulation to the Transitional Economic Team of the in-coming administration.

UNDP **Uruguay** implemented the "Support to the Implementation of UNDP's Country Programme" project (2007-2009, US\$ 520,000), focused on four priority areas: (i) development based knowledge and productivity; (ii) sustainable development; (iii) fight against corruption and inequalities; and (iv) strengthening of

democratic governance. The project supported the overall implementation and monitoring of the Country Programme and its governance component in particular. The project's main objectives included: (i) developing the capacity of the Department of Budgets and Planning<sup>8</sup> (the unit in charge of coordinating international cooperation), as well as of other actors involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Country Programme; and (ii) supporting the implementation of specific cooperation initiatives, in particular those related to local governance, and promoting local and sustainable development within the framework of the decentralization programme.

## Local Governance & Decentralization

Through the "Strengthening the Municipal Affairs Department" project (2004-2008, US\$ 1.2 million), UNDP **Argentina** aimed to support the Undersecretariat of the Province of Buenos Aires by providing normative frameworks, promoting partnerships with municipalities, and strengthening capacities in qualified municipal management and its implementation. The "Building Bridges: Collaborative Planning to Strengthen Links between Local Government and Civil Society" project (2006-2009, US\$ 775,000) aimed to reinforce the Local Civic Forums (LCFs) and influence public policies at the local level by translating recommendations provided by the LCFs into tangible actions to improve democratic governance.

UNDP **Bolivia** supported the "Strengthening the Capacities of the Ministry of Autonomy" project (2009, US\$ 120,000), which developed the Decentralization Plan with Autonomous Entities. The project followed four thematic lines: (i) research, analysis and development of rules related to the decentralization process for autonomous regions; (ii) research, analysis and design of proposals on political and fiscal competencies; (iii) agreement, coordination and validation of the new normative and operational framework with the Autonomous and Decentralized Territorial Entities

<sup>7</sup> Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID).

<sup>8</sup> Oficina de Planeamiento y Presupuesto (OPP).

(ETDAS)<sup>9</sup> through the consolidation of the Council of National Autonomous Entities<sup>10</sup>; and (iv) systematization of the decentralization process and public outreach in collaboration with the ETDAS. Also in Bolivia, the “Institutional Strengthening of the Province of Oruro” project (2007, US\$ 68,000) assisted the new prefectural government with the necessary capacity development to implement a collaborative government approach and the creation of community-based participation spaces for planning.

UNDP **Brazil** has implemented a number of projects in the area of decentralization, including the “Support to the Amazonian State’s Modernisation and Planning” project (2004-2009, US\$ 2.7 million), and the “My Place”<sup>11</sup> project (2004-2008, US\$ 1 million). The latter focused on the administrative regionalization and decentralization of the State of Santa Catarina, and included the elaboration of 27 regional development plans based on a territorial and participatory approach; 3 training programmes centred on public human resources and social capital in the region for improving competencies for development; and the implementation of a system for monitoring progress in 29 regions. The initiative was implemented by the Planning, Budgeting and Management Department of Santa Catarina.

UNDP **Colombia’s** “Strengthening Decentralization” project (2005-2009, US\$ 600,000) provided technical assistance to the central government and the territorial entities and local communities, to strengthen the decentralization process. The “Support to the Municipal Council” project (2008-2010, US\$ 418,000), aims to support governmental management through municipal councils and communication strategies, and includes the creation of a support team at the Administrative Department of the Office of the President. In addition, the “Strengthening of Public Management at Local Level” project (2009-2011, US\$ 544,000), offers technical assistance in public management and principles for inclusive local democracy to governments from Cesar, Nariño and Santander, and the Major of Cartagena. Key areas receiving support: (iii) activities related to planning and monitoring of Departmental /

District Development Plans; (ii) sectoral policies for human development; and (iii) transparency and social accountability processes. UNDP Colombia also supports the “Transparency in Territorial Public Management” project (2009-2010, US\$ 213,000), that aims to strengthen transparency conditions in local government working jointly with UNDP, as well as local capacities for data management, social accountability and knowledge sharing on local issues.

The PROLOGO project in **Colombia** (2008-2010, US\$ 180,000) aims to enhance local democratic governance to contribute to the achievement of the MDGs, and create a Centre to: (i) analyze local governance conditions for MDG attainment; (ii) disseminate information and promote dialogue; (iii) identify strategic areas and provide a discussion forum amongst local authorities and actors for the definition of actions; (iv) offer local actors a training centre on leadership and governance issues; and (v) provide the Regional Centre with feedback on its tools and methodologies. This project has a particular focus on enhancing the political participation of afro-Colombian people in the Cartagena District. Similar projects are also underway in the **Dominican Republic** (PROLOGO, 2008-2010, US\$ 180,000) and **El Salvador** (PROLOGO, 2008-2010, US\$ 180,000), where centres will be created with the same responsibilities as the one in Colombia.

UNDP **Ecuador** has also implemented several local governance projects. The “Strengthening Local Government” project (2005-2008, US\$ 330,000) focused on fostering the role of municipalities and provinces of the Frontera Norte (in particular Sucumbios province, Guayaquil, Quito and Cuenca) as regional poles of development. It aimed to strengthen the capacities of these local entities in the context of the national State’s decentralization, deconcentration and modernization. The “Strengthening Guayaquil’s Municipality” project (2002-2008, US\$ 2 million), a joint programme with UN-Habitat, was part of the UN’s continued support to the Municipality of Guayaquil (MIMG). During the first phase, two plans for local development were designed, focusing on specific priorities such as strengthening the management capacity of the Municipality of Guayaquil in order to provide high quality public services, support sustainable human development in the region and contribute to poverty reduction and the

<sup>9</sup> *Entidades Territoriales Descentralizadas y Autónomas (ETDAS).*

<sup>10</sup> *Consejo Nacional de Autonomía.*

<sup>11</sup> *Projeto Meu Lugar.*

improvement of local governance. Key outputs included: (i) completion of land registration system (canton) to be used as a database to plan and collect taxes; (ii) integration of rural and urban land registries and improvement of cadastral operations; (iii) finalization of a municipal system of information, and integration into the Cadastral<sup>12</sup> and Municipal<sup>13</sup> Geographic Information Systems; (iv) establishment of a methodology to simplify municipal procedures; (v) development of a strategy to outsource municipal social services; (vi) training of municipal staff; (vii) sharing of good practices with other municipalities in process; (viii) design of two additional local transportation lines; (ix) agreement between MIMG, CTG and the relevant transportation companies on an institutional framework to rationalize transportation in Guayaquil; (x) development of ground rules for citizen participation; and (xi) integration of the social information sub-system with the Municipal Information system.

