

A BETTER SOUTH AFRICA

A BETTER AFRICA

A BETTER WORLD

# JOINT EVALUATION OF THE ROLE AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IN THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



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# FOREWORD

This evaluation of the role and contribution of the United Nations system to the Republic of South Africa was conducted between August 2008 and March 2009 by an independent, external team of South African and international evaluation specialists.

The report is the outcome of a new approach to evaluation in the United Nations based on partnership between a national government and the UN Evaluation Group. It is an attempt to address the call in the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review for nationally led evaluations and capacity development in evaluation.

The evaluation, which was initiated by the Government of South Africa, responds to the challenge articulated in the 2005 World Summit Outcome document to *strengthen the United Nations with a view to enhancing its authority and efficiency, as well as its capacity to address effectively...the full range of challenges of our time*.<sup>i</sup> In the document, UN Member States also recognize ongoing reform measures carried out by the Secretary-General to *strengthen accountability and oversight, improve management performance and transparency and reinforce ethical conduct*.<sup>ii</sup>

The scope of the evaluation went beyond the UN system's traditional development assistance to South Africa. At the Government's suggestion, it included UN system activities that supported the country's three-tiered strategic foreign policy priorities: working for a better South Africa, a better Africa and a better world. The evaluation eventually addressed the following dimensions:

- Operational activities for development in South Africa (specifically those covered by the UN Development Assistance Framework and incorporated in the Common Country Programme Action Plan)
- Environment (notably South Africa's contribution to the follow-up of UN conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification)
- Peace and security (including UN support to areas such as crime and drug control in South Africa and in the region as well as South Africa's contribution to peacekeeping and peace-building)
- Humanitarian assistance (including disaster risk mitigation and disaster preparedness in South Africa and in Africa, along with South Africa's response to humanitarian crises in Africa).

The overarching purpose of this joint evaluation was to provide evidence and analysis that will enable decision-makers in South Africa and the UN system to enhance the role and contribution of the United Nations to support South African policies and strategies for a better South Africa, a better Africa and a better world. The evaluation therefore also had a forward-looking focus.

The evaluation is unique for a number of reasons. The Government of South Africa expressed the will to develop a policy dialogue to strengthen its partnership with the UN based on evaluative evidence. Although the evaluation was clearly initiated and driven by the Government of South Africa, it was managed jointly with the UN Evaluation Group, thus reinforcing the principle of partnership, ownership and mutual accountability.

For the UN system, this was the first time that the UN system as a whole has been jointly evaluated at the country level, rather than on an agency by agency basis. It was, therefore, an

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i. UN document A/RES/60/1, para. 146.

ii. 2 Ibid., para. 161a.

ambitious undertaking, covering a myriad of operational activities of UN agencies, funds and programmes over an extended period of time (1994-2008) and over four broad thematic areas. The idea behind the long time frame was to capture the response capacity of the UN system to the changing needs faced by the country since its liberation from apartheid. For the Government of South Africa, it was also the first time to embark on an evaluation of this nature. Funding of the joint exercise was shared equally by the two parties.

Building trust and sharing the will to improve based on lessons from past experience were essential aspects of the exercise. All important decisions were made by consensus. Critical moments of the joint exercise were the drafting of the framework terms of reference; the identification and selection of evaluation team members; the feedback provided to the first inception report; the organization of a stakeholder workshop in South Africa to share and validate preliminary findings of the evaluations; and, finally, the quality assurance process, which involved the participation of an external advisory panel and a thorough check for factual inaccuracies, omissions or errors of interpretation that might have changed the evaluation findings and conclusions presented in the first draft report. Feedback from over 25 UN agencies, funds and programmes was shared with the evaluation team. The South African Government, through its International Relations, Peace and Security Director-Generals' Forum and a workshop in which 26 Government departments participated, also provided its feedback to the evaluation team.

The evaluation demonstrated the need for champions, and there was clear leadership on both sides of the partnership. On the Government side, it established its own management structure, which was chaired by the Department of Foreign Affairs, now called Department of International Relations and Cooperation, and included key departments, i.e. the Presidency, Statistics South Africa, the Department of Public Service and Administration,

the Public Service Commission and the National Treasury; on the side of the UN Evaluation Group, it included a task force led by UNICEF, FAO and UNDP. The UN Country Team in South Africa and the regional UN team in Johannesburg collaborated with the evaluation team.

Key to the success of the joint evaluation was the fact that it was conducted by a highly competent and independent evaluation team led by a former Auditor General of South Africa, Mr. Shauket Fakie, supported by a South African and an international deputy team leaders. All members of the team are thematic experts who understand well the complex institutional setting, in addition to the challenges and opportunities faced by South Africa in each thematic area. An important feature of the evaluation team was its mix of South African and international leadership as well as thematic experts.

The team was completely independent and had no conflict of interest with the UN system or with the South African Government. They were able to critically address sensitive issues concerning the relationship between the Government of South Africa and the United Nations in an objective and impartial manner. The Joint Evaluation Management Group, comprising evaluation specialists from South Africa and the UN Evaluation Group, was also independent from line management functions on either side. A stakeholder workshop on emerging findings, conclusions and recommendations was another mechanism used to ensure the objectivity of the exercise, offering a platform for a wide range of viewpoints and interests. This was a critical event for the validation of the evaluation's outcomes.

We hope the evaluation will contribute to enhancing the accountability of the UN system in South Africa. It has identified areas in which the partnership could be improved and makes recommendations to both parties.

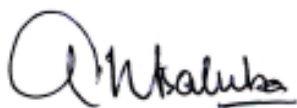
The main challenge for the evaluation will be its use and the management response expected from both the Government of South Africa and the UN system. The conclusions and recommenda-

tions that emanate from the evaluation can feed a policy dialogue within the Government on how to better use its partnership with the UN. It could also trigger a dialogue among the UN Country Team and the regional UN directors on how to better respond to the challenges and needs of South Africa. In addition, it could also contribute to the ongoing UN reform process from a bottom-up perspective, pointing out necessary adjustments in the institutional set-up in responding to the needs of an upper middle-income country such as South Africa, faces significant challenges in the fields of development, environment, humanitarian assistance and peace and security.

Finally, as the evaluation report points out, operating in an upper middle-income country that both receives and provides international cooperation is different from working in lower-income countries. The UN system has wide experience in working with middle-income countries; however, it has been difficult for UN agencies to fully draw upon this existing experience to establish working relations that

take into consideration the historical, political, economic and cultural specificities of South Africa as a middle-income country. A common understanding was needed to fully grasp the challenges and complexities of South Africa and the UN system in this context.

We would like to thank all those who have contributed to this evaluation. First and foremost, sincere appreciation is extended to the evaluation team, Mr. Shauket Fakie (team leader), Mr. Erik Lyby and Mr. Iraj Abedian (deputy team leaders) and the thematic specialists, Ms. Angela Bester (development), Mr. Fred Kruger (environment), Mr. Pieter du Plessis (peace and security) and Mr. Peter Wiles and Mr. Greg Moran (humanitarian assistance). But the preparation and management of the exercise by Mr. Henri Raubenheimer and Mr. Sheldon Moulton, on the South African side, and Mr. Oscar Garcia (UNDP), Mr. Lucien Back (UNICEF) and Mr. Carlo Carugi (FAO) were also crucial to the success of the exercise, as was the support provided by all members of the Joint Evaluation Management Group.



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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress
APSTAR	Applied Population Sciences Training and Research
AsgiSA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
CBLG	Capacity-Building for Local Governance
CCAP	Common Country Action Plan
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
ECD	Early childhood development
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
EMC	Emergency Management Committee
EPWP	Expanded Public Works Programme
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
G-8	Group of Eight (Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russian Federation, United Kingdom and the United States of America)
G-20	The Group of Twenty Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors (19 of the world's largest national economies plus the European Union)
G-77	Group of 77 (an intergovernmental organization of developing states in the United Nations)
GDP	Gross domestic product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoSA	Government of South Africa
ICDM	Intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Management
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IOM	International Organization for Migration
ISRD	Integrated Sustainable Rural Development
ISRDP	Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Programme
JIPSA	Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition
JEMG	Joint Evaluation Management Group
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCPC	National Cleaner Production Centre
NDMC	National Disaster Management Centre
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NFSD	National Framework for Sustainable Development
NGO	Non-governmental organization

NMDC	National Disaster Management Centre
NSNP	National School Nutrition Programme
OCHA	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	Official development assistance
OHCHR	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
PED	Population, environment and development
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SACI	South Africa Capacity Initiative
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SAMDI	South Africa Management Development Institute
SAPSD	South African Protection Service Detachment
TB	Tuberculosis
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UN DESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR	Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization
WMO	World Meteorological Organization
ZAR	South African rand (national currency)

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## A JOINT EVALUATION

This evaluation was carried out by an independent team of consultants on behalf of the Government of the Republic of South Africa and the United Nations Evaluation Group. Its objective was to assess the relevance and effectiveness of cooperation between South Africa and the UN system within the three-tier strategic policy priorities of the country: a better South Africa, a better Africa, and a better world. Thematic evaluations were conducted in four mutually agreed-upon areas – development, peace and security, the environment and humanitarian assistance – from which conclusions were drawn. In addition, three cross-cutting issues were assessed, namely gender equality, HIV&AIDS, and human rights and democracy.

The evaluation was carried out between September 2008 and March 2009. An evaluation report was prepared for each of the focus areas, outlining the specific analyses undertaken, findings and recommendations. This report is a synthesis of those four studies.

While South Africa was generally excluded from the UN system during the era of apartheid, the introduction of democracy in 1994 enabled the country to enter the international arena as an important political and economic contributor to UN bodies and the Non-Aligned Movement. South Africa also became active regionally, in the African Union and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). UN specialized agencies, funds and programmes could now offer assistance to the new government formed by the African National Congress (ANC). However, both sides had to assume new and unfamiliar roles: The ANC, once a liberation movement, was now a government with an ambitious agenda; and the UN, once a political supporter and platform was now a development

partner to a middle-income country that was, in many ways, different from other African states in which the UN was working. This proved to be a challenge for both sides.

The role and contribution of the UN system in South Africa subsequently came into question, and the government and the UN Country Team found that the time was right to enter a new phase that sought a larger vision for the UN in South Africa. The nature, strength and weaknesses of the UN-Government of South Africa relationship at this strategic juncture therefore became the subject of investigation.

## FINDINGS

### A BETTER WORLD

South Africa plays an important role in the UN as a leader in international debates and decisions, not least of which concern the African continent. In addition to serving of late on the UN Security Council, the country makes important financial contributions to UN funds and programmes, including the Central Emergency Response Fund, and sits on a number of expert panels. As a consequence of being a middle-income country, South Africa, like other major economies, engages in such UN agencies and bodies as the World Trade Organization, the UN Conference on Trade and Development, the International Telecommunications Union, the World Meteorological Organization, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change, the Commission on Sustainable Development, and the International Atomic Energy Agency. This is in contrast to most other African countries, which tend to relate more to UN agencies concerned with development or humanitarian affairs. In addition to being a member of the Group of 77, the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group in the UN General Assembly,

South Africa is also a member of the Group of 20, which, since November 2008, has been considering responses to the global financial crisis at the level of heads of state and/or government, thereby underscoring its place as an important player not only in Africa but in the world. In these areas, South Africa, through the UN system, is an important provider of global public goods.

### **A BETTER AFRICA**

The two-way nature of the UN-South Africa partnership manifests itself clearly at the regional level. It was through regional channels that the UN system provided political support to the country during the pre-1994 liberation struggle and capacity-building thereafter. Today, South Africa assists the UN in humanitarian relief through funding and serves as a regional hub and a major supplier of food for the World Food Programme (WFP). South Africa has been successful in its involvement in mediating the crises in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and has directly supported UN peacekeeping efforts. South Africa also plays a dominant role in SADC, based on its interest in supporting stability and development in the subregion. It has funded a number of initiatives in SADC countries aimed at strengthening their positions: For example, it worked with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and WFP in relation to food security and capacity-building in several sectors, and with the UN Environment Programme and the UN Human Settlements Programme on issues such as sustainable land-use planning and water management to reduce vulnerability and prepare for disasters in the region. Government officials in South Africa are aware that the country's economic strength may be viewed as arrogance by its neighbours; therefore they try to avoid sensitive situations in which South Africa dominates. In the same context, the government often asks UN agencies in South Africa to assume the role of a neutral convenor of conferences, facilitator of initiatives, or catalyst, in relation to SADC, thereby providing an equal platform for participating countries. Hence, in Africa it is in the national interest of South Africa to be a key provider of regional public goods.

### **A BETTER SOUTH AFRICA**

Within the borders of South Africa itself, the relationship is predominantly one in which the UN provides assistance to the country rather than the other way around. Such assistance is primarily in the field of development, guided by the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Development assistance, including environmental management, is typically funded through official development assistance (ODA), while other areas of cooperation are funded by the Government of South Africa. UN agencies assist South Africa through their individual mandates and capacities, and try to engage in strategic policy debate as they do in many other countries. They tend to find South Africa difficult to work with in that regard, due to the lack of access to high-level officials who can take strategic decisions. Strategic debate in the country therefore tends to be weak, if not absent altogether.

Many cases of missed opportunities where the UN and South Africa could have benefited from closer collaboration were mentioned by officials met during this evaluation. The relationship at the country level seems to suffer from mutual lack of knowledge and confidence, and sometimes contradictory ways of working. The cluster system developed through UNDAF has not resolved this, and opinions on the usefulness of UNDAF vary.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the four thematic evaluations.

### **RELEVANCE**

A synthesis summary across the four focus areas shows that:

- Almost all the interventions evaluated were in line with national needs and strategic government priorities as outlined in Vision 2014.
- The interventions were also consistent with UN organization mandates and international standards.

- UN capacity-building activities addressed real gaps and helped introduce new approaches.
- However, some major issues were addressed only by small projects with limited impact; in such cases, the UN response did not meet expressed national needs, which called for a more comprehensive response.
- These major needs persist in most areas.

The UNDAF and its broad programmatic priorities are aligned with the government's strategic priorities in Vision 2014 as well as with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This relevance does not, however, always permeate to the level of detailed programming due to the absence of real dialogue between the UN agencies and their counterparts in government. The factors that contribute to poor communication include a level of mistrust on the part of some government officials about assistance offered by the UN and a lack of openness to external advice.

The UN sometimes sends mixed messages about ownership of the UNDAF and programmes within it. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, which South Africa was actively involved in, refers to country ownership of the UNDAF. But on a practical level, it has been the UN that is the primary driver of UNDAF content in South Africa. The relevance of the UNDAF as the main mechanism of UN-South Africa cooperation can therefore be called into question, for several reasons:

- The UNDAF has not been able to ensure high-level communication and strategic debate between the government and UN clusters.
- It is limited to development cooperation and does not cover many other fields of UN activity, such as those assessed for this evaluation.
- Major UN-implemented programmes are outside the UNDAF, such as those funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), by far the largest investments going through the UN system in South Africa.

- As only a 'framework', UN agencies along with government departments do not always feel bound by it or by the Common Country Action Plan, and often develop activities that are not included within them.

To be relevant in South Africa requires a more individually tailored and comprehensive response to the country's international position and national interests, which takes into account South Africa's triple role as a provider of South-South assistance to other developing countries, financial contributor to the UN system and a recipient of ODA on the international scene. Some of the looming international issues that South Africa can be expected to deal with in the future include climate change, the financial crisis, food insecurity and international trade. The UN system plays a significant role in many of these areas.

## EFFECTIVENESS

The effectiveness of cooperation between the UN and South Africa was deemed fairly positive overall. Many activities were found to be *highly effective* in reaching their objectives, the majority were *effective*, and a smaller number were *less than effective*.

A number of constraints in terms of effectiveness have also been highlighted. As mentioned previously, strategic dialogue between the UN and the government has generally not been effective, and access to government officials at higher levels has proved difficult. Such officials have limited awareness of UN mandates and capabilities. The fact that most activities were assessed as being effective is more due to the extraordinary efforts by determined individuals within the government, civil society and the UN system than to an enabling partnership framework.

**The United Nations system.** Constraints on the effectiveness of the UN system arising from poor understanding of the basic structure of the South African government in accordance with the Constitution is a recurring theme throughout the focus area evaluation reports. UN interventions cannot be fully effective without a good understanding of relations within the government, and



without being able to integrate proposed interventions into government systems for budgeting, planning, and monitoring and evaluation.

It is widely recognized that not all UN experience is appropriate to middle-income countries such as South Africa (One size does not fit all). Cooperation is sometimes hampered on both sides by competition among UN agencies, and by lack of communication among government departments. Administrative procedures of both the government and the UN are slow and constrain effective cooperation. UN agencies have administrative requirements that are different from those of the government and not fully in line with Paris Declaration Principles.

Whereas the UN Country Team is small, the UN system as such is large and complex. It is understandable that many people outside the system find it difficult to fully understand its normative, operational and analytical capacities. The UN Country Team could do more to 'market' itself to South Africa – the government, the private sector, civil society and institutions of learning – to make itself better known and thereby contribute to stronger partnerships and a higher degree of effectiveness.

Fundamental questions have been raised during the evaluation. Does the UN system at the country level have the required capacity to engage with the government on strategic matters? Will the UN system at the country level be able to effectively support South Africa in its engagement in wider international issues where the country has a natural role to play? Is the UN system at the country level able to effectively support the government in implementing UN norms, conventions and resolutions, not least in the area of human rights? Does the impact of small and scattered operational activities justify the cost and time invested in them? And, if not, should the UN engage at all in operational activities in a country such as South Africa?

None of these questions can be answered fully in the affirmative, and two basic options emerge. One is to conclude that the potential value-added

is insufficient justification for keeping a permanent country presence, since it is unlikely that such value-added will substantially improve. If this option were to be chosen, UN country offices would gradually be closed down, and future contacts would be carried out directly with UN headquarters and regional offices.

The other option is to say that the potential contribution of the UN system in South Africa remains important, but essential improvements are necessary for it to be realized. For this to happen, the UN must establish itself as a body that can effectively engage with the government, civil society and research institutions at a strategic level, based on a better understanding of South Africa as a middle-income country. This would involve more realistic priority-setting. It would also move beyond small joint operational activities and evolve into a broader, long-term partnership process. Major institutional steps forward in the implementation of UN reforms are fundamental if these changes are to occur.

The independent evaluation team concludes that the second option deserves to be given a chance. The studies overall show that UN activities in the country are highly relevant, and the positive statements from respondents are many.

**The Government of South Africa.** The constraints on effectiveness on the government side include continuous leadership changes at the administrative and technical levels, lack of continuity and institutional memory, and weak knowledge management, which often makes for poor responses to opportunities and slow progress. South African government departments have significant shortages in numbers of skilled staff. This impacts the ability of departments to absorb assistance and skills transfer. It also puts a strain on the small number of people who are available to work with the UN.

Structures and processes can undermine effectiveness. Bureaucracy also slows down decision-making and implementation. Like the UN cluster system that has not been functioning fully, the government experiences its own challenges within

government clusters. Little attention is given to managing logical synergies among various focus areas, such as peacekeeping, development, defence reform, justice reform, police reform, human rights, humanitarian assistance, social development and the environment.

Technical entities and officials responsible for implementation in government departments are often not sufficiently knowledgeable of the UN system to allow them to realize the opportunities that it presents. Moreover, focal points in the provincial sphere of government often appear to be marginalized or weak. Lack of interdepartmental coordination is also a constraining factor.

Government entities sometimes express antagonism to the possibility that expertise from somewhere else can contribute to identifying and solving problems in South Africa, or within the domestic organization concerned.

In summary, the evaluation has produced evidence on the UN-South Africa partnership as follows:

- **Lack of a comprehensive framework for Government of South Africa-UN cooperation.** South Africa engages with the UN system in a number of ways that are not reflected in the UNDAF. The UN development framework is basically limited to ODA-funded activities at the country level, although some major ODA-funded activities are not included in the UNDAF. The whole range of activities pertaining to the provision of regional and global public goods, to which South Africa actively contributes, are not captured in the UNDAF.
- **Ineffective institutionalization of partnerships.** Within the current UNDAF and Common Country Action Plan, the rules of engagement are not clear to all of those government officials involved in their implementation. The government has not provided the necessary leadership to make the cluster system effective.
- **Limited understanding of roles and mandates.** Some government officials involved in the implementation of programmes do not have

a solid understanding of the UN system and how it works. Conversely, there is a strong sense from government officials that international UN staff do not always fully understand the complexities and nuances of working in the South African political environment.

- **Coordination challenges.** The various UN agencies and government departments have different planning and budgeting time frames and different lines of accountability. On neither side is there a 'single entry point' to the system (be it UN or government). The UN Resident Coordinator should perform that function, but for some time this post has been filled by various agency heads acting as Resident Coordinators. On the government side, the roles of the National Treasury and the Department of Foreign Affairs are not always clear to UN officials.
- **Inability to attract national staff.** It is a challenge for the UN to attract and retain national staff. The UN has to compete with the South African public sector and other development partners who may offer more attractive career opportunities.
- **Mixed success in partnering with civil society and non-governmental organizations.** The UN system appears to have developed good partnerships with research and academic institutions in various fields. Partnerships with South African non-governmental organizations (NGOs), however, do not appear to be strong.

## THE POTENTIAL OF THE UN IN SOUTH AFRICA

The UN system has long experience in working with middle-income countries, especially in Latin America and Asia, and recognizes the huge structural differences that exist between middle- and low-income countries, and well as among middle-income countries themselves. However, it has been difficult for UN agencies to fully draw upon this existing experience to establish working relations with South Africa that take into consideration the historical, geographic, political, economic and cultural specificities of

the country. Instead, emphasis has been given to development cooperation for which the UNDAF has been jointly prepared. In this context, the UN is often seen as just 'another donor', or as a service provider, thereby narrowing the perception to a one-way relationship rather than one in which both sides can make important contributions to the other.

The UNDP has repeatedly recognized that middle-income countries play an important role in providing global public goods such as peace-building, public health, financial stability, drug-trafficking interdiction, trans-border crime control and measures to avert climate change. Examples of UN cooperation with developing middle-income countries are plentiful, and include the following examples:

- Keeping constituencies for development strong in international fora such as meetings of the G-20, by giving a voice to the 150 or so countries that are not members of this elite group
- Helping middle-income countries access sources of support such as the GEF, the Clean Development Mechanism, and other funds to develop specific global public goods
- Assisting developing countries in preparing for negotiating sessions in the run-up to the Copenhagen Climate Conference in December 2009 by providing in-depth analyses and organizing preparatory sessions
- Facilitating experience-sharing between developing middle-income and low-income countries in the context of South-South cooperation.

The UN reform process is long overdue as a consequence of resistance by some Member States and UN bodies, for political, economic and other reasons. The continued relevance of the UN as a forum for international negotiations in a multi-polar world will depend on its ability to adapt to changed conditions. Although contested, the 2005 'Delivering as One' report

was a bold step forward towards much needed UN reforms. One size does not fit all, and South Africa should develop its own model for cooperation with the UN system. There is no need to wait for an intergovernmental mandate to embark on such a process that could be helpful to the UN as well as to South Africa. The process will, by necessity, require strong involvement by UN headquarters, and care should be taken to ensure not only transparency but also pluralism and flexibility that will facilitate access by the Government of South Africa to the expertise of non-resident UN agencies working outside UNDAF. In recognition of South Africa as a middle-income country that contributes as much to the UN as it receives, the two-way nature of the relationship would perhaps be better captured under the heading 'Delivering and Receiving as One', thereby underscoring the need for mutual streamlining of procedures.

There are four 'ones' at the country level in the 'Delivering as One' approach: one programme, one budgetary framework and fund, one leader, and one office. Of these four, the most urgent one to be addressed would be 'one leader'. The unsatisfactory situation with regard to UN Country Team management has long been a major obstacle to UN-Government of South Africa cooperation and needs immediate attention.

In conclusion, the constraints and challenges outlined in this report could be mitigated through a determined transformation of the UN presence in South Africa towards a more cohesive, coordinated and cooperative model suited to South African conditions, fully recognizing its middle-income status and its role in the provision of regional and global public goods.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the overall conclusion by this evaluation that South Africa can benefit substantially from close cooperation with the UN system; that South Africa is an important contributor to UN mandates regionally and globally; that the potential of



government-UN cooperation is currently not fully realized; and that the government-UN relationship should be located within the totality of South Africa's interests in the provision of public goods at home, in the region, and in the world, rather than be limited to development cooperation.

The recommendations should be considered in the context of enormous global challenges, including the financial crisis, climate change and threats to food security, which might impel the UN to review its modalities for country operations, and the Government of South Africa to review its foreign relations to counter the negative impact of these challenges. In this light, the recommendations are modest and doable. General elections are imminent in South Africa, which will bring about changes in executive as well as senior officials, and 2009 may indeed offer an opportune juncture to review government expectations and priorities in relation to its partnership with the UN system.

### **GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA – CREATING A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC GOODS AT HOME, IN AFRICA, AND IN THE WORLD**

- 1. Develop a comprehensive cooperation framework.** It is recommended that a strategic planning process be initiated jointly by the Department of Foreign Affairs and the National Treasury with the participation of all other government departments that interact with the UN system. The goal would be the creation of a flexible, permanent structure that will effectively cover the range of international relations related to the provision of national,<sup>1</sup> regional and global public goods and reflect South Africa's position as a middle-income country. Contributors to this new structure would include a number of government departments with regional or international outreach, South African embassies abroad, academic institutions that contribute to the

body of global scientific knowledge, private sector corporations that provide new technologies, as well as UN and other development partners.

The purpose of the cooperation framework would be to ensure coherency and systematic monitoring of overall South African engagement. This framework should take into full consideration an approach to manage regional interventions in consultation with structures such as SADC, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Union, along with individual country representatives. The new cooperation framework should be closely aligned with South Africa's Medium-Term Expenditure Framework and medium-term programmes of national departments; it should also be integrated with the objectives of the National Framework for Sustainable Development. The UN's partnership with civil society, especially non-governmental organizations, should be strengthened through a planned programme that moves beyond one-off events to building the capacity of NGOs as partners in development. The ways in which cross-cutting issues and synergies with related initiatives will be managed should be clearly defined.

### **THE UN AND THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA – MOVING TOWARDS A REAL PARTNERSHIP**

- 2. Enter into a joint strategic planning process.** It is recommended that, within the philosophy of the framework described above, the government (in national, provincial and local spheres) and the UN system (at the local, regional and headquarters levels) enter together into a strategic planning process. Assistance would be provided by external consultants to determine the scope and rules of engagement governing future cooperation that would extend beyond the UNDAF

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1. Provision of national public goods is the task of most government departments at central and decentralized levels. The present context only includes national public goods where international relations are involved, through external funding or other collaboration, such as ODA. Commercial activities by the private sector are not included.

concept. The government should define a sound and comprehensive policy and process to manage UN assistance within the broader framework of international cooperation to South Africa and the region. The process should produce clear guidelines for roles and responsibilities that are spelled out in a Memorandum of Understanding that will keep parties mutually accountable.

### **GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA - TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE UN'S POTENTIAL AND CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCTIVE TO COLLABORATION**

- 3. Review the roles of key government departments in relation to the UN.** It is recommended that the current roles and responsibilities of the National Treasury and Department of Foreign Affairs as key contact points for the UN be reviewed. While the Department of Foreign Affairs is mandated as the first point of entry for all foreign engagements, and the National Treasury deals with inward ODA flows, the complex set of relationships between the government and the UN requires interaction at strategic as well as technical levels with many government departments. As the evaluation demonstrates, this interaction does not function in ways that facilitate the full utilization of mutual resources. It is therefore recommended that clearer and more flexible mechanisms be developed.
- 4. Improve coordination.** It is recommended that government departments take the initiative to improve their coordination with UN agencies through bi-annual round-table discussions in which priorities and programmes can be reviewed. Such discussions could also serve to deepen mutual understanding of each party's mandate. Furthermore, it is recommended that the government take steps to improve the knowledge and skills of international relations focal points in departments regarding the UN system. This could be accomplished by securing the assistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs, the

National Treasury and the UN to design a programme to build such capacities. The government should demonstrate ownership of the expanded UN-government cooperation framework by ensuring that consultations are not relegated to officials who lack the mandate and skills to participate in such consultations, possibly under the auspices of the Consultative Forum on International Relations, an inter-governmental structure comprising senior officials. The current system of focal points should be evaluated and structured to become more effective, especially to improve the integration between the official focal points in the international relations entities and the technical entities within and outside of departments responsible for implementation.

### **THE UN – STREAMLINING THE UN COUNTRY TEAM TO ADD VALUE**

- 5. Adapt the UN Country Team to the specific needs of South Africa.** It is recommended that the UN at country and headquarters levels take steps to develop a unique model of 'Delivering and Receiving as One' for South Africa, taking into account its status as a middle-income country and aiming to support national priorities in a comprehensive manner. For inspiration, it is recommended that the UN Country Team and government representatives monitor the experience of the 'One UN' pilot programme as it unfolds, possibly including a joint visit to some of the pilot countries, as well as through the forthcoming evaluation.
- 6. Create one budgetary framework.** It is recommended that the UN Country Team, in collaboration with the UN Secretariat and agency headquarters, review the option for integrating budgets at the country level. It is further recommended to encourage bilateral development partners, in the spirit of the Paris Declaration, to avail funds to the UN Country Team rather than earmarking them for specific projects implemented by agencies. This process can be painful for some agencies

and care should be taken not to negatively impact the agencies' ability to make use of their comparative advantages.

**7. Strengthen UN leadership at the country level, focusing on the Resident Coordinator.**

It is recommended that the UN strengthen its leadership in South Africa in order to embark on strategic interaction with the government and South African civil society, drawing on the full register of UN capacity, while helping to channel South African expertise to the UN. This will require a streamlining of the UN Country Team's mode of operations. It is recommended that the Resident Coordinator become the 'chief executive officer' of the system at the country level, with a separate office, instead of serving the dual role as Resident Coordinator and head of agency simultaneously. In accordance with the practice in an increasing number of countries, it is recommended that the UNDP country office be led by a country director. The Resident Coordinator should be endowed with executive powers for the whole system, including the budget. He/she should be the central contact point for the Government of South Africa, have easy access to senior levels of government, and ensure that the UN system always speaks with one voice. He/she should be supported by two senior deputies, namely a strategic development manager responsible for connecting the mandates and capacities of the UN with relevant government departments, and a public diplomacy manager, responsible for UN external relations in South Africa (with the government, academia and civil society). Care should be exercised to ensure the correct balance of competencies in the recruitment of the three officials. Recruitment should be a joint process, and applicants from outside the UN system, including South African nationals, should be encouraged to apply. To the extent that the setting up of the new Resident Coordinator's Office will require additional funding, the UN and the Government of South Africa should share the responsibility to ensure that such funding

will be made available for three years on an experimental basis.

**8. Add value.** The UN should focus on high-end value-added activities that generate knowledge and information for policies and programmes: activities where it has strength, such as providing technical assistance for monitoring and evaluating areas that cut across government departments (for example, human rights, gender equality, social protection and employment creation); and activities that promote South-South dialogue. The partnership should formulate and implement clear and effective strategies for all the sectors reviewed in this report, and create a governance arrangement that assures progressive adaptation and flexibility in the face of emerging knowledge and constraints. Small projects that are demanding in terms of time and resources and not necessarily suitable for cumbersome UN procedures should only be approved when particularly strong cases can be made for them by the government.

**9. Enhance the specialized expertise of UN staff.** It is recommended that UN agencies, funds and programmes ensure that career staff posted to South Africa are experts or researchers in their respective areas of expertise. They should also have advisory capabilities and be able to engage on an equal footing with government officials. Likewise, the UN should provide South Africa with high-level, short-term international expertise in selected fields upon request.

**THE UN AND THE GOVERNMENT  
OF SOUTH AFRICA – WORK TOWARDS  
MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING**

**10. Strive to understand South Africa.** It is recommended that the Resident Coordinator's Office strengthen its briefing of staff to better communicate the specificities of South Africa, the intergovernmental relations at three levels, and the role of civil society. This would include attendance at annual sessions of the National Treasury/International Development Coordination Directorate as well as special modules on understanding

the South African context, government priorities and the Programme of Action; the machinery of government; and how development cooperation in South Africa works. It is further recommended that UN agencies be encouraged to strategize, individually and together, about how they will engage with government counterparts in a decentralized setting with overlapping competencies, using intergovernmental relations structures as far as possible.

