



ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT RESULTS
EVALUATION OF UNDP CONTRIBUTION

ARGENTINA

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ASSESSMENT OF DEVELOPMENT RESULTS: EVALUATION OF UNDP CONTRIBUTION – ARGENTINA

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FOREWORD

The Evaluation Office of the UNDP conducts independent country-level evaluations called Assessment of Development Results (ADR) which assess the relevance and strategic positioning of UNDP's support and its contributions to a country's development. The purpose of an ADR is to contribute to organizational accountability and learning and strengthen the programming and effectiveness of UNDP. This report presents the findings and recommendations of the ADR conducted in Argentina, covering two programming cycles, 2002-2004 and 2005-2008, extended to 2009.

Since the early part of the 20th century, Argentina has had the highest per capita income in Latin America and one of the lowest levels of poverty in the region. Notwithstanding its relatively low rates of growth during the second half of the 20th century and the transitory reversals in social conditions and poverty levels, the country has been able to maintain its high ranking in the Human Development Index. However, Argentina faces significant development challenges as the result of income and regional disparities.

UNDP's strategy for sustainable human development and reduction of inequalities and poverty depends on the quality of democracy and the effectiveness of institutions and public policies in each country. Yet, it also depends on the terms of the international social, political, and economic relations. To respond to national needs from its mandate, UNDP Argentina has established development outcomes for the two programming cycles, focusing on achieving the MDGs and poverty reduction, fostering democratic governance, and promoting energy and environment for sustainable development. In all these areas, support was given for the improvement of programme and project formulation, as well as for the strengthening of new alliances and

national capacities, fostering articulations between the different government levels.

The evaluation found that UNDP's cooperation programme in Argentina was aligned to national priorities and demonstrated a responsive capacity to emerging development challenges such as the crisis of 2001. When requested by the national government, UNDP had the capacity to play the role of a convener and honest broker by bringing together development actors from Government, civil society and the political system at the federal, provincial and municipal levels to face common challenges. The most important development actors of Argentina, including political parties, faith-based groups among Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims, civil society organizations, academics and the media, gathered to deliberate at the Argentinean Dialogue and found solutions to the political, institutional and economic crises facing the country at that time.

The evaluation recognized UNDP's positioning as a prestigious organization with the potential to bring legitimacy, neutrality, credibility and knowledge into the development process. However, some partners expressed concern about UNDP's concentration on the administration of Government resources. This concentration poses risks since it may limit the organization's advocacy role for promoting public policies with a human development perspective. UNDP has been heavily involved in the management of public programmes. The administrative nature of these projects, also called Development Support Services (DSS), may be justified in specific cases when combined with a clear exit strategy and technical assistance for the capacity development of public management. However, the use of DSS involves the risk of substituting the implementation capacity of the public institution in question as a consequence of efficiency gains in the short run.

Since mid-2004, UNDP Argentina has moved towards a more balanced medium-term strategy called strategic turn. The thematic direction of the strategic turn encompassed an institutional and capacity-building strategy, focusing on a comprehensive approach to competitiveness and equity, the articulation of demands for a greater and better quality social bond with human development, strengthening citizens' capacities for action and participation, and deepening a territorial presence particularly in those provinces and municipalities with greater disparities. The evaluation found that the strategic turn is a shift in the right direction and needs to be sustained. However, more attention needs to be paid to the sustainability of the benefits and results of UNDP-supported interventions.

UNDP Argentina invested in enhancing its substantive capacity and the evaluation identified the importance of a highly qualified human factor endowment for providing technical assistance in middle-income countries.

This evaluation benefited from the collaboration of the personnel of UNDP Country Office in Argentina led by Carlos Felipe Martinez, of the

Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, of representatives of the Government of Argentina, civil society organizations and of the UN System in Argentina.

I would like to thank the evaluation team, comprising Eduardo Wiener, team leader; Inka Mattila, team specialist; and Oscar A. Garcia, team member and EO task manager. I also thank the external reviewers Christian Buignon and Alfredo Stein, consultants and international development specialists, for their useful comments.

I would also like to thank Cecilia Corpus, Thuy Hang and Anish Pradhan for their administrative support.

I hope that the results and recommendations of the report can support the response of UNDP to the development challenges of the country and provide lessons that are relevant for UNDP and its international partners.



Saraswathi Menon
Director, Evaluation Office

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADR	Assessment of development results
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCF	Country Cooperation Framework
CEPAL	Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe
CSO	Civil society organization
DEX	Direct execution modality
DRR	Deputy Resident Representative
DSS	Development Support Services
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America
ERBM	Enhanced Results Based Management
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GNI	Gross National Income
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HIV	Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
ICT	Information communication technology
IFI	International financial institution
ILO	International Labour Organization
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MYFF	Multi-Year Funding Framework
NCC	Net Contributor Country
NEX	National execution modality
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NHDR	National Human Development Report
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
POP	Persistent Organic Pollutants
RBLAC	Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean

RBM	Results Based Management
RCS	Resident Coordinator's System
ROAR	Result-Oriented Annual Report
SGP	Small Grants Programme
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
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
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UNS	United Nations System
USD	United States Dollar
WB	World Bank
WBI	World Bank Institute
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Argentina is located in the southern cone of South America, with an area of 2,766,890 sq km and a population of 40.482 million. Since the early part of the 20th century, the country has had the highest per capita income in Latin America and one of the lowest levels of poverty in the region. Notwithstanding the relatively low rates of growth during the second half of the 20th century and the transitory reversals in social conditions and poverty levels, Argentina has been able to maintain its high ranking in the Human Development Index. However, the country faces significant development challenges as the result of important income and regional disparities.

In line with Executive Board decision 2007/24, the UNDP Evaluation Office (EO) has conducted an evaluation to assess UNDP contributions to development results in Argentina. The evaluation covers two programming cycles, 2002-2004 and 2005-2008, extended to 2009. This evaluation was undertaken by an independent team of consultants between August and December 2008.

The specific goals of the ADR were to:

- i) Generate lessons from past experience and make recommendations for future programming at the country and corporate levels.
- ii) Provide to stakeholders in the country an objective assessment of UNDP contributions to development results for a given multi-year period.
- iii) Support the UNDP Administrator's substantive accountability function to the Executive Board and serve as a vehicle for quality assurance of interventions at the country level.