In **Haiti**, UNDP's "Towards Local Governance in North-western Departments" project (2005-2009, US\$ 5.5 million) sought to consolidate the efforts to strengthen local actors' capacities in collaborative planning, good governance and revalorization of the environment, and was implemented in four communities in the North-western Departments. Currently, the "Towards Territorial Governance and Administration Reform"<sup>14</sup> project (2009-2011, US\$ 4.9 million), aims to reduce poverty in Haiti's northern border through social and economic development, strengthening local governance and the establishment of structures for negotiation, coordination and planning. The project focuses on supporting public services (especially health and sanitation) and infrastructure projects. UNDP Haiti has also supported the Ministry of the Interior and Local Governments through a programme for the development of disaster risk management systems (2005-2009, US\$ 2 million), which was integrated into the country's decentralization strategy. The project intervened at central level as well as in the departments of Artibonite, des Nippes, and the Grand'Anse.

UNDP **Honduras** is currently supporting the Observa-

tory System for Localizing MDGs (2006-2010, US\$ 3.5 million). The project provides tools to evaluate the impact of policies and investments (national and external) for the achievement of MDGs. The tools focus on identifying the best niches for investment, especially activities and initiatives that contribute to higher levels of citizen participation, social audit and the strengthening of accountability systems.

**Mexico's** "Strengthening Democratic Culture in Mexico's Indigenous Electoral Districts" project (2007, US\$ 1.2 million), focused on promoting a democratic culture amongst the indigenous population of each electoral district, taking into account traditional forms of political participation, and applying a human rights based approach. Women's political participation for the achievement of the MDGs was given special attention, stressing the positive impact of indigenous women's enhanced political and social participation in the design and implementation of public policies. The project's main outputs included: (i) analysis of political and electoral participation in the 28 Indigenous Electoral Districts<sup>15</sup>; (ii) empowerment of indigenous peoples, promoting accountability and transparency; (iii) comparative and cross-cutting analysis of increased political participation and leadership of indigenous women in 5 countries in Latin America<sup>16</sup>; (iv) development of advocacy agendas at the state and municipal levels in order to strengthen representation and participation; (v) strengthened community leadership and successful democratic practices; (vi) provision of useful insight for electoral and political conflict resolution within indigenous communities. This initiative was funded by the Democratic Governance Thematic Trust Fund, the Spanish Agency for International Co-operation, the Federal Electoral Court, the Federal Electoral Institute, and the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples.

The "Support to the Decentralization and Territorialization of MDGs" project in **Nicaragua** (2008-2009, US\$ 1.9 million) was a joint UNCDF and UNDP initiative

<sup>12</sup> *Sistemas de Información Geográfica Catastral (SIGCA).*

<sup>13</sup> *Información Geográfica Municipal (SIGMU).*

<sup>14</sup> *Appui à la Gouvernance Territoriale et Locale.*

<sup>15</sup> Indigenous Electoral Districts, representing 28 of the 300 electoral constituencies, were developed as political entities in 2005 to: (i) improve decentralization; (ii) address indigenous peoples' specific political and cultural issues; and (iii) ensure representation in the Federal Congress for indigenous communities, elected through customary mechanisms.

<sup>16</sup> Peru, Bolivia, Ecuador, Guatemala and Nicaragua.

which contributed to the achievement of the MDGs at the local level. The programme developed a political framework for decentralization by supporting municipalities on poverty reduction strategies and inclusive local governance. It also included the promotion of changes in the normative frame, and focused on strengthening local capacities for pro-poor local development planning and the promotion of local economic development actions. This project was implemented in partnership with the Nicaraguan Association of Municipalities (AMUNIC).

In **Panama**, UNDP's "Promotion of Decentralization and Municipal Management of the Property Tax" project (2005-2007, US\$ 110,000), supported what was then the new Panamanian government of Martin Torrijos in its decentralization agenda, including institutional aspects and local public policies. The project prioritized: (i) provision of technical assistance to the Local Governments Direction at the Ministry of Government and Justice in the elaboration of the legal and institutional framework to promote and foster the decentralization process; (ii) development of a cadastre system in selected municipalities, in particular those under indigenous authority and/or with women in leadership positions; (iii) property tax management; and (iv) local participatory processes.

UNDP **Peru** has implemented several projects in the area of local governance. The "Support to the Decentralization Process" project (2003-2009, US\$ 550,000) was integrated into the "Support to the Implementation of Actions to Strengthen the New Structure of the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Social Development (MIMDES) – PER/O3/O13" programme, and the Decentralization Process. Its main objective was the development of institutional and staff capacities in support of the creation of a transparent and efficient institution oriented toward equity and social inclusion. Currently, the "Support to the National Council for Decentralization" project (2004-2010, US\$ 50,000), promotes the advancement of the decentralization process. In addition, the "Strengthening the Administrative Management and Human Capacities of the Tumbes Regional Government" project (2006-2010, US\$ 480,000), aims to provide the Tumbes government with technical assistance, and includes staff capacity-building, improvement of computer platforms

and strengthening of administrative management.