**11. Strive to understand the UN system.** It is recommended that more attention be given to UN public diplomacy in order to increase understanding of what the UN is and does. This should include:

- The marketing of services that can be offered by the UN system to South Africa and the region, with clearly defined processes on how to access these services
- Bi-annual briefings to the government to discuss major policy developments and initiatives from UN headquarters and strategic issues pertinent to the implementation of the joint cooperation framework. These briefings should

preferably follow on the bi-annual Cabinet Lekgotla

- Briefing sessions and conferences for wider audiences (including national and provincial legislatures, the private sector and civil society) on global and regional issues of special importance where the UN is involved. Examples include climate change in the lead-up to the Copenhagen Conference, the food security crisis and peace-building in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

**12. Follow up on these recommendations in 2012.** It is recommended that an independent follow-up evaluation be conducted in 2012 to ascertain if the strengthening of the UN Country Team has taken place: if the new roles of the Resident Coordinator and his or her deputies have enabled them to become trusted advisers to the government; if a comprehensive cooperation framework has been established covering the whole range of potential UN services; and if communication and mutual understanding have substantially improved. Based on the outcome, the evaluation should make recommendations with regard to further strengthening or, alternatively, reducing the UN presence in South Africa.

## Chapter 1

# THE JOINT EVALUATION

In 2006, the Government of the Republic of South Africa requested the collaboration of the United Nations Evaluation Group in undertaking a joint, country-level evaluation of the role and contribution of the UN system.<sup>2</sup> Initially, the evaluation was meant to focus only on the contribution of the UN to the country's national development objectives. It was to explore the relevance and effectiveness of this contribution, the use of UN development assistance by South Africa, and lessons learned in capacity development. The evaluation was intended to inform the preparation of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Common Country Action Plan (CCAP) for the period 2007-2010.

The UN Evaluation Group subsequently conducted a pre-scoping mission from 15-19 May 2006 and a scoping mission from 4-15 February 2008. In a dialogue between the parties, it was proposed that the scope of the evaluation be expanded beyond that of the UN's traditional development assistance to South Africa. The Government of South Africa suggested including activities implemented within the UN system in line with the country's three-tier strategic policy priorities: working for a better South Africa, a better Africa, and a better world. The terms of reference that were subsequently agreed upon can be found in Annex 1.

The objective of the current evaluation was to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the cooperation between South Africa and the UN system within these three policy priorities. Thematic evaluations would be conducted in four

focus areas – development, peace and security, the environment and humanitarian assistance – with a view to using those findings to inform the conclusions of this synthesis report.

The evaluation was to be responsive to the needs and priorities of South Africa and serve as an accountability and learning mechanism for the UN system. It was also to be consultative and to engage the participation of a broad range of stakeholders. It was to be guided by a Joint Evaluation Management Group.

This evaluation constitutes a 'first' for both the UN system and South Africa. For the UN it is the first time that a country-level evaluation is carried out jointly with a host government, and involves the entire UN system rather than a single UN agency or programme. For the Government of South Africa, it is the first time that it has embarked on an evaluation of this nature. Funding for the joint exercise was shared equally by the two parties.

The joint evaluation was country-led and carried out by an independent evaluation team comprising:

- Mr. Shauket Fakie, Team Leader (South Africa)
- Mr. Iraj Abedian, Deputy Team Leader (South Africa)
- Mr. Erik Lyby, Deputy Team Leader (Denmark)
- Ms. Angela Bester, Development Specialist (South Africa)

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2. The UN system comprises all entities of the UN Secretariat as well as funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other organizations. The Bretton Woods institutions are not considered part of the system. The UN Evaluation Group is a system-wide network of UN evaluation offices endowed with its own norms and standards.



- Mr. Fred Kruger, Environment Specialist (South Africa)
- Mr. Peter Wiles, Humanitarian Assistance Specialist (United Kingdom), replaced by Mr. Greg Moran (South Africa) towards the end of the mission
- Mr. Pieter du Plessis, Peace and Security Specialist (South Africa).

Overall strategic guidance for the evaluation was provided by a Joint Evaluation Management Group, co-chaired by the Government of South Africa and the UN Evaluation Group. On the South African side, membership included the Presidency of the Government of South Africa, through its International Relations and Trade Policy Coordination Unit; the Department of Foreign Affairs; The National Treasury, through its International Development Cooperation Unit; the Office of the Public Service Commission; the Department of Provincial and Local Government; and Statistics South Africa. On the UN side, membership included the Evaluation Office of UNDP; the Evaluation Office of UNICEF; the Evaluation Service of FAO; and the Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination (of the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs, known as UN DESA). The Joint Evaluation Management Group prepared the terms of reference, appointed the evaluation team, guided the process, provided the team with substantive comments on the inception report and final draft reports, and appointed an external advisory panel<sup>3</sup> to comment on the draft reports.

The evaluation team wishes to thank all the officials of the Government of South Africa, the UN system as well as members of South African civil society who shared their time, information and experience in support of the evaluation. Thanks to the staff at UN headquarters and

South African diplomatic missions in New York, Geneva and Rome for contributing their high-level perspective on key issues. Also appreciated are the many constructive comments received from the advisory panel, the Joint Evaluation Management Group and the UN Evaluation Group, which have helped strengthen the reports. However, the analysis that follows, and the conclusions and recommendations made, remain those of the independent evaluation team and do not necessarily reflect the policies, opinions or positions of any other parties.

## 1.1 METHODOLOGY

This section provides a brief outline of the methodology applied in this evaluation. For further details, see Annex 2.

### 1.1.1 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The framework terms of reference identified effectiveness<sup>4</sup> and relevance as the main evaluation criteria. The first logical step was to develop the questions that should be answered through the study. These questions are at two levels: the disaggregate (focus-area) level, and the aggregate (synthesis) level.

**Effectiveness** is defined as the extent to which agreed-upon objectives have been met, or can be expected to be met. In practice, the objectives are not always explicit, or there can be several competing objectives for the same activity. In such cases, it can be necessary to operationalize them on the basis of available oral and written documentation. In the case of cooperation between the Government of South Africa and the UN, it is particularly important to look at the roles played by various actors. External factors outside the control of these actors that may have had a significant influence on the success of the activity also need to be identified.

3. The advisory panel consisted of Ms. Inge Kaul (Germany), Mr. Matthew Smith (South Africa) and Ms. Tanja Ajam (South Africa).

4. Effectiveness should not be misinterpreted to mean an organization's internal efficiency. The efficiency of UN agencies has been subject to many evaluations by bilateral development partners over the years. However, this criterion remains outside the scope of this evaluation.

**Relevance** is determined by the extent to which the activities correspond with policies and are in line with local needs and priorities. Methodological challenges can occur when there is more than one policy to refer to, or when there is lack of consensus on the interpretation of needs and priorities.

The evaluation was complex. It was intended to be forward-looking and cover outcomes, outputs/deliverables and processes of the work that South Africa and the UN system are doing together, with a view to determining the value-added by such cooperation. Both sides of the equation should be examined, since the government's actions also impact outcomes in the context of interaction with the UN system. Since the UN system is not a significant donor in financial terms, the quality of the interaction as a strategic partnership is given special attention.

The evaluation operated at several levels and involved a mapping exercise for each focus area of the work of the UN system in South Africa as well as for South Africa regionally and globally. For practical reasons, the mapping is selective and cannot constitute a full inventory of South

Africa-UN relations over the period 1994-2008. Based on the mapping of a 'universe' for each focus area, sets of activities were chosen in order to narrow the scope. The criteria for selection included the nature of the activities: they should cover the range of typical areas of cooperation; they should include domestic, regional and global dimensions; and they should be evaluable, that is, sufficient evidence must be available to allow for sound assessments based predominantly on triangulation of qualitative information. Quantitative data would be used when available, but these were relatively few.

### 1.1.2 EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

A format was devised as a tool for the selection of activities and subsequent analysis, classifying each set of activities (typically a project or programme) by type: whether its nature is mainly *normative* (for example, concerning international conventions, specific international standards, or internationally agreed protocols); *analytical* (for example, concerning strategic development in which the UN has participated, or studies that support policy analysis); or *operational* (such as

**Figure 1. Tool for Selecting and Analysing Activities, Projects, Programmes and Clusters**

Type of activity Evaluation criteria with sub-themes	Normative ■ International conventions ■ Specific standards ■ Agreed protocols	Analytical ■ Strategic development ■ Studies	Operational ■ Pilot projects ■ Catalytic activities
<b>Effectiveness</b> ■ Partnership quality ■ Capacity-building ■ Gender equality ■ HIV&AIDS ■ Human rights			
<b>Relevance</b> ■ Partnership quality ■ Capacity-building ■ Gender equality ■ HIV&AIDS ■ Human rights			

pilot projects that test new approaches on a small scale, or activities where the UN has played a catalytic role). These types were set against the evaluation criteria of effectiveness and relevance, each with a set of sub-themes: *partnership quality* (nature and strength of UN-South Africa cooperation – a central issue in all components); *capacity – or institution-building* (identified as a central goal of UN assistance); and three *cross-cutting issues*: gender equality, HIV&AIDS, and human rights and democracy. The format is shown in Figure 1.

### 1.1.3 EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation questions are placed at different levels, from very general to very specific; what is common to them is that they must be answerable to be useful. The more general questions are relevant to all (or most) of the focus areas as well as to the synthesis. The more specific ones relate to the focus areas and differ between them.

In principle, conclusions can be drawn if Figure 1 is applied to all the selected projects/activities, and all the evaluation questions are placed in the empty spaces and adequate answers to them are given. Some of the general evaluation questions applicable to all focus areas are the following (see Annex 2 for the full list of questions):

#### Effectiveness

- To what extent have agreed-upon objectives been reached?
- Has there been full agreement between partners on what the objectives are?
- Are the objectives explicit, or do they need to be deduced from the available evidence?
- Are the planned activities sufficient in terms of resources to realize the objectives?
- Have the communication channels functioned effectively?
- Have multi-agency activities been effective, drawing on strong expertise and avoiding overlap?
- To what extent has UN experience from other countries contributed to the achievement of the objectives?

- To what extent has the UN's role as strategist, centre of intellectual excellence, as a catalyst or implementer of pilot activities been effective in contributing to the achievement of the objectives?

#### Relevance

- Are the objectives in keeping with the real needs and priorities of the implementing partners as well as the intended beneficiaries? What is the extent of the fit or disjuncture and why?
- Should the direction of activities (the approach) be changed, or discontinued?
- To what extent have ratified UN conventions been turned into national legislation, and when has this happened? What was the role of the UN system in helping South Africa do this?
- To what extent did South Africa influence conventions and resolutions?
- To what extent has the UN system supported South Africa's ratification of conventions?
- In which ways has the Government of South Africa been able to use the UN system to further its agendas, for example, through the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, Group of 77 (G-77), membership in UN fora and governing bodies of UN agencies?
- To what extent, and how, has the UN system facilitated the Government of South Africa in playing a strategic and influential role in the agenda of the South African Development Community (SADC) region, in Africa, and in the global community (the G-77 and G-8, for example)?

## 1.2 THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The preparation of the evaluation took more than two years, from the first mission in May 2006 until the start of work in August 2008. The aim was to conclude the exercise by end January 2009, in view of the 2009 national elections in South Africa, which would complicate the work if not finished well before.



The inception phase took place between 25 August and 19 September 2008, when the draft inception report was submitted for comments. The final version, with comments from the government and the UN Evaluation Group, was submitted on 22 October. By that time, the methodology had been developed, the activities for in-depth study had been selected and initial interviews had been carried out by the focus-area specialists. The selection followed a rigorous process guided by the criteria described above, by which many otherwise relevant activities regrettably had to be excluded, and several UN agencies had to be left out.

The main field data collection phase took place between October and December 2008. The Team Leader and the international Deputy Team Leader visited UN Headquarters and Government of South Africa Permanent Missions in Geneva, Rome and New York between 19 and 25 November in order to obtain high-level views on the more strategic aspects of the UN-South Africa relationship (see Annexes 3 and 4 for a list of persons consulted during the course of the evaluation and a selection of key documents reviewed). A stakeholder workshop was convened in Pretoria on 4 December in which government, UN and South African civil society representatives had an opportunity to contribute their views and help validate or criticize the team's preliminary findings.

Various versions of the focus-area draft reports were prepared in December and January and subjected to quality assurance and consistency control, in parallel with the drafting of this synthesis report. The final drafts were then submitted for peer review to the external advisory panel, consisting of three experienced evaluators. After the necessary modifications, they were sent to receive comments by the Government of South Africa and the UN Evaluation Group. This iterative process was concluded in March 2009, when the present synthesis and four focus-area reports were submitted to the Government of South Africa and the UN Evaluation Group.

The process was hampered by various events. For personal reasons, the specialist on humanitarian assistance resigned on 20 November after having carried out most of his field investigations. This dealt a serious blow to the evaluation as much research that had already been done could not easily be transferred to his replacement. South Africa provides humanitarian assistance to other countries in the region and also supports the development of their disaster preparedness capacity – hence, an important aspect of the regional dimension would be lost in the event that this focus area would have to be dropped from the evaluation. A South African consultant agreed to step in from 8 December and do as much as possible with this component within the limited time left. However, under the circumstances, the scope of the study had to be narrowed down considerably from that planned in the inception phase.

The availability of government officials for interviews proved an obstacle to all consultants. UN staff were generally accessible, and much could be achieved through desk study and Internet searches. But without the government side, triangulation could not take place. This was a source of frustration to all focus-area specialists.

### **1.2.1 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE METHODOLOGY**

The methodology as such is assessed to have been workable. However, some of the circumstances were not conducive to the efficient performance of the evaluation. Key among these were:

1. Non-availability of officials in government departments clearly hampered the evaluation. But it also served to draw attention to a problem that has consistently been referred to by UN staff faced with the same problem, and is clearly an impediment to strategic interaction.
2. The evaluation intended to cover the period 1994 to 2008. However, as programme documents and reports for the early period were not always available, and officials from the government and the UN were no longer

in the department or in the country, the majority of programmes that could be evaluated fall within the last five to eight years.

3. The evaluation time frame was too short, especially seen in relation to the long gestation period.
4. The selection and contracting of a team of consultants on an individual basis was less efficient than selecting a company or institution through competitive tendering. It was known in advance that the individual consultants had other commitments simulta-

neously with the evaluation, commitments that limited their availability for fieldwork and teamwork.

### **1.3 THIS REPORT**

The following chapters provide a brief history of the UN system in post-apartheid South Africa; summarize findings in the four focus and three cross-cutting areas; describe the two-way nature of the UN-Government of South Africa partnership; and offer general conclusions and recommendations.

## Chapter 2

# THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA AND THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Ironically, that was also the year when racial discrimination was formalized in South Africa. The National Party took power based on apartheid, a policy that was gradually refined to cover all aspects of life in South Africa. This took place in a period of history otherwise characterized by decolonization and the emergence of new independent states in Africa and Asia. The continuation of apartheid, and the severe punishment of its opponents, turned international public opinion against South Africa and made the country into an international pariah. The United Nations provided an important forum for giving voice to the abhorrence felt by most nations, and to support the cause of the South African majority.

The first resolution (395(V)) by the UN General Assembly on apartheid dates back to 1950. It was followed by many others, including the post-Sharpeville Security Council resolution 134 of 1960 and the first arms embargo in resolutions 181 (1962) and 182 (1963). In 1963, the Special Committee against Apartheid was established to report on a regular basis to the General Assembly with support from the United Nations Centre against Apartheid. South Africa had become a standing item on the UN agenda as a systematic offender of basic human rights. Though mostly non-binding, an embargo on South Africa was widened to encompass areas such as economic, political and cultural interaction with the country. Several UN agencies actively supported the struggle. Partly as a result of international

pressure, apartheid was finally abandoned and the first fully democratic elections took place in April 1994.

## 2.1 POST-APARTHEID SOUTH AFRICA

Since the transition to democracy, South Africa has achieved a steady rise in its gross domestic product (GDP). It is classified by the World Bank as an upper-middle income country,<sup>5</sup> though it also has one of the highest levels of inequality in incomes and human development in the world. The government's management of the economy is generally viewed in a positive light by international financial markets.

The transition to democracy, which has seen three successful national and two local elections so far, has nevertheless been accompanied by huge challenges and major backlogs in the delivery of the most basic services to the poorest segments of the population. The three spheres of government – national, provincial and local – all have complementary roles to play in effecting good governance across sectors. However, as with many new institutions, there is still a great deal of variation in available human and institutional capacity at different levels.

The nature of the challenges that faced the new government in 1994 required a large and comprehensive range of policies, legislation, strategies and programmes to transform the country – building new institutions and transforming old ones. The main national policy frameworks have included the following:

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5. World Bank income group classification: Economies are divided according to 2007 gross national income per capita, calculated using the World Bank Atlas method. The groups are: low income, US\$935 or less; lower-middle income, US\$936-US\$3,705; upper-middle income, US\$3,706-US\$11,455; and high income, US\$11,456 or more.

- **Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP).** This initial plan of the African National Congress (ANC) set out priorities and strategies for most aspects of development for the new democracy and informed many government decisions in the early years.
- **Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR).** This policy of the Government of South Africa has become the key driver of the country's macroeconomy since June 1996.
- **Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA).** Launched in February 2006, this initiative has the explicit objective of removing systemic and sectoral obstacles to growth and has a target of halving unemployment and poverty between 2004 and 2014. To achieve this will require an average economic growth rate of at least 4.5 percent per year between 2006 and 2009, and an average growth of 6 percent per year in the period from 2010 to 2014.
- **Joint Initiative on Priority Skills Acquisition (JIPSA).** This initiative was established by the Cabinet in 2006 to support AsgiSA in the field of human resources development, with the aim to relax the importation of foreign skills, improve employability and reduce poverty.
- **Vision 2014.** This vision for the future was derived from the 2004-2009 electoral manifesto of the ANC. It informs the government's Medium-Term Strategic Framework for 2004-2009 and identifies the following key objectives:
  - Reduce poverty and unemployment by half
  - Provide the skills required by the economy
  - Ensure that all South Africans are able to fully exercise their constitutional rights and enjoy the full dignity of freedom
  - Offer compassionate government service to the people

- Achieve a better national health profile and massively reduce preventable causes of death, including crime and violence and road accidents
- Significantly reduce the number of serious and priority crimes and cases awaiting trial
- Position South Africa strategically as an effective force in global relations.

## 2.2 DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The fall of apartheid in 1994 also signalled the beginning of official development assistance (ODA) to the country from bilateral and multilateral donors. South Africa's high average per capita income limited the ODA flows that could be allocated to it, however, since the majority of ODA transfers are, by policy, to low-income states. This is the case for both multilateral and bilateral donors, and core UN funding to middle-income countries is, by definition, quite limited. In spite of the huge development challenges faced by large sections of the population, the ODA to South Africa only constitutes a small part of the total expenditures by the government.

Figure 2 shows that, between 1994 and 2005, South Africa received ZAR 46.7 billion (US\$7.6 billion) in ODA, ZAR 1.3 billion (US\$209 million) of which came from the UN system. Looking at the last year of that period (2005), the country received ZAR 5.4 billion (US\$850 million) in ODA, of which ZAR 226 million (US\$35 million) was from the UN system, the majority from the Global Environment Facility. While these amounts are considerable by most standards, they remain small when measured against the government's regular revenue the same year, which amounted to ZAR 412 billion (US\$65 billion), of which total ODA constituted 1.3 percent, or against the 2005 GDP of ZAR 1,580 billion (US\$248 billion).<sup>6</sup>

6. Sources: Republic of South Africa-NOT: Development Cooperation Information System and the 2007 National Expenditure Estimate. Current ZAR values without inflation.

**Figure 2. Official Development Assistance Received by South Africa, 1994-2005**

Years	ODA received	ZAR millions	Average exchange rate	US\$ millions
1994-2005	Total	46,753	6.16	7,590
1994-2005	UN	1,289	6.16	209
<b>ODA in context – Fiscal year 2005</b>				
FY 2005	South Africa GDP	1,580,119	6.38	247,668
FY 2005	National revenue	411,748	6.38	64,537
FY 2005	Total ODA received	5,420	6.38	850
FY 2005	UN part of ODA	226	6.38	35

The main thrust of the first five years of democratic government was the development of sustainable and equitable policies and strategies. As a result, the bulk of ODA during that period was targeted to overall government policy and strategy development. A government strategy paper in 2003 states that “There is an increasing realisation in Government and amongst the international donor community that development co-operation can play an even greater role in the massive task of reconstruction and development delivery. However, in order to reap maximum benefit from the ODA resources at South Africa’s disposal, all ODA will have to be fully aligned to South Africa’s core development priorities, and managed effectively and efficiently in a manner that supports South Africa’s chosen development path to the fullest extent possible.”<sup>7</sup>

In line with its foreign policy interests, which relate to Africa and the world, South Africa is now also providing financial and other support to development and stability in several countries in the region. The total development assistance expenditure from South Africa to other countries is not available, since it appears in the budgets of different departments. Ministers from G-77 countries in 2008 adopted principles for South-South cooperation whereby financial contribu-

tions from other developing countries cannot be seen as ODA. Among major programmes is the African Renaissance Fund, which received ZAR 392.4 million (US\$62 million) in 2005 for various African cooperation projects, the largest being ZAR 278 million (US\$44 million) for assistance to presidential elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 2008, ZAR 100 million (US\$12 million) was allocated to the South Africa National Defence Force for the peace-support operation in Burundi. Some of these activities fall naturally under the purview of the UN, and South Africa and the UN have collaborated in many of these initiatives.

South Africa is also a financial contributor to the UN system through assessed contributions to the regular, international tribunal and peacekeeping budgets of the UN. The country makes further financial contributions to the UN Country Team and the UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies; it also provides funding for numerous programmes and projects in the country implemented in cooperation with UN agencies.

This dual relationship as both a contributor and recipient of UN assistance is somehow indicative of emerging international relationships in a globalized world – the very terms ‘donor’ and

7. Republic of South Africa, National Treasury, ‘Policy framework and procedural guidelines for the management of ODA’, chapter 2 in the *Development Cooperation Information System (DCIS) 1994–2005*.



‘recipient’, in fact, no longer reflect existing realities. Whereas industrialized countries have pledged to move towards the longstanding target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for assistance to developing countries, global issues of shared relevance are taking increased prominence in the form of the need for global public goods.<sup>8</sup> Such public goods include a sustainable environment, through a reduction of carbon dioxide emissions and global warming, for example, and peace and security regionally and globally. Over and above ODA, and in their own interests, *all* governments are charged with delivering public goods in their countries, and contributing to delivery of the same at regional and global levels.

This evaluation looks at the ways in which the government and the UN contribute to the delivery of public goods in South Africa, primarily through assistance to social and economic development and activities that promote a sustainable environment. However, it also looks at how South Africa contributes to public goods in Africa and the world, primarily through direct interventions to secure peace and security in the African region and, beyond that, through the provision of environmental assistance abroad and, indirectly, through participation in various multilateral fora and contributions to global funds.

After its re-entry on the international scene, South Africa became an active player, most recently as a member of the UN Security Council. It has also served as chair of the G-77 and has participated in the Non-Aligned Movement and the G-20 in relation to the current financial crisis. South Africa contributes to important multilateral funds and programmes, such as the Central Emergency Response Fund, and was particularly active in the establishment of the UN Human Rights Council.

## 2.3 THE UN SYSTEM

The UN system has undergone significant development in the period under review. The adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was a major milestone, and South Africa, like most other countries, is regularly reporting on progress towards this end. More recently, the architecture of development cooperation has been moving in new directions as a result of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness,<sup>9</sup> which secured international agreement to harmonize and align ODA delivery, with the aim of making aid effectiveness a high priority, and reaffirming commitments to accelerate progress in implementation relevant to the MDGs. The ensuing Accra Agenda for Action, endorsed by ministers of developing and donor countries and heads of multilateral and bilateral development institutions on 4 September 2008, is a commitment to accelerate and deepen implementation of the Paris Declaration. The UN system and South Africa subscribe to the Paris Principles. However, UN mandates and contributions go beyond *aid* effectiveness. Rather, they aim to serve the broader framework of strengthening national capacities for *development* effectiveness, not least through their normative and capacity-building work. The 2005 World Summit Outcome Document<sup>10</sup> provides the wider, more comprehensive framework for the UN system, including development, humanitarian assistance, environment, peace and security and trade.

The case for reforming the UN system itself has repeatedly been made over the years by Member States that have found the political landscape as shaped after World War II no longer reflective of the world today. The composition of the UN Security Council has been challenged, as has the apparent lack of coordination of the UN system at the field level, especially regarding development cooperation.

8. Kaul, I, I. Grunberg and M. Stern (eds.): *Global Public Goods*, UNDP and Oxford University Press, 1999.

9. High-Level Forum, Paris, 28 February–2 March 2005, *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, Ownership, Harmonisation, Alignment, Results and Mutual Accountability*. Available at: [www.aidharmonization.org/ah-overview](http://www.aidharmonization.org/ah-overview)

10. UN General Assembly resolution 60/1.

Accordingly, in 1997 UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan embarked on a UN reform process that has proven difficult to implement. An important step forward was taken with Report A/61/583 of the High-Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence, which was presented to the UN General Assembly in November 2006. The recommendations by the Panel were seen as too far-reaching by some Member States, and the report has yet to be adopted. Hence, no intergovernmental mandate exists. However, a pilot initiative was set in motion in which eight countries<sup>11</sup> volunteered to try out the new approach, which became known as 'Delivering as One'. Out of the eight pilot countries, four are in Africa. Only one pilot country (Uruguay) is an upper-middle income country like South Africa, while two others (Albania and Cape Verde) are lower-middle income countries. The remaining five are classified as low-income countries. The varied experiences of the pilot countries are of interest to South Africa. While a full evaluation of the Delivering as One pilot is premature, some interesting trends have begun to emerge. Some of these will be discussed later in this report in relation to the future cooperation between the UN system and South Africa.

## **2.4 THE EARLY YEARS OF UN SYSTEM-GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA COOPERATION**

While South Africa had generally been excluded from the UN system during the apartheid era, the introduction of a democratic Constitution in 1994 enabled it to enter the international fora as an important political and economic contributor to UN bodies and the Non-Aligned Movement. South Africa also contributed regionally, in the African Union and SADC. At the national level, the UN specialized agencies, funds and programmes could now offer assistance to the new ANC government, and agreement on development cooperation with UNDP was signed in October 1994 by President Mandela.

However, both sides now had to assume new and unfamiliar roles: The ANC had to transform itself from a liberation movement into a government with a very ambitious agenda, and the UN had to move from a political supporter and platform to a development partner in a country that, in many ways, was different from other African states in which it was working.

From 1994 to 1999, the UN system did not have a single coordinating framework for its engagement with South Africa. Different agencies entered the country at different times, each engaging with the government in terms of its specific mandates. The UN system has grown from those early years to encompass the following eight specialized agencies, funds and programmes, which focus exclusively on South Africa: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Population Fund (UNFPA), Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UN Information Centre (UNIC) and World Health Organization (WHO). Partly due to South Africa's geographic location and good infrastructure, a number of UN agencies have located their regional offices there, many of which also cover South Africa in addition to other countries in the subregion. Those UN agencies and bodies include the UNDP Regional Centre, International Labour Organisation (ILO), Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), International Organization for Migration (IOM), UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), World Food Programme (WFP), UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), UNAIDS, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), UN Environment Programme (UNEP), UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), and the recently established UNFPA Regional Office.

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11. Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam.

**Table 1. UN Development Assistance Framework for South Africa, 2002-2006**

Objectives	Intended outcomes
Integrated sustainable rural development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support formulation of operational frameworks for the Government of South Africa's Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy</li> <li>■ Building capacity for effective and efficient service delivery of national, provincial and local government</li> </ul>
Managing the HIV/AIDS pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Contribute to efforts by the government, NGOs, key partners and communities for improved care and support for people infected and affected by HIV/AIDS, especially children</li> <li>■ Contribute to the establishment of enabling environments in communities, learning institutions and work places that protect human rights and reduce stigma</li> <li>■ Integrate HIV concerns in all sectors of society</li> <li>■ Successfully advocate for multisectoral planning, budgeting and implementation in response to HIV/AIDS</li> </ul>
Regional integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Enhance South Africa's contribution to regional peace, stability, democracy and good governance</li> <li>■ Enhance capacity for articulating relevant economic policies for poverty alleviation in the region</li> <li>■ Enhance the regional response to HIV/AIDS interventions and partnerships</li> <li>■ Promote indigenous knowledge systems and exchange of the learning experiences in the region</li> <li>■ Mitigate the impact of disasters and enhance disaster management in the region</li> </ul>

Most of these regional agencies are active members of the UN Country Team, which comprises 17 UN agencies, funds and programmes and represents the largest array of UN entities in Southern Africa.

Initial cooperation in South Africa focused on development in support of the Reconstruction and Development Programme, drawing especially on UN experience in other African countries. The first country cooperation framework was prepared between 1995 and 1997. The broad objective of the country cooperation framework was poverty reduction within a sustainable human development framework. However, a review mission in 2001 found that, although UNDP's assistance had made a significant contribution to South Africa's efforts to reduce poverty and strengthen governance, there were also

areas of weakness, which include the following:

- The experience and expertise of UNDP in assisting countries in the development of implementation strategies for strengthening delivery mechanisms were not utilized to their fullest extent.
- The partnership between the Government of South Africa and UNDP had not been forged effectively. A lack of awareness as to how the respective bodies operated was considered a contributing factor.
- The UNDP's limited resources were spread too thinly across many projects.<sup>12</sup>

The review mission recommended that the subsequent cooperation framework should concentrate on three areas, namely HIV&AIDS,

12. UNDP, Draft Country Review Report, June 2001.



**Table 2. UN Development Assistance Framework for South Africa, 2007-2010**

Objectives	Intended outcomes: The UN's work will all be aimed at supporting government and other development partners to achieve the following outcomes for South Africa
Strengthening democracy, good governance and administration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Improved capacity of provincial and local government to deliver effective basic social services</li> <li>2. Improved processes related to the macro-organization of the state</li> <li>3. Strengthened participatory governance processes</li> </ol>
Supporting government and its social partners to accelerate economic growth and development for the benefit of all	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Strengthened national macroeconomic capacities for policy formulation, implementation and coordination</li> <li>5. Enhanced skills of government and social partners to respond to the needs of the labour market</li> <li>6. Strengthened government ability to develop and implement coordinated 'second economy'<sup>13</sup> interventions</li> <li>7. Strengthened government capacity to implement selected 'first economy'<sup>14</sup> interventions</li> </ol>
Strengthening South African and subregional institutions to consolidate the African Agenda, promote global governance and South-South cooperation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Strengthened capacity of South Africa to support the African Union Commission and other policy-related institutions, such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development, the African Peer Review Mechanism, the Pan-African Parliament, African Court of Justice and Human Rights, and SADC in addressing socio-economic, peace and political issues to implement the Africa agenda</li> <li>9. Strengthened South-South cooperation</li> <li>10. An enabling environment to organize major sporting events</li> </ol>
Strengthening government efforts to promote justice, peace, safety and security	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11. Harmonized national, regional and international laws related to the rights of children, women, marginalized and vulnerable populations, migrant populations and detainees for effective implementation at national and local levels to ensure justice for all</li> <li>12. Harmonized national, regional and international laws related to relevant treaties on combating organized crime, corruption, money laundering, trafficking in persons, smuggling of migrants, arms trafficking, drug-related crimes, drug precursor control and terrorism</li> <li>13. Reduced levels of corruption and fraud in key government entities</li> <li>14. Enhanced structures for prevention and response to address violence against children and women</li> <li>15. Criminal justice and penal reform supported</li> <li>16. Social crime prevention initiatives strengthened</li> </ol>
Intensify poverty eradication	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. The government is supported in implementing the social sector Expanded Public Works Programme for home and community-based care workers, early childhood development workers, and community health workers</li> <li>18. Access to education broadened and quality of education improved</li> <li>19. Capacity of government to implement the HIV&amp;AIDS comprehensive plan supported</li> <li>20. Matching of skills to the requirements of the economy is supported</li> <li>21. The increasing demand for housing and services is addressed</li> <li>22. The capacity of the national health system to deliver quality service is improved and expanded</li> <li>23. Efficient delivery of social grants in a comprehensive social security system is supported</li> <li>24. Strategic management and coordination of programmes for subsistence and small emerging farmers are supported to improve their food security and livelihoods</li> </ol>

13. The terms 'first' and 'second' economies were used by former President Thabo Mbeki to refer to the duality of the South African economy. The first economy represents the developed, formal sector, while the second economy represents the sector of South Africa characterized by poverty and underdevelopment.