The principal focus of the evaluation was an assessment of UNDP's contribution to overall

national development. "Results" are defined as "outcomes", or the effects of one or multiple outputs on processes or development conditions in a sector or thematic area. It is recognized that attribution, or precise causal linkage between UNDP outputs and perceived outcomes may at times be difficult to determine, particularly in a complex environment with many variables and actors.

The methodology was based on the general ADR guidelines developed by UNDP as well as the organization's evaluation policy, and adopted the following evaluation criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability for assessing contributions to development results; and relevance, responsiveness, and quality of partnerships for assessing strategic positioning.

Argentina's ADR focused on the following three thematic areas: a) fostering democratic governance, b) achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and reducing poverty under a human development perspective, and c) ensuring environmental sustainability. Reflecting on the characteristics of Argentina's economic history, its current juncture and prospects, the ADR examined the past with a forward-looking perspective.

Argentina's ADR is particularly relevant for two interdependent reasons. First, the country cooperation programme is one of the largest in UNDP and offers a unique opportunity to further examine a particular situation with more general relevance; third-party resources, particularly funds from the Argentinean government, the so-called "non-core resources", are almost exclusively Argentina's source of finance. The second reason is Argentina's economic history and development. Few countries have engendered as much interest and research in terms of long-term economic and social development.

The central idea was to cull and glean from the country programme evaluative evidence of UNDP's intended and achieved contributions to development results.

CONCLUSIONS

The main conclusions of the evaluation are the following:

- 1. UNDP's cooperation programme in Argentina was aligned to national priorities and demonstrated a responsive capacity to emerging development challenges such as the crisis of 2001.** UNDP's cooperation frameworks and the objectives pursued were consistent with national development needs and were considered relevant. The organization has also demonstrated good capacity to adapt to changing development circumstances and flexibly adjusted the portfolio of projects to respond to the agreements that emerged from the Argentinean Dialogue after the crisis of 2001.
- 2. When requested by the national government, UNDP had the capacity to play the role of a convener and honest broker by bringing together development actors from government, civil society and the political system at the federal, provincial and municipal levels to face common challenges.** The most important development actors of Argentina, including political parties, faith-based groups among Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims, civil society organizations, academics and the media gathered to deliberate at the Argentinean Dialogue and found solutions to the political, institutional and economic crises facing the country. UNDP played a key role in that process. After the crisis, the political system reassumed its capacity. However, the culture of dialogue continued and permeated discussions at the national, provincial and municipal levels with the support of various UNDP projects reaffirming the democratic values of Argentinean society.
- 3. The technical and analytical capacity of UNDP staff is widely valued and recognized.** Engaging in a policy dialogue in Argentina, a country with a sophisticated professional and intellectual capacity is challenging. UNDP had established not only a reputation for efficient project administration capacity but also a reputation for conducting significant contributions to the analysis of development challenges from a human development perspective. The design and implementation of new projects were praised by national counterparts along with the technical capacity of UNDP staff.
- 4. Some development actors perceive UNDP mainly as a resource administrator, hence, not recognizing its full potential role as a development partner in Argentina.** Key partners acknowledge UNDP as a prestigious organization with the potential to bring legitimacy, neutrality, credibility and knowledge into the development process. However, some partners expressed concern about UNDP's concentration on the administration of government resources. This concentration poses risks since it may limit its advocacy role for promoting public policies with a human development perspective.
- 5. The sustainability of some UNDP interventions was questioned and these did not always develop sufficiently their exit strategies.** More attention needs to be paid to the sustainability of the benefits and results of UNDP-supported interventions. In some cases, it was identified that the benefits ceased after the conclusion of UNDP projects. The strengthening of administrative implementation capacities of institutions has been limited, in those cases, to developing the capacity to execute UNDP projects without clear exit strategies. That was particularly the case for projects of an administrative nature.
- 6. The project portfolio dedicated to Development Support Services (DSS) did decrease significantly in the time under evaluation screening a positive trend towards a more value-added portfolio, in terms of technical assistance and attention**

paid to designing exit strategies. Since 2003 UNDP has contributed to the formulation and, most importantly, to the execution of various government emergency programmes in response to the crisis. Many of these programmes had ended by 2005. In addition, the “strategic turn” implemented since 2005 has resulted in a more balanced programme portfolio, as the share of big DSS projects has diminished considerably.

7. **The “giro estraterico” has been a positive shift into the right direction.** The direction of the “strategic turn” encompassed an institutional and capacity-building strategy, focusing on the articulation of demands for a greater and better quality social bond to human development; strengthening citizens’ capacities for action and participation in a more complex and uncertain context; and deepening a territorial presence particularly in those provinces and municipalities with the lowest HDIs and greater disparities. These orientations together with more emphasis on designing exit strategies for new projects are seen as a positive shift.

LESSONS LEARNED

UNDP operations in Argentina bring two potential lessons learned for the organization corporately:

- a. **The importance of a highly qualified human factor endowment for providing technical assistance in middle-income countries.** Having a well-qualified technical staff is of immense relevance for UNDP’s work. Understanding the needs and development challenges of the country in the areas of poverty reduction, fostering democratic governance and promoting environmental sustainability and being able to provide sound policy advice requires a sophisticated professional team. Such human factor endowment is most likely the source of new information and information is the emerging paradigm to complete economic and political markets. Although a well-qualified technical staff is not a full guarantee of relevance and

developmental effectiveness, its absence is close to a guarantee of lacklustre performance.