In **Trinidad and Tobago**, UNDP supported the "Institutional Strengthening and Support to the Ministry of Local Government – MOLG" project (2006-2009, US\$ 680,000). The project focused on facilitating the necessary improvements of local systems in order to enhance the quality of life of the citizenry. In support of this initiative, UNDP provided technical expertise to assist the ministry in the strengthening of its management systems, human resource capacity and funding mechanisms, all critical areas for the creation of an enabling environment for the attainment of effective decentralization, local governance and urban/rural development.

In **Uruguay**, the "Support to the Municipal Development Unit" project to implement the Programme of Development and Municipal Management IV (2004-2009, US\$ 9 million), focused on strengthening the development of local governments, and improving their financial and management capacities in support of the decentralization process. The project was implemented through the Office of Planning and Budget, at the Office of the President).

UNDP's **ART Programme**<sup>17</sup> in Geneva has several interventions in the region. ART GOLD Bolivia (2008-2011, US\$ 1.4 million), supports the country's efforts to enhance development within a framework of respect for its cultural and ethnical diversity, as expressed in its National Development Plan (NDP). This programme contributes to the implementation of four NDP strategic objectives: (i) the eradication of poverty and inequity; (ii) the promotion of democracy based on a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic and community-partner nation; (iii) the increase of economic productivity through integrated change and diversification of the production model; and (iv) promotion of Bolivia's worldwide interaction, based on its own identity and sovereignty. ART Bolivia forms part of the government's strategy for administrative decentralization and reduction of poverty, and supports the "Territorial Planning and Local Development" initiative led by the Ministry for Development Planning and the Vice-Ministry for

<sup>17</sup> All information on ART Programmes (except for that on El Salvador) was obtained from the 2008 ART Activity Report published by UNDP.

Decentralization. The programme works in close collaboration with the MDGs initiative, providing multilateral, bilateral and decentralized international cooperation actors with an operational and flexible instrument for the articulation and harmonization of initiatives prioritized by the Territories and the Local Authorities and Communities. The Departments of Potosí, La Paz and Oruro have been selected for the first phase of the programme's implementation.

In **Colombia**, support to local economic development through Local Economic Development Agencies (LEDAs) and the ART Programme Framework, began in 2003 and has since been consolidated in the Departments of Antioquia, Valle del Cauca, Cauca, Nariño, Boyacá, Bolívar, Cesar and Santander. Colombia's ART-REDES Strategy (2007-2008, US\$ 9 million) contributed to human development, the peacebuilding and reconciliation process, and the achievement of the MDGs by supporting and promoting the participation of both the Colombian government and civil society organizations in all-inclusive political, economic and social processes. The programme concentrated its efforts on: (i) strengthening the role of Colombia's local communities and their capacity to communicate with national institutions; (ii) mitigating and transforming the underlying causes of violence in Colombia's internal conflict, and preventing the violence from escalating in regions where it's latent; and (iii) coordinating local, national and international efforts and funds, as well as technical and financial resources.

In **Cuba**, the "Human Local Development – PDHL" programme (1998-2012, US\$ 4.7 million), is a joint venture of the Cuban government and UNDP Cuba. Launched as a United Nations Strategy endorsing the efforts of national authorities to promote the coordination of International cooperation actions in support of prioritized local development processes, it focuses on: technical and administrative decentralization, local economic development, delivery, sustainability and quality of territorial services, and gender mainstreaming. The programme provides a reference framework that allows international cooperation organizations to function in a coordinated manner while increasing their efficiency and impact. Currently, PDHL is active in 8 of the 14 provinces and 57 of the 169 municipalities in Cuba. The programme's implementation in these terri-

ories contributed to the decentralization process, and the development of local capacities through innovative, participative and inter-sectoral methodologies. More than 970 initiatives were implemented at the local and national levels as a result of the exchange knowledge and lessons learned through a network of more than 300 decentralized cooperation actors.

The ART GOLD programme in the **Dominican Republic** (2007-2011, US\$ 800,000) is aligned with the government's poverty reduction strategies for the achievement of the MDGs. ART GOLD DR also provides an important tool for developing joint initiatives with the neighbouring Republic of Haiti, involving both countries' populations. A total of 9 priority areas covering 5 provinces, 40 municipalities and 770,000 inhabitants, were identified for intervention<sup>18</sup>. In these provinces, ART GOLD promotes and supports local development processes that were approved through, and are open to, participation by the different local stakeholders, donors and decentralized cooperation actors from the North and South. The main objective of UNDP initiatives in the Dominican Republic is to strengthen national institutions, and implement a development strategy (at both national and local levels) to achieve the MDGs.

The ART Programme in **Ecuador** (2008-2011, US\$ 3.2 million) focuses on providing the country with a planning and management framework to strengthen coordination between the sub-national (provincial / cantonal), national and international levels of development processes. The programme also allows coordination between donor countries, UN agencies and local governments engaged in decentralized cooperation initiatives, in order to support the implementation of national decentralization strategies and the achievement of the MDGs. During its first year of operation, the programme's activities focused on establishing its sub-national and national operational structures, and strengthening dialogue between the different action levels. Having identified the provinces of Carchi, Los Ríos, Bolívar and Azuay as priority areas for intervention, ART Ecuador is currently assisting

<sup>18</sup> These areas include the provinces of Montecristi, Dajabon, Elías Piña, Independencia and Pedernales that border with Haiti, and another four provinces, namely Bahoruco, Hermanas Mirabal (ex-Salcedo), Milenio, El Seibo and Monte Plata.

in the process of territorialization of the MDGs undertaken by the national government, through strengthening of local capacities, support to the establishment of the Millennium Social Investigations Centre (CISMIL), and the publication of analytical and methodology papers such as the MDGs' reports at the sub-national level.

In **El Salvador**, ART's "Support to the Territorial Networks and Cooperation Areas for Human Development – Governance and Local Development" project (2010-2014, US\$ 8.5 million) is a framework programme focusing on enhanced coordination of projects from different UN agencies, donors and other actors involved in decentralization initiatives.