14. See footnote 13.

sustainable integrated rural development, and regional integration.

#### **2.4.1 UNDAF**

Within the evolving UN reform process, a consolidated effort was made to ensure coordination among UN development agencies at the country level through a UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The 2002-2006 UNDAF for South Africa identified three priority areas, based on the findings of the 2001 review mission,

round-table discussions involving the UN system, the Government of South Africa, civil society organizations and bilateral development agencies, and mid-term reviews of UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF programmes (see Table 1).

The current UNDAF (see Table 2) aims to align itself with achievement of the MDGs and with government programmes in a 'cluster' format, with the UN clusters corresponding to those of the government.

## Chapter 3

# DEVELOPMENT

The evaluation of the development focus area relates closely to the first and second UNDAFs described in the previous chapter, and covers the themes of poverty and inequality; employment; access to and quality of services; and governance. For each theme, a summary is provided of the relevance and effectiveness of the UN system response.

### 3.1 REDUCING POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

The Government of South Africa conceptualizes poverty in three dimensions, namely, income poverty, human capital poverty and asset poverty. It has committed itself to halving poverty by 2014. Programmes to address all three dimensions of poverty include social security assistance; universal access to basic services; access to education and health services; access to housing; land reform and support to emerging farmers.

The government asserts that there has been a reduction in absolute income poverty between 1995 and 2005. This decline has been driven primarily by the expanded reach of the social assistance programme, whose beneficiaries grew from 2 million in 1999 to 12 million in 2007.<sup>15</sup> Civil society takes a less optimistic view of progress against poverty and calls for the need to tackle poverty and inequality simultaneously.<sup>16</sup>

Poverty is a serious problem however it is measured. In 2005, 48 percent of the population lived on less than ZAR462 (US\$72) per month,

45 percent lived on less than ZAR367 (US\$57) per month, and 23 percent lived on less than ZAR250(US\$39) per month.<sup>17</sup> In absolute terms, South Africa is characterized by a significant proportion of the population living in poverty, with deep inequalities along racial and gender lines.

In October 2008, the Government of South Africa released a discussion document entitled 'Towards an Anti-Poverty Strategy'. This draft strategy considers poverty in broad terms as a deficiency in an individual's socio-economic capabilities. In this definition, factors such as income, as well as the lack of access to basic services, assets, information, social networks or social capital are all considered to be manifestations of poverty.<sup>18</sup>

#### 3.1.1 INTEGRATED SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT (ISR)

The role envisaged for the UN in this programme was to assist in building replicable multisectoral and multi-stakeholder models in the poorest provinces that could be applied across the country to reduce poverty. The UN would assist government in developing management and monitoring systems, structures and implementation for the multi-million dollar Poverty Relief Fund. The entry points for the UN would be the provinces of North West, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo.

**Relevance:** The UN programme of support was aligned at the strategic level with government priorities in its own Integrated Sustainable Rural

15. The Presidency, Republic of South Africa, *Towards a Fifteen Year Review*, August 2008.

16. South African National NGO Coalition (SANGOCO), *Millennium Development Goals: Africa and South Africa 2007 Review: Are we on track?*

17. The Presidency, Republic of South Africa, *Development Indicators 2008*, June 2008.

18. Republic of South Africa, *Towards an Anti-Poverty Strategy: A discussion document*, draft, October 2008.

Development Programme (ISRDP). What would have been of particular interest to the government was the development of poverty reduction models that could be replicated, since ISRDP was set up with such pilots in mind. The government was also challenged in using the resources in its Poverty Relief Fund in an effective and sustainable way. The UN's intentions to support this priority were therefore relevant.

The relevance is less clear at the level of specific projects implemented under the umbrella of the UN-supported programme.

**Effectiveness:** The UN's effectiveness in ISRDP is mixed. Some projects in the programme achieved their objectives whereas others fell short of expected results:

- UNDP support to the Eastern Cape to formulate its Provincial Growth and Development Plan is one project that achieved its objective. The UN also achieved a degree of success with the establishment of the KwaZulu-Natal Monitoring & Evaluation System (the 'KwaZulu-Natal Nerve Centre') and in supporting the establishment of a public sector learning academy in the province. These three initiatives have been sustained by respective provincial governments.
- UNDP assisted in the design of the monitoring and evaluation framework for the Poverty Relief Fund at the national level, which was the extent of its involvement in the Fund. There is no evidence that the UN strengthened government capacity to effectively implement the Fund.
- There are a number of projects under the rubric of capacity-building for service delivery, focusing at the local level. It is not clear how they contribute to integrated sustainable rural development. The UN's review found that there was a lack of coordination of UN efforts at the local level.
- UNDP provided funding to the Independent Development Trust for drafting the design of the ISRDP in 2001. However, the evaluation

could find no evidence that UNDP developed poverty reduction models that could be replicated in other areas.

### 3.1.2 CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

A primary objective of the UNFPA country programme in South Africa has been to integrate population issues into development policy and practice. In response to capacity problems identified by a review of UNFPA's first country programme in South Africa, it introduced three significant capacity-building programmes, which were developed between 2001 and the present:

- **Primary HIV/AIDS Capacity-Building Course for Government Managers and Planners:** The aim of the programme is to enhance the capacity of managers and planners to integrate the population and development impact of HIV&AIDS on policies, programmes, projects and service delivery. The programme was launched in July 2001 and funded by UNFPA until 2004. The programme was modified following a review in 2003-2004.
- **Applied Population Sciences Training and Research (APSTAR) I and APSTAR II:** The goal of this training course, which is offered by the University of KwaZulu-Natal, is to build the capacity of government officials to integrate population factors into development policies, programmes and activities. The programme was launched in 2001/2002 and restructured in 2005.
- **Population, Environment and Development (PED) Nexus:** The aim of this training course is to enhance the leadership and management capacity of government officials and other development planners to understand the linkages between population, environment and development.

**Relevance:** The programmes were very relevant at the time of their initial establishment since they responded to the expressed need of government officials involved in development and develop-

ment planning. The AIDS programme was established at a time when the non-health aspects of the epidemic received little attention and there were no related capacity-building programmes that catered specifically to government managers and planners.

The APSTAR programme was established to partially address the shortage of demographers in South Africa, a consequence of the lack of popularity of demography as a profession, especially among black students. Though not intended to produce demographers, the APSTAR programme was in response to a need for government officials to have a basic level of knowledge and skill in demographic issues. This was necessary for the implementation of the South African Population Policy (1998) and for the country to implement its international commitments with regard to population and development.

The PED Nexus programme addresses a need in government to understand the complex interplay between population, environment and development. The emergence of issues such as climate change makes this understanding even more pertinent for government planners. The programme was designed collaboratively by the Government of South Africa and UNFPA, which has helped to instil a strong sense of national ownership.

**Effectiveness:** In 2006, UNFPA and the government jointly commissioned evaluations of the three programmes. The evaluation of the AIDS programme, which was modified since its introduction in 2001, confirmed its relevance. It also concluded that the restructured programme was more focused and working well. The programme was reaching 85 percent of targeted trainees and had been accredited and institutionalized within

the public service through the South African Management and Development Institute.<sup>19</sup>

APSTAR II, which was also modified after its launch, was evaluated in 2006 as well as in 2007. The 2006 evaluation found that a sizeable number of participants experienced difficulties with the technical aspects of the course; employers did not provide the necessary material, intellectual and moral support; completion rates were low; and the course had not been accredited. The 2007 mid-term evaluation confirmed the findings of the 2006 evaluation and pointed to a low completion rate of 44 percent. The evaluation recommended fundamental changes to the programme.<sup>20</sup>

The 2007 evaluation, because of its timing, could not cover the full cycle of training of participants. The government and UNFPA subsequently commissioned a supplementary evaluation and the results were released in September 2008. The overall findings are more positive. At the end of the cycle, 65 percent of enrollees had graduated from the programme, and seven of the 49 graduates qualified for enrolment in a Master's degree programme in population studies. Participation from prioritized provinces and districts was lower than desired, however. The programme was found to be increasing its cost-effectiveness and value as the rate of graduates increased with each cycle. The majority of employers, supervisors and senior managers expressed positive views about the value and impact of the programme.<sup>21</sup>

The evaluation of the PED Nexus programme found it to be of a high standard; most participants reported positive experiences from the programme.<sup>22</sup>

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19. Groenewald, C.J., and S.K. Gaisie, 'Building capacity of government officials to integrate population factors into development policies, programmes and activities', *HIV&AIDS Integrated Development*, volume 2, July 2006.

20. Gaisie, S.K., and C.J. Groenewald, 'Sustainability of training programmes in population and demography to address capacity gaps in population and development integration in South Africa', *Evaluation of APSTAR II*, volume 1, July 2007.

21. Groenewald, C.J., *Supplementary evaluation of the Applied Population Sciences Training and Research Programme (APSTAR II) with special reference to Cycle 4 conducted during 2007*, September 2008.

22. Groenewald, C.J., and S.K. Gaisie, 'Building capacity of government officials to integrate population factors into development policies, programmes and activities', *Review of the PED Nexus Lead Programme 2005-2006*, July 2006.



### 3.1.3 POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL PROTECTION STUDIES

The UN system, through UNICEF and UNDP, provided support to the government Department of Social Development on issues relating to poverty and social protection. Specifically, the UN organizations commissioned research and facilitated South-South dialogue on social security and social protection in the following areas:

- **Review of Children's Access to Employment-Based Contributory Social Insurance Benefits:** With the high rate of orphaning in South Africa, the issue of children's access to benefits from insurance schemes and pension funds is a concern. UNICEF commissioned research on this issue for the Department of Social Development, which was published in May 2008.
- **Review of the Child Support Grant:** Also on behalf of the Department of Social Development, UNICEF commissioned a review of the Child Support Grant with a view to identifying barriers to effective implementation and access. The report was published in June 2008.
- **South-South dialogue on social protection:** In 2007, South Africa's Presidency and Department of Social Development organized a bi-regional dialogue on social protection and poverty. The UNDP country office, together with the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa and the International Poverty Centre, worked with the government on a framework for the conference, which took place in June 2007.<sup>23</sup>

**Relevance:** All three examples of technical support are highly relevant to South Africa and are based on needs expressed by the government. The development of a comprehensive system of social security was first articulated in the Reconstruction and Development Programme and remains one of the top priorities of government. Social security is an area of some contro-

versy within government and between government and its social partners. An international conference that drew on the experiences of other middle-income countries in Latin America provided an evidence-based contribution to the policy debate on reform of the South African social security system.

**Effectiveness:** The study on children's access to social insurance was completed successfully and the publication was released. It is expected that the report will serve as input to a government Social Security and Retirement Reform project, which was initiated in 2007 to develop options for comprehensive social security.

The study on Child Support Grants achieved its objective of providing evidence-based input to the government about the barriers to accessing such grants. It identified that children under a year old were significantly under-represented as beneficiaries of these grants and that these children were at greater risk of malnutrition and growth problems. The absence of birth certificates was found to be a major reason why these children were not registered for grants. Consequently, a policy change was put into effect, and the requirement for birth certificates was relaxed. UNICEF has also begun a dialogue with the South African Social Security Agency to provide technical assistance on case management.<sup>24</sup>

The Bi-Regional Conference on Social Protection and Poverty Reduction generated a number of lessons from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Southern African countries. Senior government officials in South Africa commented on the value derived from the conference. In her closing speech, the then Deputy President cited the following lessons from the Latin American experience that are pertinent to South Africa:

- Poverty and inequality can be reduced.
- The scale of interventions and targeting is important.

23. Speech delivered by the Deputy President of South Africa, the Honourable P. Mlambo-Ngcuka, 9 June 2007.

24. *Development Cooperation Information System Project Status Report*.

- The comprehensiveness and integration of social protection measures are necessary.
- Social protection needs to be an integral component of the country's growth and development strategy.
- The role of the state is indispensable to making a serious dent in poverty.<sup>25</sup>

## 3.2 EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment is one of South Africa's biggest challenges, and the creation of a net 1.6 million new jobs between 1995 and 2003 has not kept pace with the rapid growth of the labour force. There are more unemployed women than unemployed men, and young people constitute nearly a third of the unemployed. The unemployment rate in South Africa in September 2007 was between 23 percent and 34 percent, depending on the definition used. In absolute terms, there are between 4.4 million and 7.6 million people in the country who are unemployed.<sup>26</sup>

Halving unemployment by 2014 is one of the government's development goals. It has introduced a range of initiatives to promote economic growth on the one hand, and interventions to assist the unemployed to enter the labour market. These include microeconomic reforms (industrial policy and restructuring and trade policy); Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment; a National Skills Development Strategy; increasing public sector investment; support to micro- and medium-sized enterprises; and the Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP).

### 3.2.1 EXPANDED PUBLIC WORKS PROGRAMME

The EPWP was established in April 2004 and was officially launched by former President Thabo Mbeki as a short- to medium-term response to unemployment. The programme, which is targeted at the poorest sections of the labour force, provides work opportunities, skills

development and access to future employment. The use of labour-intensive methods is an important aspect of the programme, as it was for its forerunners – the Public Works Programme and the Working for Water Programme. The EPWP incorporates social services in the programme, specifically early childhood development and home-based care for the ill, especially those infected or affected by HIV and AIDS. The programme aims to train a defined population and create one million employment opportunities in its first five years.<sup>27</sup>

UN support to the EPWP is currently located with the National Department of Public Works and the Limpopo provincial government. Indirect support to social sector programmes is also provided by UNICEF to the departments of education and social development.

The model for the EPWP was the Gundo Lashu Project in Limpopo, for which the ILO provided technical assistance between 2002 and 2004. The project, which piloted labour-based methods, was considered so successful that it was referred to by the then President in his address to the National Council of Provinces in 2004. The ILO now provides advice at the national level on labour-based technologies, especially road construction. It also trains emerging contractors and reorients technical staff in government on labour-based methods. Although the concentration is on road construction, there is potential for expanding this approach to housing, water and sanitation.

The ILO is currently supporting the EPWP in Limpopo Province, including the social sector programmes. Specific outputs include the following:

- Coordinate or assist in the training of 180 learners from emerging road contractors
- Coordinate and participate in the training of at least 100 non-road infrastructure learners from emerging small-scale contractors

25. Speech delivered by the Deputy President of South Africa, Her Excellency Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, 9 June 2007.

26. Altman, M. and D. Hemson, *The Role of Expanded Public Works Programmes in Halving Unemployment*, Human Sciences Research Council, August 2007 (quoting a September 2006 Labour Force Survey of Statistics South Africa).

27. Department of Public Works, Republic of South Africa, EPWP website: [www.epwp.gov.za](http://www.epwp.gov.za)

- Provide reorientation training for at least 45 established consulting/mentoring firms
- Provide training and create awareness among at least 96 municipal officers (municipal and technical managers)
- Organize workshops and provide technical and managerial support to all implementing agencies on the use of labour-intensive construction, including pro-employment planning and implementation methods.<sup>28</sup>

**Relevance:** The ILO's support to the programme at the national and provincial level is relevant to the extent that the government has placed a high priority on the EPWP, as reflected in the Annual Programme of Action. The ILO's technical support to the Limpopo provincial government is highly relevant and is based on the needs of both the government and municipalities in the province. Both the national and provincial programmes focus on providing technical skills in areas where the beneficiary departments and municipalities lack capacity or technical know-how. The Limpopo programme is assisting government to create employment opportunities in rural areas where the need is most acute.

**Effectiveness:** The ILO programme in Limpopo appears to be effective, and the ILO team in that province has provided assistance to implementing agencies to realign their programmes with the principles of the EPWP. The team has reported an increase in demand from municipalities and has, to date, trained 200 officials, more than double the target number. Provinces such as Mpumalanga and the Eastern Cape have expressed interest in labour-based approaches for road construction. The number of EPWP projects and labour-intensive projects has also increased since 2005, which can be attributed in part to the contribution of the ILO.

The ILO Limpopo team has raised a number of challenges regarding the implementation of the EPWP. These include a general lack of buy-in by senior officials in the province; the lack of capacity in municipalities to participate in a meaningful way; and the lack of clearly defined roles of the national and provincial departments of public works.<sup>29</sup> Concerns have also been raised by the provincial Department of Public Works about the low participation of departments in the province.<sup>30</sup>

The ILO programme in the national Department of Public Works has focused primarily on providing implementation advice on labour-based methods and supporting the work of the EPWP coordination unit in the department. It is not likely to achieve the intended output of the UNDAF 2007-2010 of supporting the national government to adopt appropriate policies and programmes related to the EPWP. The ILO has commissioned its own research<sup>31</sup> on the EPWP, but has not yet shared its findings with the government.

The Government of South Africa achieved its target of creating one million work opportunities by March 2008, a year ahead of schedule. There are, however, ongoing debates about the EPWP, in particular, about the extent to which it can contribute to halving unemployment by 2014 and the quality of the employment created. Plans for implementing the second phase of the EPWP have been finalized, and the intention is to create 4.5 million work opportunities or 2 million full-time equivalents by 2014. The ILO, with its vast knowledge resources on social security and social protection, has the potential to make a high-impact contribution to the policy dialogue on employment.

28. ILO, *Bi-Annual Progress Report on Limpopo EPWP*, January to June 2008.

29. Ibid.

30. Limpopo Department of Public Works.

31. Research was conducted by William F. Mitchell, Centre of Full Employment and Equity, University of Newcastle, Australia, 'Assessing the wage transfer function and developing a minimum wage framework for the Expanded Public Works Programme in South Africa', 9 May 2008.



### 3.2.2 ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE DECENT WORK AGENDA

The Decent Work Agenda refers to the commitment made by UN Member States to provide their citizens with opportunities for productive work that provides a fair income, security in the workplace, social protection for workers and their families, a safe and healthy work environment, freedom to organize, and equality of opportunity for women and men.<sup>32</sup> The Decent Work Agenda recognizes the link between poverty, unemployment and under-employment and therefore is a dimension of poverty reduction strategies. The ILO assists Member States to develop Decent Work Country Programmes with defined priorities and targets. The ILO in South Africa has implemented the following activities in support of the Agenda:

- Assisted the government in developing the Decent Work Country Programme framework; the Department of Labour is still in the process of developing the details
- Provided technical assistance to the EPWP, which supports government efforts to provide decent work opportunities for unemployed people, targeting youth, women and people with disabilities
- Supported the Department of Labour, along with employers' and workers' organizations to facilitate the development of a common occupational health and safety profile for South Africa and to strengthen national occupational health and safety systems. The ILO also brought in a specialist to consult with business and labour on the ratification of ILO Convention 187 – the promotional framework for the Occupational Safety and Health Convention
- Set up the Global Compact Occupational Health and Safety Pilot Project in the Eastern Cape to promote good standards and human rights through business innovation.

The project, which was operational from 2004 through 2008, provided technical guidance and implementation of audits within international standards and also integrated AIDS-related concerns into occupational health and safety interventions

- Supported the realization of ILO Convention 182 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour through the ILO Child Labour Action Programme. The first phase of the project was completed in March 2008 and carried out research and policy development. It also undertook capacity-building of practitioners, developed a monitoring and evaluation system, and piloted a number of projects
- Conducted a review of the National Economic, Development and Labour Council at the request of the government, with the aim of assessing the impact of social dialogue as an instrument of social and economic development in South Africa. The review has been completed, a stakeholder workshop conducted and the report submitted to the Minister of Labour for the Cabinet's consideration
- Assisted the government in reviewing labour market regulation and provided support on issues related to social security.<sup>33</sup>

**Relevance:** The support provided by the ILO is highly relevant since it provided technical inputs in areas where there were gaps in skills or technical capacity, for example, in developing a national profile of occupational health and safety. The government is currently working on integrating all occupational health and safety functions in order to reduce fatalities and accidents and the associated social and economic costs. In addition, the government requires an independent body with good standing to assist or provide an evidence base for policy development in contested areas such as labour market regula-

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32. ILO, Decent Work: Frequently Asked Questions. Available at: [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org)

33. ILO (South Africa): Overview of programmes provided to the evaluation team.

tion. In this regard, it can benefit from global expertise to advance its own agenda.

The support is aligned with the government's priorities to reduce unemployment, and its relevance has been confirmed in various addresses by the Minister of Labour.

**Effectiveness:** The Global Compact Occupational Health & Safety Pilot Project has been assessed by the ILO as achieving most of its intermediate goals. The project conducted initial audits of suppliers and identified gaps in understanding and applying international standards of occupational safety and health; labour inspectors were trained in these standards; and labour and factory inspectors learned to implement best practices concerning HIV&AIDS in the workplace, which were added to the pilot. Finally, a Preventative Service System was designed. Several attempts were made by the National Steering Committee of the project and the ILO to get the pilot programme implemented, but these were unsuccessful. The assessment report speculated on the reasons for non-implementation, suggesting that it was hesitation on the part of the Department of Labour, which was concerned about having to assume responsibility for the programme if it were to be rolled out.<sup>34</sup> The project has, however, received international acclaim: The UN Global Compact Leaders Annual Review 2007 cited it as a replicable model.<sup>35</sup>

**The Child Labour Action Programme** has not yet been through a mid-term evaluation. However, a preparatory assessment by partners in government and civil society indicates that there has been some progress in this early stage of the programme, as well as institutional challenges. These include difficulties in accessing information to assist partners or accessing the right

people in other government departments. Problems have also been encountered in integrating the work within the broader children's rights framework; in meeting what many perceive to be unrealistic demands on the part of the ILO for senior officials to be present at all meetings; and concerns that the Department of Labour does not chair the Implementation Committee, raising questions around the transfer of skills to government officials.<sup>36</sup>

From the information available to the evaluation team, it appears that the ILO has generally been successful in its programmes in the area of employment, in those specific areas where it has expertise that is needed by South Africa. The fact that the Minister of Labour served as chair of the ILO Governing Body for a period may have also assisted the ILO in its engagement with partners in South Africa.

### 3.3 IMPROVING ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF SERVICES

South Africa has made progress in providing access to health services since 1994. Real expenditure in this area has increased through an expanded health infrastructure, the upgrading of facilities and a broadening of the health services available. Ninety-five percent of the population are said to live within a 5-kilometre radius of a health facility and access to health services as measured by the increase in visits has improved.<sup>37</sup>

Despite this progress, the health outcomes for South Africans have not improved to a level commensurate with its middle-income status. Life expectancy is declining, infant mortality rates are high and maternal mortality rates are increasing. Reported cases of tuberculosis (TB) are increasing, and 5.5 million people in South Africa are living with HIV, in spite of declining

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34. Maike Frommann, *ILO SafeWork*, ILO, July 2008.

35. Ibid.

36. ILO (South Africa): *TECL [Programme Towards the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour] Partners' Self-Evaluation Report*, 11 April 2006.

37. The Presidency, Republic of South Africa: *Towards a Fifteen Year Review*, August 2008.

HIV prevalence.<sup>38</sup> Increases in non-communicable diseases such as obesity, hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, and violent deaths, road injuries and fatalities associated with alcohol taint the health profile of the nation. In addition, there are the human resource challenges experienced by the health sector, with insufficient numbers of skilled health professionals.

Education outcomes at the primary school level in South Africa compare unfavourably with the outcomes achieved by South Africa's neighbours, who have fewer resources. Children from poor and disadvantaged homes bear the burden of poor quality education in disadvantaged schools.

### 3.3.1 WHO BIENNIUM PROGRAMME

The Biennium Programme encapsulates the technical support provided by WHO to South Africa over a two-year cycle. The 2006-2007 programme focused on providing technical expertise to set norms, standards and protocols and on developing guidelines on providing best practice information and technical advice on public health issues. It also provided support to adapt the training of health workers.

Although the Department of Health is the primary partner for WHO, the UN organization also works with Statistics South Africa, the National Treasury, the Department of Social Development and the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism. WHO also interacts with provincial health departments.

**Relevance:** WHO operated as a country liaison office in South Africa until August 2007, when it became a full fledged country office. The early type of support it offered was a focused response to the needs of the Department of Health. The country cooperation strategy 2008-2013 was developed in collaboration with the Department of Health and other stakeholders and is closely

aligned to government priorities. The strategy focuses on:

- Strengthening health policies and systems to minimize inequities in access for poor and vulnerable people
- Reducing infant, child and maternal morbidity and mortality
- Combating HIV&AIDS, TB and malaria
- Preventing and reducing disease, disability and premature death from non-communicable conditions, accidents, violence and injuries
- Strengthening surveillance systems to promote the prevention of diseases and their impact on the health of poor and vulnerable people.<sup>39</sup>

**Effectiveness:** The WHO 2006-2007 Biennium Programme was less effective than planned. The work plan for the programme was only approved in May 2007, resulting in diminished spending and implementation rates.<sup>40</sup> The office's performance assessment shows that 75 percent of outcomes were partially achieved, 12 percent were fully achieved and 14 percent were not achieved.<sup>41</sup>

Although the implementation rate was lower than planned, WHO demonstrated its effectiveness in health crisis areas. Its ability to bring together local players and international expertise to respond to the public health crisis of extremely drug-resistant strains of TB is an example of effective intervention. WHO has also been an active supporter and facilitator of the Department of Health's efforts in the SADC region with the Trans-Limpopo Malaria Initiative and the Inter-Country Polio Initiative. With WHO support, the Department has developed a proposal to study the prevalence of TB, which will assist in providing more accurate figures on the disease so that the government can plan and implement a more effective response.

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38. The Presidency, Republic of South Africa: *Development Indicators*, June 2008.

39. WHO Country Cooperation Strategy 2008-2013, South Africa.

40. WHO Country Office South Africa, Contribution to the Regional Director's Report 2007.

41. WHO Office 2006-2007 Performance Assessment Report.

### 3.3.2 PAEDIATRIC DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT: CHILDREN'S ACCESS TO ANTIRETROVIRAL TREATMENT

An estimated 38,000 babies are born with HIV in South Africa each year, and another 26,000 newborns are infected through breastfeeding.<sup>42</sup> Early diagnosis and treatment of babies with HIV is seen as a key strategy for reducing infant and child mortality. Without treatment, an estimated 50 percent of HIV-positive newborns will die before their second birthday.<sup>43</sup> During 2005–2006, UNICEF supported early diagnosis and access to treatment by:

- Increasing the capacity of laboratories to conduct tests using innovative new testing techniques
- Supporting implementation of the down-referral method, which saw medical practitioners dispatched from the large Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital to outlying clinics to train doctors and nurses to administer antiretroviral medicines to children
- Supporting district collaboratives to facilitate the identification of problems and possible solutions to health problems by local stakeholders. This community-based approach was carried out in collaboration with the Institute for Health Improvement and the Centre for Rural Health Partnership.

In its plan for 2006–2007, UNICEF proposed support to expand testing capacity in KwaZulu-Natal, where the laboratory aimed to double the number of tests it conducted within a year. It also proposed to initiate a Paediatric Diagnosis and Treatment Consultative Forum. In the area of early treatment, the plan aimed to scale up its down-referral initiative and district collaboratives to an additional four provinces. It further proposed to integrate early testing and treatment into neonatal care and the integrated management of childhood illnesses.

UNICEF's support to child survival also involved technical support to the development of the National HIV&AIDS Strategic Plan, with emphasis on the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV; in addition, it supported the review of policy guidelines in this critical area. UNICEF also advocated for the inclusion of children under two years of age in a 2008 survey by the Human Sciences Research Council on HIV prevalence and incidence. This was hailed by UNICEF as the first population-based survey that includes children in this age group.

**Relevance:** The programme was relevant in that it addressed the needs of young children at risk of dying because they have no access to appropriate treatment. UNICEF support was also relevant to the health laboratory that lacked the capacity to significantly scale up testing. Such support is also consistent with the National Strategic Plan for HIV&AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections (2007–2011).

**Effectiveness:** The main results achieved by the programme include the following:

- Between 2005 and 2006, tests to determine whether a newborn had contracted HIV increased from 8,000 to 36,000. UNICEF estimated that about 300,000 children annually are exposed to HIV; provisional data from the children's organization indicate that testing capacity had been increased to 300,000 by 2008.
- The number of children receiving antiretroviral therapy increased from 25,000 in 2006 to 32,000 in 2007, thus reaching 47 percent of the 68,000 children estimated to be in need of treatment. Provisional data from UNICEF indicate that more than 50,000 children were receiving treatment by late 2008, representing 73 percent of children identified as in need.

42. Republic of South Africa, HIV&AIDS and STI [Sexually Transmitted Infections] Plan for South Africa, 2007–2011.

43. UNICEF, *Saving Children, Enhancing Lives: Combating HIV&AIDS in South Africa*, Second Edition, 2006.



It is not possible to determine the extent to which UNICEF actually achieved its objectives since there is no evidence of measurable goals or targets having been set for the programme. Nor was the programme featured in any of the planning documents (UNICEF country programme and UNDAF 2002-2006). It appears that the programme was a response to problems that emerged during 2004 and 2005 with regard to children's access to early testing and treatment.

The integration of this work into the broader programme of maternal and child survival will contribute to its sustainability since it will not be a stand-alone programme. The role of UNICEF has been to support the testing of models and approaches, and linking them to existing initiatives. The emphasis on capacity-building will also contribute to sustainability.

### 3.3.3 NATIONAL SCHOOL NUTRITION PROGRAMME (NSNP)

The Integrated Food Security and Nutrition Programme was endorsed in a July 2002 Cabinet workshop/meeting as a priority of the social cluster. The programme takes its lead from Goal 1 of the MDGs, which pledges to eradicate hunger, and aims to reduce by half the number of households suffering from food insecurity by 2015. The NSNP aims to:

- Improve enrolment and attendance and reduce drop-out rates by providing nutritious meals
- Encourage the establishment of sustainable food production initiatives in schools
- Promote nutrition education to improve nutritional knowledge and healthy eating and lifestyles in school communities.

UNICEF provided support to the Department of Education to evaluate the National School Nutrition Programme in 2007. External consultants were appointed and managed by UNICEF to conduct the evaluation, which was completed in early 2008. UNICEF is providing financial assistance to disseminate the evaluation's findings in the provinces.

Since early 2006, FAO and the departments of agriculture and education have worked to develop a package of support to the NSNP. The goal is to assist the Department of Education to consolidate the Sustainable Food Production Programme and the Nutrition Education Programme in schools and surrounding communities. The programme was to run from March 2006 to November 2007, but implementation was slowed as a result of delays in concluding the official agreement between the government and FAO.

**Relevance:** The area identified for support by FAO and UNICEF is highly relevant. Food security and children's nutrition and their access to education are a priority for the social cluster and are reflected in the government's Programme of Action. The support to evaluate the NSNP was relevant, as it was based on the needs of the departmental officials responsible for coordination of the programme. The FAO support at the level of programme detail can be assumed to be relevant to the needs of the Department.

**Effectiveness:** According to the Department of Education, the evaluation funded by UNICEF was useful in that it helped officials better understand the programme and generated productive internal debates. The findings also assisted in planning the programme for the next financial year. The Department did express disappointment that there was no skills transfer from the consultants to the Department, primarily as a result of the busy schedules of targeted officials.

### 3.3.4 ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

UNICEF support to early childhood development (ECD) has been in the form of working with departments to develop plans and guidelines to assist with the implementation of related policy. UNICEF:

- Supported, in 2004, the development of the National Integrated Plan for Early Childhood Development. The plan, which spanned the



years 2005–2010, was mandated by a Cabinet workshop/meeting and developed for the social sector cluster.

- Assisted the departments of education, health and social development to convene an experts meeting in December 2005. Officials, together with UNICEF national experts, met to share knowledge, insights and experiences in psychosocial care and support for HIV-positive children and those receiving antiretroviral therapy. This was largely unexplored territory for the Government of South Africa, and the intention of the meeting was to map critical interventions going forward.
- Advised the Department of Social Development in the formulation of Guidelines for Early Childhood Development Services, which were published in May 2006. For years, interventions in early childhood development had been based on interim guidelines, and UNICEF support helped conclude a long process.

**Relevance:** The support provided by UNICEF was relevant. The activities were based on the priorities in the government Programme of Action and were carried out at the request of the social sector cluster. The support was also relevant to the needs of the officials in respective departments who were involved in policy and programme development, as well as to practitioners in early childhood development.