- b. **The need of a strategic cooperation framework for the UN system, even if it is not a corporate requirement, enhances the opportunity for more coherent and effective UN cooperation.** An effective coordination of the United Nations system in a country that almost reached the status of net contributor country can be enhanced by a strategic framework such as the one developed by Argentina Country Team in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The existence of the UNDAF enhances the probabilities of indentifying synergies among agencies and more direct coordination around the achievement of development outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations of the evaluation are as follows:

1. **Support institutional capacity development with a long-term perspective of recovering the strategic role of the state in promoting inclusive and sustainable human development.** Effective capacity building demands a link to a broader set of institutional reforms. This requires building political commitment, sponsoring capacity development among key stakeholders, and embedding capacity development into broader national development priorities.
2. **Continue supporting dialogue and deliberative mechanisms among different levels of government and society (national, provincial and municipal) to reach agreements on how to reduce regional and local disparities under the MDGs’ conceptual framework.** UNDP should continue playing a convener role fostering democratic values embedded in the practice of deliberation and dialogue around the main development challenges faced by Argentina, particularly in the

interfaces of the three levels of government. UNDP should fully capitalize the identified opportunities such as strengthening the use of knowledge network and products, and include more actors beyond the immediate stakeholders, to leverage and improve the quality of its partnerships.

3. **Continue developing and fostering inter-sector initiatives such as the ones recommended in National Human Development Reports and MDGs reports based on new diagnoses and empirical evidence about the development constraints faced by Argentina.** National Human Development Reports proved to be significant contributions to advancing the debate around public policies with a human development perspective and a multi-dimensional approach. The evidence-based quality of the analysis together with the advocacy capacity of UNDP can be further utilized to address sensitive development issues.
4. **Deepen the “Giro Estrategico” and the policy advice and technical cooperation role played by UNDP in the formulation of public policies with a human development perspective.** The Giro Estrategico is a shift in the right direction and needs to be sustained. The UNDP project portfolio still has room for improvement and the interventions can still work on the link to capacity development, its value added in terms of policy advice and a reduction of DSS projects of an administrative nature.
5. **Ensure the sustainability of the benefits of UNDP interventions once they are finished by properly considering exit strategies.** There are several ways to address the need for sustaining the benefits of UNDP-supported projects. These include ensuring the necessary institutional level of ownership over the interventions and ensuring the financial support from national funding sources once UNDP support has ceased.
6. **Support the systematization and lessons learned from good practices undertaken by the Argentinean Government in the framework of South-South Cooperation.** The enhanced monitoring and evaluation of UNDP interventions can assist in the systematization of good practices and lessons learned that can be of relevance to other development initiatives within and beyond the purview of the UNDP cooperation programme for Argentina.
7. **Ensure the capacity response of UNDP to emerging consequences of global recession and its impact on Argentina by adopting a flexible approach to programming.** UNDP in Argentina should keep its capacity response to ever-emerging development challenges faced by the country. It will be necessary that the next country programme preserve a flexible approach to address, in close collaboration and partnership with the national government, the unexpected consequences of the current global financial crisis.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ADR PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The Evaluation Office (EO) of the United Nations Development Programme undertakes a series of independent evaluations under a conceptual framework called “Assessment of Development Results” (ADRs). The central idea is to cull and glean from country programmes evaluative evidence of UNDP’s intended and achieved contributions to development results. The main focus of ADRs is on development results at the country level. They signal a transition in the accountability framework from process compliance¹ to results and to strategic UNDP contributions to development. Their scope includes UNDP’s responsiveness and alignment to specific country challenges and priorities, strategic positioning, and engagement with partners².

The number, selection of countries and timing of ADRs are determined to ensure coverage and to allow findings and recommendations to inform the preparation of subsequent country programmes. Currently all ADRs are finalized prior to the development of new country programme documents. In line with Executive Board decision 2007/24, the UNDP EO has assessed UNDP contributions to development results in Argentina. The evaluation covers two programming cycles, 2002-2004 and 2005-2008, extended to 2009. This evaluation was undertaken by an independent team of consultants between August and December 2008.

The specific goals of ADRs are to:

- i) Generate lessons from past experience and make recommendations for future programming at the country and corporate levels.
- ii) Provide to stakeholders in the country an objective assessment of UNDP contribution to development results for a given multi-year period.
- iii) Support the UNDP Administrator’s substantive accountability function to the Executive Board and serve as a vehicle for quality assurance of interventions at the country level.

Argentina’s ADR focuses on the following three thematic areas: a) fostering democratic governance, b) achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and reducing poverty under a human development perspective, and c) ensuring environmental sustainability. Reflecting on the characteristics of Argentina’s economic history, its current juncture and prospects, the ADR examined the past with a forward-looking perspective³.

Argentina’s ADR is particularly relevant for two interdependent reasons. First, the country cooperation programme is one of the largest in UNDP and offers a unique opportunity to further examine a particular situation with more general relevance; third-party resources, particularly funds from the Argentinean government, the so-called “non-core resources”, are almost exclusively Argentina’s source of finance. The second reason is Argentina’s unique economic history and development. Few countries have engendered as

1. See Menon, Saraswathi, ‘Foreword’, in *Evaluation of Results-based Management*, UNDP Evaluation Office, United Nations Development Programme, December, 2007, p. i

2. See United Nations, ‘The Evaluation Policy of the UNDP’, Executive Board of the UNDP and the United Nations Population Fund, DP/2005/28 May 2006, p. 9

3. The ongoing process of UNDAF aims to identify the key areas and outcomes for UN cooperation.

much interest and research in terms of long-term economic and social development.

1.2 METHODOLOGY

The principal focus of the evaluation was an assessment of UNDP's contribution to overall national development. "Results" are defined as "outcomes", or the effects of one or multiple outputs on processes or development conditions in a sector or thematic area. It is recognized that attribution, or precise causal linkage between UNDP outputs and perceived outcomes may at times be difficult to determine, particularly in a complex environment with many variables and actors.

The methodology was based on the general ADR guidelines⁴ developed by UNDP as well as the organization's evaluation policy, and adopted the following evaluation criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability for assessing contributions to development results; and relevance, responsiveness, and quality of partnerships for assessing strategic positioning. Based on the inception report findings, the evaluation concentrated its attention on the role played by UNDP to help the country get out of the economic and political crisis of 2001 and the strategic shift of the portfolio which was characterized mainly by projects of an administrative nature on development support services (DSS).