The "Local Development Programme" – LDP ART in **Uruguay** (2006-2010, US\$ 2 million), was designed to contribute to the achievement of the MDGs by supporting political and administrative decentralization, and strengthening the role of local communities in their own economic and social development through increased capacity for dialogue, and the distribution of support provided by international cooperation actors. Stipulated outcomes include: (i) increased access to resources by local communities, articulated within ongoing local development actions; (ii) increased resources for local governments to manage development within their territories; (iii) improved government capacities for enhanced communication between the national, departmental and local levels; (iv) improvement, at the local level, of the government's capacities to communicate between the private and public sectors; (v) capacity-development of local actors to improve participation in local development processes; (vi) improved local planning at the different government levels; (vii) increased inclusion of diverse actors in government processes, especially women and youth; and (viii) improved living conditions of the beneficiaries. The departments of Artigas and Rivera were selected as the pilot geographical areas for the programme's implementation in 2007, and the government later decided to expand the programme to 15 of the 19 Departments in Uruguay. ART International also provides operational support to the UN's "Delivering as One" strategy, of which Uruguay is one of the pilot countries.

## Accountability, Transparency & Integrity in Public Administration

Relatively few anti-corruption projects have been implemented in recent years. UNDP **Argentina** supported the "Institutional Strengthening of the Anti-Corruption Office" (2005-2009, US\$ 380,000), including its management capacities at national, provincial and municipal level. The project's objectives included: (i) a mapping exercise to identify issues related to access to, and transparency of public contracting procedures; (ii) development of an e-learning system for public servants (including the creation of a virtual library and documentation centre); and (iii) the design and implementation of pedagogic activities targeted at teachers and students in order to raise awareness, encourage debate and promote social consciousness and respect for the rule of law. UNDP Argentina also implemented the "Social Accountability Project" (2004-2008, US\$ 1.2 million) aimed at institutionalizing social accountability mechanisms for local democracy practices, and monitoring and evaluation according to citizen's perceptions. The project's main goal was to promote social awareness of policy-making procedures, and to implement and strengthen democratic governance initiatives.

In **Barbados**, UNDP implemented the "Anti-Corruption Programme for the Development and Ratification of the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)" in English-speaking Caribbean countries (2006-2009, US\$ 90,000), part of UNDP's Global Programme to support anti-corruption Interventions.

UNDP **Colombia's** "National Commission of Royalties" project (1999-2009, US\$ 36 million) focused on strengthening the mechanisms and processes of administrative and financial audits conducted by the National Department of Planning, and included the development of an information system.

UNDP **Mexico's** "Quality of Government and Accountability in Mexican Federal Entities" project (2009, US\$ 300,000), supported by the Oslo Governance Centre, focused on strengthening the public administration's accountability by: (i) developing the government's ca-

capacities throughout the 32 states which constitute the Mexican Federation. Through the introduction of an objective indicator database it was possible to evaluate public management and local accountability mechanisms<sup>19</sup>. The project's main objective was to develop an analytic methodology which took into consideration the particularities of the 32 states. The indicators developed prioritized issues such as accountability<sup>20</sup>, good governance, public management and performance of government institutions and public policies. Key outputs included: (i) effective compliance with civil rights; (ii) enhanced social and political participation; (iii) improved political diversity; and (iv) effective participation of civil society, media and the private sector.

## Public Financial Management

UNDP **Brazil** implemented a series of public financial management projects, reaching the sub-national state level. At the federal level, the "Strengthening Fiscal Management Programme – PROGER" (2001-2008, US\$ 8.8 million) was implemented by the State Department of Planning and Investment (Planning, Budgeting and Management Ministry), and the National Treasury Department (Finance Ministry). The project's main objectives included: (i) supporting the design of a plan for improving management, monitoring and evaluation; (ii) enhancing the structure and capacities of the National Treasury Department for dealing with federal debt and fiscal policy implementation; and (iii) supporting the implementation of the Fiscal Responsibility Law<sup>21</sup> at the local level. UNDP Brazil has also implemented a number of projects in support of the "Modernization of the Tax and Finance Administration System" of different States<sup>22</sup>. These projects covered a

variety of objectives, including: (i) enhanced fiscal audit management through the implementation of modern procedures, new computer tools, improvement of technical capacities, reformulation of strategies, integration of information systems and the creation of an audit laboratory to fight fiscal fraud; (ii) increased Treasury income through capacity development, enhancement of technical infrastructures, combating fiscal evasion and better provision of fiscal and land registry information; (iii) enhanced strategic planning capacities; (iv) development of new models of human resources systems; and (v) improved coordination between different departments and amongst states through integrated systems of information on inter-state market operations.

UNDP **Brazil** also supported the "Restructuring / Modernization of the Finance Department" of various States<sup>23</sup>, with the overall objective of supporting institutional development, and the modernization of planning/administrative processes for financial control. Through the "Fiscal Modernization Programme of Brazilian States" (2002-2008, US\$ 7.3 million), UNDP supported the improvement of fiscal administration through technical cooperation, and assistance to the development, monitoring and evaluation of projects. In addition, UNDP assisted with the "Coordination of the National Programme in Support of the Administrative and Fiscal Management of Brazilian Municipalities – PNAFM" (2005-2008, US\$ 5 million). The initiative supported the Unit of Coordination of Programmes (UCP), Executive Department of the Ministry of Treasury, with technical assistance for all phases of the project cycle, as well as the systematization and public dissemination of municipal projects and their results.

UNDP **Colombia** supported the "Modernisation of the Public Finance Administration II" project (2001-2009, US\$ 95 million), aimed at strengthening the in-

<sup>19</sup> The indicator database – open to public consultation – holds information on the states' government institutions in order to develop local agendas that will contribute to the reform and improvement of local public administrations.

<sup>20</sup> This included accountability mechanisms to survey local bureaucracies, and the revision of the local legislative and autonomous organisms' roles.

<sup>21</sup> *Lei de Responsabilidade Fiscal*.