**Effectiveness:** UNICEF activities in this area have been effective in that they assisted the government in achieving its objectives of developing an integrated plan and approach to early childhood development. The guidelines developed have provided a vehicle for the government to improve the quality of services related to early childhood development and ensuring that children's rights are protected.

The experts meeting was catalytic in that a number of knowledge or information resource requirements were identified and developed. The outputs of the workshop also served as input

to the National Integrated Plan on Early Childhood Development. In addition, the guidelines and studies are serving as an important information resource for the early childhood development component of the Expanded Public Works Programme.

### 3.3.5 UNICEF PARLIAMENTARY PROGRAMME

UNICEF established an office in Cape Town in 2007, with the aim of engaging the South African Parliament on children's issues. The rationale is that engagement with parliamentarians could have a significant impact on a range of children's issues. In practical terms, this means creating awareness among parliamentarians of the content of draft legislation such as the Children's Bill, supporting Parliament's public participation processes, and providing insights on budget allocations to children's programmes.

**Relevance:** The programme is relevant in its focus on children and their rights. Issues affecting children, in particular, poor and vulnerable children, are a priority of the government's social cluster. There are many programmes in government aimed at improving conditions for children, for example, social grants, programmes for the care and protection of orphans and vulnerable children, and programmes dealing with violence against children. A focus on the rights of children is relevant since the Constitution requires that children's rights not be abrogated.

**Effectiveness:** It is too early to judge the effectiveness of the programme since it has only been in operation for one year. The Cape Town office is the first of its kind in Africa and the Pan African Parliament has expressed interest in applying this model in other African countries. The office is not without its challenges:

- Parliamentarians have busy schedules, so access is a challenge.
- The Parliament's schedule is set, and often work has to be done within very tight deadlines.
- The capacity of the office is limited, which constrains what it can realistically achieve.

### 3.4 GOVERNANCE

Good governance is one of the key pillars on which the growth and development of South Africa rests. The adoption of the Constitution in 1996, the creation of a single public service from the fragmented apartheid administrations, the establishment of a new system of local government, and the transformation of the machinery of government are some of the milestones in enhancing governance in South Africa. There has also been a drive to combat corruption in both the public and private sectors under the auspices of the National Anti-Corruption Framework.

South Africa presents a comprehensive set of legislation and programmes aimed at enhancing governance in the country. However, implementation is relatively weak due to capacity challenges. The country report for South Africa's African Peer Review Mechanism noted the gains made by South Africa. It also identified capacity constraints and poor service delivery, especially at provincial and local government level as a recurrent theme of meetings with stakeholders. This lack of capacity was identified as a major constraint to efforts to improve the quality of governance and service delivery.<sup>44</sup>

#### 3.4.1 CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR LOCAL GOVERNANCE

The Capacity-Building for Local Governance (CBLG) programme commenced in 1999 in support of South Africa's drive to transform local government. The first phase of the programme focused on the North West and Limpopo provinces and had three components: improvements in service delivery and institutional capacity-building and integrating a rights-based approach to development. The programme was a partnership between the Government of South Africa through the Department of Provincial and Local Government and UNDP (with UN DESA as the implementing

partner). A mid-term review of the programme in 2002 found that the results of CBLG fell far short of expectations, primarily as a result of poor project management on the part of the implementing agent, compounded by slow progress by the Government of South Africa on the local government agenda. Consequently, the Department of Provincial and Local Government and UNDP agreed to redesign the programme, which aimed to achieve the following outputs in 10 municipalities in the two provinces:

- Qualitative improvement in Integrated Development Plans to support more effective and efficient service delivery
- Cooperative relations between district and local municipalities, especially on issues of service delivery
- Improved municipal governance capacity
- Enhanced ability of national and provincial government and district municipalities to monitor and build capacity of local municipalities
- Knowledge management and broader sharing of lessons learned.<sup>45</sup>

**Relevance:** In its redesigned form, the CBLG was relevant to the needs of local government in South Africa. The project appraisal noted that extensive consultations had been undertaken to align the programme with the strategic objectives of the Department of Provincial and Local Government, as well as with the local development priorities reflected in the resolutions of the President's Coordinating Council. A number of changes to the institutional arrangements were proposed by the Department of Provincial and Local Government to ensure ownership of the programme by the Government of South Africa, and a plea was made for flexibility of outputs to allow for changes in government priorities.<sup>46</sup>

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44. African Union, *African Peer Review Mechanism Country Report: South Africa*, 2007.

45. Government of the Republic of South Africa and UNDP, *Refocus of the Capacity Building for Local Governance Project SAF 99/001*, September 2004.

46. Capacity-Building for Local Governance Programme, *Minutes of Project Appraisal Committee Meeting*, 13 August 2004.

**Effectiveness:** The redesigned CBLG was never implemented, although there were discussions between UNDP and the Department of Provincial and Local Government in June 2005 on ways to move forward. There were discussions again in 2006 to ascertain whether the CBLG could refocus support to Project Consolidate, a major new initiative of the government to provide hands-on support to 136 municipalities. According to officials in Department of Provincial and Local Government, UNDP did not communicate further with the department after several meetings were held to set up the project management unit for the redesigned programme. Attempts were made to follow up, but there was no feedback from UNDP, nor did the department receive formal communication to indicate that the funds had been redirected to other programmes.

### 3.4.2 SOUTHERN AFRICA CAPACITY INITIATIVE

The Southern Africa Capacity Initiative (SACI) started up in 2004, as the UN's response to the triple threat of food insecurity, weakened governance and HIV&AIDS in Southern Africa, identified by the UN's Special Envoys on HIV&AIDS and Food Security. It was envisaged that the programme would address the capacity crisis in countries in the SADC region, including South Africa. The situation analysis from different countries found that most public services were operating in a pre-AIDS epidemic mode and had not reviewed their capacity to taking into consideration the impact of the epidemic. The major elements of the initiative were:

- Deploying UN volunteers in various sectors to respond to the capacity shortage
- Working with public sector management institutions to rapidly scale up skills development in the public sector
- Reorganizing service delivery and introducing efficiencies
- Introducing technology to improve service delivery.

The programme developed a detailed methodology that comprised a process for engagement and a set of tools for planning, designing and implementing transformative service delivery. The programme officially ended in 2007, though the SACI methodology has been refined for continued application in capacity-building programmes of UNDP. In South Africa, various aspects of the programme were implemented in the three focal provinces of KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Limpopo.

**Relevance:** The relevance of the programme to the South African context is debatable. Even though South Africa is considered the epicentre of the AIDS epidemic, has governance challenges, and segments of its population experience hunger, the threat perceived by the UN Special Envoys did not affect South Africa in the same way as it did in other countries in the region. The view that many governments in the region had not reviewed their public service establishment registers since 1974 did not hold true for South Africa, which had undergone a major restructuring and transformation process since 1994. This was a clear case that 'one size does not fit all'.

South Africa does have serious capacity constraints in the public sector, and remedying this problem has been a priority for the government. Some elements of the SACI programme were of interest to one or two departments, but the scale of support offered by the programme was small relative to other government capacity-building programmes.

**Effectiveness:** A challenge in evaluating the effectiveness of SACI is that the objectives for the programme in South Africa were not made explicit. SACI in South Africa never made it to the mainstream of the government's capacity-building endeavours, nor did the model for optimizing service delivery achieve much beyond the two to three provincial government departments where it was applied. The fact that SACI was developed without input from the South African public service may have made the

concept difficult to sell to government officials. There is no evidence of consultation or collaboration with the Department of Public Service and Administration, the lead department for driving the government's initiatives in service delivery improvement and capacity-building in that area. The implementation of SACI methodology requires expertise in business-process re-engineering, finance transformation, organizational restructuring and change management, in addition to expertise in the subject matter (for example, hospital management). Such expertise does not reside in UNDP and without a significant budget to purchase such expertise, SACI could not deliver on its promise.

### 3.4.3 ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF SOUTH AFRICA'S ROLE IN THE NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD), THE AFRICAN UNION AND SOUTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE

The evaluation could find only limited UN activities that supported South Africa's role in the region or the continent with regard to governance:

- UNDP assisted the Government of South Africa to secure a grant proposal for the African Ministers Programme. According to staff at the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), UNDP helped them finalize the proposal in record time, even though it involved multiple stakeholders.
- UNDP also assisted DPSA with interim funding of a senior position in its Governance Branch, which is responsible for International and African Affairs.

- The extent of involvement of the UNDP country office in the Africa Peer Review Mechanism was limited to the administration of funds.
- There are no programmed activities in the UNDAF governance & administration cluster on promoting South-South dialogue on governance issues. The DPSA leads the government's public administration working group in India, Brazil and South Africa and has had no support from the UN system in South Africa.

**Relevance:** The governance & administration cluster appears to be disconnected from the lead departments on the government side, which are the Department of Provincial and Local Governance and DPSA. Although the UNDAF is aligned at the level of priorities with the cluster, the content of the programmes and nature of support are not necessarily aligned. The level at which the UNDAF 2007-2010 has been pitched in the area of governance is operational rather than strategic, and the UN is not forefront in the minds of lead department officials in the governance & administration cluster. As one official said, they tend to forget that the UN can assist them.

**Effectiveness:** As the lead agency in the governance & administration cluster, UNDP has focused its attention on three provinces. While this is appropriate for the nature of the support proposed in the UNDAF 2007-2010, engagement with the provinces cannot be effective in the absence of broader engagement with national departments within the framework of intergovernmental relations.



## Chapter 4

# PEACE & SECURITY

As a country with very high crime rate in a relatively unstable region, peace and security are among the central policy issues of the Government of South Africa. Consequently, the 2008 State of the Nation Address included as priority areas “revamping the criminal justice system to intensify our offensive against crime” and “enhancing our focus on key areas in terms of our system of international relations, with particular focus on some African issues and South-South relations.”

The evaluation of UN assistance to peace and security in South Africa addresses the following key issues: peacekeeping, crime prevention, the justice system, drug control, and actions against corruption and terrorism.

### 4.1 PEACEKEEPING

The UN’s capacity to implement peacekeeping operations has been a central strand of its work to maintain international peace and security since 1948. UN peacekeeping has undergone significant reform, in large part owing to the publication and implementation of the *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (known as the ‘Brahimi Report’) in 2000, which was commissioned by the UN Secretary-General after failures in UN peacekeeping during the 1990s. This process of reform is ongoing. The UN has set out its Peacekeeping 2010 agenda to build on the Brahimi reforms and enable it to meet the challenges of managing complex peacekeeping operations in the 21st century.

UN peacekeeping missions are mandated by the Security Council and established and sustained

by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, in partnership with many other actors within and outside the UN system. In recent years, the UN has often partnered with regional organizations such as the African Union or European Union at various stages over the life of a peacekeeping mission, in order to exploit their complementary capacities. In 2005, the Security Council and the General Assembly established a new UN Peacebuilding Commission,<sup>47</sup> whose purpose is to advise on strategic priorities for peacebuilding and bring together international political, donor and military efforts in a given country, as well as to highlight any gaps that threaten to undermine peacebuilding and, where necessary, to mobilize funding.

The peaceful resolution of Africa’s conflicts is one of the cornerstones of South Africa’s foreign policy, which is intended to create a better South Africa, a better Africa, and a better world. The policy is not only based on South Africa’s own security interests, but also on its political and economic engagement in the region. Since 1994, South Africa has participated in several UN peacekeeping operations and currently is among the largest troop-contributing countries in the UN. South Africa has also contributed to African Union operations, and is the largest African financial contributor to that organization’s peacekeeping. UN peacekeeping policy, structures and doctrine have evolved over the years to reflect the changing nature of peacekeeping.

Under the auspices of the Department of Foreign Affairs, a White Paper on Peace Missions was developed to guide any future role South Africa may have in such missions. The White Paper formed the core policy response to the widespread

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47. Security Council resolutions 1645 (2005) and 1646 (2005), and General Assembly resolution A/RES/60/180.



expectations that South Africa had to contribute to the prevention and resolution of these conflicts. The Cabinet approved the paper in 1999, after almost two years of consultative deliberations. It adopted a holistic, multidisciplinary approach, where political and military tasks were also driven by humanitarian concerns. Its scope was wide, covering not only philosophical and political concerns of peace-support operations, but also practical issues of contributions.

The White Paper reiterated the position that “participation is increasingly a prerequisite for international respectability and for an authoritative voice in the debate on the future of international conflict management and the reform of intergovernmental organizations such as the UN, the OAU [Organization of African Unity] and the Southern African Development Community.” However, as South African experience in peace-keeping accumulated, the White Paper was criticized for being too academic and impractical, and a review and update of it started in 2006.

#### 4.1.1 BURUNDI

South Africa was formally drawn into the Burundi peace process in 1999 when former President Nelson Mandela was appointed facilitator of the Arusha Peace Process and most of the warring parties signed a peace agreement in August 2000. The Arusha Agreement called for security assurances in the form of international troop deployments. South Africa found itself in a position where it was expected to devise a strategy to support the fledgling peace process by deploying its own forces. This deployment took place in 2001, for the first time under the new policy conceived in South Africa’s White Paper on Peace Missions.

The strategic and operational foundations for this deployment were informed by ongoing engagement with the Organization of African Unity (now the African Union), and a number of regional actors.

Five principal international interventions with South African participation were deployed in

Burundi after the signing of the Arusha Agreement. These included the:

- South African Peacekeeping Role in Burundi Protection Service Detachment in 2001
- African Union Mission in Burundi in 2003/2004
- United Nations Mission in Burundi in 2004/2006
- Bureau Intégré des Nations Unies au Burundi in October 2006
- African Union Special Task Force in 2007.

Initially, the African Union attempted to put together a small multinational force with the task of providing protection and support to the members of the Temporary Burundian Government. South Africa agreed to contribute, but because no ceasefire agreements had been concluded at the time, no other country was willing to undertake the risk. The South African Protection Service Detachment (SAPSD), consisting of 700 troops, was swiftly deployed to Burundi on 27 October 2001 to provide security for Burundian leaders returning from exile. The original plan was that the SAPSD would undertake this responsibility on a bilateral basis with an inclusive all-Burundian Special Protection Unit. Although the Arusha Agreement allowed for the establishment and training of a unit to perform this function, the level of political distrust in Burundi was such that the unit could not at first be set up. However, the Special Protection Unit was finally established during February 2004, but still awaits international assistance in terms of training and equipment.

Although the SAPSD was successful in completing its assigned functions, it was limited from playing a broader role in the peace process. It could neither play an extensive peacekeeping role, nor could it provide protection to civilians, as its deployment was primarily based in Bujumbura. The Government of South Africa therefore called on donor contributions to cover a proposed regional peace-support force. South Africa led in assisting the African Union in planning for the initiation

of a mission, and South African National Defence Force personnel formed the majority of headquarters staff. The 91st Ordinary Session of the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, held in Addis Ababa, on 2 April 2003 mandated the deployment of the African Union Mission in Burundi for a period of one year, pending the deployment of a UN Peacekeeping Mission.

The mission in Burundi was the African Union's first peacekeeping mission, and it proved to be a test case. It reflected the intention of its members to intervene in situations in which the UN refused to become involved as well as the manner in which the African Union and UN could complement one another in peace-support operations. The UN would not intervene in Burundi unless a ceasefire agreement had been signed. The African Union was able to respond to the needs on the ground and to secure an environment conducive to UN engagement.

The African Union Mission in Burundi was a partial success, although it cannot be claimed that the mission fully facilitated the ceasefire agreement. It did, however, contribute to the stabilization of many parts of the country and to the delivery of humanitarian assistance. It also provided protection to the returning leadership and to coordinating mission activities with the UN in Burundi. After the signing of the ceasefire agreement in 2003, the UN started negotiations for the deployment of a mission. Although the African Union Mission was credible and accepted in the country, its high costs to the countries contributing troops highlighted the importance of a UN mission being deployed.

South Africa played an important role in the transitional operation to the United Nations Mission in Burundi. It continued to be the largest force present on the ground, contributing approximately 1,500 troops, which proved to be a determining factor for the deployment of the UN mission. By January 2006, South Africa's continued contribution to the mission included 888 troops and five military observers.

The latest UN mission in Burundi, the Bureau Intégré des Nations Unies au Burundi, was established in part to facilitate the implementation of the ceasefire between different Burundian factions, signed on 7 September 2006 and mediated primarily by the South African government. The mission mandate mostly stated a need to support the implementation of the agreement, assist in the reform of the security sector and provide support for the reintegration of ex-combatants.

With the request from the Government of Burundi for the UN to leave the country following elections, the African Union felt there was a need for a continuing mission to safeguard stability. Thus, the African Union Special Task Force was deployed in order to protect the FNL leadership in cooperation with the Government of Burundi, working with both the military and the police. Although the African Union wanted a larger presence, it did not have the financial and organizational capacity that would allow this. South Africa was, therefore, the lead nation in this mission as the only troop-contributing country and the primary source of financial support and resource assistance. South Africa has therefore maintained an almost continuous presence in Burundi since 2000.

**Relevance:** The objectives of the peacekeeping efforts are in line with South Africa's real needs and priorities. Peace and stability is the basis for development. However, due to the need to act quickly, the politically approved processes – that is, those laid out in the White Paper – were not followed in many instances.

UN conventions and resolutions have been turned into national legislation and South Africa is playing a strong role on the African continent. This activity contributes very strongly towards a better Africa and better world. However, lack of resources hampers South African and African Union capability to address the needs of Africa for peace and stabilization.

**Effectiveness:** The objectives have been reached with mixed levels of success in different countries,

often due to factors outside the control of the parties involved in peacekeeping missions: time frames and levels of support can change rapidly and become unpredictable. Resource limitations remain a major constraint on effectiveness.

Different mandates, reporting structures and time frames impact negatively on delivery. The fit between the political and military priorities and responsibilities is not always optimal.

Well functioning channels of communication and strong relationships were developed over time, specifically at tactical and operational levels. The UN's role as strategist, facilitator and coordinator has strongly contributed to successes in various African countries. However, as acknowledged by the UN in 2005, "many 'new' wars occur in countries that have failed to consolidate peace." When peacebuilding fails, "parties to conflict often unleash greater violence than in the prior war," as seen in Angola in 1991 and Rwanda in 1994. Kofi Annan in 2005 argued that this illustrates the need for the UN to ensure that "peace agreements are implemented in a sustained and sustainable manner."<sup>48</sup> This was also one of the rationales for creating the Peacebuilding Commission.

In addition to being among the largest troop-contributing countries to the UN and a contributor to international and African efforts to secure peace and security in Africa, South Africa has acted as a facilitator in conflict situations on the continent, which assisted in creating conditions necessary for the deployment of peacekeeping operations or political dialogue between conflicting parties. The UN Security Council, in fact, paid tribute to the "facilitation efforts of South Africa in the service of peace in Burundi."<sup>49</sup>

## 4.2 CRIME PREVENTION

Interventions in the area of crime prevention focus on the need to prevent victimization, to protect and assist victims and to treat them with

compassion and respect for their dignity. They also seek to enhance the capacity of SADC Member States in implementing the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols.

The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been instrumental in the following interventions:

- Developing effective law enforcement responses to violence against women in the Southern African region
- Assisting SADC Member States in drafting legislation and policy on trafficking in persons and developing a regional Plan of Action on trafficking in persons
- Establishing a 'One-Stop-Centre' to counteract violence against women and children in Western Cape, North West, Northern Cape, Mpumalanga and Gauteng provinces
- Supporting South Africa's Victim Empowerment Programme.

Starting in 1998, UNODC established three outreach centres: in Mpumalanga, Eastern and Northern Cape. Its main objectives are to provide a range of services, including legal services, counselling, medical assistance, support groups and overnight shelter to survivors of violence, specifically women and children. The centres also provide rehabilitation services, including counselling and support groups, for male perpetrators and potential perpetrators in order to break the cycle of violence. The responsibility for the daily management and operation of the centres has been handed over to the respective provincial governments. UNODC also provided support to three other provinces – Limpopo, Northern Cape and North West – mainly in the form of national UN Volunteers who were available on-site for a wide variety of functions, such as awareness-raising, counselling and administrative support. The UN Volunteers also provided assistance to the Mpumalanga and Eastern Cape centres.

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48. UN document A/59/2005/Add. 2, paragraphs 1-2.

49. UN Security Council resolution 1719 (2006).

**Relevance:** The interventions address important needs and priorities and are all very relevant. UN conventions related to this area have been turned into legislation and policy guidelines. These were addressed in individual departmental strategic plans for implementation. Support towards the Victim Empowerment Programme also addresses gender, human rights and issues related to HIV&AIDS.

**Effectiveness:** The centres function and achieve what they were meant to do. However, the UN system did not facilitate a strategic and influential role for the government in combating violence against women in the SADC region or elsewhere. South Africa is active in this regard in the Southern Africa Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization as well as in SADC and the wider African context. However, there is potential for a strategic partnership between the UN and South Africa in taking a stand against violence directed at women that could reverberate continent-wide.

Overall, there is a lack of strategic thinking and management processes to ensure coordinated implementation in line with South African priorities. The country lacks a coherent approach on how to engage with UN agencies and other development partners on specific priority themes and no formal management process is in place to ensure effective implementation. The UN agencies should follow procedures laid down by recipient countries, and the Government of South Africa should establish comprehensive processes to ensure strategic alignment, coordination among stakeholders and a formal process to manage interventions – from the policy and strategic level to implementation at local levels. Lack of accountability and responsibility is apparent at all levels.

### 4.3 THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

Interventions in this area were operational in nature. The following interventions have been implemented:

- Support was provided for the development of appropriate criminal justice responses to young offenders. The objective was to assist in the use of diversion by the government and NGO sector, to protect children in detention, and to raise awareness about the transformation of child justice. Activities included a needs analysis of diversion and alternative sentencing; assistance in drafting regulations and standards for new child justice legislation; and advocacy in the field of child justice.
- Judicial officers were trained to improve performance in drug-related casework. The objective was to strengthen judicial and prosecutorial capacity to administer drug-control legislation.
- The integrity and capacity of the court system was strengthened, enhancing the rule of law. A comprehensive assessment tool was developed to determine the specific needs and conditions of the country's judicial system. The assessment covered a national sample of court professions (prosecutors, lawyers and magistrates) as well as provincial samples of court personnel and users of specific courts in Mpumalanga, Gauteng and Northern Cape provinces. Key findings are the need to:
  - Increase accessibility to the courts
  - Make the delivery of justice more efficient
  - Enhance public trust in the justice system
  - Increase independence
  - Improve fairness and impartiality of the judiciary
  - Enhance the integrity, accountability and oversight of the justice sector.

**Relevance:** The interventions relate to high-level priorities of the government. Relevant conventions have been turned into national legislation, a process that is fairly well developed and established in South Africa. Yet the link from ratification into mainstream strategic planning



cycles is almost non-existent. The process of harmonizing interventions supported by international partners with government planning and implementation processes is very poorly developed. Nor is there a link between these interventions and the process of influencing debates at the UN General Assembly or Security Council, the G-77 or governing bodies of UN agencies.

**Effectiveness:** Effective implementation is hampered by poor institutional linkages. The interventions have been planned and developed at the operational level, and it is not clear how much influence South African counterparts had in determining the content and scope of the interventions. A formal process of guiding and managing UN agency interventions in South Africa is either lacking or not implemented. UN agencies enter departments based on personal networking and not through established and agreed-upon processes between the government and the UN system. The Department of Foreign Affairs is an important role-player in terms of coordinating on behalf of government. But fragmentation and lack of formal processes to follow through on political and high-level strategic discussions to ensure coordination, harmonization and alignment with governmental and departmental strategic frameworks are lacking. The same deficiencies are applicable at the regional level.

Interventions in this area can contribute towards a better South Africa and region if effective systems and processes are put in place to manage strategic partnerships and to ensure consistency at political, policy and implementation levels. Current interventions might be effective at the micro-level, but can become lost opportunities when it comes to being effective on a broader scale.

#### 4.4 DRUG CONTROL

Interventions by UNODC in this area are both of a normative and operational nature and cover both national and regional projects and programmes. They include:

- Drug abuse prevention and HIV&AIDS awareness-creation among juvenile prisoners in South Africa
- Container control in South Africa
- The South African Airport Interdiction Project
- Counter-narcotics enforcement
- Drug-demand reduction and a related HIV&AIDS prevention project for Western Cape Province
- Precursor control in Southern Africa to control substances used in the manufacturing of illicit drugs and psychotropic substances. Activities include: reviewing current laws and regulations to ensure conformity with Article 12 of the 1988 UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and related resolutions of the UN Economic and Social Council; establishing mechanisms between regulatory and law enforcement authorities to prevent the diversion of precursor chemicals from illicit trade; developing law enforcement capabilities in the detection of trafficking and dismantling of illicit laboratories; assessing laboratories with regard to their capability to undertake advance tests on precursor chemicals
- Two programmes supported by UNODC Regional Office are enhancing drug awareness nationally and drug education in schools: Community Counselling, Treatment and Rehabilitation Services for Drug Abusers in disadvantaged areas, launched 1999 with the Department for Social Development, and the National Drug Awareness and Schools Education Programme, launched in 2004 with the departments for social development and for education
- Counter-measures against illicit drug trafficking and cross-border crime at international ports of entry in the SADC region
- Support for the Establishment and Strengthening of Joint (Customs/Police) Port Drug Units at Southern and Eastern



African Seaports (2002-2004). In collaboration with the World Customs Organization and host governments, UNODC helped to create specialized joint port drug units in the nine countries along Africa's eastern and southern coastlines. The project has provided training, equipment, logistical support and expert advice to these units. Phases one and two included Djibouti (Djibouti), South Africa (Durban, Cape Town, Port Elizabeth and the Johannesburg Dry Port), Kenya (Mombasa), United Republic of Tanzania (Dar es Salaam), Mozambique (Maputo) and Mauritius (Port Louis)

- A project called Judicial System Training in Southern and Eastern Africa (2000-2004) aimed to meet the drug-related training needs of judges, magistrates, prosecutors and investigators in Southern and Eastern Africa. Participating countries included Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe
- Community-Based Drug Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation in Disadvantaged Areas (1999-2004), implemented in collaboration with the NGO sector and the Department of Health, is focused on youth and driven by decisions made in consultation with national and provincial authorities. The link between drug-related risk behaviour and the spread of HIV was emphasized throughout
- Drug Interdiction Training and Prevention Initiatives (1999-2003) aimed to build the capacity of drug law enforcement agencies within South Africa – and to a limited extent in neighbouring countries – to interdict the flow of illicit narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.
- The Land Border Capacity-Building in South-Eastern Africa (1999-2003) project aimed to increase seizures of illicit drugs and other crime-related materials by law

enforcement agencies in Mozambique, South Africa and Swaziland. The project provided basic and specialized equipment and training to increase the capacity of interdiction units (police, customs and immigration) at border posts to combat illicit drug smuggling and organized crime. Special training was provided to the linked areas of trafficking in firearms and stolen motor vehicles, as well as the cross-border movement of people in these three countries. An independent evaluation noted that the three countries are now better able to deal with these problems and that notable improvements have occurred in the interdiction rates associated with cross-border drug trafficking and related crime. Various South African departments and their regional counterparts have benefited from these projects. Communication between the South African departments and the UN system in this area was very good and solid relationships were established over time.

Various UN conventions, protocols and resolutions related to drug control have been incorporated in South African and regional regulatory frameworks over the past couple of years.

**Relevance:** The objectives are in line with internationally accepted standards and practices to deal with global priorities and are aligned with South African and regional priorities. South Africa is active in influencing conventions related to drug control on an international level and using the UN Security Council and UNODC to further its agenda.

UN conventions are incorporated in South African and regional legislation, policies and procedures. Consistency in process and procedures in a regional context can be improved. Major needs still exist in terms of capacity development in the region, including South Africa.

South Africa is playing a leading role in the SADC region and on the African continent in terms of interdiction, but UN assistance is still needed in terms of capacity-building in South Africa and beyond its borders.

**Effectiveness:** Agreement between the partners at the political, strategic and operational levels had clearly defined objectives; implementation is the responsibility of individual member states or regional mechanisms.

The UN role is mostly in the normative and capacity development fields. In terms of capacity development, South African counterparts reported huge successes, and demand exists both nationally and regionally for repeated training courses. Capacity-building in the region is a major issue to be addressed. External funding and resources will be required to meet these needs.

Ratified UN conventions have been turned into national legislation and agreement of them has even been reached at the regional level. Some gaps in supporting mechanisms still exist, which impact negatively on the effectiveness of implementation. South Africa is dependent on regional cooperation on this matter and effectiveness is affected by the lack of capacity in the region. Implementation of the interventions however, was very effective at the operational level. The UN system is flexible in facilitating South Africa's inputs at the international level.

The lack of a process to manage consistency among the UNDAF, strategy development at the cluster and regional levels, individual departmental strategic planning and the Medium-term Expenditure Framework has create situations where projects were designed at the operational level without formal links to the strategic environment. For example, individual decisions within departments such as the South African Police Service to restructure their units had a serious and negative effect on the overall aim of the projects and drained capacity from the system that had been developed over years.

At the regional level, the lack of a process to ensure consistency from policy to operational levels is even more visible. Various supporting processes are not attended to and therefore interventions appear to be ad hoc and not addressing the total system.

## 4.5 FIGHTING CORRUPTION

Within the Southern Africa region, corruption is of growing concern as a developmental issue. In conjunction with drug trafficking and other forms of transnational crime, it undermines the regional capacity to nurture growth and reduce poverty. The confidence of citizens and foreign investors in the ability of governments to uphold the rule of law and provide security is to a great extent related to 'good and clean governance'.

In 1999, UNODC launched the United Nations Global Programme against Corruption, focusing on the development of the UN Convention against Corruption. Regional activities, such as those in Southern Africa, provide support to anti-corruption capacities within groups of countries, such as the SADC Protocol against Corruption, the Southern African Forum Against Corruption, monitoring corruption through the Human Rights Trust of Southern Africa, and networking with donors and civil society. At the country level, in South Africa, for instance, technical assistance is provided to national programmes against corruption. These include the assessment and monitoring of corruption trends and the efficacy of anti-corruption measures; anti-corruption legislation; dedicated anti-corruption agencies and coordination with other agencies on an anti-corruption mandate; strengthening the internal capacity of government departments for risk management and anti-corruption mechanisms; and public awareness and community anti-corruption work.

In 2001, the Department of Public Service and Administration and the UNODC signed an agreement on 'UN Support to the National Anti-Corruption Programme'. Within this framework a number of activities were carried out. These included support for the preparation of the Public Service Anti-Corruption Strategy, which was adopted by the government in January 2002, as well as the Prevention and Combating of Corrupt Activities Act, which was adopted in April 2004. The strategy was implemented over a three-year period. In 2006, a comprehensive

audit to assess progress was carried out. It concluded that, overall, the strategy had been implemented, although some gaps remained.

The Public Service Commission's research reports into provincial anti-corruption mechanisms confirm that there is a distinct lack of coherent and consistent application of corruption prevention mechanisms and legislation. This was especially apparent in provincial departments in Free State and KwaZulu-Natal provinces.

In terms of support for corruption prevention, the UNODC has partnered with the Public Service Commission since 1999 in helping to establish an anti-corruption coalition. In 2001, the coalition was formally established as the National Anti-Corruption Forum, at its launch in Cape Town. UNODC has also supported both National Anti-Corruption Summits held during 2005 and 2008. As part of implementing the resolutions passed at these summits, a National Anti-Corruption Programme was established. Many of the projects have been implemented, as reported at the Third National Anti-Corruption Summit, some with UNODC support.

UNODC has also facilitated the sharing of best practices from South Africa for combating corruption within the region. In the UNODC project to combat corruption in Swaziland, experts from the South African Office of the Public Service Commission, the Department of Public Service and Administration, the National Prosecuting Authority and the Special Investigating Unit have played a major role in supporting the Anti-Corruption Programme of Swaziland.

Also, within the framework of this programme, jointly with the Department of Public Service and Administration, UNODC prepared the first comprehensive 'Country Corruption Assessment Report', which was adopted by the government in January 2003 and launched and presented to the Parliament in April of that year. The project has also provided assistance through mentors to the National Directorate of Public Prosecutions to work on special anti-corruption investigative

approaches and techniques and set up the Integrity Management Unit.

With the Department of Public Service and Administration, UNODC handed over their joint report on the 'Focused Assessment of Anti-Corruption Capacity within the Department of Correctional Services' to the Minister of Correctional Services in 2004. The report provides a detailed description and analysis of the anti-corruption scenario within the department. It analysed the strengths and weaknesses of the legislative framework; institutional capacities for prevention, investigation and prosecution; management policy and practice; and ethics existing within the Department for Correctional Services. The analyses were followed by a set of strategic and operational recommendations on strengthening the department's capacity to fight corruption.