The preparatory phase involved initial review of documentation as well as consultations in New York with the EO, the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC) and key departments of UNDP. The preparatory phase also included a one-week scoping mission to Buenos Aires, undertaken by the team leader and the team specialist. The mission was used to refine the scope of the evaluation, to discuss the structure and rationale of the country programme with national counterparts from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNDP officers and to

identify additional documentation to guide the team. The mission enabled the team to select key projects and activities to be reviewed in greater depth because of their particular relevance to each of the programme themes. The mission was also used to map UNDP partners in preparation for more detailed interviews. This preparatory mission was followed by a second round of desk review of documentation and analysis of financial information. A list of major documents consulted appears as Annex 3. On the basis of the scoping mission, desk review, notes and questions were shared with the relevant units of the country office in preparation for the main mission. An inception report was produced outlining the main evaluation areas, elaborating an evaluation framework and spelling out the methodological approach to undertake the evaluation. The inception report was shared with the country office and received further comments.

A main evaluation mission was undertaken from 27 October to 12 November 2008. The evaluation team had extensive discussions with the senior management of UNDP, with the programme units responsible for thematic areas and with project staff. It also met a significant number of partners of UNDP in the government, in the UN system, among multilateral and bilateral agencies, NGOs and the civil society. To facilitate the preparation of the interviews, in addition to standard stakeholder mapping, a more detailed analysis of the relevant stakeholders was made. This analysis included an assessment of the relationship between the stakeholder and different practice areas or cross-cutting issues, as well as the relationship with UNDP in general. The list of people consulted appears as Annex 2. The mandate, strengths and weaknesses of the stakeholders were also analysed. Individual interviews were semi-structured following two template interview protocols, one for implementing counterparts and the other for development partners not directly engaged in the implementations of projects.

4. 'Guidelines for an Assessment of Development Results' (ADR), UNDP Evaluation Office, December 2007

The desk review, the interviews and the individual and group meetings were supplemented by field visits to project sites in the municipalities of La Matanza, Moreno, Famailla and San Miguel de Tucuman (Provinces of Buenos Aires and Tucuman). The selection of site visits took into account the existence of more than one UNDP project in different thematic areas that are potentially complementary; the existence of initiatives that combine interventions at national, provincial and municipal level; and the coverage of less developed areas like the northwest region of the country and the urban peripheral area of Great Buenos Aires. During the main mission, it was decided not to conduct a field visit to Chaco Province. This decision was made due to logistic constraints and to optimize the short time available. Nevertheless, the case of the Chaco Province was carefully analysed through desk reviews, phone interviews and interviews with representatives of the local government who went to Buenos Aires.

Given the limitations in time and the scope of the evaluation (over 200 projects in the two programming cycles) the evaluation team used a purposive sample approach⁵. The programme portfolio was concentrated mainly in projects funded by the Government of Argentina, and outcome achievements were not necessarily related to the financial scale of projects. UNDP-funded initiatives were also crucial for the promotion of cooperation issues such as advocacy and policy advice.

A purposive sample of 21 projects was selected from the three practice areas (democratic governance, poverty reduction and environment and sustainable development), representing 28 percent of the programme portfolio in financial terms. Three types of interventions were identified for each practice area: a) development support services (DSS), b) development support services with capacity development and c) strategic interventions in which the mandate of UNDP and its value added in terms of technical assistance was

clear. The sample identified successful and less successful interventions, with the intention of conducting a gap analysis to distil causalities. The sample was representative of the practice areas and sources of funding. (See Figure 8)

The analysis made use of a “triangulation” method, based on (a) programme documentation, evaluation reports and other relevant written material, (b) stakeholders’ perceptions, and, (c) existing primary data and surveys such as the Partnership Survey and the Global Staff Survey. The country office was extremely forthcoming in facilitating access to all the documentation.

Finally, the evaluation faced a number of limitations in analysing the progress made towards the contribution to development results including: changes in the original dates and the short time for conducting the evaluation; the purposive sample containing biases to capture the strategic orientation of the programme portfolio; limited access to baselines in some of the interventions, and the absence of outcome evaluations commissioned by the country office.

1.3 ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

The report is organized in four chapters. Following the Executive Summary and this introduction, a second chapter examines the national development context. This is followed by a third chapter assessing the contribution of UNDP to development results in Argentina through its programme activities and other non-project interventions. A final chapter draws the conclusions of the evaluation exercise and makes recommendations.

While the analysis of the various programme interventions is based on an overview of the full portfolio of projects under each major programme theme, a few representative projects are presented in more detail in boxes that accompany the text.

5. Bamberger, Michael, Jim Rugh and Linda Mabry, *Real World Evaluation: Working under Budget, Time, Data and Political Constraints*. © Sage Publications 2006.

Chapter 2

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

2.1 GEOGRAPHIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

Argentina is located in the southern cone of South America, with an area of 2,766.890 sq km a population of 40.482 million. Since the early part of the 20th century, Argentina has had the highest per capita income in Latin America and one of the lowest levels of poverty in this region. Notwithstanding its relatively low rates of growth during the second half of the 20th century and the transitory reversals in social conditions and poverty levels, the country has been able to maintain its high ranking in the Human

Development Index, as seen from Table 2. However, Argentina faces significant development challenges as the result of income and regional disparities.

2.2 POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Argentina is a federal republic, with a presidential form of government and a bicameral legislature. The three-tiered federation is composed of the national government, 23 provinces and the autonomous government of the city of Buenos Aires, and 2,164 municipalities. The president is

Table 1. Argentina: Human Development Index, 1975-2006

Year	Value	Year	Value
1975	0,790	1998	0,837
1980	0,804	1999	0,842
1985	0,811	2000	0,844
1990	0,832	2001	0,849
1992	0,882	2002	0,853
1993	0,885	2003	0,863
1994	0,884	2004	0,863
1995	0,888	2005	0,869
1997	0,827	2006	0,860