<sup>22</sup> Previous interventions covered the states of: Mato Grosso do Sul (1997-2008, US\$ 11 million); Maranhão (2002-2007, US\$ 14 million); Tocantins (1997-2007, US\$ 3.5 million); Paraíba (PROMOSAT: 1997-2007, US\$ 15.4 million); Sergipe (PROMATE:

1998-2007, US\$ 7 million); Piauí (2002-2007, US\$ 6.5 million); Rio de Janeiro (PROMOFAZ: 1998-2007, US\$ 26 million); Amapá (PROMOFAZ/AP: 1998-2007, US\$ 3.5 million); Pernambuco (PROMOFAZ/PE: 1999-2007, US\$ 15.5 million); Paraná (PROMOSEFA/PR: 2000-2007, US\$ 10.5 million); Rio Grande do Norte (2002-2008, US\$ 17 million); and Sao Paulo (2004-2009, US\$ 32 million).

<sup>23</sup> Including: Minas Gerais (2002-2008, US\$ 35 million); Ceará (SEFAZ: 2000-2007, US\$ 1.2 million); Rondônia (1999-2008, US\$ 5.7 million); and Rio Grande do Sul (PROMOFAZ/RS: 1998-2007, US\$ 25.4 million).



stitutional capacity of the Department of National Taxes and Customs<sup>24</sup>, in order to increase tax collection, reduce the fiscal deficit, and respond to the population's socioeconomic demands. The project also supported the institutional reform and capacity-building of the Department of Public Credit. Also in Colombia, UNDP supported the National Commission of Royalties (1999-2009, US\$ 36 million) through a project aimed at strengthening the mechanisms and processes of administrative and financial audits conducted by the National Department of Planning. The main objective was to improve the follow-up and monitoring of projects dedicated to the promotion of the mining industry, and the protection of the natural environment.

UNDP **Guatemala** has implemented several projects in the area of public finance. The "Support to the Ministry of Public Finance" project (2008-2010, US\$ 450,000), aims to: (i) strengthen the fiscal position of the government of Guatemala; (ii) create strategic alliances between the executive power and political parties, Congress, majors, the international community and socio-political groups; and (iii) build a Citizen Observatory of Public Expenditure to improve transparency. The "Reform and Modernization of the Tax Administration Superintendence – SAT" project (2005-2009, US\$ 600,000) promoted modern and transparent fiscal performance within the tax and customs administration. The project focused on improving institutional management, facilitating international business, and simplifying custom processes in line with international standards. The "Support to the National Financial Office" project (2008-2009, US\$ 62,000), in collaboration with the National Financial Office (CGC)<sup>25</sup>, worked to achieve the renovation of internal audit rules for State entities, first implemented, as a pilot, at CGC. The restructuring of units for internal audits and the development of assessments and capacity-building programmes were also contemplated.

UNDP **Mexico**'s "Information Platform for the Institutionalization of Social Policies (IPRO)" initiative (2009-2012, US\$ 300,000)<sup>26</sup> is sponsored by a joint initiative

of the Social Development and Public Education Ministries, with Mexican Transparency as its main partner. The initiative provides one of the most efficient mechanisms for adjusting local governments' budgetary management for the fulfilment of social public policies and programmes – particularly health and education – in order to redress the needs of vulnerable groups. Key outputs include: (i) development of minimum standards and indicators for the institutionalization of social public policies; (ii) improvement of transparent and objective follow-up mechanisms to revise public financial management and expenditure regarding social public policies; and (iii) creation of an on-line public database including indicators and minimum standards of institutionalization of social public policies<sup>27</sup>. Currently, IPRO's database contains data on 778 social public policies in 24 states, which voluntarily submit their information on public financial management, disbursement and accountability.

In **Panama**, the "Tax Management Step II" project (2003-2008, US\$ 4.2 million), aimed to improve the taxation and financial management capacity of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MINEF) through the implementation of modern procedures, new computer tools, increased technical capacities and communication policies with civil society.

UNDP **Paraguay** also implemented a number of projects in this area. The "Fiscal Decentralization and Training" project (2006-2008, US\$ 370,000) contributed to the process of institutional strengthening and modernisation of the Treasury Department. Specifically, it supported the reform of two units: the Technical Unit for Decentralization in charge of the coordination of fiscal relations between central and sub-national governments, and the Academic Unit for Policies, in charge of civil service. The "Strengthening the Management Capacity of the Treasury Department" project (2005-2008, US\$ 165,000) aimed to strengthen this capacity through the provision of technical assistance in support of "transparency and fiscal responsibility for development". The "Public Procurement System" project (2006-2008, US\$ 830,000) sup-

<sup>24</sup> Dirección de Impuestos y Aduanas Nacionales (DIAN).

<sup>25</sup> Contraloría General de Cuentas (CGC).

<sup>26</sup> This initiative was developed as a result of the favourable government response, research data compiled regarding protection of public financial budgets and successful outputs of UNDP's "Protec-

tion of Federal Social Programmes in the Context of the July 2006 Elections" project.

<sup>27</sup> IPRO's on-line database can be consulted at: <http://www.programassociales.org.mx>

ported the Public Procurement System through the development of a legal framework and the provision of institutional support, including the implementation of a system of information for public contracting (SICP). Another project supported the “Regional Tax Offices” (2007-2008, US\$ 2.5 million), by promoting the modernisation and re-engineering of the tax system conducted by the Sub-secretariat for Taxes. The project focused on strengthening selected regional offices through the improvement of their infrastructure, and the appointment and training of public servants to provide tax payers with accurate information, assistance and advice.

In **Uruguay**, UNDP supported the “Strengthening of the Central Bank of Uruguay” project (2004-2009, US\$ 2.5 million), through the improvement of information and risk-administration systems. The “Support to the Implementation of the Programme to Improve Budget Management” project (2004-2009, US\$ 2.8 million) aimed to enhance the Central Budget Administration’s efficiency through the improvement of budget management. The main objectives included: (i) strengthening public management evaluation mechanisms; (ii) updating of technological processes of public contracting; (iii) implementing technological strategies designed by the government; and (iv) supporting and promoting ICT-based initiatives to improve public services and the efficiency of administrative operations.