The Memorandum of Understanding on corruption between South Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and UNODC is of strategic importance for the region.

The SADC response to corruption culminated in the adoption and signing of the SADC Protocol against Corruption (14 August 2001). All 14 SADC Member States, demonstrating a clear political commitment and regional response to addressing corruption, signed the Protocol. As a regional body, SADC joins other regional entities that have adopted the regional anti-corruption instruments, including the Organization of American States, the Council of Europe and the European Union. The SADC Protocol was also timely in view of the preparations of the new anti-corruption instrument proposed by the African Union and the United Nations Convention against Corruption.

**Relevance:** Addressing corruption is clearly an international priority and aligned with South African and regional priorities.

UN conventions are incorporated in South African legislation and national strategy. However, implementation remains a concern, largely due to

lack of capacity, processes and mechanisms to translate conventions into a coherent strategy and to implement these at the national and regional level.

South Africa is playing a leading role in fighting corruption in the SADC region and on the African continent, but it lacks the ability to put a consistent mechanism in place to ensure effective strategy development and implementation of any strategies or plans.

Interventions in this regard can contribute strongly towards a better South Africa, better Africa and a better world if there is coherent planning and effective processes and systems in place to ensure implementation.

**Effectiveness:** Ratified UN conventions have been turned into national legislation, and the UN system is flexible in facilitating South Africa's inputs at the international level. However, the partnership between South Africa and the UN in this regard is limited to ad hoc interventions. Ad hoc seminars and even projects with limited scope have little value if they are not turned into coherent strategies that are effectively implemented.

There is scope for much stronger partnerships to address the lack of coherent strategies and to ensure their implementation in a structured, formalized manner with clear roles and responsibilities, and that take into account reporting, monitoring, evaluation, accountability and corrective measures.

#### 4.6 COUNTERING TERRORISM

The UN General Assembly has focused on terrorism as an international problem since 1972. In the 1970s and 1980s, it addressed the problem through various resolutions. In recent years, Member States have advanced their counter-terrorism work through the General Assembly on both legal and operational tracks. The Assembly's norm-setting work has been marked by recent successes in adopting conventions

aimed at suppressing terrorism financing, bombings and access to nuclear material. World leaders at the 2005 September Summit unequivocally condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes. Building on this historic platform, the Summit also requested Member States to work through the General Assembly to adopt a counter-terrorism strategy – based on recommendations from the Secretary-General – that would promote comprehensive, coordinated and consistent responses at the national, regional and international level. The resulting strategy is in the form of a resolution (A/RES/60/288) with an annexed plan of action. With this strategy the General Assembly has concretely reaffirmed and enhanced its role in countering terrorism. The strategy also calls for the Assembly to monitor implementation and to review and update the strategy.

Member States receive assistance with their counter-terrorism efforts through the work of various United Nations departments, programmes and specialized agencies. UNODC, for example, provides countries with assistance on counter-terrorism legislation; UNDP addresses development and governance issues that have bearing on counter-terrorism work; the International Atomic Energy Agency undertakes work to prevent nuclear terrorism and WHO promotes measures to address the threat of bio-terrorism. The International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Maritime Organization have been addressing the security of commercial aviation and of ships and port facilities, respectively, for decades.

Pursuant to UN Security Council resolution 1535 (2004), the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee, through its Executive Directorate, visited South Africa in June 2008 to monitor the country's implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) and to continue the dialogue on Security Council resolution 1624 (2005). In addition to these objectives, and perhaps more importantly, the visit also identified areas in which South Africa would benefit from receiving technical



assistance in order to fully implement the 2001 resolution. Areas where South Africa could assist fellow Member States on technical and legislative issues in the region were also identified and are receiving attention.

South Africa's Department of Foreign Affairs chairs a Counter-Terrorism Interdepartmental Working Group in which the intelligence community and all relevant departments are represented. In addition to providing policy advice, the Working Group also coordinates feedback to the Counter-Terrorism Committee and ensures that the international counter-terrorism mechanisms to which South Africa is a signatory are adhered to and are reflected in South Africa's regulatory framework. In this regard, policy advice is currently being developed to address the implications for South Africa if her nationals were to be listed by the UN Security Council resolution 1267 Committee for having alleged links to international terrorism.

In line with the African Union's 'Ezulwini Consensus', the Government of South Africa is of the view that the lack of consensus on the definition of terrorism within the United Nations is problematic. Many countries feel that the fight for self-determination cannot be defined as terrorism. In light of its own history, the Government of South Africa shares this view and distinguishes between terrorism and the legitimate struggle for national liberation or self-determination undertaken in accordance with international law and the UN Charter. On the sensitive issue of executive powers to combat terrorism, the government holds the opinion that "international cooperation in combating terrorism is pivotal. But just as important, is that this international cooperation is done in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations, including respect for civil liberties, human rights and the rule of law. The Security Council in particular has wide ranging powers to list persons and entities that it believes to be linked to terrorists or certain acts. In listing

such persons it is very important that due process is followed and the principles of natural justice are adhered to."<sup>50</sup>

In April 2005, the President of South Africa stated that on the following month, the Protection of Constitutional Democracy against Terrorism and Related Activities Act would become operational. The Act makes the Republic of South Africa fully compliant with UN Counter-Terrorism Conventions and Protocols, as well as the African Union Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism. The Act makes terrorism and related activities a general offence, and equips law enforcement agencies in South Africa to effectively deal with both international and domestic terrorist activities. Furthermore, the Act provides extraterritorial jurisdiction in respect to specified offences, along with measures to combat the financing of terrorist activities, in line with Security Council resolutions and the International Convention on the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism.

In June 2008, the UN Counter-Terrorism Committee Directorate reported positively on South Africa's progress, specifically in relation to the South Africa's counter-terrorism legislation. It also recommended that the Protection of Constitutional Democracy against Terrorism and Related Activities Act be used as a best practice on the African continent. The African Union is already working on model legislation.

**Relevance:** Work undertaken in this area is fully in line with internationally accepted standards and practices. The UN role is mostly normative. Capacity-building in the region in the area of counter-terrorism is a major issue yet to be addressed. The implications of UN conventions, even before they have been ratified, have already been incorporated into South African legislation, policies and procedures. Implementation in South Africa is coordinated through the Interdepartmental Task Team, with all relevant parties and the Ministry of Finance, and is

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50. African Union Executive Council, 7th Extraordinary Session, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 2005.



chaired by the Department of Foreign Affairs. The Task Team has the authority to co-opt any ministry, department or institution in South Africa as needed.

This intervention contributes strongly towards a better South Africa, a better Africa, and a better world insofar as it encourages the fight against terrorism and, indirectly, the fight against organized crime.

**Effectiveness:** Implementation is the responsibility of individual Member States or regional mechanisms. Ratified UN conventions have been turned into national legislation in South Africa; agreement on related mechanisms has also been reached at the regional level. However, supporting mechanisms to ensure implementation at the regional level have yet not been developed. South Africa is dependent on regional cooperation on

this matter and therefore the effectiveness of implementation is very limited. It is not clear which South African department or regional structure would take responsibility to manage these deficiencies.

Consistency is lacking in a regional context. Although political buy-in is pledged, supporting mechanisms to implement some of the conventions are not in place at the regional level. UN assistance is needed to increase capacity-building in the subregion and on the African continent as a whole.

South Africa is active in influencing conventions related to terrorism on an international level and participates in the UN Security Council to further its agenda. The UN system is flexible in facilitating South Africa's inputs at the international level.

## Chapter 5

# ENVIRONMENT

South Africa has been party to many international conventions that are important for the management and protection of the environment, starting with the Ramsar Convention in 1975. However, the transition to democracy in 1994 marked the beginning of an intense period of activity in the environment sector as the country re-entered global fora and began developing and implementing environmental policy and its instruments in response to the new Constitution. This coincided with ratification of multilateral environmental agreements that arose from the Rio Declaration in 1992. The Republic of South Africa is now a signatory to 22 of these agreements and, within these, a total of about 500 subordinate instruments. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism lists 21 multilateral environmental agreements for which it is the national focal point.

The following set of international treaties makes clear the linkages between poverty and environmental degradation and emphasizes the need for an integrated approach to natural resource management and rural development. Thus they make specific contributions to overarching development frameworks such as poverty reduction strategies. They include the:

- Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol
- UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol
- Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

- Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (known as the 'Stockholm Convention')
- UN Forum of Forests and the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests.

In the absence of a coherent and overarching national strategy for sustainable development, South Africa recently drew up a new policy vehicle called the National Framework for Sustainable Development.<sup>51</sup> From this broad framework, a national strategy and environmental action plan for South Africa will be developed.

The present evaluation focuses largely on South Africa's implementation of the UN Convention of Biological Diversity, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, the Convention to Combat Desertification, and South Africa's role in the region and the world with respect to these multilateral agreements. In addition, there are important developments in the UN Forum on Forests, including processes on non-binding instruments relevant to sustainable forest management, which are important for South Africa.

Through SADC and the African Union, South Africa is party to several protocols and other instruments of regional environmental policy. These include the Continental Framework for the Environment, NEPAD's Environmental Action Plan, and various SADC protocols, such as those for forestry and fisheries.

While the MDGs<sup>52</sup> include just one Goal that addresses the environment directly – Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability – the Johannesburg

51. Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2008b, *People – Planet – Prosperity: A National Framework for Sustainable Development in South Africa*, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, Pretoria, South Africa, June 2008.

52. See: <http://www.undp.org/mdg/>

Plan of Implementation<sup>53</sup> is explicit that the environment is one of three interlinked pillars of sustainable development.

The areas selected for evaluation among UN-supported activities within the environment sector include action to protect biodiversity, combat climate change and promote sustainable land management.

## 5.1 UNDAF AND THE ENVIRONMENT

None of the objectives and outcomes of the current UNDAF (see section 2.4.1) refer specifically to the environment. However, the document does incorporate eight cross-cutting issues to be mainstreamed throughout the UN's work in South Africa. One of these refers to the environment: "South Africa's natural resources provide an excellent foundation from which to expand the economy so that jobs and wealth benefit the poor, but this must, however, be undertaken in a manner that ensures sustainable development for future generations."

The UNDAF emphasizes support for South Africa's regional agenda, through institutions such as SADC and the African Union. As a development partner, through the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund, South Africa is looking to specialized UN knowledge and expertise to support its regional initiatives based on mutual interest, non-partisanship and the promotion of human rights, good governance and democracy.

Below is a summary of the role in various UN agencies in the joint agenda set out in UNDAF in the area of the environment.

### 5.1.1 THE ROLE OF UNDP IN UNDAF

In 2006, UNDP revitalized its environment team with the objective of improving its delivery of resources and services to key national environ-

ment clients. Since then, the government, together with the UNDP country office and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Regional Coordination Unit, has developed one of the most comprehensive GEF portfolios<sup>54</sup> in Africa. The UNDP office has built and nurtured strong relationships with government agencies, resulting in the signing of four Memoranda of Understanding outlining UNDP support for project execution and capacity development. UNDP also supported the government in successfully organizing and hosting the GEF Assembly in Cape Town in August 2006. A key outcome of this meeting was an agreement to create the Benguela Current Commission as a follow-up to the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem Project.

UNDP provides demand-driven technical assistance for diagnosing delivery constraints and strengthening the delivery capacity of the state and its development partners. In relation to the environment, UNDP provides technical support to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism through initiatives geared to the conservation of natural ecosystems for providing sustainable livelihoods, economic growth and poverty alleviation. It also works to promote energy efficiency and address climate change.

### 5.1.2 FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UN

FAO programmes are mainly funded from government sources and focus on environmental management. These include:

- Technical assistance to the National Department of Agriculture and Department of Environmental Affairs for disposal of toxic, agrochemical pesticides while developing sustainable strategies to prevent recurrence
- Development of training materials, guidelines, databases and direct support to countries wishing to implement a prevention and disposal project

53. See: [www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD\\_POI\\_PD/English/WSSD\\_PlanImpl.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/WSSD_POI_PD/English/WSSD_PlanImpl.pdf)

54. GEF, 2008a, *GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation: South Africa (1994-2007)*. Global Environment Facility Evaluation Office, October 2008; GEF, 2008b, *GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation: South Africa (1994-2007)*, Annexes I-M, Global Environment Facility Evaluation Office, October 2008.

- Technical assistance to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism to facilitate the transfer of skills regarding obsolete pesticides, pesticide safety, personal protection, risk assessment and environmental protection
- The transfer of skills to national counterpart staff in South Africa who can assist in project development in neighbouring countries
- Collaborative work with the government to identify candidate countries that wish to benefit from support in subsequent phases of the plant production and prevention/disposal of obsolete pesticides programme.

### 5.1.3 UN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

UNEP plays a role in South Africa largely through UNDP, though no mention of this is made in the UNDAF and Common Country Action Plan. UNEP has supported one project directly in South Africa, a GEF-funded effort to help prepare for the first National Communication from South Africa on progress towards the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

UNEP supports a wide range of regional programmes involving South Africa. The often lead to benefits including the building of regional networks of experts, and the dissemination, trial and innovation of new instruments and modalities of environmental policy and management.

## 5.2 PROTECTING BIODIVERSITY

### 5.2.1 DEVELOPING AND MAINSTREAMING POLICY INSTRUMENTS TO SUPPORT THE CONVENTION ON BIODIVERSITY

Since signing the Convention in November 1995, South Africa has made rapid progress in implementing its provisions. The 1997 White Paper on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of South Africa's Biological Diversity was the

first step, followed by the passage of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act in 2004. The deployment of its instruments began in May 2003 and led to the development of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and preparation of the statutory National Biodiversity Framework.

Seventeen initiatives, two of which have been normative, three analytical, and 11 operational, were considered in this evaluation. These projects, outlined below, were funded mostly by the GEF, and implemented either by the World Bank or UNDP, or sometimes both together. On the South African side, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism was the focal point, although the projects were mostly executed by the South African National Biodiversity Institute or, in some cases, universities.

### 5.2.2 THE NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

The Development and Implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, in which UNDP served as implementing agency, was especially important. The project engaged a wide range of stakeholders in a comprehensive assessment of the country's biodiversity and related institutions. The findings were published in 2005, accompanied by a strategic assessment of biodiversity conservation issues along with the strategy and action plan.<sup>55</sup> These outputs are the foundation for the National Biodiversity Framework.

A bioregional plan is intended to guide land-use planning, environmental assessments and authorizations, and natural resource management by a range of sectors whose policies and decisions impact on biodiversity. If carried out successfully, biodiversity priorities and sustainable management of natural resources will be taken into account by all of these sectors. Especially important actors that are statutorily bound by bioregional plans include local and district municipalities and

55. Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, *South Africa Country Study 2005: Situation assessment undertaken to inform South Africa's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSA)*, Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, South Africa, 2005; Driver, A., et al., 'National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment 2004: Priorities for biodiversity conservation in South Africa', *Strelitzia*, vol. 17, South African National Biodiversity Institute.

environmental decision-makers whose actions bear on environmental impact assessments and related instruments.

### 5.2.3 THE CAPE PROGRAMME AND ALLIED BIOREGIONAL PROGRAMMES

In 1998, the Cape Peninsula Biodiversity Conservation Project marked the beginning of a 10-year partnership in the field of biodiversity, which evolved over time based on learning and adjustment to the changing South African context.<sup>56</sup> This was also the start of a continuous portfolio of initiatives all directly relevant to the obligations under the Convention on Biodiversity, and thus the implementation of the instruments of policy contained in the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act and the National Environmental Management: Protected Areas Act.

Each project in this loosely interrelated set has direct relevance to the Convention and to the implementation of government policies in this field. However, the strongest strand is the subset that addresses bioregional plans and their programmes of implementation as required in the Biodiversity Act and the adjunct instrument, the further development of protected area networks.

GEF support to the first five years of the CAPE Programme included funding for civil society involvement through the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund and two related projects: CAPE Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development and CAPE Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative.<sup>57</sup> The executing agencies of the CAPE programme are the South African National Biodiversity Institute, the South African National Parks, CapeNature, Eastern Cape Parks Board and the Wilderness

Foundation. The South African National Biodiversity Institute, however, is the management agency and therefore the recipient of the GEF grants; it is through the Institute that the linkages among these initiatives are maintained.

With regard to CAPE as a whole, the following statement is illustrative: “Almost without exception, partners, landscape initiatives and task teams cited the CAPE programme’s ability to inspire social and institutional cohesion around common conservation goals and objectives as the pre-eminent factor for success in their respective fields of endeavour.”<sup>58</sup>

Nevertheless, evaluations and the reports from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund identify certain challenges and possible barriers to progress: “...the socio-economic benefits of conservation have not become evident in poor regions, nor has the promised contribution of tourism to local economic development come to fruition (despite that ‘tourism is the key to both biodiversity conservation and livelihoods on the Agulhas Plain’).”<sup>59</sup>

This suggests that though the CAPE Programme is highly relevant, there are risks to its sustainability in the medium term, especially as the GEF and other mechanism move on to their next phases.

### 5.2.4 BIODIVERSITY: RELEVANCE

Each project in this programme has been directly relevant to the obligations under the Convention on Biodiversity, and thus the implementation of the policy instruments contained in national biodiversity and protected areas acts. The greatest emphasis has been on bioregional plans and their programmes of implementation, as well as the further development of protected area networks. There has been a strong emphasis on

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56. Global Environment Facility Evaluation Office, *GEF Country Portfolio Evaluation: South Africa (1994–2007)*, Final report (unedited), 25 March 2008.

57. Child, B., Independent Mid-term Evaluation of the ‘UNDP-GEF CAPE Agulhas Biodiversity Initiative (ABI): Final report’, Project number: SAF/03/G31/A/1G/99, April 2007.

58. Steyn, L., *CAPE Pathfinder 2008 – sustaining achievements*, draft, 14 November 2008.

59. Child op. cit.



mainstreaming biodiversity management into all economic sectors, including the stewardship of natural resources on land outside protect areas.

#### 5.2.5 BIODIVERSITY: EFFECTIVENESS

CAPE projects have made real progress towards nationally and globally important biodiversity conservation objectives. There has been substantial success in mobilizing and organizing the diverse partners and stakeholders in governance structures, task teams and information forums. The CAPE Coordination Unit is the key organ here. The Unit was created to foster coordination as well as to pay the role of neutral broker among the numerous agencies involved in implementation. Initially funded by World Wide Fund for Nature - South Africa, the Unit has continued with support from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund, the GEF and other donors. The South African National Biodiversity Institute is now the managing agency of the CAPE Coordination Unit. Projects funded by the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund have greatly increased the reach of the programme, geographically, but also in terms of involving civil society.

The CAPE strategy has influenced landscape and bioregional planning not only in South Africa, but also in projects in the Eastern African Marine Eco-region (Kenya, Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania), the Central Annamites (Viet Nam), and the Eastern Africa Coastal Forests. It has also influenced the dryland eco-regional programmes of the World Wide Fund for Nature, thus delivering important catalytic and replication effects.<sup>60</sup>

Nevertheless, the evaluation has identified a number of serious challenges that could impede progress:

- The socio-economic benefits of conservation have not yet materialized in poor regions, nor has local economic development yet seen the benefits from tourism.

- The financial sustainability of the biodiversity conservation effort arising from CAPE is uncertain.
- Governance and institutional barriers have emerged in the different governing bodies involved: "Transformation in key institutions remains a distant goal. The project is stumbling because of institutional constraints. ...despite the good and improved management to date, the burdensome institutional arrangements required to handle the complexity of the programme is still a major risk factor."<sup>61</sup>
- The demands arising from the norms generated by the programme are such that available employment conditions attract few suitable candidates for the regional and local leadership and management roles required.
- Biodiversity policy and plans are not yet integrated into statutes mandating local development planning, with some evidence that the case for biodiversity in sustainable development has not yet been properly made.<sup>62</sup>

### 5.3 ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE

#### 5.3.1 POLICY INITIATIVES THAT SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Since ratifying the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in August 1997, South Africa has made substantial progress on its implementation. The implemented policies would give South African negotiators under the Convention clear and mandated positions for their negotiations. It would also ensure that South African stakeholders understood and committed to a range of realistic strategies for future climate action. In addition, the designated national authority required to guide and manage Clean Development Mechanism project proposals is now established by regulation within the Department of Minerals and Energy.

60. GEF 2008a, op. cit.

61. Child op. cit.

62. Spierenburg et al. op cit.

In this segment of the environment sector, South Africa has strong capacity in policy development, negotiation, and science and technology in national institutions. Nevertheless, in these developments, the UN has played several key roles. This has largely been through UNDP, which has provided technical support and served as an implementing agent for the GEF, along with UNEP, UNIDO and the World Bank:

- UNDP and UNEP have supplied analytic support, by providing assistance in the National Communication process and the National Capacity Self-Assessment.
- UNDP, UNIDO and World Bank have supplied operational support, especially in catalytic initiatives designed to promote cleaner energy production, including industrial energy efficiency (though UNIDO has also provided normative support to the designated national authority and in the implementation of the Clean Development Mechanism).

### 5.3.2 ANALYTICAL PROJECTS IN THE FIELD OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

Two analytical partnership projects, now in their early stages, are designed to support the structural economic changes needed to ensure an adequate response to climate change. The first is the World Bank/GEF project on Renewable Energy Market Transformation (2008-2012),<sup>63</sup> with the Department of Minerals and Energy as partner.

The second is a project on Industrial Energy Efficiency in South Africa (2008-2013), with UNIDO as UN executing agency and funding from multiple donors (the project has already attracted co-funding of about 20 million euros [US\$26 million]). The South African partner is the Department of Trade and Industry, but its

multiple co-partners include the Department of Minerals and Energy, Business Unity South Africa, the signatories to the Energy Efficiency Accord, and the South African Bureau of Standards, among others. The National Cleaner Production Centre (see below) is to be the executing agency. The project aims to contribute to a significant shift in industrial energy practices in South Africa, and possibly in the Southern African region, by putting in place a system of industrial energy management standards with a system optimization approach that complies with international best practice, and thus ensures its adoption.

UNIDO and partners in Ethekwini (Durban) launched another initiative on climate change mitigation in 2008 in order to produce industry climate-change compacts and partnerships with key industries in that city.

A new UNDP/GEF project with the Department of Minerals and Energy is now starting up: Market Transformation through Energy Efficiency Standards and Labelling of Appliances in South Africa.<sup>64</sup>

### 5.3.3 OPERATIONAL PROJECTS IN ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY

The Programme for the Establishment of a National Cleaner Production Centre was a partnership between UNIDO and the Department of Trade and Industry. The Centre, which was launched during the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development, is hosted by the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research in Pretoria. The Centre now operates with financial support from the Department of Trade and Industry, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, and the governments of Austria and Switzerland. Its purpose is to enhance the competitiveness and

63. World Bank, Project appraisal document on a proposed grant from the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund in the amount of USD 6 million to the Republic of South Africa for a renewable energy market transformation project, Report No: 39789-ZA, 4 June 2007.

64. UNDP/GEF PIMS 3277, Market Transformation through Energy Efficiency Standards and Labelling of Appliances in South Africa.

productive capacity of national industry, focusing on small- and medium-sized enterprises, through cleaner production techniques.

A project on solar water heaters for low-income housing in peri-urban areas (2003-2006)<sup>65</sup> was a partnership between UNDP (as GEF implementing agency) and the Department of Minerals and Energy, the Department for Environmental Affairs and Tourism and the Central Energy Fund. Its aim was “transforming the market for solar water heaters in South Africa through barrier removal and creating a susceptible market environment in South Africa,” thus contributing to affordable energy for low-income households, reduced electricity consumption, a sustainable solar water heater industry, and new employment.

The UNDP/GEF project, South African Wind Energy Programme, Phase I (2007-2009)<sup>66</sup> is a partnership with the Department of Minerals and Energy (the executing agency), the Department for Environmental Affairs and Tourism and the Cape Town Metropolitan Municipality. The goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated by thermal power generation in an interconnected national system. The project objective is to install and operate up to 5.2 megawatts at the Darling wind farm and prepare the development of 45 megawatt combined wind farms. The project will contribute to South Africa’s national development objectives by diversifying power generation in South Africa’s energy mix; setting up a wind energy industry that could generate employment; and promoting sustainable development by making use of the nation’s renewable and natural resources.

Sustainable Public Transport and Sport: A 2010 Opportunity (2008-2011)<sup>67</sup> is a US\$335 million

UNDP/GEF project (the GEF contribution is US\$11 million), carried out with the Department of Transport and coordinated by the 2010 Transport Task Team. The Department is using the 2010 World Cup Soccer Tournament as a catalyst to achieve appropriate and fundamental improvements in South Africa’s public transport system. The project will address the policy, institutional, financial, informational and operational barriers to providing an effective, sustainable and environmentally friendly urban public transport system, planned and regulated at local levels of government.

### 5.3.4 CLIMATE CHANGE: RELEVANCE

The 11 projects that relate to the implementation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change are all directly relevant to the country’s National Climate Change Response Strategy and the Energy Efficiency Strategy. However, the projects form a rather disparate set, and some may be of marginal value. It is difficult to say if, as a whole, they are a good fit with South Africa’s priorities in this field (landfill gas conversion, solar cookers and fuel cells, for example, are questionable in this regard). Even so, these initiatives are allowing promising opportunities to be tested, and are valuable for that reason alone. Both the solar cooker and solar thermal electric technology projects, for example, succeeded as pilots and will inform judgement as to whether further investments are advisable and worthwhile.<sup>68</sup>

The analytical projects are highly relevant and support the development of a sustainable energy programme, which is the key issue in the country’s National Climate Change Response Strategy. Likewise, the Wind Energy Programme is clearly relevant to the country’s priorities. It is too early

65. UNDP/GEF, UNDP/GEF Solar Water Heaters for Urban Housing in South Africa: Final evaluation, Project number: SAF/00/G35/A/1G/99, August 2008. Available at: [http://www.undp.org/gef/05/portfolio/writeups/cc/sa\\_solarwaters\\_h](http://www.undp.org/gef/05/portfolio/writeups/cc/sa_solarwaters_h)

66. UNDP, *Government of South Africa – United Nations Development Programme – Global Environment Facility: Technical Assistance to the South Africa Wind Energy Programme (SAWEP)*, Project document, PIMS 1637.

67. UNDP/GEF, *Sustainable Public Transport and Sport, a 2010 Opportunity*, PIMS 3276, Project ID: 00055675.

68. GEF 2008a op. cit.

to evaluate its effectiveness, however, other than to note that the nature of the partnership is such that an effective outcome is likely.

It is important to note that none of the initiatives thus far addresses adaptation to climate change, a crucial gap.<sup>69</sup> Adaptation will require responses across the whole economy – in agriculture, forestry, water resources management, biodiversity management and cleaner production. The adaptation gap therefore provides the opportunity to integrate the necessary strategies, not only for climate change but also for sustainable land management and biodiversity management, into a comprehensive response to the National Climate Change Strategy, as well as capturing sustainable development properly into the successor to the current government Programme of Action.

### 5.3.5 CLIMATE CHANGE: EFFECTIVENESS

Those projects that are complete or in an advanced stage have proved effective: The establishment of South Africa's first National Cleaner Production Centre, for example, exemplifies the kind of institutional development required to enable the technological innovations envisaged in these two strategies. In addition, the initiatives aimed at developing the market for alternative energy, such as solar water heaters, have delivered real promise and are important given the range of barriers to energy transformation that exist in the South African economy. Their catalytic effect has also proved real in many cases: Again, in reference to the water heaters, the fact that Eskom has taken up the next phase indicates the real likelihood of greatly magnified uptake among South African households, and the supplementary World Bank project is likely to extend their use far beyond low-income households.

However, the key potential contribution of most of the climate change projects is not likely to be the quantity of greenhouse gas emissions reduced directly, but their contribution to the body of

knowledge required to analyse policy and strategy options and to catalyze change through demonstration, removing barriers, and/or influencing the establishment of a better enabling environment for the transition to a low-emissions economy.<sup>70</sup>

## 5.4 PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT

### 5.4.1 COMBATING DESERTIFICATION

Since becoming party to the Convention on Combating Desertification in September 1997, South Africa has completed several important steps to meet its obligations, including:

- A national awareness campaign in 1998 and 1999
- An audit of land degradation in South Africa by the National Botanical Institute and partners
- The 2002-2003 development of a National Action Programme on Sustainable Land Management.

The Cabinet approved the National Action Programme in 2005; however, there have been no real joint government-UN initiatives in this regard. South Africa did, however, serve as an Executive Committee member of TerrAfrica, representing SADC Member States, until November 2008.

### 5.4.2 THE UN FORUM ON FORESTS

South Africa has been an active participant in the UN Forum on Forests since its predecessor, the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, met for the first time in 1995. South Africa has taken a strong position that the 'non-legally binding' nature of the instrument on all types of forests should stand until the work of the current programme in the UN Forum on Forests has been completed.

Domestically, South Africa has made good progress in responding to the policy imperatives

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69. See also: GEF 2008a op. cit.

70. GEF 2008a op. cit.



arising from the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. Intense negotiations among governments at the conference resulted in the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of all Types of Forests, also known as the 'Forest Principles', as well as Chapter 11 of Agenda 21: Combating Deforestation. The UN in South Africa has supported this area in a low-key way, principally through FAO. This has included capacity-building for a Forest Resources Assessment and information systems and provision of expertise for a new National Forest Programme.

#### **5.4.3 SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT: RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS**

GEF allocations to combat desertification, protect forests and deal with persistent organic pollutants have been much smaller (about US\$3 million) than support to biodiversity (US\$53 million) and climate change (US\$25 million). Moreover, direct involvement on the part of UN agencies has been very limited. While apparently relevant, the effectiveness of UN technical assistance is difficult to assess.

### **5.5 ENVIRONMENT: AN OVERALL ASSESSMENT**

When examined overall, the domestic programme in the environment sector over the past decade or so is perhaps less valuable than what is suggested by various evaluations. While the programme has had a high degree of effectiveness in the immediate term, its medium- and long-term effectiveness is uncertain, given the institutional and capacity barriers emerging now, as well as challenges in delivering social and economic benefits in the biodiversity field. Regarding relevance, there is a degree to which it is out of sync with national priorities. The preponderance of the budget has been spent in the biodiversity domain, despite the fact that this issue does not appear at all in the government

Programme of Action. Recently, however, good contributions have been forthcoming in climate change, and the balance is apparently shifting in that direction – most importantly, toward piloting and mainstreaming innovation for a green economy. However, here the focus has been on mitigation, with no significant work yet evident on adaptation. The other domains – desertification and forests – have as yet had little support from the UN-government partnership.

Meanwhile, South Africa has emerged as both a key international actor and partner among many in the developing world participating in regional and global processes and negotiations that are having an impact on environmental policy and development.

In 2002, the international community met in Johannesburg for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to achieve a global consensus on how to make sustainable development a reality. This resulted in the adoption of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. Following the Summit, South Africa has continued to play a high-level leadership and bridge-building role in international meetings that address the issues of sustainable development and environmental management. In terms of climate change, South Africa has played a key role in facilitating a positive outcome in negotiations in several Conferences of Parties to the UN Framework Convention, and has led the G-77 on a number of issues. South Africans have made key contributions in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (see above) as well as in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.<sup>71</sup>

Following the Third Assembly of the GEF, held in Cape Town in September 2006, South Africa became a donor (contributing US\$5 million [ZAR38 million] over the years 2007-2010) as well as a recipient of GEF funding. In doing so, South Africa contributed to resolving the Resource Allocation Framework that determines how GEF funds are disbursed.

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71. See: [www.millenniumassessment.org/](http://www.millenniumassessment.org/)



In negotiations on chemicals management, South Africa is playing an increasingly active role, and was consequently asked to chair the 2008 meetings of the Montreal Protocol on Ozone-Depleting Substances. On biosafety, South Africa is playing a leading role in the ongoing negotiations on Liabilities and Redress

and on the issue of an appropriate access and benefit-sharing regime.

In the UN Forum on Forests and its predecessor, South Africa has consistently played an important role. It has, for example, been a key player in the adoption of the current Non-Binding Instrument.

# HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

Southern Africa faces a wide range of disaster risks, including drought, flood, veld (grassland) and urban fires, epidemics and technological disasters. Threats from climatic events are thought likely to increase as a result of global climate change. Events in May and November 2008 have shown that the country is also prone to widespread violence, population displacement and epidemics caused by the collapse of the economy, infrastructure and services in neighbouring countries. In line with government policies, South Africa is engaged in the development of disaster-management structures at home as well as using its resources to assist in the mitigation of natural and human disasters in the region and globally. This section briefly discusses the interaction between the South African government and civil society and the UN system, starting at the international level.

### 6.1 SOUTH AFRICA'S CONTRIBUTION TO HUMANITARIAN REFORM EFFORTS

In the context of the 2005 UN Humanitarian Response Review and the current UN reform,<sup>72</sup> the new architecture for humanitarian assistance is taking shape globally. Emphasis is also being placed on the full funding of the new Central Emergency Response Fund to facilitate quicker, more effective flows of funds in response to disasters. The mandate of the UNHCR is expanding to also cover protection and assistance for displaced people in need, regardless of whether they have crossed an international border. Closer coordination between OCHA, national governments and NGOs is foreseen through the cluster approach, which establishes

lead roles in the delivery of specific assistance, such as shelter, water and food.

Since 1994, South Africa has made a clear commitment to supporting international humanitarian policy and good practice, starting from its support for UN General Assembly Resolution 46/182 of 1991 and subsequent humanitarian reform processes that resulted in part from the UN Humanitarian Response Review (August 2005) and 'Delivering as One' (2006).

In concrete terms, South Africa made significant inputs through General Assembly resolution 50/124, which dealt with the creation by the Central Emergency Response Fund. South Africa was one of the first countries to contribute to the Fund and has supported it with annual contributions since at least 2005/2006.<sup>73</sup> It is reported to be the largest contributor among African countries and the 25th highest contributor out of 192 countries. South Africa has also made contributions to OCHA for the UN's internal displacement centre and Integrated Regional Information Networks.

South Africa is an active participant in the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination system and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction process; it was also one of the first pilot countries to work on the Hyogo Framework for Action. Lastly, the Government of South Africa is contributing (through the Department of Foreign Affairs' African Union Desk) to the African Union's attempt to develop a regional instrument for dealing with internally displaced persons.

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72. Reform outline by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon, January 2008. Available at: <http://www.un.org/reform/humanitarian.shtml#1>

73. South Africa has been a board member since the establishment of the Fund.

The government has contributed significantly to humanitarian assistance in the region since 1994. Except for loans and financial assistance made through the African Renaissance and International Cooperation Fund, this contribution is usually provided through contributions to UN agencies in the region, in line with the commitment of the Department of Foreign Affairs to use multilateral, rather than bilateral, approaches. The government role in international humanitarian assistance is led by the Department of Foreign Affairs working in close cooperation with the National Disaster Management Centre.<sup>74</sup> Other government departments are involved (including those for health and social development) and the South African National Defence Force, particularly if on-the-ground assessment, logistical support or delivery is required.

South Africa has made substantial contributions to FAO's Regional Emergency and Rehabilitation Programme in the Southern African Region from 2004 to 2008 (which has a total budget of more than US\$25 million for eight countries). Under this programme, FAO has procured substantial agricultural inputs in South Africa and delivered them to target countries in the region.

South Africa has been a very important resource and logistics hub for humanitarian supplies to the rest of Southern Africa. WFP has procured substantial amounts of food in South Africa and made extensive use of its ports and transport facilities. WFP reports that it has purchased food from South Africa valued at US\$291 million since the start of 2002. UNICEF also has developed a purchasing hub in South Africa.

Although most of the country's humanitarian assistance has been to countries in the region, South Africa has also provided assistance in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami and Hurricane Katrina in the USA, and to disasters in China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Myanmar, the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Pakistan.

## 6.2 DISASTER MANAGEMENT

South African's disaster management structures evolved on the basis of a White Paper in 1999 that led to the Disaster Management Act (No 57 of 2002), publication of a National Disaster Framework in 2005 that became a statutory instrument in the Act, and the establishment of the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) in May 2006. The NDMC falls under the Department of Provincial and Local Government and is the principal functional unit for disaster management at the national level. It is responsible for guiding and developing frameworks for the government's disaster management policy and legislation, facilitating and monitoring their implementation, and facilitating and guiding cross-functional and multidisciplinary disaster management activities among the various organs of state.

National departments are required to assess any national legislation applicable to their function and must advise the NDMC on the state of such legislation. Based on the principle of auxiliaryity (using existing structures and resources), disaster management responsibilities must be integrated into the routine activities of the various sectors and disciplines within the relevant organs of state and their substructures.

The provincial sphere of government is represented on the Intergovernmental Committee on Disaster Management (ICDM) by a member of the Executive Council of each province, who is involved in either disaster management or the administration of other national legislation aimed at dealing with disasters. Local government is represented on the ICDM by members of municipal councils selected by the South African Local Government Association.

Two interdepartmental structures have been put in place to facilitate disaster management. The first is the National Disaster Management Advisory Forum chaired by the NDMC and

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74. National Disaster Framework of 2005.

consisting of all government departments as well as other stakeholders. The Forum is also the main venue for which national, provincial, local government and other role-players consult and coordinate their actions on disaster management. The Forum meets quarterly.

The second relevant structure is the Emergency Management Committee (EMC), a much smaller group of Forum members, usually the NDMC, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Department of Defence and the South African Police Service. The EMC is usually only convened when a disaster has occurred in order to formulate a possible response strategy by South Africa. Thus, the EMC is not tasked with preparedness or mitigation, but more with actual response by South Africa.

South Africa's international disaster response is also governed through these two instruments, although they primarily govern domestic disaster preparedness, mitigation and response. In respect to international disasters, the Department of Foreign Affairs is, however, the lead department, but should act in coordination with the NDMC.

In addition to reacting to regional disasters, the government also assists proactively in the building of food-security capacity in neighbouring countries through projects with WFP and FAO.

Two cases of response to disasters within South African borders serve to illustrate the relevance and efficiency of national policies and structures, and the interaction between South Africa and the UN.

### 6.2.1 XENOPHOBIC VIOLENCE IN 2008

In May 2008 a series of riots in South Africa left dozens of foreigners and South Africans dead in what has been described as 'xenophobic violence'.

The violence was clearly a disaster (as defined by the Disaster Management Act) as well as a shock, requiring an urgent, coordinated and ongoing humanitarian response. It therefore provides a lens through which the government's preparedness and ability to respond in a coordinated fashion can be viewed, and an assessment made of the relevance and effectiveness of collaboration between the government and UN agencies with different but overlapping mandates.<sup>75</sup>

South Africa's laws relating to refugees and asylum seekers are heavily influenced by the international normative framework. The Refugee Act (130 of 1998) is clearly based on the principles of the United Nations 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and 1967 Protocol, the Organization of African Unity Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969), and the SADC Protocol on the Facilitating of Movement of Persons – all of which were rapidly ratified after 1994.<sup>76</sup> In the case of migrants, admission is governed by the Immigration Act of 2002, amended in 2004.

As a result, the normative framework was securely in place to ensure that everyone's basic rights, lives and property are protected regardless of their status. In the situation that arose in May 2008, South Africa could also expect to draw on a range of UN agencies (including regional bodies based in Johannesburg) with well-developed mandates, international experience and expertise, budgets, and the capacity to assist. The UN Country Team organized itself and distributed roles among the various agencies, most notably OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF and UNFPA.

UN agencies continued to provide support and various forms of assistance, including technical assistance, during the period in which Centres of

75. Some commentators have pointed out that using the word 'xenophobia' tends to pre-judge an analysis of the nature and causes of the violence that took place, particularly since nearly 20 percent of those killed during the violence were South African.

76. One notable exception is the United Nations Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, which South Africa has yet to sign. Although it was reported that the process to sign will begin in 2009, this is doubtful in the current climate.

Safety and Security were established. When it became clear that the government would be closing down the Centres and expecting people to reintegrate into society, UNHCR advised the Department of Home Affairs on the necessary documentation to provide to people and assisted those who showed marked resistance to the six-month temporary residence documents offered. UNICEF provided cash grants to assist people in finding accommodation when they left the Centres,<sup>77</sup> and UNHCR offered similar financial support for grants to refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable Zimbabweans through its implementing partners. Child protection reintegration activities were provided, such as accessible mental health services to survivors of xenophobic violence, including counselling and referral of complex trauma cases.

Yet despite these efforts, the response of all role-players, including civil society organizations, attracted criticism from various sources. Though largely limited to two of the nine South African provinces, the crisis was complex and will not be analysed further here. Suffice it to say that victims included people of many nationalities (not only Zimbabweans, as was the common misperception) with very different statuses – refugees, asylum seekers, undocumented migrants, or those ‘forcibly displaced’ (a new term applied to Zimbabweans).

#### **6.2.2 CHOLERA OUTBREAK: NOVEMBER 2008 ONWARDS**

On 15 November 2008, the first cholera cases were identified in Musina in Limpopo Province. Three weeks later, a total of 751 cases had been reported, with the number of deaths counted at 11.<sup>78</sup> Most cases were among foreign nationals (87 percent from Zimbabwe) or South African nationals having recently travelled to Zimbabwe, but there is evidence of local transmission, particularly around Madimbo.

Musina municipality has an official population of 40,000, and it is estimated that some 3,000 to 5,000 foreign nationals may be present in town or passing through on a daily basis. The outbreak was closely linked to poor hygienic conditions and limited access to basic services (health, water and sanitation, hygiene, shelter, food) of asylum seekers and migrants, most of them from Zimbabwe. This population is highly mobile, and because most are undocumented, many do not seek health care in Musina for fear of arrest and deportation. Driving cases underground increases further the risk of spreading the epidemic in South Africa.

International organizations already present in Limpopo Province before the start of the outbreak included IOM, Médecins Sans Frontières-Belgium, the South African Red Cross Society, Save the Children-UK, UNHCR, and a number of faith-based organizations. Of these, three had long-term programmes in the education, food, health, capacity-building and protection sectors, while Médecins Sans Frontières-Belgium and UNHCR established programmes in 2007/2008 to provide humanitarian assistance and protection to Zimbabweans crossing the border, following episodic spikes in migration starting in early 2007. WHO and UNICEF provided technical assistance to local authorities in the area of health and water and sanitation. With neither a clear government declaration of *prima facie* refugee status, nor a government-recognized emergency, partners reportedly struggled to provide humanitarian assistance in a holistic and integrated manner to this vulnerable population and to secure an appropriate response from government agencies.

At the request of the Minister of Health, OCHA provided an overview of the situation and suggestions for addressing the threat on 10 December 2008. According to OCHA, the situation called for “Urgent action, requiring strong government

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77. This support was initially intended to be part of a broader package of assistance but, with the exception of a food parcel from the South African Red Cross Society, this did not occur.

78. These figures do not include the nearly 1,000 reported deaths in Zimbabwe during the same period.



leadership, coordination and implementation capacity, backed by political will. In particular, holistic and integrated response plans must be implemented consistently and according to national and international standards.”

The following key challenges were identified by OCHA:

- Multiple government-led task forces to address the crisis in Musina were not coordinated.
- There was no common situation analysis or holistic and integrated action plan to address the cholera crisis in an effective manner. The mass influx contingency plan was not relevant to the current crisis.
- The role of international partners was not universally accepted by some local authorities.
- The root cause of the crisis – a major humanitarian emergency in Zimbabwe provoking unmitigated migration across informal border crossings – was not being appropriately addressed, despite its centrality to any prevention and response strategy.
- Provisions under the Children’s Act were not being made available to unaccompanied migrant minors, whose numbers were steadily increasing. The number of infants and mothers at the showgrounds were also on the rise. Shelter, protection and access to basic services were not readily available to this vulnerable group. The rights of migrant children to nutrition, health, education, social security and protection were compromised.

### **6.2.3 HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE: RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS**

The two cases show several deficiencies in the approaches applied to disasters in and around South Africa. Lessons from xenophobic violence have not yet been internalized into a coherent and efficient system with clear roles for government departments internally, and vis-à-vis UN organizations and NGOs, drawing on the extensive experience of the latter. These structures need to be developed much further to become relevant to the management of future disasters.

The responses have not been effective in reaching their objectives. The NDMC central, provincial and local structures are still new and too focused on countering natural disasters to be able to deal effectively with other types of crisis situations. Many of the issues that arise around the treatment of refugees, asylum seekers and undocumented migrants in South Africa relate to the Department of Home Affairs, which has been widely criticized for being ineffective and often corrupt. Massive backlogs have built up in the refugee processing system. UNHCR has supported a number of backlog projects with limited success in terms of outcomes (26 percent achievement of results was reported in 2006).

In the absence of leadership and continuity by a permanent Resident Coordinator, the UN response was uncoordinated and ad hoc. While the UN is often used to handling emergencies by ‘taking the ball and running with it’, this was not possible in these cases, since the UN had to wait for an official request for assistance from the government. The UNHCR worked closely with the government, but was criticized for its efforts by a group of NGOs, especially for its involvement in setting up (and closing) the Centres of Safety and Security. Accusations about violations of the human rights of the victims of xenophobia were also widespread.

The traditional mandate of the UNHCR has been restricted to dealing with people with refugee status. In light of the localized nature of many conflicts, where the number of internally displaced persons (‘refugees in their own country’) often outnumber those who seek refuge outside, this mandate is no longer sufficient to deal with humanitarian crises. In practice, UNHCR has long been addressing the needs of internally displaced persons, though their mandate in this area is not clear. Earlier attempts to extend the mandate have fallen through due to opposition by some Member States, including those of the G-77 and the African Union. As part of these groupings, South Africa has voted against the extension, thereby limiting UNHCR’s capacity to deal effectively with crises such as these.

Both cases cited above emanate from the economic, social and political crisis in Zimbabwe. Attempts to introduce UN sanctions on Zimbabwe have, however, been blocked by the same groupings, and mediation efforts within the African Union, SADC or bilaterally by South Africa have failed. It is likely that decisive action to resolve the Zimbabwe crisis could have prevented, or at least contained, the xenophobic violence and the cholera outbreak in the first place.

To improve the effectiveness of the structures set up under the Disaster Management Act, clear policies, strategies and plans need to be put in place to deal with the creation and maintenance of future Centres of Safety and Security and to manage reintegration once the threat of violence has receded. These are areas where various UN agencies are well positioned to provide appropriate advice, assistance and training based on internationally acceptable standards and best practices.

# CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The following issues, which cut across sectors and programmes, were not assessed in terms of relevance and effectiveness in the same manner that the four focus areas were, since they are assumed to be generally relevant. The following sections outline the extent to which the evaluation found the cross-cutting areas to have been integrated into South African and UN statutory instruments, and how they have been internalized into programmes and projects.

### 7.1 GENDER EQUALITY

The UN and the Government of South Africa require gender equality to be addressed in all programmes. The government has a policy on gender mainstreaming, and all departments are required to have gender focal points for driving the integration of gender into departmental policies and programmes. Similar policies and structures pervade the UN system.

The issue of gender equality was dealt with in varying ways in the programmes evaluated. In the development focus area, the APSTAR and the HIV&AIDS Capacity-Building for Planners programmes had strong gender dimensions. The issue of women's vulnerability to HIV, the impact of the epidemic on women, and the rights of teenage girls to sexual and reproductive health care are all areas that are covered in these programmes. There is no evidence, however, of gender considerations in the targeting of course participants.

The WHO and UNICEF health programmes focus on maternal health, women's access to health services and their right to sexual and reproductive health. In the Expanded Public

Works Programme, the government has set targets for the number of women participating in the programme. The ISRD identified gender mainstreaming as one of its projects. Furthermore, UNDP provided initial assistance to the Office on the Status of Women in the Presidency to develop a training manual on gender mainstreaming. UNFPA has supported a number of capacity-building initiatives on the prevention of gender-based violence. Most notable among these are participation in the international campaign, '16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence' and work with the Department of Education in the prevention of sexual violence in schools.

In the focus area of peace & security, specific attention is paid to gender and vulnerable groups in interventions focusing on victim empowerment, and violence against women and children. Gender equality was also addressed in capacity development by ensuring gender equality in the process of nominating participants.

In the focus area of the environment, it is recognized that women, especially in rural areas, are dependent on natural resources for their livelihoods. For women affected by poverty, access to these resources is often affected by gender. South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality<sup>79</sup> recognizes that relationship: "Given the large proportion of women in rural areas who are dependent on natural resources and who are affected by poverty, access to these resources is a gender issue. In large measure, women struggle to get water, wood and fuel as well as access to mineral and other resource rights." The GEF has explicit policies requiring

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79. South Africa's National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality, prepared by the Office on the Status of Women, undated.

gender mainstreaming in its projects; however, a recent evaluation found that in only a minority of projects was this requirement included.<sup>80</sup>

There is no doubt that South Africa has made progress on gender equality since it signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women in 1993. However, there is a very long way to go in achieving gender equality in South Africa, and the needs of women in the areas of employment and access to services and natural resources still lag far behind those of men. Given these challenges and the real threat to reversal of gains made thus far, the UN system could be playing a more active role in supporting achievement of gender equality.

## 7.2 HIV&AIDS

Issues related to HIV&AIDS have been integrated into most of the programmes reviewed as part of this study. In the field of peace & security, for example, the epidemic is specifically addressed through Victim Empowerment programmes and through some interventions related to drug control. The epidemic is recognized as a major risk factor and constraint to peacekeeping and peace-building operations due to the large number of South African National Defence Force members who are infected with HIV.

HIV&AIDS was one of three priority areas identified in the UNDAF covering the years 2002-2006.

Through the UNDAF, the UN aimed to support a holistic response by addressing factors that reinforce the links between HIV&AIDS and poverty. Attention was also to be paid to the 'feminization' of poverty. Support was to be provided to priority provinces (Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo) to develop provincial strategies to combat both HIV&AIDS and poverty. The 2005 annual review of UNDAF found that although there had been some

delivery on the plan, the UN's work was sporadic and did not portray a UN system-wide contribution to the country's response to the epidemic.<sup>81</sup>

Developing and maintaining a partnership with the government in the earlier years of the 2002-2006 UNDAF presented a challenge to the UN system in South Africa. HIV&AIDS was highly charged politically and some government and UN officials alike kept a low profile on the issue. Mainstreaming HIV&AIDS was a way of getting around the political sensitivity since work could proceed on the issue without drawing unnecessary attention. Other constraints to the partnership between government and the UN system in combating HIV&AIDS included the fact that the Department of Health was the main interlocutor between government and the UN system (and other development partners) on the issue. This had the effect of limiting the HIV&AIDS agenda to the health sector rather than development as a whole, thus providing little space for support to and cooperation with other departments.

Towards the latter part of the first UNDAF (2002-2006), the UNAIDS office and the other UN agencies that formed part of the UN theme group on HIV&AIDS have been able to support the government in meaningful ways. Most notable is assistance provided to the government to develop the new National Strategic Plan for HIV&AIDS and Sexually Transmitted Infections. UNFPA promotes the integration of reproductive rights and sexual and reproductive health services and HIV prevention in development and humanitarian frameworks. The UN system has also supported the Department of Health in its global reporting obligations and in accessing resources from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Another important contribution has been the role of UNAIDS in convening a process to sort out the discrepancies in data on HIV&AIDS by Statistics South Africa, the Department of Health and the Human Sciences Research Council.

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80. GEF, *Mainstreaming Gender at the GEF*, Global Environment Facility, undated.

81. Review of the 2001-2006 UNDAF Implementation Status and Lessons Learned, June 2005.

Currently, there is nothing in the country's HIV&AIDS Strategy<sup>82</sup> regarding the relationship between the epidemic and the natural environment, despite social studies demonstrating clear linkages. Searches through all relevant project documents in the field of the environment, including the GEF (2008a, 2008b), revealed that none had incorporated gender or HIV&AIDS initiatives.

South Africa has the largest treatment programme in the world. While it is important that HIV&AIDS be dealt with as an integral part of the development agenda, it is still necessary to have a comprehensive programme of support from the UN (and other development partners) focusing on the epidemic in its own right.

### 7.2.1 HIV&AIDS: RELEVANCE AND EFFECTIVENESS

South Africa is the epicentre of the AIDS pandemic. It therefore requires a critical mass of capacity from the various UN agencies involved to add value to the country's efforts. The UN system has been able to contribute substantively by drawing on international scientific knowledge and evolving models for prevention, testing and community-based care, and the general relevance of the interventions is high. However, the overall effectiveness is assessed as being modest. This is partly due to the political climate, but also because UN-supported interventions were too many in number and too scattered. They therefore had a limited strategic impact in an otherwise vibrant environment with very active partners among national NGOs and research institutions.

## 7.3 HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY

For 40 years, the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights was the centre point of the international community's opposition to the apartheid regime, and it formed the base of the new South African Constitution. Consequently,

a human rights-based approach to development is enshrined in the Constitution's Bill of Rights. South Africa was an active participant in setting up the UN Commission on Human Rights and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Following the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002, the UN Commission on Human Rights resolved<sup>83</sup> to reaffirm that peace, security, stability and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, as well as respect for cultural diversity, are essential for achieving sustainable development and ensuring that sustainable development benefits all. The World Summit Outcome Document,<sup>84</sup> in turn, reaffirms the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights.

The extent to which UN programmes in South Africa adopted a human rights-based approach was not always easy to discern from programme documents and reports. The prominence of such an approach differed, and there were rarely explicit targets or indicators against which such an approach could be evaluated.

- Section 24 of the Constitution of South Africa stipulates that everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being. Environmental rights were reaffirmed in the 1992 Rio Declaration and by the UN Commission for Human Rights following the Johannesburg World Summit.
- Programmes within the ILO Decent Work Agenda are explicit about human rights, including, for example, the right to a safe work environment, equal wages for women and men and other forms of non-discrimination in the workplace. The programme to support the elimination of the

82. HIV&AIDS and STI [sexually transmitted infections] Strategic Plan for South Africa, 2007-2011, 12 March 2007.

83. Human rights and the environment as part of sustainable development, Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/71.

84. See: <http://www.un.org/Depts/dhl/resguide/r60.htm>



worst forms of child labour is another example of a human rights-based approach. The Expanded Public Works Programme has a Code of Good Practice issued by the Department of Labour to protect the labour rights of participants in the programme.

- Programmes for children had, as points of departure, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the South African Constitution. The promotion and protection of children's right to education, social assistance, food security and treatment (including antiretroviral therapy) were explicit in these programmes. UNICEF's Parliamentary Programme carries out advocacy for the full spectrum of children's rights.
- The human rights approach was not evident in some capacity-building programmes or in programmes involving short-term expertise.
- The programmes made no explicit reference to disability, other than in the case of programmes relating to social security and social protection. Disability is a major development issue in South Africa, and the South African National NGO Coalition has recommended that it be added as a ninth Millennium Development Goal.
- A lack of cooperation between the UN Regional Initiative on Human Rights and the relevant directorate of the Department of Foreign Affairs was noted with some concern. According to interviews conducted, the Department did not respond to communications from the UN Commission for Human Rights for months. The relationship therefore became one between the UN system and South African NGOs, rather than the Department of Foreign Affairs.
- In its recent report on environmental rights in South Africa, the South Africa Human Rights Commission finds that "Progress in the realization of the right to environment

could not be very well monitored and observed by the Commission during the year under review because annual progress reports in terms of section 11 of the National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998, were inaccessible at the time of writing. These progress reports should contain detailed information on the implementation of measures instituted to ensure the right to environment."

- In this evaluation, a search through all relevant evaluation reports related to the environment, including those covering the GEF country portfolio, revealed no reference to human rights, with one exception (the Wild Coast project). The biodiversity projects, such as the CAPE partnership programme and the National Grasslands Programme, are inherently rights-based initiatives, yet they do not explicitly recognize this. Nor do they provide for learning and other activities around human rights. A study of the democratization of natural resources management in the Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area<sup>85</sup> revealed great complexity and challenge in the process of realizing the rights of local communities to their natural resources and ecosystem services, with local rights often denied; this article showed "that local communities are, despite the conservationists' rhetoric, under-represented, under-respected, under-skilled, and under-resourced actors in this power game."

There are other role-players in the human rights arena in South Africa that can add value to the work of the UN system in promoting human rights-based approaches. The South African Human Rights Commission monitors the progressive realization of social and economic rights. Other institutions, such as the Foundation for Human Rights and the Human Rights Institute of South Africa, have done extensive advocacy work in the area of human rights.

85. Spierenburg, M., C. Steenkamp, and H. Wels, 'Enclosing the Local for the Global Commons: Community land rights in the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area', *Conservation and Society* 6 (1): 87-97, 2008.

## Chapter 8

# PARTNERSHIPS

Establishing trust, confidence and partnerships between the UN's agencies, funds and programmes and its Member States are important factors in the UN's effectiveness and sustainability. This trust must be based on open and frank dialogue with the objective of achieving a common benefit.

### 8.1 MULTILATERALISM

Partnerships between the agencies, funds and programmes of the UN and its Member States are two-way. The UN is only as strong as its Member States allow it to be. The mandates of the various UN entities arise from debate and the adoption of conventions, resolutions and other mechanisms within the UN by representatives of Member States in different UN fora, and in the governing structures of UN organizations. These mandates are accorded to the agencies by Member States and are therefore binding to the UN agencies in the same way as national policies are to national governments. However, the UN is also a political battleground in which the same countries that have contributed to the development and approval of conventions, resolutions and other mechanisms do not always take full co-ownership of these mandates.

The agencies, funds and programmes are there to implement the mandates in ways that are suited to the situations of the host countries and demanded by their governments. While UN entities are neutral providers of assistance to their hosts, Member States have also given each of them their own agenda that they must follow, which, in some cases, is not fully aligned with the host government's policy (AIDS in South Africa is a case in point). Aligning UN support with national policy at the country level works best when full mutual respect is paid to UN mandates

and vice versa. Practically, UN mandates are administered in a subtle, flexible way, acknowledging the specific conditions and policy concerns of the host country. However, cases of insufficient understanding or recognition of UN mandates have been observed in some government departments in South Africa, which have tended to view the UN as just another service provider that can be called upon as needed.

### 8.2 A BETTER WORLD

The Republic of South Africa plays an important role in the UN as a leader in many debates and decisions, not least in relation to the African continent. In addition to recently serving on the UN Security Council, the country makes important financial contributions to UN funds and programmes such as the Central Emergency Response Fund, and sits on a number of expert panels. As a consequence of being a middle-income African country, South Africa, like other major economies, engages to a larger extent in such UN agencies and bodies as the World Trade Organization, the UN Conference on Trade and Development, the International Telecommunications Union, the World Meteorological Organization, the World Intellectual Property Organization, the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change, the Commission on Sustainable Development, and the International Atomic Energy Agency. This is in contrast to most other African countries, which tend to relate more to UN agencies concerned with development or humanitarian affairs. In addition to being a member of the G-77, the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group in the UN General Assembly, South Africa is a member of the G-20, which, since November 2008, has been considering responses to the financial crisis at the level of heads of state and/or government,

thereby underscoring its position as an important player not only for Africa but for the world. In these areas, South Africa, through the UN system, is an important provider of global public goods.

South Africa engages actively in several governing councils of UN agencies. South African candidates for these governing structures enjoy a good deal of support from a wide array of countries. However, representatives of South Africa's Permanent Missions express the view that the country is underrepresented in the UN Secretariat and would like to see a more active effort to get South Africans into the UN career track. This does not appear to be easy: On the one hand, there is fierce competition among countries for available posts and, on the other hand, a reported reluctance on the part of South African professionals to apply for such posts due to apparently better career opportunities at home. Deficiencies also exist in the UN human resources management system, which the organization is attempting to address as part of reform efforts dating back to the late 1990s. It would require clear policy backing from the Government of South Africa and a protracted effort on behalf of the Permanent Missions to change this picture.

### **8.3 A BETTER AFRICA**

The two-way nature of the UN-South Africa partnership manifests itself clearly at the regional level. It was at this level that the UN system provided South Africa with political support in the pre-1994 liberation struggle and capacity-building thereafter; today, South Africa assists the UN in humanitarian relief operations through funding and serves as a logistics hub and major supplier of food for WFP. South Africa has been successfully involved in mediation of the crises in Burundi and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and has directly supported UN peacekeeping. The efforts of the UN Security Council, of which South Africa was a member, to resolve the Zimbabwe humanitarian crisis was unsuccessful and generated widespread criticism.

South Africa plays a dominant role in SADC based on its interest in supporting stability and development in the subregion. The country has funded a number of initiatives in SADC countries aimed at strengthening their positions in areas such as food security and capacity-building in several sectors. Government officials in South Africa are aware that their country's economic strength could be seen by their neighbours as leading to arrogance; they therefore try to avoid sensitive situations in which they might dominate. The UN agencies in South Africa have often been asked by the government to assume the role of a neutral convenor of conferences, facilitator of initiatives, or catalyst in relation to SADC, thereby providing an equal platform for participating countries. Hence, in Africa, it is in the national interest of South Africa to be an important provider of regional public goods.

As noted in section 2.4, 12 UN agencies, funds or programmes are based in South Africa and working at the regional level. Together, these agencies cover not only all of the SADC countries, but also assist SADC institutions and other regional organizations, both governmental and civil society. The areas of assistance and capacity-building address a wide range of development concerns, including the environment, health, education, humanitarian relief, migration and refugee flows, drugs, crime, the administration of justice and human rights. Much of this assistance is provided in cooperation with South African partners, thereby strengthening the capacity and profile of these partners in the African region while helping to strengthen South-South cooperation, regional structures and regional responses.

### **8.4 A BETTER SOUTH AFRICA**

Within the borders of South Africa itself, the relationship is predominantly one in which the UN provides assistance to South Africa rather than the other way around. The UN assistance is primarily in the field of development, guided by the UNDAF, and less so in other areas.

Development assistance, and assistance to environmental management, is funded partly by ODA and partly by the government, while other areas of assistance are funded exclusively by the government. UN agencies assist South Africa within their mandates and capacities, and try to engage in strategic policy debate as they do in many other countries. They tend to find South Africa difficult to work with in that regard, especially due to their lack of access to high-level officials who can take strategic decisions. Strategic debate and synthesis are therefore weak, if not absent altogether.

Many cases of missed opportunities where the UN and South Africa could have benefited from closer collaboration were mentioned by officials met during this evaluation. While the UN-South Africa relationship in the 1990s started out on a positive footing, this later changed and is now seen by some as being at an all-time low – a ‘make-or-break’ situation according to a source in the UN Secretariat. The relationship at the country level seems to suffer from mutual lack of

knowledge and confidence, and sometimes contradictory ways of working. The cluster system has not resolved this: There are reported gaps in integration within and between the clusters both on the UN and the government side. The UNDAF was intended to be of help in this regard. Opinions on the usefulness of the UNDAF differ, however, with some believing that it is too all-encompassing to fit with the limited field presence of the UN, and that the agencies take up many activities that are outside the UN development framework.

An effective partnership requires mutual understanding of respective roles and mandates, shared vision or common understanding of what the partnership aims to achieve, and a coordinated programme of action to achieve the objectives of the partnership. Furthermore, an effective partnership is one that is institutionalized and not subject to the vagaries of individuals. These are attributes that are weak in the partnership between the UN system and South Africa.

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary and synthesis of findings in the four focus areas and their implications for the relationship between South Africa and the UN system.

## 9.1 RELEVANCE

A synthesis summary across the four focus areas shows that:

- Almost all the interventions evaluated were aligned with national needs and the strategic priorities of the government as reflected in Vision 2014.
- They were also aligned with the mandates of the implementing UN agencies and with international standards.
- UN capacity-building activities addressed existing capacity gaps and helped in the introduction of new approaches.
- However, some highly relevant issues were addressed only by small and scattered project activities that had limited impact. Such activities were not commensurate with the importance of these issues, which called for more comprehensive interventions.
- The need to address these major and relevant issues persists in most areas despite the interventions evaluated, due to their small scale and a lack of overall strategic guidance beyond that of the UNDAF.

### 9.1.1 THE UN DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK

The UNDAF and broad programmatic priorities are aligned with the government's strategic priorities in Vision 2014 as well as with the

MDGs. This relevance does not, however, always permeate to the level of detailed programming due to an absence of real dialogue between the UN agencies and their counterparts in government. The factors that contribute to this poor communication or absence of dialogue include an element of mistrust on the part of government officials about assistance offered by the UN and a lack of openness to external advice.