Sources: For 1975, 1980, 1985, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2007/2008, Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2007, p.234. For 1990, UNDP, *Human Development Report 1993*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1993, p.135. For 1992, UNDP, *Human Development Report 1995*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1995, p.155. For 1993, UNDP, *Human Development Report 1996*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1996, p.135. For 1994, UNDP, *Human Development Report 1997*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1997, p.146. For 1995, UNDP, *Human Development Report 1998*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1998, p.128. For 1997, UNDP, *Human Development Report 1999*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1999, p.134. For 1998, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2000*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2000, p.157. For 1999, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2001, Making New Technologies Work for Human Development*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001, p.141. For 2000, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2002, Deepening Democracy in a Fragmented World*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2002, p.149. For 2001, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2003, Millennium Development Goals: A Compact Among Nations to End Human Poverty*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2003, p.237. For 2002, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2004, Cultural Liberty in Today's Diverse World*, Hoechstetter Printing Co., New York, 2004, p.139. For 2003, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2005, International Cooperation at a Crossroads: Aid Trade and Security in an Unequal World*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2005, p.219. For 2004, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2006, Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crisis*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2006, p.283. For 2005, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2007/2008, Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2007, p.229. For 2006, UNDP, *Human Development Report 2008 Statistical Update*. http://hdrstats.undp.org/2008/countries/country_fact_sheets/cty_fs_ARG.html

Table 2. Argentina : Selected Social Indicators, 1990-2006

Social Indicators	1990	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Population (millions)*	32.5	36.8	37.2	36.6	37.9	38.2	38.6	39.0
Population Below Poverty Line (in percent)**	42.6	33.4	35.9	53.0	47.8	40.2	33.8	26.9
Population Below Extreme Poverty Line (in percent)**	12.7	9.0	11.6	24.8	20.5	15.0	12.2	8.7
Unemployment Rate***	6.3	14.7	20.7	20.7	14.5	12.1	10.1	8.7

Sources: * See IMF (2008) World Economic Outlook Database, Available online at www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2008/01/weodata/index.aspx, accessed 9 December 2008. ** See Concejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Públicas Sociales, Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, Informe País 2007, Presidencia de la Nación, Argentina, Octubre, 2007, p.19. ***For 2000, International Monetary Fund, 'IMF Executive Board Concludes 2005 Article IV Consultation with Argentina', Available online at www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pn/2005/pn0583.htm, accessed 23 October 2006. *** For 1990, 2005 and 2006, see INDEC, Encuesta Permanente de Hogares, Empleo y Desempleo, Available online at www.indec.mecon.ar, accessed 9 December 2008. For 2000-2004, International Monetary Fund, 'IMF Executive Board Concludes 2006 Article IV Consultation with Argentina', Available online at www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pn/2005/pn0583.htm, accessed 20 October 2006.

head of state elected for a four-year term, and can be re-elected for one consecutive term. He or she appoints a cabinet and a chief of cabinet, who can be removed by a majority vote in each chamber. According to the 1994 Constitutional amendment, all National Congress members – representatives and senators – are elected by citizens' direct vote.

The provinces have diverse economic, geographic and demographic characteristics. The Buenos Aires province has 38 percent of the nation's population – 48 percent when combined with Buenos Aires City – generating together about half of the country's GDP.⁶

Argentina has gone through a series of political crises and economic instability during the past decades. Since the early 1990s, the institutional structure of Argentina has been subject to strong pressures as a consequence of structural reforms aiming to reduce the size and role of the state. The 2001 crisis revealed the weakness in the management of public policies and the fragility

of certain state institutions, including justice and security-sector institutions, the legislative power and political parties⁷. Recovering from the 2001 crisis was a successful process in terms of the main economic and social indicators. Nonetheless, institutional reconstruction needs to be stepped up in order to revitalize the state functions in way that provides democratic support and includes citizens in decisions concerning the future of politics in Argentina⁸. The prominent issue of individual and collective human rights is interlaced with the need to recover the legitimacy of institutions and trust in broad social sectors in a democratic system.

2.3 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

There is widespread agreement among different governmental and civil society actors and development cooperation agencies that the main challenges in the area of governance include the modernization of public administration at the central, provincial and municipal levels and the

6. See Webb, Steven B., 'Argentina: Hardening the Provincial Budget Constraint', in *Fiscal Decentralization and the Challenge of Hard Budget Constraints*, Jonathan Rodden, Gunnar S. Eskeland, and Jennie Litvack, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2003, p.191.

7. UNDP Argentina, "PNUD - Documento sobre el programa para la Argentina 2005-2008", 2004, p. 3.

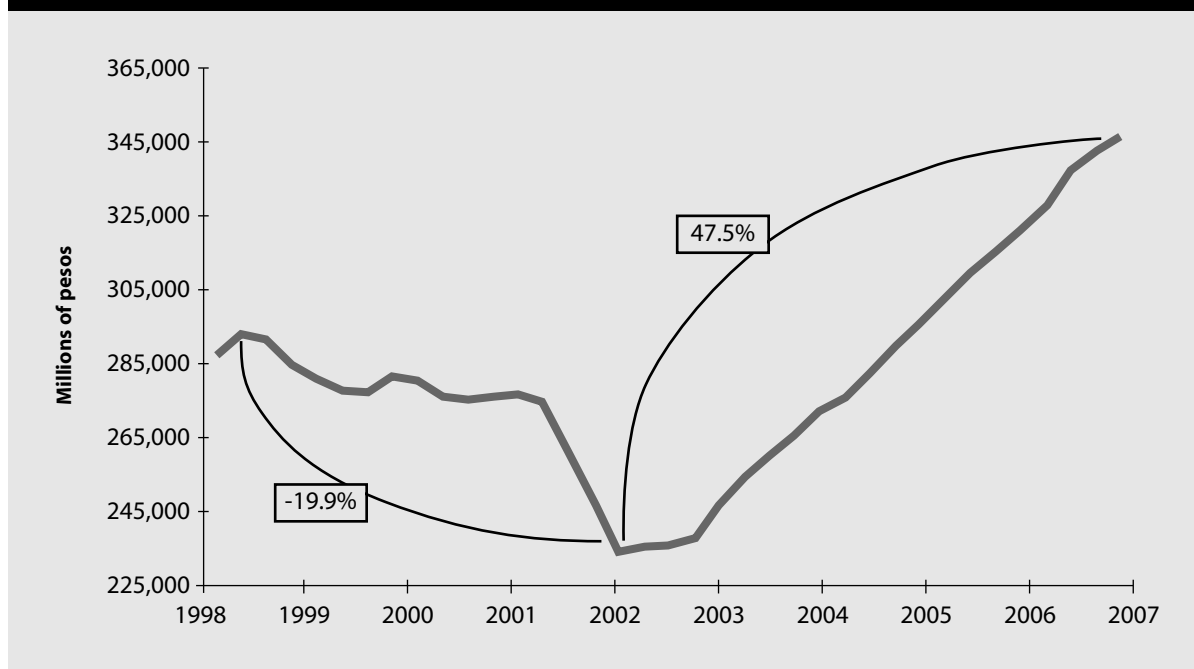
8. UNDP Argentina, "Informe presidencial 2007", Project FO/ARG/05/012 Análisis Prospectivo para Fortalecer la Gobernabilidad Democrática en Argentina, December 2007.