The “Modernization of Tax and Customs Administration” project (2006-2010, US\$ 34 million) in **Venezuela** is a continuation of two previous initiatives<sup>28</sup> supported by UNDP to help reform the Integrated National Service of Tax and Customs Administration (SENIAT)<sup>29</sup>. The current project aims to: (i) adapt and install the Automated Customs System (SIDUNEA); (ii)

strengthen institutional management; (iii) improve the tax collection system (for non-petrol taxes); (iv) increase transparency; (v) improve control over the collection process; and (vi) facilitate international trade operations and prevent fraud.

## Aid Effectiveness

UNDP **Argentina** supported the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the “Strengthening of the Sub-secretariat of Coordination and International Cooperation” project (2006-2008, US\$ 6.5 million), which provided technical assistance aimed at strengthening and developing staff members’ operational management skills.

In **Brazil**, UNDP supported the “Modernizing the Management of Technical Cooperation in Brazil” project (2000-2008, US\$ 1.2 million), focused on: (i) improving the operation of programmes and projects of technical cooperation with international partners; (ii) increasing the dissemination of best practices amongst national institutions and developing countries; and (iii) adapting the institutional model of the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MRE)<sup>30</sup>, to better meet the demand for technical support for the implementation of development projects.

UNDP **Costa Rica**, implemented the “Strengthening Institutional Capacities for the Management of International Cooperation” project (2007-2009, US\$ 300,000), aimed at rationalizing the management of international cooperation.

UNDP **Guatemala**’s “Development Assistance Database” project (2008-2009, US\$ 150,000) supported the design and implementation of a Computer System (DAD) to manage development aid, in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration.

In **Nicaragua**, UNDP supported the “Strengthening of the National Coordination of External Cooperation”, through the Secretariat of Economic Relations and

<sup>28</sup> The “Support to the Modernization of the Customs System” project (2002-2008, US\$ 22.8 million) focused on providing modern software and equipment (in particular the Automated Custom System – SIDUNEA, a tool developed by UNCTAD and currently implemented in 80 countries). In addition, the “Support to the Modernization of the Customs System – SENIAT III” project (2007-2009, US\$ 70 million), focused on consolidating the customs system reform in line with international principles and practices. Specific objectives included: (i) strengthening the automation and integration of customs system processes; (ii) improving the operating capacity, security and control systems with the use of cutting edge technologies and the reform of customs infrastructure; and (iii) streamlining the institutional processes.

<sup>29</sup> *Servicio Nacional Integrado de Administración Aduanera y Tributaria (SENIAT).*

<sup>30</sup> *Agência Brasileira de Cooperação (ABC), Ministério das Relações Exteriores (MRE).*

Cooperation (SREC)<sup>31</sup> (Phase III: 2008-2009, US\$ 380,000). The project focused on strengthening the SREC's capacity in order to identify national priorities and effectively implement development objectives.

UNDP **Peru** is currently implementing two projects in this area. The first is a small project dealing with the "Supervision and Follow-up of International Cooperation" (2006-2010, US\$ 32,000), and the second supports the "Modernisation of the Peruvian Agency of International Cooperation" (2008-2010, US\$ 220,000). Both are included within the programme for the "Modernization and Strengthening of the International Cooperation in Peru", which fosters the development and incorporation of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to strengthen the transparency of international cooperation arrangements.

## E-government, Information & Communication Technologies (ICTs)

UNDP **Argentina** has implemented several ICT projects, including the "Support to E-government in Buenos Aires" project (2008-2009, US\$ 4.3 million) which supported the reform, innovation and strengthening of the technical and management capacities of the government of Buenos Aires, in particular in the areas of organization, administration, development of computer infrastructure, telecommunications and information systems. The initiative also included the development of an Information Agency for the Buenos Aires government, as well as the design and coordination of an E-government plan. The "Technological Modernization of the Registry Office in the Province of Buenos Aires" project (2006-2008, US\$ 577,000), focused on the design and implementation of an ICT strategy to improve service provision to citizens, the efficient management of the organization, and to increase adaptability to technological changes. UNDP also supported the "Development of Computer Systems in the Ministry of

Economy"<sup>32</sup> project (2004-2008, US\$ 7.7 million), which aimed to overcome problems in network security and system interoperability, and improve the ministry's infrastructure in order to ensure the project's implementation. In addition, UNDP Argentina also supported the "Computerization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Culture" project (2006-2008, US\$ 7 million), which focused on: (i) modernizing the Computer Centre; (ii) renovating and replacing workstations in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Representations; (iii) modernizing the central equipment in the Foreign Office and Diplomatic Representations; and (iv) modernizing the Systems of Communications and LAN and WAN networks. Finally, the "Computer Systems Strategy for the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security" (2005-2008, US\$ 4.7 million) contributed to the implementation of the ministry's Computer Strategy through the provision of technical assistance, the computerization of the institution, and the implementation of an institutional policy to rationalize the organization and use its resources more efficiently.

UNDP **Brazil** supported a project on "National Information System of Cities – SNIC" (2005-2008, US\$ 1.8 million), implemented by the Special Department for Urban Development, Office of the Presidency<sup>33</sup>. Its main objectives included: (i) the development of an integrated information system to enhance the Ministry of Cities' local urban planning and monitoring of public resources capacities, including through the provision of information to citizens and municipalities; and (ii) building partnerships with social actors at the federal, state and local levels to stimulate the production of information and facilitate the empowerment of urban actors for its comprehensive use and maintenance.

In **El Salvador**, UNDP assisted the Department of Immigration with the implementation of a new technological platform and computer system DGMYE (2006-2008, US\$ 2.1 million). This project supported the launch of the initial phase of modernization of immigration control services, which included increased re-

<sup>31</sup> The SREC is Nicaragua's principal national institution for coordination, negotiation and management of resources received through external cooperation.