The UN sometimes sends mixed messages about ownership of the UNDAF and programmes within it. In the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, in which South Africa is actively involved, the UN speaks of country ownership of the UNDAF. But on a practical level the UN has been the primary driver of UNDAF content. Among some UN officials involved in work in South Africa, their mindset suggests a concern about losing control over what they regard as their programmes.

The relevance of the UNDAF as the main mechanism for UN-South Africa cooperation can be called into question for the following reasons:

- It has not demonstrated an ability to ensure coherence of the UN presence and actions in South Africa.
- It has not been able to ensure high-level communication and strategic debate between the Government of South Africa and UN clusters.
- It is limited to development cooperation and does not cover the many other fields of UN activity such as those evaluated in this study.
- Major UN-implemented programmes are outside the UNDAF, such as those funded by the GEF (by far the largest investments



going through the UN system in South Africa). Joint activities between the government and UN agencies at headquarters level often make no reference to the UNDAF.

- As only a ‘framework’, officials in UN agencies as well as government departments do not always feel bound by the UNDAF and Common Country Action Plan, which are seen as internally inconsistent. As a result, they often develop activities that fall outside these official frameworks.

To be relevant in addressing the needs of South Africa as a middle-income country requires a more comprehensive response to the country’s international position and national interests. It also requires an understanding of South Africa’s triple role as a provider of South-South assistance to other developing countries, a financial contributor to the UN system, and a recipient of ODA on the international scene. Some of the looming international issues that South Africa can be expected to deal with in the future include climate change, the financial crisis, food insecurity and international trade, among many others. The UN system plays a significant role in most of these areas, and close cooperation between it and South Africa could be particularly fruitful in ensuring that the voice of developing countries is heard in relevant fora.

## 9.2 EFFECTIVENESS

An evaluation of UN-South Africa cooperation, as described in the preceding sections, suggests that it has worked fairly well. Many activities were evaluated as being *highly effective* in reaching their objectives, the majority were seen as *effective*, and a smaller number were regarded as *less than effective*.

A number of constraints on effectiveness have also been highlighted. Strategic dialogue between the UN and the Government of South Africa has generally not been very effective, responses have been slow, and access to government officials at higher levels has proved very difficult. Moreover,

government officials have limited awareness of UN mandates and capabilities. The fact that most activities have been evaluated as being effective is due more to the extraordinary efforts by determined individuals within the government, civil society and the UN system, than to an enabling partnership framework.

### 9.2.1 EFFECTIVENESS ON THE PART OF THE UN

Constraints to effectiveness arising from poor understanding of the basic structure of the South African government, in accordance with the Constitution, are recurrent themes throughout the focus area evaluation reports. UN interventions cannot be fully effective without a solid understanding of intergovernmental relations, and without being able to accommodate and integrate UN interventions into government budgeting, planning and monitoring and evaluation systems.

It is broadly recognized that not all UN experience is appropriate to middle-income countries such as South Africa (one size does not fit all). Intra-systemic cooperation is sometimes hampered on both sides by competition among UN agencies, and by lack of communication among government departments. Administrative procedures of both the government and UN are slow and place constraints on effective cooperation. UN agencies have administrative requirements that are different from those of the government and not fully in line with the Paris Declaration Principles.

Whereas the UN Country Team is small, the UN system as such is large and complex, and it is understandable that many people outside that system find it difficult to fully understand its normative, operational and analytical capacities. The UN Country Team could do more to ‘market’ itself to South Africa – the government, the private sector, civil society and institutions of learning – to make itself better known and thereby contribute to stronger partnerships and a higher degree of effectiveness.

Fundamental questions have been raised during the evaluation. Does the UN system at the country level have the required capacity to engage with the government on strategic matters? Will the UN system at the country level be able to effectively support South Africa in its engagement in wider international issues in which it has a natural role to play? Is the UN system at the country level able to effectively support the government in the implementation of UN norms, conventions and resolutions, not least in the area of human rights? Does the impact of small and scattered operational activities justify the cost and time invested in them? And, if not, should the UN engage at all in operational activities in a country such as South Africa?

None of these questions can be answered fully in the affirmative, and two basic options emerge. One is to conclude that the likelihood of substantial improvement in the partnership is not convincing, and that the potential value-added is insufficient justification for keeping a permanent country presence. If this option were chosen, the UN Country Team would gradually be closed down, with future contacts conducted directly with UN headquarters and regional offices.

The other option is to say that the potential contribution of the UN system to South Africa remains important, but that essential improvements are necessary for it to become realized. For this to happen, the UN must establish itself as a body that can effectively engage with South Africa's government, civil society and research institutions at a strategic level, based on a better understanding of South Africa as a middle-income country. This would involve more realistic priority-setting. It would also involve moving beyond small, joint operational activities into broader, longer-term partnership processes. Major institutional steps forward in the implementation of the UN reforms are fundamental for these changes to happen.

The independent evaluation team concludes that the second option deserves a chance. The overall response from the studies has shown that UN-supported activities in South Africa are highly relevant, and positive statements from respondents are many.

### **9.2.2 EFFECTIVENESS ON THE PART OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT**

The constraints on the government side include continuous leadership changes at the administrative and technical levels, lack of continuity and institutional memory, and weak knowledge management, which often makes for poor responses to opportunities and slow progress.

South African government departments have significant shortages in the number of skilled staff. This affects the ability of departments to absorb assistance and skills transfer. It also puts a strain on the small number of people who are available to work with the UN. Structures and processes undermine effectiveness, and bureaucracy slows down decision-making and implementation. Like the UN cluster system that has not been functioning fully, the government experiences its own challenges within government clusters.<sup>86</sup> Little attention is given to managing logical synergies among different focus areas, such as peacekeeping, development, defence reform, justice reform, police reform, human rights, humanitarian assistance, social development and the environment. Technical entities and officials responsible for implementation in government departments are often not sufficiently knowledgeable of the UN system to allow them to realize the opportunities that it presents; focal points in the provincial sphere of government often appear to be marginalized or weak; and lack of intradepartmental coordination is also a constraining factor.

Finally, government entities sometimes express antagonism to the possibility that expertise from somewhere else can contribute to the identifica-

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86. The cluster system itself is under review by the ANC and may be substituted by something else by the incoming administration. *Mail & Guardian*, 13 February 2009.

tion and solution of problems in South Africa, or within the domestic organization concerned.

The government's challenges to an effective UN-South Africa partnership can be summarized as follows:

- **Lack of a comprehensive framework for government-UN cooperation.** South Africa engages with the UN system in a number of ways that are not part of the UNDAF. For example, the whole range of activities pertaining to the provision of regional and global public goods, to which South Africa actively contributes, are not captured in the UN development assistance framework.
- **Ineffective institutionalization of partnerships.** Within the present UNDAF and Common Country Action Plan, the rules of engagement are not clear to all of those government officials who are involved in their implementation. The government has not provided the necessary leadership to make the cluster system effective.
- **Limited understanding of roles and mandates.** Some government officials involved in the implementation of programmes lack a thorough understanding of the UN system and how it works. A common but serious misunderstanding is to see the UN in the same way as a bilateral donor, thereby not recognizing the Government of South Africa's own role in the UN system and the strengths as well as the weaknesses of multilateralism. Learning about the UN system is often through trial and error, resulting in delays and frustration. At the more senior level of government, there appears to be a limited understanding or appreciation of the role of the UN system and how it can be used to the benefit of the country. Moreover, there is a strong sense from government officials that international UN staff do not always fully understand the complexities and nuances of the South African political environment.

- **Coordination challenges.** The various UN agencies and government departments have different planning and budgeting time frames and different lines of accountability. On neither side is there a 'single entry point' to the system. In principle, the Resident Coordinator should perform that function on behalf of the UN. In practice, that post has been filled by various agency heads in the role of acting Resident Coordinator. On the government side, the roles of the National Treasury and the Department of Foreign Affairs are not always clear to government officials, nor to UN officials. Whereas the Department of Foreign Affairs has overall responsibility for international relations, the Treasury has a formal policy process for dealing with development partners and monitoring ODA flows through a single entry point at the International Development Coordination Directorate. In contrast, the Department of Foreign Affairs has different desks with varying thematic and regional responsibilities.
- **Failure to attract national staff.** It is a challenge for the UN to attract and retain national staff. The UN has to compete for staff with the South African public and private sectors and other donors who may offer better career opportunities.
- **Mixed success in forging partnerships with civil society.** The UN system appears to have developed good partnerships with research and academic institutions in the area of health and education. The partnership with South African NGOs in the development arena, however, is not strong.

### 9.3 THE POTENTIAL OF UN COOPERATION IN SOUTH AFRICA

The UN system has long experience in working with middle-income countries, especially in Latin America and Asia, and recognizes the huge structural differences that exist between middle- and low-income countries, as well as among middle-income countries themselves. However, it

has been difficult for UN agencies to fully draw upon this existing experience to establish working relations with the government that take into consideration the historical, geographic, political, economic and cultural specificities of South Africa as a middle-income country. Instead, emphasis has been given to development cooperation for which the UNDAF has been jointly developed. No similar framework exists for the remaining scope of government-UN relations, beyond the general procedures of different government departments. In this perspective, the UN is often seen as just ‘another donor’, or as a service provider, thereby narrowing the perception to a one-way relationship rather than one in which both sides can make important contributions to the other.

UNDP has repeatedly recognized that middle-income countries play an important role in the provision of certain global public goods such as peace-building, public health, financial stability, and addressing drug-trafficking, trans-border crime and climate change. UNDP defines its own role in middle-income countries as follows:<sup>87</sup>

- Providing effective advocacy for human development and achievement of the MDGs, in particular to address widening inequalities
- Responding to existing and potential demands from government and civil society
- Tapping middle-income countries as ‘beacons’ to broker development knowledge and experience gained from good practice in the framework of South-South cooperation
- Ensuring coordination, representation and partnership in the context of UN reform.

South Africa possesses substantial human, scientific and technological capacity, not least in its vibrant private sector, which makes it a natural beacon for South-South cooperation, as mentioned above. Within South Africa, the UN must take care not to duplicate, or compete with, local institutions that already have the required capacities. However, important capacity constraints in South Africa have also been identified in this evaluation and elsewhere, and the UN can draw on its international experience to add value to the government’s own efforts. This must take place within agreed-upon cooperation frameworks, such as the Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review, the Paris Principles and Accra Agenda for Action, and ongoing UN reforms (see point 4 above).

Examples of potential UN cooperation with developing middle-income countries are plentiful<sup>88</sup> and include the following:

- Keeping constituencies for development strong in international fora such as recurrent meetings of the G-20, thereby representing the 150 or so countries that are not members of this elite group
- Helping middle-income countries access specific global public goods, such as resources available through the GEF, the Clean Development Mechanism and other funds
- Assisting developing countries in preparing for negotiating sessions in the run-up to the Copenhagen Climate Conference in December 2009 by providing in-depth analyses and organizing preparatory sessions
- Facilitating experience-sharing among developing middle-income countries and low-income countries in the context of South-South cooperation.<sup>89</sup>

87. Speech by Ad Melkert, UNDP Associate Administrator, Barbados, 18 February 2009, on UNDP’s contribution/value-added in middle-income countries.

88. Examples can be found in recent evaluation reports, such as: Evaluation of the Role of UNDP in the Net Contributor Countries of the Arab Region (<http://www.undp.org/eo/thematic/ncc.html>). An evaluation on South-South cooperation based on cases in Barbados, Brazil, China, Guatemala, Mali, South Africa and Thailand can be found in: Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to South-South Cooperation (<http://www.undp.org/eo/thematic/ssc.html>).

89. Ad Melkert op. cit.



### Box 1. The Changing Role of the UN Resident Coordinator

"Para 17. The resident coordinator reports to the Secretary-General through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator as Chair of the United Nations Development Group. The delineation of the responsibilities of the resident coordinator as leader of the United Nations country team, on the one hand, and his or her role as UNDP representative, on the other, is being clarified in the update of the job description for resident coordinator. To make sure that the resident coordinator is more fully available for coordination functions and to avoid conflicts of interest, the General Assembly requested UNDP to appoint a country director to run its core activities, including its fund-raising, especially in countries with large country teams and complex coordination situations, or in situations of complex emergencies. As of May 2008, 49 country director posts have been established, and 41 have been filled."

Excerpt from the *Report of the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council Substantive session of 2008: Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation: follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council. Functioning of the resident coordinator system, including costs and benefits*, New York, 10-14 July 2008

#### 9.3.1 UN REFORM

The UN reform process is long overdue as a consequence of resistance, for political, economic and other reasons, by some Member States and UN bodies. The continued relevance of the UN as the overall forum for international negotiations in a multi-polar world will depend on its ability to adapt to changed conditions. The High-Level Panel's 'Delivering as One' report was a bold step forward towards dearly needed reforms. One size does not fit all, however, and South Africa should develop its own model for cooperation with the UN system. There is no need to wait for an intergovernmental mandate to embark on such a process that can only be helpful to the UN as well as to South Africa. The process will, by necessity, involve strong engagement by UN headquarters, and care should be taken to ensure not only transparency but also pluralism and flexibility that will facilitate access by the Government of South Africa to the expertise of non-resident UN agencies working outside the UNDAF.<sup>90</sup> In recognition of South Africa as a middle-income country that contributes as much as it receives from the UN, the two-way nature of the relationship would

perhaps be better captured under the heading 'Delivering and Receiving as One', thereby underscoring the need for a mutual streamlining of procedures.

The progress of UN reform is slow in South Africa as well as in general, and is a major constraint on the UN's effectiveness. Although it is premature to draw conclusive lessons from the current pilot exercise on UN reform, some pointers towards the future have appeared that can help inform the debate on what might be most appropriate for the UN presence in South Africa. Based on consultations in the pilot countries, the Report of the Co-chairs on System-Wide Coherence (July 2008)<sup>91</sup> discusses some of the same issues as those identified in this report.

There are four 'ones' at the country level in the 'Delivering as One' approach: one programme; one budgetary framework and fund; one leader; and one office. Of these, the most urgent to be addressed is 'one leader'. The unsatisfactory situation with regard to UN Country Team management has long been a major obstacle to UN-Government of South Africa cooperation and needs immediate attention (see Box 1).

90. The International Civil Aviation Organization and the International Meteorological Organization are examples of non-resident agencies that provide development assistance to most countries without necessarily being taken into account in the UNDAF.

91. *System-Wide Coherence: Report of the Co-chairs, Ambassador Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania) and Ambassador Kavanaugh (Ireland)*, submitted to the UN General Assembly on 21 July 2008.



There is already one UN office in Pretoria to accommodate most of the Country Team. The issue here is not so much the physical location of agencies, but rather effective interaction among them.

One programme exists to some extent in the UNDAF; however, it is necessary to expand this to cover much more of the totality of the UN mandate. More work is needed to arrive at a comprehensive UN country programme with streamlined procedures and sufficient flexibility to ensure that it addresses the whole range of UN programmes, regardless of whether related agencies are physically present in the country or not.

One budgetary framework and one fund is a difficult area, but some of the pilot countries are making progress in this regard. In line with the Paris Principles, this requires that core funding for UN activities is allocated to the country office as such, and that development partners allocate their contributions either to UN headquarters or to the country office directly, rather than to individual projects by specialized agencies.

It is concluded that the constraints and challenges outlined in this report could be mitigated through a determined transformation of the UN presence in South Africa towards a unique 'Delivering and Receiving as One' approach in a particular model suited to South African conditions, including its status as a middle-income country and its role in the provision of regional and global public goods.

## 9.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations summarize and synthesize the findings of the four focus-area reports and the implications for the global framework for Government of South Africa-UN relations.

The recommendations are based on the overall conclusion that South Africa can benefit substantially from closer cooperation with the UN system; that South Africa is an important contributor to UN mandates regionally and globally; that the potential of Government of South Africa-UN cooperation is currently not fully utilized; and that this relationship should be

located within the totality of South Africa's interests in the provision of public goods at home, in the region, and in the world, and not be viewed as being limited to development cooperation. The recommendations propose a major streamlining of the UN presence in South Africa, as part of the UN reform process, to be implemented over the next three years. At this time, a follow-up evaluation will show if the desired strengthening has taken place for the UN to become a real strategic partner to the government.

The recommendations should be considered within the context of huge global challenges, including the financial crisis, climate change and food security issues, which may impel the UN to review modalities for its country operations, and the Government of South Africa to review its foreign relations overall to counter the negative impacts of these challenges.

The recommendations are based on the reasoning that contributions from the UN system to South Africa must be demand-driven, and that such demand will only exist when there is sufficient knowledge of what is being offered, and when the structures governing the relationship are conducive to expedient response and delivery.

The recommendations aim to address current constraints in these areas and are modest and doable. General elections are imminent in South Africa, with consequent changes in the political executive as well as senior officials. For this reason, 2009 may indeed be an opportune juncture to review government expectations and priorities in relation to its partnership with the UN system.

### 9.4.1 GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA – CREATING A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR THE PROVISION OF PUBLIC GOODS AT HOME, IN AFRICA, AND IN THE WORLD

**Recommendation 1. Develop a comprehensive cooperation framework.** It is recommended that a strategic planning process be initiated jointly by the Department of Foreign Affairs and the National Treasury with participation of all other government departments that interact with the UN system. The goal would be the creation of a flexible, permanent structure that will effectively

cover the range of international relations related to the provision of national,<sup>92</sup> regional and global public goods and reflect South Africa's position as a middle-income country. Contributors to this new structure would include a number of government departments with regional or international outreach, the South African embassies abroad, academic institutions that contribute to the body of global scientific knowledge, private sector corporations that provide new technologies, as well as UN and other development partners.

The purpose of the cooperation framework would be to ensure coherency and systematic monitoring of overall South African engagement. This framework should take into full consideration an approach to manage regional interventions in consultation with structures such as SADC, NEPAD and the African Union. The cooperation framework should be closely aligned with South Africa's Medium-Term Expenditure Framework and medium-term programmes of national departments; it should also be integrated with the objectives of the National Framework for Sustainable Development. The UN's partnership with civil society, especially NGOs, should be strengthened through a jointly planned programme that moves beyond one-off events to building the capacity of NGOs as partners in development. The ways in which cross-cutting issues and synergies with related initiatives will be managed should be clearly defined.

#### 9.4.2 THE UN AND GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA – MOVING TOWARDS A REAL PARTNERSHIP

**Recommendation 2. Enter into a joint strategic planning process.** It is recommended that, within the philosophy of the framework described above, the government (in national, provincial and local spheres) and the UN system (at local, regional and headquarters levels) enter into a joint strategic planning process. Assistance would be provided by external consultants to determine the scope and rules of engagement governing future cooperation that would extend beyond the

UNDAF. The government should define a sound and comprehensive policy and process to manage UN assistance within the broader framework of international cooperation to South Africa and the region. (To deal with the UN in isolation would only add to the current lack of coordination, harmonization and alignment with national and regional priorities, principles and implementation criteria.) The process should produce clear guidelines for roles and responsibilities that are in line with the foregoing recommendation and spelled out in a Memorandum of Understanding that will hold the parties mutually accountable.

#### 9.4.3 GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA - TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE UN'S POTENTIAL AND CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT CONDUCTIVE TO COLLABORATION

##### **Recommendation 3. Review the roles of key government departments in relation to the UN.**

It is recommended that the current roles and responsibilities of the National Treasury and Department of Foreign Affairs as key contact points for the UN be reviewed. The goal would be to clearly define a formal process to manage this relationship. While the Department of Foreign Affairs is mandated as the first point of entry for all foreign engagements, and the National Treasury deals with inward ODA flows, the complex set of relationships between the government and the UN requires interaction at strategic as well as technical levels with many government departments. As the evaluation clearly demonstrates, this interaction does not function in ways that facilitate the full utilization of mutual resources. It is therefore recommended that clearer and more flexible mechanisms be developed.

**Recommendation 4. Improve coordination.** It is recommended that government departments take the initiative to improve their coordination with UN agencies through bi-annual round-table discussions in which priorities and programmes can be reviewed. Such discussions could also serve

92. Provision of national public goods are what most government departments at central and decentralized levels are tasked with. The present context only includes national public goods where international relations are involved through external funding or other collaboration, for example, as ODA. Commercial activities by the private sector are not included.

to deepen mutual understanding of each party's mandates. Furthermore, it is recommended that the government take steps to improve the knowledge and skills of international relations focal points in departments regarding the UN system. This could be accomplished by securing the assistance of the Department of Foreign Affairs, the National Treasury and the UN to design a programme to build such capacity. The government should demonstrate ownership of the expanded cooperation programme by ensuring that consultations are not relegated to officials who lack the mandate and the skills to participate in them, possibly under the auspices of the Consultative Forum on International Relations, an intergovernmental structure comprising senior officials. The current system of focal points should be evaluated and structured to become more effective, especially to improve the integration between the official focal points in international relations entities and the technical entities within and outside of departments responsible for implementation.

#### 9.4.4 THE UN – STREAMLINING THE UN COUNTRY TEAM IN SOUTH AFRICA TO ADD VALUE

**Recommendation 5. Adapt the UN Country Team to the specific needs of South Africa.** It is recommended that the UN at country and headquarters levels take steps to develop a unique model of 'Delivering and Receiving as One' for South Africa, taking into account its status as a middle-income country and aiming to support national priorities in a comprehensive manner. For inspiration, it is further recommended that the UN Country Team and government representatives monitor the experience of the 'One UN' pilot programme as it unfolds, possibly including a joint visit to some of the pilot countries, as well as through the forthcoming evaluation.

**Recommendation 6. Create one budgetary framework.** It is recommended that the UN Country Team, in collaboration with the UN Secretariat and agency headquarters, review the option for integrating budgets at the country level. It is further recommended to encourage bilateral development partners, in the spirit of the Paris Declaration, to avail funds to the UN Country

Team rather than earmarking them for specific projects implemented by agencies. This process can be painful for some agencies and care should be taken not to negatively impact the agencies' ability to make use of their comparative advantages.

#### **Recommendation 7. Strengthen UN leadership at the country level, focusing on the Resident Coordinator.**

It is recommended that the UN strengthen its leadership in South Africa in order to embark on strategic interaction with the government and South African civil society, drawing on the full register of UN capacity while helping to channel South African expertise to the UN. This will require a streamlining of the UN Country Team's mode of operations. It is recommended that the Resident Coordinator become the chief executive officer of the system at the country level, with a separate office, instead of serving in the dual role of Resident Coordinator and head of agency simultaneously. In accordance with the practice in an increasing number of countries, it is recommended that the UNDP country office be led by a country director. The Resident Coordinator should be endowed with executive powers for the whole system, including the budget. He/she should be the central contact point for the Government of South Africa, have easy access to senior levels of government, and ensure that the UN system always speaks with one voice. He/she should be supported by two senior deputies, namely a strategic development manager responsible for connecting the mandates and capacities of the UN with relevant government departments, and a public diplomacy manager, responsible for UN external relations in South Africa (with the government, academia and civil society). Care should be exercised to ensure the correct balance of competencies in the recruitment of the three officials. The recruitment should be a joint process, and applicants from outside the UN system, including South African nationals, should be encouraged to apply. To the extent that the setting up of the new Office of the Resident Coordinator will require additional funding, the UN and the Government of South Africa should share responsibility to ensure that such funding be made available for three years on an experimental basis.

**Recommendation 8. Add value.** The UN should focus on high-end value-added activities that generate knowledge and information for policies and programmes: activities where it has strength, such as providing technical assistance for monitoring and evaluating areas that cut across government departments (for example, human rights, gender equality, social protection and employment creation), and activities that promote South-South dialogue. The partnership should formulate and implement clear and effective strategies for all the sectors reviewed in this report, and create a governance arrangement that assures progressive adaptation and flexibility in the face of emerging knowledge and constraints. Small projects that are demanding in terms of time and resources and not necessarily suitable for cumbersome UN procedures should only be approved when particularly strong cases can be made for them by the government.

**Recommendation 9. Enhance the specialized expertise of UN staff.** It is recommended that UN agencies, funds and programmes ensure that career staff posted to South Africa are experts or researchers in their respective areas of expertise. They should also have advisory capabilities and be able to engage with government officials on an equal footing. Likewise, the UN should provide South Africa with high-level, short-term international expertise in selected fields, upon request.

#### 9.4.5 THE UN AND GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA – WORK TOWARDS MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

**Recommendation 10. Strive to understand South Africa.** It is recommended that the Resident Coordinator's Office strengthen its briefing of staff to better communicate the specificities of South Africa, the intergovernmental relations at three levels, and the role of civil society. This would include attendance at the annual sessions held by the National Treasury/International Development Coordination Directorate as well as special modules on understanding the South African context, government priorities and the Programme of Action; the machinery of government; and how development cooperation in South Africa works. It is further recommended that UN agencies be encouraged to strategize,

individually and together, about how they will engage with government counterparts in a decentralized setting with overlapping competencies, using inter-governmental relations structures as far as possible.

**Recommendation 11. Strive to understand the UN system.** It is recommended that more attention be given to UN public diplomacy in order to increase understanding of what the UN is and does. This should include:

- The marketing of services that can be offered by the UN system to South Africa and the region, with clearly defined processes on how to access these services
- Bi-annual briefings to the government to discuss major policy developments and initiatives from UN headquarters and strategic issues pertinent to the implementation of the joint cooperation framework. These briefings should preferably follow the bi-annual Cabinet Lekgotla
- Briefing sessions and conferences for wider audiences (national and provincial legislatures, the private sector and civil society) on global and regional issues of special importance where the UN is involved. Examples could include climate change in the lead-up to the Copenhagen Conference, the food security crisis, and peace-building in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**Recommendation 12. Follow up on these recommendations in 2012.** It is recommended that an independent follow-up evaluation be conducted in 2012 to ascertain if the strengthening of the UN Country Team has taken place: if the new roles of the Resident Coordinator and his or her deputies have enabled them to become trusted advisers to the Government of South Africa; if a comprehensive cooperation framework has been established that covers the whole range of potential UN services; and if communication and mutual understanding have substantially improved. Based on the outcome, the evaluation should make recommendations regarding the further strengthening of or, alternatively, reducing the UN presence in South Africa.



# FRAMEWORK TERMS OF REFERENCE

## I. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

1. The Government of the Republic of South Africa (RSA) has requested the collaboration of the United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) in undertaking a joint country-level evaluation of the role and contribution of the United Nations system<sup>93</sup> for the Republic of South Africa. The Government of the RSA and UNEG have been engaged in a dialogue on this evaluation since 2006.<sup>94</sup>
2. The evaluation was originally meant to focus only on the contribution of the UN system to national development objectives of the RSA, the relevance and effectiveness of this contribution, the use of UN development assistance by the RSA, and lessons learned in capacity development. The evaluation was initially meant to inform the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and the Common Country Action Plan (CCAP) for the period 2007-2010.
3. During the scoping mission of UNEG (4-15 February 2008), it was proposed, in consultation between both parties, to expand the scope of the evaluation beyond the UN's traditional development assistance to the RSA. The Government of the RSA suggested including activities implemented within the UN system in line with the three tiers of strategic policy priorities: working for (a) a better South Africa, (b) a better Africa and (c) a better world. The evaluation would have to address:
  - a) Operational activities for development in South Africa (specifically those covered by the framework of the UNDAF and incorporated in the CCAP), namely the UN system's efforts to support Government in:
    - the strengthening of democracy, good governance and administration through capacity enhancement in priority areas of service delivery and service access
    - the acceleration of economic growth and development for the benefit of all
    - the strengthening of South African and subregional institutions to consolidate the African Agenda, promote global governance and South-South cooperation
    - the promotion of justice, peace, safety and security.
  - b) Humanitarian assistance (including disaster risk mitigation and disaster preparedness in South Africa and in Africa; participation of the RSA in humanitarian response in Africa)
  - c) Environment (notably the RSA's contribution to the follow-up of the conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification)
  - d) Peace and security (including the UN's contribution to areas such as crime and drug control in South Africa and in the region as well as South Africa's contribution to peacekeeping and peace-building).
4. The Government of the RSA has established a core national group that will guide the

93. The UN system comprises all entities of the UN Secretariat as well as funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other organizations. The UNEG is a system-wide network of evaluation offices endowed with its own norms and standards.

94. UNEG conducted a pre-scoping mission during the period 15-19 May 2006 and a scoping mission during the period 4-15 February 2008. The present draft framework terms of reference is the principal outcome of the scoping mission.



overall evaluation process jointly with UNEG. National and international evaluation specialists not directly involved in the implementation of UN programmes in South Africa will be included in the Joint Evaluation Management Group (JEMG). On the national side, the group will count among its members representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs, The Presidency, Statistics South Africa, the Office of the Public Service Commission, the Department of Provincial and Local Government and the National Treasury. On the UNEG side the group will include representatives from evaluation offices of FAO, UN Office of Internal Oversight Services, UN DESA, UNDP, UNICEF and WFP.

5. During the scoping mission an agreement was reached among partners on the key principles, norms and standards that should guide the evaluation process with due regard to the UNEG Norms and Standards and those of the African Evaluation Association. The Association has a well-developed set of norms and standards to guide evaluation, which emphasizes issues of respect, partnership and transparency. The evaluation will, to the greatest possible extent, seek to be independent, credible and useful and adhere to the highest possible professional standards in evaluation. It should be responsive to the needs and priorities of the RSA and serve as an accountability and learning mechanism for the UN system. The evaluation should be consultative and engage the participation of a broad range of stakeholders.

## II. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

6. The joint evaluation will serve the following purpose for decision-makers in the RSA and in the UN system at different levels: “Enhance the role and contribution of the UN system in support of RSA policies and strategies for a better South Africa, a better Africa and a better world.”

7. The objective of the evaluation will be to assess the relevance and effectiveness of the cooperation between the RSA and the UN system within the three tiers of strategic policy priorities of the RSA (a better South Africa, a better Africa, and a better world). Case studies will be conducted in four focus areas, with a view to using those results which are sufficiently generalizable to inform the outcomes and conclusions drawn from the evaluation. These focus areas are:
  - a) the cooperation between the UN system and the RSA for development in South Africa
  - b) the cooperation between the UN system and the RSA related to the environment
  - c) the cooperation between the UN system and the RSA related to humanitarian assistance in Africa
  - d) the cooperation between the UN system and the RSA related to peace and security.

## III. KEY FOCUS AREAS

### DEVELOPMENT

8. Since the beginning of the post-apartheid era, a key objective of the Government of the RSA has been the improvement of the quality of life for all South Africans. However, poverty eradication in the so-called ‘second economy’ remains a major development challenge for the country. South Africa has followed a coherent and structured approach to tackling poverty by integrating it into sectoral policies, strategies and budget allocations. The targeted interventions in respect to the second economy focus on building a well-educated and healthy nation, the acceleration of access to productive assets, the reduction of inequality, and the increase in income of the poor and marginalized.
9. The evaluation will assess the contributions made to facilitate access to services that reduce inequalities, such as the access to: education and improved quality of education; national health system; the access to housing,

including the security of tenure, water, sanitation and shelter; food security and livelihoods for small farmers; and the contribution to the implementation of the government's plan to prevent HIV infection and to fight HIV&AIDS. Several assessments have been made of these issues, with the most comprehensive evaluation of the performance of Government contained in the annual *State of the Public Service* reports of the Public Service Commission. These reports have identified challenges facing Government in terms of meeting development goals.<sup>95</sup>

10. The evaluation will also assess the contributions made by the UN system to increase employment opportunities as a way to increase the income of the poor. This includes the development of skills for women, support for enhanced youth employment, urban renewal and improved access to programmes such as the Expanded Public Works Programmes, which would enable the informal sector to graduate to the mainstream economy of South Africa. This specific component of the evaluation should show the relative contribution of the UN to the overall development objectives of the country.
11. In the area of the environment, the evaluation will assess the contribution to the follow-up to the conventions on three international treaties concluded at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, namely: The Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.
12. Since the Rio Earth Summit, South Africa has been a very active player in the regional and global environment debate.<sup>96</sup> Its foreign policy clearly defines the prominent role South Africa intends to play in the strengthening of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the African Union and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as a means to foster regional integration. At the global level, South Africa sees the UN system as a multilateral neutral platform to perform on the environmental agenda set in the three Rio Conventions.
13. In fact, South Africa accounts for about 1 percent of the world's anthropogenic 'greenhouse' gas emissions,<sup>97</sup> due to its energy production, which has a high dependency on coal.<sup>98</sup> The country also contains an important share of global biodiversity,<sup>99</sup> and is subject to a high risk of desertification. It is estimated that the country contains about 6 percent of the world's mammal species, 8 percent of the avifauna, 5 percent of the reptile species, 16 percent of the estimated number of marine fish species, and about 6 percent of the described insect species. All of these important species, many of them endemic to South Africa, are under anthropogenic pressure, particularly due to mining, forestry, urban development and agricultural expansion, and alien invasive plants and animals. Between 14 and 37 percent of the country's fauna and flora are considered under threat. Some 25 percent of South Africa's lands are classified as severely degraded and 90 percent of the country is dominated by arid and semiarid lands.