Table 3. Argentina: GDP Annual Growth Rates, 1980-2008

Year	GDP	Year	GDP	Year	GDP
1980	1,5	1990	-1,8	2000	-0,8
1981	-5,4	1991	10,6	2001	-4,4
1982	-3,2	1992	9,6	2002	-10,9
1983	4,1	1993	5,7	2003	8,7
1984	2,0	1994	5,8	2004	9,0
1985	-6,9	1995	-2,8	2005	9,2
1986	7,1	1996	5,5	2006	8,5
1987	2,6	1997	8,1	2007	8,7
1988	-1,9	1998	3,9	2008*	7,0
1989	-6,9	1999	-3,4		

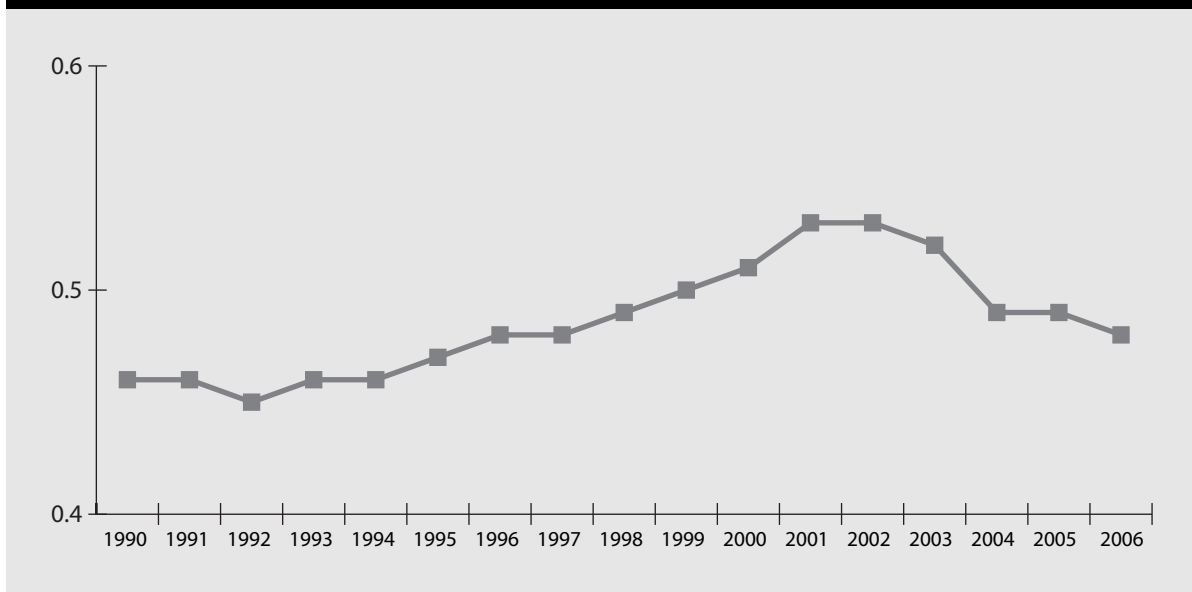
Sources: For 1980-2003, Roberto Frenkel, 'Real Exchange Rate and Employment in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico', Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad (CEDES) Paper Presented to G24, Buenos Aires, 2004 p.34. For 2000-2003, Roberto Frenkel, 'Real Exchange Rate and Employment, *Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Mexico*', Centro de Estudios de Estado y Sociedad (CEDES), Paper Presented to G24, Buenos Aires, 2004 p.34. For 2004-2005, Banco Central de la República Argentina, 'Economic Indicators', Macroeconomic Radar, Available online at www.bcra.gov.ar, accessed 9 December 2008. For 2006-2007, Banco Central de la República Argentina, 'Economic Indicators', Macroeconomic Radar, Available online at www.bcra.gov.ar, accessed 9 December 2008. * Forecast. For 2008, IMF, *World Economic Outlook: Housing and the Business Cycle*, International Monetary Fund, Washington, DC, April, 2008 p.83.

Figure 1. Argentina: Gross Domestic Product, 1998-2006



Source: INDEC. See: National Council of the Coordination of Social Policies, Millennium Development Goals: Country Report 2007, The Office of the President, Argentina, November, 2007, p.15

Figure 2. Argentina: Gini Coefficient 1990-2006



Source: For 1990-1998, see World Bank (2000 p.5 Table 3), *Poor People in a Rich Country: Poverty Report for Argentina*; Report No. 19992-AR, Volume I, March 23. For 1999-2002, see World Bank (2003 p.6, Table 1.2), *Argentina - Crisis and Poverty 2003: A Poverty Assessment*, Report No. 26127 -AR, July 24. For 2003-2006, see Consejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Públicas Sociales (2007 p.19), *Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, Informe País 2007*, Octubre, Argentina: Presidencia de la Nación

need for greater public trust in the transparency and efficiency of state institutions. The strengthening of the justice system continues to be, as in many other Latin American countries, a central challenge.

Since the mid-1990s, Argentina has gone through a very difficult cycle consisting of an economic boom, a major economic, social and political crisis in 2001 and 2002, and then a rapid recovery from 2003 until 2008. After experiencing rapid growth between 1996 and 1998, the economy experienced a period of recession between 1999 and 2001, and then collapsed in 2002 with a drop in GDP of -10.9 percent. Poverty levels jumped from 33.4 percent in 2000 to 53 percent in 2002. The unemployment rate went from 14.7 percent

to 20.7 percent in the same period. Extreme poverty doubled from 2001 to 2002. Income distribution worsened and the Gini coefficient increased from 0.48 in 1997 to 0.53 in 2002.