<sup>32</sup> This project was the continuation of several initiatives supported by UNDP and the IDB to achieve the computerization of the ministry, which was lacking an E-government strategy.

<sup>33</sup> *Secretaria Especial de Desenvolvimento Urbano da Presidência da República (SEDU/PR)*.

search capacities and improvement of public services for national and foreign users.

UNDP **Mexico** is developing the “Strengthening the Institutionalization of Citizen Security (IFIS)” project (2009-2012, US\$ 7,200) as part of the “Information Platform for the Institutionalization of Social Policies (IPRO)” initiative. This joint effort between the Knowledge Management Unit (KMU) of UNDP RCLAC and Mexican Transparency aims to: (i) develop minimum standards and indicators for the institutionalization of citizen security; (ii) improve analytical capacities and promote a diagnostic tools to measure citizen security at the municipal level; and (iii) create an on-line platform to provide useful insight on national and local levels of citizen security, government accountability on security, and cross-cutting data analysis from a Human Rights Based Approach. IFIS’ overall objective is to gather successful regional experiences on citizen security and develop a catalogue of citizen security services taking into account national political diversities.

UNDP **Peru** implemented the “Support to the Modernization of the Ministry of Transport and Communication” project (2003-2009, US\$ 7.1 million), an E-government project focusing on improving services to citizens by: (i) adapting and implementing the ministry’s telecommunications infrastructure; (ii) implementing management and security systems; (iii) acquiring and installing new computers and office equipment; (iv) staff training; and (v) designing new administrative processes.

## Institutional Development of Specific Government Ministries & Agencies

UNDP Offices in Latin America and the Caribbean are engaged in a large portfolio of projects that support institutional development of specific ministries and agencies. For example, several UNDP Country Offices provide support to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, through initiatives such as **Argentina’s** “Institutional Strengthening of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Culture” project (2002-2008, US\$ 7.5 million). This project focused on: (i) developing and

implementing capacity-building and training systems, as well as evaluation mechanisms; (ii) developing an information system; (iii) developing a “Strategic Programme of Policy and Management Analysis”; and (iv) strengthening the National Foreign Service Institute (ISEN) and the Centre of International Economy (CEI). In **Bolivia**, UNDP supported the “Strengthening of Negotiation and Planning Capacities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs” project (2008, US\$ 100,000), focused on enhancing the ministry’s capacities for foreign policy development and implementation.

UNDP **Panama**, in collaboration with the Secretariat for the Economic Integration of Central America (SIECA), implemented the “Support to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs” project (2007-2008, US\$ 780,000). The project assisted the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the implementation of an integrated System of Information to expand its information, communication, research and evaluation capacities. In Peru, UNDP implemented the “Strengthening the Institutional Management of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs” project (2005-2009, 1.4 million). The project focused on improving the ministry’s efficiency and administrative capacities through staff training, enhanced internal management systems, and the provision of modern institutional headquarters in a context of preservation of Lima’s heritage.

In **Argentina**, UNDP also supported the “Institutional Strengthening of the Ministry of Defense” project (2006-2008, US\$ 800,000), which provided the ministry with insights and diagnosis on its structure and processes in order to design a new, functional, organization. This project also assisted in the design and implementation of a democratic agenda as well as the formulation of a Human Rights Policy for the Armed Forces. In addition, UNDP Argentina supported the “Strengthening of the Department of the Interior” project (2006-2009, US\$ 2.1 million), aimed at developing the management capacities of the ministry, and provincial and municipal governments, through the development of projects, studies and capacity-building programmes. Amongst other objectives, this initiative supported provinces with the design of pre-investment projects, within the framework of the programme of modernization of administrative systems, optimization of capacities in public policy management, and design,

evaluation and implementation of provincial policies towards their municipalities.

UNDP **Brazil** has the largest portfolio of projects in this area, including the “Modernization of Planning and Management of the State Government of Amazonas” project (2005-2010, US\$ 2.7 million), executed by the Department of State Planning and Economic Development (SEPLAN)<sup>34</sup>. The project’s main objectives include: (i) enhancing management and public administration capacities; (ii) improving planning, monitoring and evaluation of public policies; (iii) facilitating citizens’ access to public information in the Amazonas State; (iv) strengthening the SEAD; and (v) operationalizing the State Coordination Unit<sup>35</sup>, with a view to improve coordination, implementation and project management. A second area of support included the “Integrated Management for the Implementation of National Projects” initiative (2000-2009, US\$ 8.7 million), executed by the Brazilian Cooperation Agency (ABC)<sup>36</sup>. This initiative focused on: (i) strengthening administrative and financial management capacities within the ABC’s General Coordination Unit for Project Implementation<sup>37</sup>; (ii) incorporating technical management mechanisms into projects under national implementation; and (iii) incorporating national implementation mechanisms into ABC’s Institutional Reconfiguration Plan. UNDP also supported the “Modernization and Institutional Strengthening of the Real Estate Assets Commission” project (2004-2009, US\$ 3.8 million), executed by the Real Estate Assets Commission (CVM)<sup>38</sup>. This project aimed to: (i) improve the regulatory legal framework of the capital market; (ii) enhance the CVM’s competitiveness and knowledge of comparative legislation in relevant markets; and (iii) improve procedures for market transparency.

In the **Dominican Republic**, UNDP supported the institutional strengthening of the Social Security Office – ADESS (2005-2008, US\$ 550,000), through the improvement of its operations, its capacity to respond to beneficiaries’ demands, as well as the management of

new social benefits. UNDP also supported the “Strengthening of the Registry Office” project (2007-2008, US\$ 150,000), and assisted the Central Electoral Board with the process of birth certificate delivery. The programme targeted children and teenagers, identified through public school census. Support to the achievement of the MDGs was also provided through the “Strengthening of the Social Welfare Cabinet (GASO)” project (2004-2008, US\$ 730,000). This project focused on the institutional strengthening of the GASO, and capacity-building for the design, monitoring and evaluation of social policies and programmes.