## ENVIRONMENT

11. In the area of the environment, the evaluation will assess the contribution to the follow-up to the conventions on three international treaties concluded at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, namely: The Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.

95. Republic of South Africa, State of the Public Service Reports 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, Public Service Commission.

96. While the RSA did not have an official delegation at the Rio Earth Summit, the African National Congress was present. Both the country's national development policies and foreign policy, formulated after the 1994 democratic elections, reflect South Africa's alignment to the international consensus on the interlinked nature of environment and development.

97. South Africa is ranked 20th in the world.

98. Based on 1990 data, a new inventory of greenhouse gases is under preparation, under the Second National UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

99. South Africa is considered the third most biologically diverse country in the world.

14. South Africa's international commitment to improving the quality of life (i.e., people's livelihoods), preventing and reducing environmental health risks, reducing vulnerability to natural hazards and protecting the quality of the regional and global commons is demonstrated by its direct involvement in the follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD): in 2003, it chaired the 11th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), during which a multi-year programme of work beyond 2003 was established on the basis of two-year implementation cycles, i.e., CSD 16 and 17. These are regarded as the 'Africa Cycles' because of their focus on the sustainable development agenda set in Johannesburg during the WSSD in 2002.

## HUMANITARIAN

15. South Africa faces increasing levels of disaster risk. It is exposed to a wide range of weather hazards, including drought, cyclones and severe storms that can trigger widespread hardship and devastation. The country has an extensive coastline and proximity to shipping routes that present numerous marine and coastal threats. It shares borders with six Southern African neighbours that present both natural and human induced cross-boundary risks, as well as humanitarian assistance in times of emergency.
16. These changing risk patterns in the RSA, including chronic vulnerability, present significant challenges and underline the importance of comprehensive integrated and coordinated disaster risk management that focuses on preventing or reducing risks of disasters, mitigating the severity of disasters, preparedness, and rapid and effective response.
17. The RSA plays a major role in humanitarian assistance on the African continent, part of which involves close cooperation with the UN system. For example, WFP has procured substantial amounts of food in South Africa and made extensive use of its ports and

transport facilities. The evaluation will assess how the UN system has made use of both food and non-food contributions of the RSA and also of its infrastructure. The evaluation will also consider cooperation in the areas of vulnerability mapping and food security monitoring.

18. The RSA is engaged in emergency preparedness and disaster risk reduction, both at the national and the regional levels. The evaluation will assess to what extent and in what ways these activities have involved cooperation with UN organizations that specifically address these dimensions.

## PEACE AND SECURITY

19. Crime has been referred to by the Government as a high priority issue. Crime also features prominently in the public's concern along with issues of poverty, job creation and HIV&AIDS. The criminal justice system has undergone substantive transformation and reorganization. There is still considerable work to be done in the areas of crime prevention, reporting, detection and processing cases.
20. In addition, the Government faces numerous challenges in preventing and controlling crime – including drug and human trafficking and organized crime. Several programme components are undertaken within South Africa and at the SADC subregional level by the United Nations Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in legal and enforcement sectors and improving the interdiction results in key areas of illicit trafficking and organized crime.
21. The promotion of justice, peace, safety and security is a major priority for the Government of the RSA. There has been significant progress in this area, but challenges remain. The evaluation will assess the UN role and contribution to combat organized crime, corruption, money laundering, trafficking and drug-related crimes and also its contribution to addressing the social roots of criminality.

22. South Africa has committed itself to regional peace and security and to strengthening of regional security arrangements. The RSA's involvement in peacekeeping is based on economic and security concerns – a better future for the African continent is important for the South African state and its people. Peace and stability in Africa is linked to the country's national interest. The RSA makes significant contributions to UN peacekeeping operations. It led successful negotiations to resolve the internal and external aspects of the crises in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Burundi and laid foundations for peace-building operations.
23. The RSA places emphasis on post-conflict reconstruction and development, including capacity-building, public service census, social and humanitarian affairs, including education, population and immigration matters. The evaluation will also assess the role played by the UN system in assisting the RSA in its contributions concerning peace and security to the region.

### CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

24. Several cross-cutting issues will permeate the evaluation exercise: capacity development, human rights, HIV&AIDS and gender mainstreaming. These are major factors that need to be taken into consideration for all tiers of the policy priorities: a better South Africa, a better Africa and a better world.

## IV. EVALUATION PROCESS

25. The evaluation process is presented in Figure 1. The following phases are envisaged:

- i) An **Inception Phase**, ideally to take place in May/June 2008, during which the four identified key focus areas will be further defined so that detailed terms of reference for each area can be finalized. Stakeholders' mapping and visits by the Deputy Team Leaders to headquarters of the UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies (New York, Geneva or Rome) and of regional institutions, including NEPAD and SADC, will also take place in this phase. The Inception Phase is expected to produce a detailed description of the evaluation key questions, the specific information needs and the data collection and analysis methods for each key focus area at national, regional and global levels. This is supposed to lead to detailed terms of reference for each of the key focus areas.
- ii) The **Collection of Evidence Phase** will follow, tentatively scheduled to take place during July/August/September 2008. In this period, thematic studies as well as a document review, interviews and field visits will be undertaken.
- iii) The **Synthesis Phase** will then take place in October/November 2008, with the possibility of having thematic workshops to validate findings and generate recommendations. The report should then be finalized before the end of the year.

## V. EVALUATION METHODS

26. This is a strategic evaluation focusing on the *relevance* and *effectiveness* of the UN role and

**Figure 1. The Evaluation Process**

Inception	Collection of evidence	Synthesis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Further definition of focus areas</li> <li>Detailed terms of reference</li> <li>Stakeholder mapping</li> <li>Headquarters visits (UN System, NEPAD, SADC)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Thematic studies</li> <li>Document review</li> <li>Interviews</li> <li>Field visits</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Validation of findings</li> <li>Recommendations</li> <li>Workshops</li> <li>Quality assurance</li> <li>Final report</li> </ul>



contribution to the RSA as a whole<sup>100</sup> in the context of the ongoing UN reform. As such, the methodological focus goes beyond specific project-level analysis.

27. Within the broad key focus areas, the units of analysis should therefore be concrete and evaluable illustrative examples (i.e., programmes, projects, and enabling activities) of the partnerships between UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies and the respective government ministries and/or departments as well as other governmental entities. Programmes and projects are evaluable when they embody a set of activities that pursue specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) objectives with clear indicators that allow them to be assessed at a later stage, whether the objectives and corresponding results have been achieved and whether these are relevant and sustainable. Evaluability also requires the existence of adequate sources of information to assess the achievement of results and their relevance and sustainability in the national and international context.

## INCEPTION PHASE

28. The above-mentioned methodological challenge is to be faced during the Inception Phase, when concrete and evaluable activities should be identified and framed into the four key focus areas. Based upon a more detailed and complete mapping exercise of the work of the UN system in the RSA (and with the RSA in the region and at the global level), typologies of select activities should be chosen, narrowing down the four key focus areas according to the following criteria:
  - a) **Significant past investment**, i.e., activities with a high share of the total funds channeled through the UN system
  - b) **Evaluability**, i.e., jointly implemented activities that can appropriately and

effectively be measured in order to conduct an effective evaluation.

29. Such sets of activities, which are based on the above criteria, are supposed to be illustrative of the UN work in the RSA and beyond, and could include:
  - a) **Pilot operational activities and/or project formulations** initiated by UN entities in partnership with line ministries, which, if successful, lead to upscaling by the Government of the RSA
  - b) **Normative activities** undertaken by UN entities at the demand and in support of the Government of the RSA's strategy and policy-making effort
  - c) **Studies and analyses** undertaken by UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies at the demand of the Government of the RSA in specific sectors
  - d) **Capacity-/institution-building activities (including technical assistance)** carried out by UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies at the demand of the Government of the RSA on specific topics.
30. A list of all the available strategic, thematic, country and regional/global programme evaluations undertaken by the various UN entities or by national evaluation institutions such as the Public Service Commission should be constituted, which includes an inventory of the respective findings, recommendations and lessons learned in relation to the four key focus areas.

## COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE PHASE

31. Different qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods and tools will be chosen and applied by the Evaluation Team in each key focus area during the Collection of Evidence Phase. The choice of the methods depends on the:

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100. Reference is made to the evaluation purpose and objectives (paras. 6 & 7).



- a) Precise evaluation key questions that will be formulated during the Inception Phase in the four detailed terms of reference
  - b) Extent, intensity and diversity of the operational, normative and analytical work carried out by the various funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the UN system in each key focus area
  - c) Gap between the information needs and the available data collected from projects, programmes, studies, previous evaluations and the existing materials collected and posted in the RSA/UNEG website.<sup>101</sup> This will include evaluations produced by the Public Service Commission, which has a rich database of evaluations
  - d) Level of analysis at national, regional or global levels.
32. The evaluation methods and tools might include:
- a) **Desk review** of project documents, implementation and monitoring reports, mid-term and final evaluations; national sustainable development agendas, priorities and strategies; UN country assistance strategies and frameworks such as UNDAF, CCAP and others; national statistics
  - b) **Establishment of historical causality**, i.e., the main historical facts and events related to the RSA/UN partnership both before and after 1994, including first of all the narrative of what happened visibly, on the surface, and secondly the narrative of why it happened as it happened<sup>102</sup>
  - c) **Interviews with key informants-stakeholders** (by applying a semi-structured interview protocol), i.e., relevant government departments, bilateral and multilateral donors and agencies, NGOs (both local and international with a presence in South Africa); representatives from UN agencies present in the RSA; beneficiaries and supported institutions, including municipal governments and associations, and local communities and authorities
  - d) **Field observation/visits** in selected locations at the provincial and municipal level
  - e) **Thematic studies** to be identified during the Inception Phase and implemented during the Collection of Evidence Phase. These studies should represent the main sets of activities implemented by the UN system family for RSA (see para. 29). It is foreseen that three to four studies could be adequate in terms of meaningful and cost-effective information-gathering in consideration of the limited budget available. The studies will attempt to assess the role and contribution of the involved UN entity to the theme in question, and should include the cross-cutting issues, as identified in the UNDAF, such as the UN role and contribution to capacity-building at the provincial and municipal level, UN support to the promotion of gender mainstreaming in the provincial and municipal public service, human rights and HIV&AIDS. The thematic studies will be conducted by national consultants and/or research institutions under the guidance and with the involvement of the national and international Deputy Team Leaders. The studies will include an assessment of the comparative advantage of the UN for the RSA as compared to what other national and/or international private and/or public actors are doing, as well as an investiga-

101. See: <http://stone.undp.org/undpweb/eo/evalnet/sfcle/index.cfm>.

102. The establishment of historical causality can be very useful in complex strategic evaluations as a valid substitute to counterfactual analysis. From a methodological point of view, historical facts can be extremely helpful for triangulation (ref. Rob van den Berg, 'A draft note for discussion in the meeting of the DAC Network on Development Evaluation', 15-16 January 2004, Paris).

tion of areas of missed opportunities and/or niches for UN work in the RSA and for the RSA regionally and globally.

33. As it will not be possible to visit other countries in the region benefiting from RSA support through UN entities, the Collection of Evidence Phase at regional and global levels has to be based upon desk reviews on regional and global activities of normative, analytical and operational nature. In addition, evaluation questionnaires, which will be prepared during the Inception Phase, will be sent out to pre-selected key informants to gather their perceptions on the partnership between the UN system and the RSA and beyond. Further regional-/global-level information gathering will be undertaken through interviews with informed officials during the visits of the national and international Deputy Team Leaders to UN entities' headquarters in New York, Geneva or Rome and a visit to NEPAD and SADC (see para. 25, i.). These exercises should allow the Evaluation Team to further triangulate and eventually confirm-challenge the findings at the regional and global levels.

## SYNTHESIS PHASE

34. Triangulation shall be applied during the Synthesis Phase to verify and validate findings from the above-mentioned analyses, which, as we have seen, include desk reviews, key informant interviews, field observation and thematic studies. The establishment of historical causality, which is to be undertaken as an evaluation method and not as a simple narrative/contextual exercise, will be a particularly relevant and methodologically innovative source of information for triangulation purposes.
35. The factual evidence of findings and the operational character of the recommendations will be discussed in a series of participatory thematic workshops where the main stakeholders will be represented.

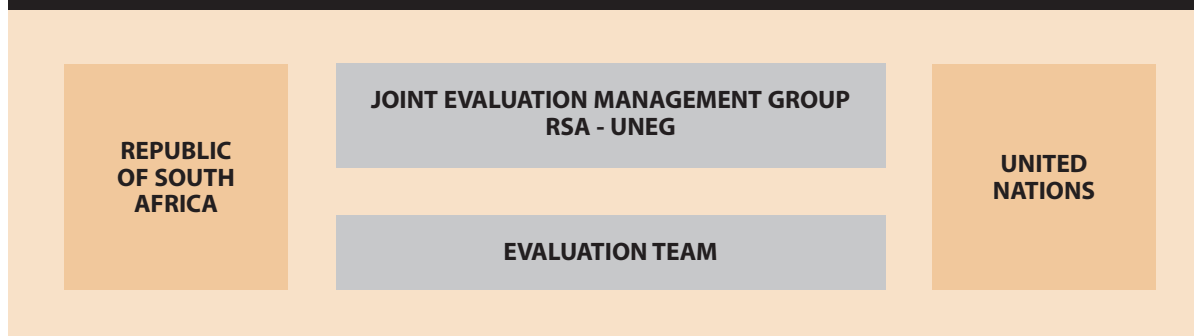
36. Quality assurance of the draft report by an external peer review panel composed of nationally and internationally renowned specialists in the four evaluation key focus areas will follow, and lead to the finalization of the report by the Evaluation Team.

## VI. ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT

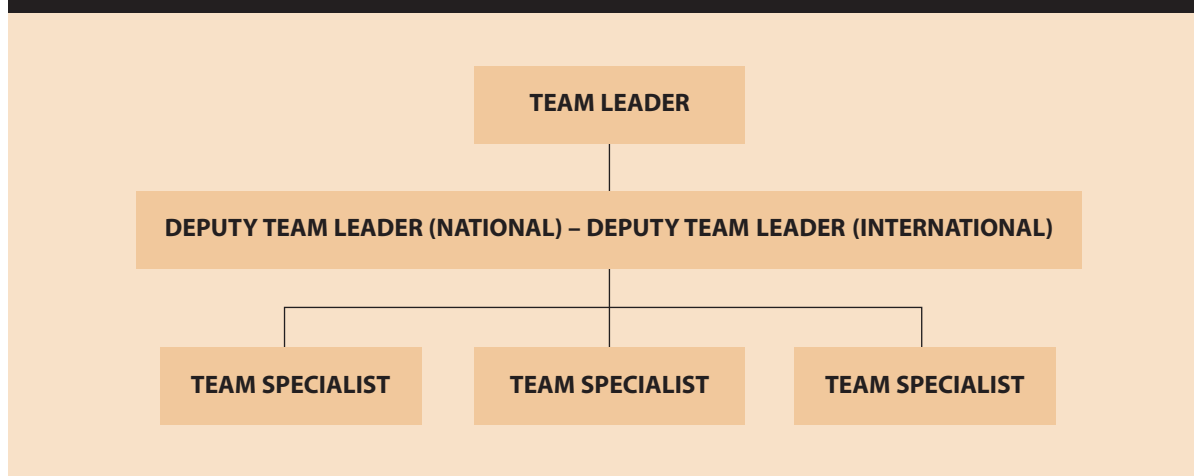
### INSTITUTIONAL SET-UP

37. The overall strategic guidance for the evaluation will be provided by the JEMG with membership and co-chaired by the Government of the RSA and UNEG. The JEMG will oversee the conduct of the evaluation and will meet at key points during the evaluation process. This involves fully participating in the design of the evaluation, managing the evaluation process, including the identification and selection of the Evaluation Team and assuring that the final product complies with the highest standards in evaluation. Among others it will include the following activities: developing the current draft joint evaluation framework terms of reference, coordinating and managing the joint evaluation process, developing the terms of reference for the Evaluation Team members, guiding the thematic studies, developing the programme of analytical work, identifying an external advisory panel to peer review the results of the evaluation and guiding the work of the Evaluation Team in the synthesis of the findings and recommendations.
38. The quality of the evaluation can be enhanced if the JEMG makes use of an external advisory panel at the end of the evaluation process to review draft evaluation reports. This would help address the challenge of evaluating actual results achieved in an environment where it is both theoretically and methodologically difficult to assert the effectiveness of a system-wide UN role and contribution for South Africa.
39. The JEMG is composed on the South African side by the Presidency of the Government of South Africa, through its

**Figure 2. The Institutional Setup**



**Figure 3. The Evaluation Team**



International Relations and Trade Policy Coordination Unit, the Department of Foreign Affairs, The National Treasury, through its International Development Cooperation Unit, the Office of the Public Service Commission, the Department of Provincial and Local Government and Statistics South Africa. On the UNEG side, the JEMG is composed of the Evaluation Office of UNDP, the Evaluation Office of UNICEF, the Evaluation Service of FAO and UN DESA's Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination; it could be expanded to include the evaluation expertise required by the scope of evaluation in areas currently not considered, namely humanitarian assistance and peace and security.

40. The JEMG will appoint a qualified Evaluation Team, comprising international and national experts to conduct the evaluation.
41. The Evaluation Team can have the composition shown in Figure 3.
42. The Evaluation Team will be composed of a Team Leader (South African) and two Deputy Team Leaders, a South African and an international. The Evaluation Team can be further completed with evaluation team specialists, as required, according to the areas of concentration of the evaluation, including development, environment, humanitarian assistance, and peace and security.

**Table 1. Evaluation Time Frame**

Activity	Estimated date
Desk review and analysis of documentation	May 2008
Inception mission	June 2008
Final detailed terms of reference for the four key focus areas and the thematic studies	June 2008
Collection of evidence phase	July/August/September 2008
Headquarters consultations in New York, Geneva, Rome and Gaborone	September 2008
Drafting the report	September/November 2008
Thematic workshops	October 2008
Quality assurance	November 2008
Presentation of final report	December 2008

43. A small Secretariat function will be needed in order to support the implementation of the evaluation process, including organizing interviews, field visits, dialogue and stakeholder meetings on the findings and recommendations, support the Evaluation Team in liaison with the key partners and make available to the Evaluation Team all the material and information that is required. The UN Country Team in South Africa could provide Secretariat support if provided with adequate resources.

#### TIME FRAME

44. The tentative time frame for the evaluation process is shown in Table 1.

#### BUDGET

45. The UNEG and the Government of the RSA, through its participation in the JEMG, will meet all costs directly related to the conduct of the evaluation. The Government of the RSA made a contribution of US\$ 157,575 in a trust fund to the UNDP Evaluation Office in New York. UNEG is matching the RSA's contribution. The evaluation budget can be administered from New York and all the expenses could be made against decisions made by the JMEG. Until the issuance of the current framework terms of reference no resources have been spent from the evaluation budget.

# EVALUATION METHODS AND INSTRUMENTS

## METHODOLOGY

This evaluation was a particularly complex one: it should be forward-looking and cover outcomes, outputs/deliverables and processes alike of what South Africa and the UN system are doing together, with a view to determining the value added by the cooperation. Both sides of the equation should be examined, as government's actions also impact on outcomes in the context of interaction with the UN system.

The evaluation operated at several levels and involved, in the inception phase, a mapping and selection exercise for each focus area of the work of the UN system in the Republic of South Africa (RSA) as well as for the RSA regionally and globally. For practical reasons, the mapping was selective and did not constitute a full inventory of RSA-UN relations 1994-2008. Based on the mapping of a 'universe' for each focus area, sets of select activities were chosen narrowing down the scope. The criteria for selection include the nature of the activities: They should cover the range of typical areas of cooperation; they should include the domestic, regional and global dimensions where relevant; they should be evaluable, i.e., sufficient evidence must be available to allow making sound assessments based predominantly on triangulation of qualitative information (quantitative data should be used when available, but were expected to be relatively few).

## THE EVALUATION PROCESS

The process consisted of three phases as follows, with some overlapping in time between them:

### Inception Phase: 25 August – 22 October 2008

1. Develop a draft evaluation framework and do preliminary testing of it

2. Create a catalogue (universe) for each focus area. Identify overlaps between focus areas
3. Identify potential activities for in-depth review. Identify overlaps between the potential areas
4. Interactive resolution across focus areas and final selection of activities for in-depth study
5. Develop specific evaluation instruments for each focus area (evaluation questions and information collection methods)
6. Prepare final evaluation framework with specific terms of reference for each focus area
7. Prepare overall work plan and report outlines
8. Submit draft inception report for comments by the Government of South Africa (GoSA) and UNEG (19 September 2008)
9. Include comments and submit final inception report (22 October 2008).

### Collection of Evidence Phase: 22 October – 19 December 2008

1. Main field data collection in the four focus areas, desk studies, Internet searches, interviews with GoSA and UN officials in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Cape Town and Gaborone (SADC)
2. Team meetings
3. Preliminary analysis of focus-area studies, first and second draft reports; comments
4. Team Leader and International Deputy Team Leader visits to UN Headquarters and GoSA Permanent Missions in Geneva, Rome and New York (19 – 25 November 2008)



**Table 1. Interviews**

Interviews by organization	GoSA	UN	Others
Development	16	18	4
Peace & security	16	10	3
Environment	19	12	5
Humanitarian	13	18	18
Headquarters visits	3	20	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Grand total</b>			<b>175</b>

5. Stakeholder workshop with government, the UN and South Africa civil society (5 December 2008)
6. Third draft focus area reports; comments.

**Synthesis Phase:****19 December 2008 – 20 February 2009**

1. Quality assurance and consistency control
2. Drafting of synthesis report
3. Peer review by Advisory Panel (16 – 23 January 2009)
4. Final drafts of all report for submission to GoSA and UNEG (23 – 30 January 2009)
5. GoSA and UNEG comments (30 January – 13 February 2009)
6. Final synthesis and focus-area reports prepared and submitted (13 – 20 February 2009).

**INTERVIEWS**

Individuals selected for interview were chosen from the GoSA and UN structures with a view to providing different but mutually supportive perspectives:

- People with specific knowledge of a project or programme, typically having been involved in its implementation (technical level)
- People with high-level, strategic knowledge of the GoSA-UN partnership (managerial level).

Interviews were semi-structured. Interviewees normally received the terms of reference ahead of each session. An introduction at the start of a session focused on the strategic nature of the evaluation, on its scope, and on a forward view. Thereafter interviewees had the opportunity to respond at length, with interpolations only for clarity of affirmation. The approach was that of reflective listening. Each interviewee was, however, asked for any documentary or other information resources he or she felt might be useful for the analysis in the evaluation. Interviews took 60 minutes on average.

Around 175 interviews were carried out in the evaluation, involving at least 250 persons. The numbers are tentative, as some people were interviewed more than once. The approximate distribution by focus area between GoSA, UN and other organizations such as civil society representatives or academic institutions is shown Table 1.

The evidence obtained was analysed using triangulation methods, typically by comparing at least three versions of the same subject from the government department, the involved UN agency, and from other sources obtained from published documentation, websites, or other stakeholders such as regional bodies, civil society organizations or academic institutions.

**Figure 1. Matrix**

Type of activity Evaluation criteria with subthemes	Normative ■ International conventions ■ Specific standards ■ Agreed protocols	Analytical ■ Strategic development ■ Studies	Operational ■ Pilot projects ■ Catalytic activities
<b>Effectiveness</b> ■ Partnership quality ■ Capacity-building ■ Gender equality ■ HIV&AIDS ■ Human rights			
<b>Relevance</b> ■ Partnership quality ■ Capacity-building ■ Gender equality ■ HIV&AIDS ■ Human rights			

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

The framework terms of reference identified effectiveness and relevance as the main evaluation criteria. The team developed the evaluation questions, i.e., the questions on effectiveness and relevance that should be answered through the study. These questions are at two levels: the disaggregate (focus-area) level, and the aggregate (synthesis) level.

Relevance is determined by the extent to which the activities correspond with policies and are in line with local needs and priorities. Methodological challenges can occur when there is more than one policy to refer to, or when there is lack of consensus on the interpretation of needs and priorities.

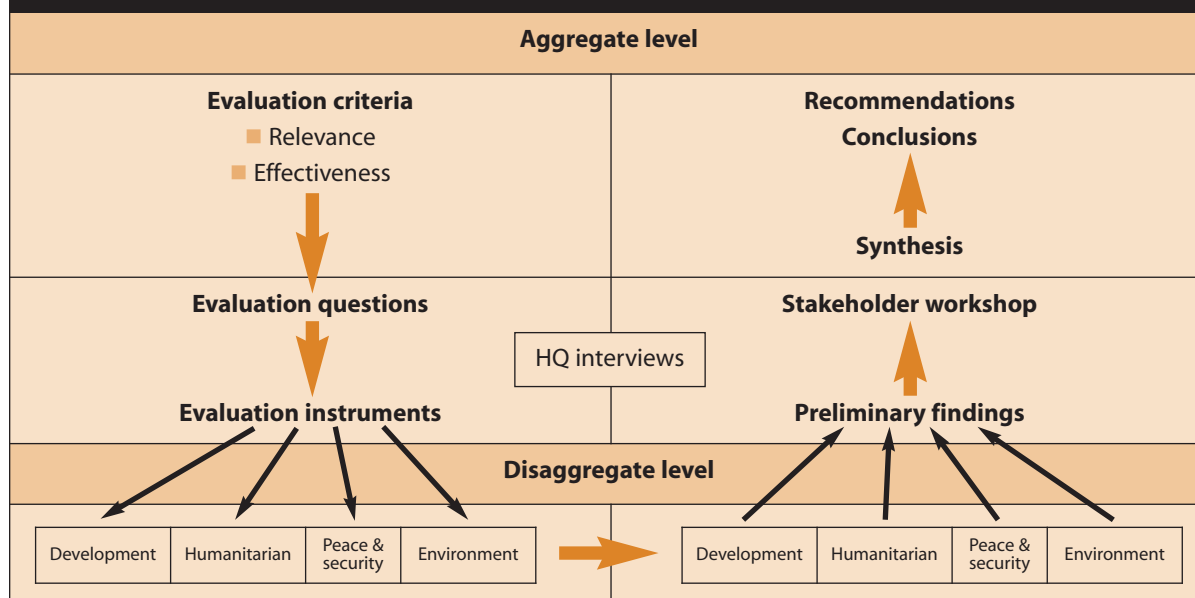
Effectiveness is defined as the extent to which agreed objectives have been met, or can be expected to be met. In practice, the objectives are not always explicit, or there can be several competing objectives for the same activity. In such cases it can be necessary to operationalize them on the basis of available oral and written documentation. In the case of cooperation

between GoSA and the UN, it is particularly important to look at the roles played by the various actors. External factors outside the control of the actors that may have had a significant influence on the success of the activity also need to be identified.

## EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

A matrix was devised as a tool for selection of activities (see Figure 1) for analysis, classifying each set of activities (typically a project or programme) by type: whether its nature is mainly *normative* (e.g., concerning international conventions, specific international standards, or internationally agreed protocols; *analytical* (e.g., concerning strategic development in which the UN has participated, or studies that support policy analysis; or *operational* (such as, for example, pilot projects testing new approaches on a small scale, or activities where the UN has played a catalytic role). These types were set against the two evaluation criteria: effectiveness and relevance, each with a set of sub-themes: partnership quality; capacity-/institution-building; gender equality; HIV&AIDS; and human rights and democracy.

**Figure 2. Evaluation framework**



The overall framework for the evaluation is shown in Figure 2. The process starts at the aggregate level where the terms of reference are formulated and the evaluation criteria decided upon. From the criteria and the initial identification of issues presented above, the evaluation questions are formulated, first at the overall level that applies to all focus areas and, secondly, questions tailored to each area.

Information was collected and analysed at disaggregate level, leading to findings for each focus area. These were analysed across and a draft synthesis report prepared with preliminary conclusions and recommendations. The draft report was then circulated for comments, and the findings were presented for verification in the stakeholder workshop in Pretoria on 4 December 2008. Comments from stakeholders were then considered and incorporated in the final draft report.

### EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The evaluation questions are placed at different levels, from very general to very specific – common to them is that they must be answerable to be useful. The more general ones will be relevant to all (or most) of the focus areas as well

as to the synthesis. The more specific ones relate to the focus areas and will differ between those. The general evaluation questions applicable to all focus areas are the following:

#### Relevance

- Are the objectives in keeping with real needs and priorities of the implementing partners as well as the intended beneficiaries? What is the extent of the fit or disjuncture and why?
- Should the direction of activities (the approach) be changed, or discontinued?
- To what extent have ratified UN conventions been turned into national legislation, and, when this has happened, what was the role of the UN system in helping the RSA in doing this?
- To what extent did South Africa influence conventions and resolutions?
- To what extent has the UN system supported the RSA ratification of conventions?
- In which ways has the GoSA been able to use the UN system to further its agendas, e.g., through the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, G-77, membership in UN fora and governing bodies of UN agencies?

- To what extent, and how, has the UN system facilitated the GoSA in playing a strategic and influencing role in the agenda of the SADC region, in Africa, and in global fora (G-77, G-8)?
- To what extent has UN support facilitated South-South dialogue and knowledge-sharing (through groups such as IBSA [India, Brazil, South Africa] or BRICS [Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Russia, India and China])?
- How flexible is the UN system to address needs expressed by the regions?

#### **Effectiveness**

- To what extent have agreed objectives been reached?
- Has there been full agreement between partners on what the objectives are?
- Are the objectives explicit or do they need to be deduced from the available evidence?
- Are the planned activities sufficient in terms of resources to realize the objectives?
- Have the communication channels functioned effectively?
- Have multi-agency activities been effective, drawing on strong expertise and avoiding overlaps?
- To what extent has UN experience from other countries contributed to the achievement of the objectives?
- To what extent has the UN's role as strategist, centre of intellectual excellence, as a catalyst or implementer of pilot activities been effective in contributing to the achievement of the objectives?
- To what extent have ratified UN conventions been turned into national legislation, and, when this has happened, has the implementation been effective?
- To what extent did South Africa influence conventions and resolutions?
- How do the different mandates, reporting structures and time frames of the different UN agencies impact on delivery?

- How have the challenges experienced in joint programming influenced delivery?

### **CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

#### **HIV&AIDS**

- In which way has HIV&AIDS been relevant as a cross-cutting issue to each specific activity, and how has this been tackled?

#### **Gender equality**

- In which way has gender equality been relevant as a cross-cutting issue to each specific activity, and how has this been tackled?

#### **Human rights**

- In which way has human rights been relevant as a cross-cutting issue to each specific activity, and how has this been tackled?

#### **Partnerships**

- Is there mutual agreement or understanding between the partners on what should be achieved through the partnership?
- How do the structure and processes of the GoSA impact on the UN's ability to be effective in a strategic role – vis-à-vis The Presidency, Department of Foreign Affairs, Treasury and other departments?
- How does the UN's own structures and processes limit or facilitate its strategic capability (relates to issues of duplication, joint programming without joint implementation)?
- Are there good examples of the UN playing a strategic role in South Africa? If so, under which circumstances? What can be learned from it?

#### **Capacity development**

- In which areas has the UN effectively contributed to the development of human, organizational or institutional capacity in South Africa?
- Has UN support to institutional capacity development led to sustainable ownership by the supported institutions?

## SELECTION OF AREAS FOR IN-DEPTH STUDY

The selection process resulted in a list of projects, programmes and activities for further study:

### Development

- Poverty and inequality
- Employment
- The broadening of access to services and improving the quality of health and education
- Governance

### Humanitarian assistance

- Humanitarian policy
- Humanitarian response
- Disaster management
- Food security
- Xenophobic violence

### Peace & security

- Peacekeeping
- Crime prevention
- Justice system
- Drug control
- Organized crime
- Corruption
- Terrorism

### Environment

- Biodiversity
- Climate change
- Sustainable land management
- The UN Forum on Forests.



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## Annex 4

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