Under a long-term social development perspective, an important challenge for the present and for the future seems to be more structural and comprehensive.⁹ It is also one that includes more preventive frameworks focusing on such key components of social welfare as employment, pension reform, education, social mobility, fairness perceptions of social interactions and, finally and very importantly, the larger issue of inequality.

“Ignoring inequality in the pursuit of development is perilous¹⁰” and “inequality is conducive

9. On the structural character of the social problems in Argentina, see Anlló, Guillermo, Bernardo Kosacoff and Adrián Ramos, ‘Crisis, Recuperación y Nuevos Dilemas: La Economía Argentina 2002-2007’, *Crisis, Recuperación y Nuevos Dilemas: La economía argentina 2002-2007*, Bernardo Kosacoff (ed.), CEPAL Buenos Aires, United Nations, Argentina, 2007, p.22.

10. See Ocampo, Jose Antonio, ‘Executive summary’, *The Inequality Predicament*, Report on the World Social Situation 2005, United Nations, New York, 2005, p.1.

to growth retarding policies”¹¹. These policies may end up adversely affecting poverty, employment and equity. Understanding the dynamics and circularities between neglecting inequality or inequity, on the one hand, and the quality of public policies, on the other, may well be the real challenge. The answer to this would include engendering new information on the characteristics of each country situation and the dissemination of the information to the public at large. It would also include a political economy agreement that has been called a “distributive agreement”¹².

Argentina’s biodiversity and ecosystems are extremely rich. However, the country faces significant environmental challenges as a result of land degradation, deforestation, endangered biodiversity and ecosystems and pollution of water resources on the top of over-exploitation of coastal resources. These environmental threats have persisted

over decades and increased the vulnerability of the country’s population to natural disasters.

In recent years, Argentina’s government developed an “eco-systemic vision” to understand the environmental challenges faced by the different regions. The government aims to integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources. Moreover, it has reaffirmed the role of the state in orienting environmental policy and guaranteeing a respect for human rights. It recognizes that the environment determines the quality of every person’s life in the areas of dignity and social justice¹³.

The succinct description of the national context aims to be an input for understanding better the depth and breadth of the UNDP cooperation frameworks in Argentina since 2002.

11. See Alesina, Alberto and Dani Rodrik, ‘Distributive Politics and Economic Growth’, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, Volume CIX, Number 2, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994, p.465.

12. See Heymann, Daniel, ‘Buscando la Tendencia: Crisis Macroeconómica y Recuperación en la Argentina’, *Serie Estudios y Perspectivas 31*, Naciones Unidas, CEPAL Buenos Aires, Argentina, Abril, 2006, p.70.

13. See Concejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Públicas Sociales, *Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, Informe País 2007*, Presidencia de la Nación, Argentina, Octubre, 2007, p.59.

Chapter 3

UNDP'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO DEVELOPMENT RESULTS

3.1 OVERVIEW OF UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMMES, 2002-2008

The first country programme (2002-2004) was adopted under the severe circumstances of the 2001-2002 social, economic and political crisis. The country programme for 2005-2008 focuses on three practice areas, namely i) achieving the MDGs and poverty reduction, ii) fostering democratic governance, and iii) energy and environment for sustainable development (Table 4). In all these areas, support was given for the improvement of programme and project formulation and management, as well as for the strengthening of new alliances and of national capacities, and fostering articulations between the different government levels.

The current country programme focuses on 11 expected outcomes for 2005-2008. Many of these are a continuation of those established in the 2002-2004 programme. The outcomes and their corresponding indicators are illustrated in Table 5.

The evaluation takes these outcomes as the basis for the assessment of the contribution made by UNDP to achieve national development results.

The programmes of other UN agencies were taken into account for the formulation of the current country programme to increase complementarities among the different agencies. Even though UNDAF is not obligatory for Argentina – due to its previous Net Contributor Country (NCC) status – the Resident Representative has promoted it since 2004. The first UNDAF¹⁴ for Argentina is expected to be available by mid-2009¹⁵.

Table 4. UNDP Country Programme: Goals and Service Lines for Argentina

Goals	UNDP Corporate Service Lines
1. Achieving the MDGs and poverty reduction	1.1 MDG country and regional monitoring 1.3 Local and provincial initiatives, including microfinance 1.5 Private sector development 1.6 Gender mainstreaming
2. Fostering democratic governance	2.1 Policy support for democratic governance 2.4 Justice and human rights 2.6 Decentralization and cooperative federalism 2.7 Public administration reform and anti-corruption
3. Energy and environment for sustainable development	3.1 Frameworks and strategies for sustainable development 3.2 Effective water governance 3.5 Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity 3.6 National/sectoral policy and planning

14. The participating UN agencies are ILO, UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, PAHO, CEPAL, ECLAC, UNFPA, UNIFEM, UNHCR, UNOPS, and the regional offices of UNIDO and UNESCO.

15. For more details on UN coordination, see 3.6.4

Table 5. UNDP Country Programme: Outcomes and Indicators, 2005-2008

Practice Area	Expected Outcomes	Main Indicators
Fostering democratic governance	Increased knowledge of human rights, with special emphasis on economic, social and cultural rights	The relative number of people aware of human rights implications
	Incorporation of a culture of dialogue into the country's different sectors	Number of forums proposing consensus recommendations
	Strengthening of government management capacity at the national, regional and municipal level	New management systems in operation
	Reform of the electoral system and political parties as well as improvement of the justice administration	Laws and decrees on the reform of the electoral system and political parties; More efficient procedures for the administration of justice
Achieving the MDGs and reducing human poverty	MDGs advocacy and human development concept application	Participation of various social agents in the follow-up of the MDGs and in the selection of NHDR subjects and provincial HDI
	Increased access to basic social services and income rise for the population in a situation of poverty	Percentage of the population under the poverty line with access to complementary feeding, basic medicines and income transfer programmes
	Increased opportunities for unemployed	Unemployment rate
Ensuring environmental sustainability	Integrating into public policies an environmental approach, along with risk assessment and prevention management of natural disasters	Public policies to incorporate these aspects
	Stopping current levels of desertification	Percentage of arid and semi-arid lands suffering from desertification
	Increase conservation and utilization of biodiversity.	1) Percentage of protected areas to keep biological diversity; 2) percentage of protected areas at the national level efficiently keeping biological diversity
	Control emissions of ozone-depleting substances and persistent organic pollutants	Emissions of polluting agents