In **Mexico**, SIGOB was first developed for the Office of the Chief of Government, where its positive results aroused the interest of other partners and policy-makers. As a result, the modules and products were adapted to develop the capacities of decentralized institutions such as the Water System of Mexico City (2008, US\$ 197,000), for which two modules were implemented: (i) the System of Documentary Transparency (TRANSDOC); and (ii) the System of Goal Programming and Results-based Management of the Water System in Mexico City. Key outputs from the implementation of SIGOB modules include the enhanced transparency and efficiency of the services provided through technological innovations. The 2009 results confirmed that SIGOB has the flexibility to fulfil the needs and requirements of local counterparts, and can be replicated within different levels of government.

UNDP **Paraguay** supported the “Land Registry Programme” (2007-2008, US\$ 1.7 million), which promoted territorial planning and the efficient use of property tax. The programme focused on improving the management of rural lands, contributed to the update and maintenance of the land registry, and improved legal security of title deeds.

UNDP **Peru** has implemented a substantial number of institutional development projects, such as the “Support to the Modernisation and Provision of Health Services” project (2007-2009, US\$ 20 million) with the Ministry of Health – including implementation in rural hospitals; the “Support to the Implementation and Modernization of the Ministry of Labour” (2004-2009, US\$ 1.5 million); the “Institutional Modernization of the Ministry of Production” project (2002-2009, US\$

<sup>34</sup> *Secretaria de Estado de Planejamento E Desenvolvimento Econômico*.

<sup>35</sup> *Unidade de Coordenação Estadual (UCE)*.

<sup>36</sup> *Agência Brasileira de Cooperação (ABC)*.

<sup>37</sup> *Coordenação Geral de Administração de Projetos (CGAP)*.

<sup>38</sup> *Comissão de Valores Mobiliários (CVM)*.

400,000), focusing on the development of ministry's technical and administrative capacity; and the "Implementation of the Law of Rationalization of the Ministry of Education" project (2008-2009), based on the requirements of the new organic law on judicial power. The latter operated through the provision of technical and methodological assistance within the framework of the decentralization and modernisation of the Ministry of Education's institutional management. In addition, UNDP Peru is currently implementing the "Support to the Capacities of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces" project (2008-2010).

In **Venezuela**, UNDP supported the "Institutional Strengthening of the National Institute of Statistics" project (2004-2008, US\$ 230,000), in order to assist it in the fulfilment of the roles and responsibilities legally assigned to it.

## Access to Information

No project information available at this time.

## Streamlining Regulations & Procedures

No project information available at this time.

## Gender & Public Administration

In the **Dominican Republic**, UNDP implemented the "Political Parties, Policy-making and Gender at the

Municipal Level" sub-regional project (2007, US\$ 59,000), which focused on integrating gender mainstreaming in political parties and local policy-making. UNDP Peru supported the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Social Development – MIMDES (2003-2009, US\$ 550,000), through the development of institutional and staff capacities to create a transparent and efficient institution oriented toward equity and social inclusion.

UNDP **Mexico** currently supports the "Strengthening Capacities for the Implementation of National Legislation regarding Gender Equality and Non-Violence Against Women" project (2008-2012, US\$ 656,600). Its main objective is to promote the institutional implementation and legal harmonization of international instruments for advancing gender equality and non-violence against women, in national and local jurisprudence. At the state level, the focus has been on strengthening institutional capacities of local women's institutions, the legislative branch and NGOs. Key outputs include 8 Guidance Notes on Gender reflecting the particularities of each state, and providing stakeholders with the basis to: i) incorporate gender-based approaches to the development of public policies, specially health and education; (ii) introduce a gender perspective to public policies and media campaigns; and (iii) promote the harmonization of the national gender legal framework. It has also provided a useful local platform for the achievement of MDG 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women. With an initial contribution from the Gender Thematic Trust Fund (GTTF), UNDP has successfully managed to mobilize funds in order to work with counterparts such as the National Institute of Women, the Health and Education Ministries and the Ministry of Interior at the federal level. It has also expanded its agenda to include the states of Zacatecas, Guerrero, Estado de Mexico and Chiapas, with the states of Quintana Roo and Campeche recently expressing interest in participating.

# CONCLUSION

UNDP has been and continues to be very active in the areas of public administration and local governance reform in Latin America and the Caribbean, with a considerable number and range of projects across the region's countries. Although the experiences in the region are diverse, substantial progress in State reform has been made over the past three decades.

Demand has been especially strong in the area of local governance, reflecting the changing nature of the state across the region. UNDP's portfolio of local governance projects is both large and varied, involving a wide array of initiatives connected with enhancing systems and practices of local governance.

Decentralization stands high on the policy agenda in many Latin American countries. To sustain the momentum in countries such as Bolivia, Colombia, Panama, Peru and Trinidad and Tobago, UNDP is supporting the respective national institutions to roll out or strengthen their ongoing decentralization processes. Promoting equitable regional and polycentric development is another priority in Latin America and the Caribbean, a region that historically suffers from significant territorial disparities. In response to this need, UNDP implements a number of projects in support of regionalization processes, using, for example territorial development as an entry point for fostering pro-poor policies, inclusive development and strengthening local services delivery. In Colombia, the local governance programme is tailored to support the conflict transformation processes.

UNDP has also maintained a high profile in more traditional areas of public administration reform. These include system-wide initiatives involving reform of the civil service, financial reform and specialized projects in specific ministries across the region. In contrast, UNDP has been less active in the areas of accountability, transparency and integrity systems, although there does seem to be a role which UNDP could play in this field given its global experience. As a pioneer in new areas of public administration reform, including E-governance and aid effectiveness, UNDP's investment in these emerging areas has increased in recent years.

Overall, UNDP can be seen to be a major player in public administration and local governance reform in Latin America and the Caribbean and appears set to maintain this role as there is still a large appetite in the region for such reforms and continued demand for expert services in this area.





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