Source: UNDP Executive Board Documents, September 2004

The cooperation model implemented by UNDP Argentina from the end of the 1980s until the 2001/2002 crisis was based on the paradigm of providing development support services (DSS) while abiding by the corporate guidelines set forth by the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC). During the 1990s, UNDP in Latin America engaged in a resource mobilization strategy due to the diminished

financial resources for development cooperation to middle-income countries. The country offices found a way to self-finance their operations by mobilizing resources with third parties, including international financial institutions. This operational modality has been particularly influential in Argentina. The DSS have corresponded to a demand from the government to UNDP for administrative resources, especially those coming

from international financial institutions¹⁶. The government demands and appreciates the DSS since they allow for transparency, efficiency and reliability in project implementation¹⁷.

3.1.1 TRANSITIONING TO A MORE STRATEGIC ROLE

Since mid-2004, UNDP Argentina¹⁸ has moved towards a more balanced medium-term strategy called “strategic turn” (*giro estratégico*). The “strategic turn” is in line with the strategic corporative guidelines of UNDP which focus on institutional capacity building¹⁹ and changes in the development cooperation environment reflected in the Paris Declaration²⁰ on aid effectiveness.

The thematic direction of the “strategic turn” encompassed an institutional and capacity-building strategy, focusing on:

- A comprehensive approach to competitiveness and equity
- Articulation of demands for a greater and better quality social bond with human development
- Strengthening citizens’ capacities for action and participation in a more complex, unstable and uncertain context
- Deepening a territorial presence particularly in those provinces and municipalities with the lowest HDIs and greater disparities
- Advocacy of regional integration schemes through the promotion of cooperative development approaches towards improved integration into the global economy

To create the bases for the “strategic turn”, UNDP made initial steps to establish a technical

team with strong capabilities; to produce a series of high-quality human development studies; and to consolidate a virtuous circle between a renewed management of DSS and a substantive and action-orientated approach to development. As part of the new “strategic turn”, DSS was no longer considered eligible in terms of hiring personnel for ordinary state function positions, for infrastructure projects, or for “pure” procurement projects.

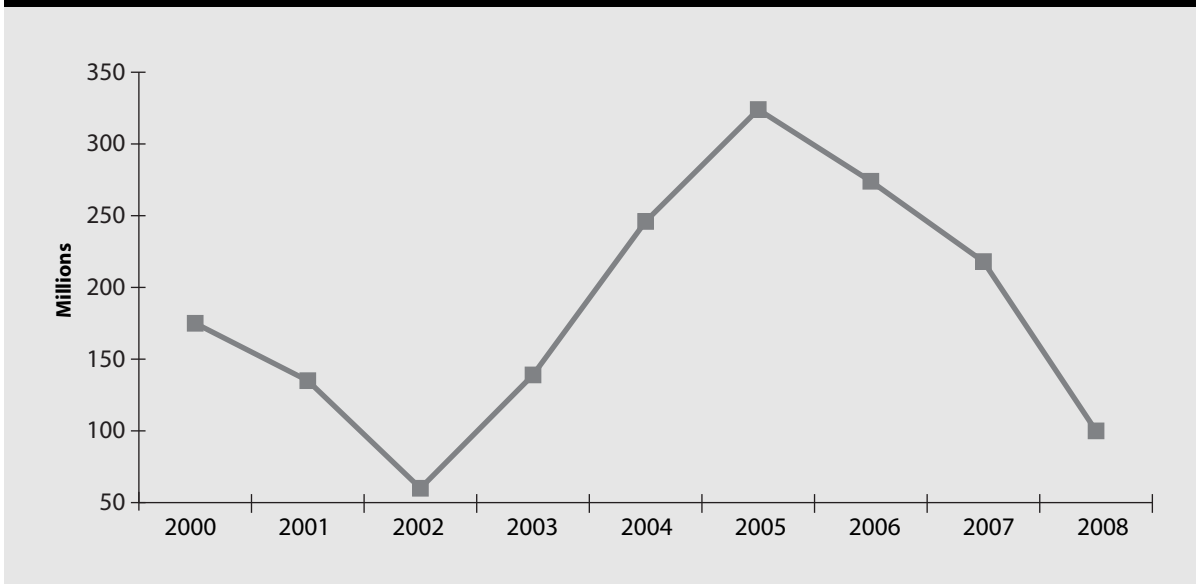
3.1.2 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT OF THE UNDP PROGRAMME²¹

The financial portfolio of UNDP Argentina is one of the biggest in UNDP. As seen in Figure 3, the programme expenditure was strongly affected by the 2001-2002 crisis, with a significant drop in 2002. Afterwards, the crisis cried out for the urgent services of UNDP Argentina. Since 2003 UNDP has contributed to the formulation, and, most importantly, to the execution of various government emergency programmes. Many of these programmes had ended by 2005. In addition, the “strategic turn” implemented since 2005 has resulted in a more balanced programme portfolio, as the share of big DSS projects has diminished.

A comparison of the allocation of resources among the corporative practice areas for the two programming periods 2002-2004 and 2005-2008, illustrated in Figure 4, shows that the relative importance of practice areas related to achieving MDGs and poverty reduction has increased. On the other hand, the relative weight of democratic governance, along with energy and the environment has decreased.

16. In the 1990s, Argentina became the most important Latin American country for the IADB and for the WB globally.
17. Many interviewees pointed out that their projects would not have been implemented without UNDP’s project management capacity, which provided continuity during project implementation.
18. UNDP’s second Common Country Framework (CCF) in Argentina covered the years 2002-2004. The administration of Nestor Kirchner requested UNDP Country Programme (CP) 2005-2008 to be extended one year, until 2009, so as to allow the newly elected authorities to develop the new programme.
19. Ref. United Nations, “Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System”, General Assembly 59/250, December 2004; and United Nations, “In Larger Freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all”, Report of the Secretary General, New York, March 2005.
20. Synthesis Report of the Evaluation of the Implementation of the Paris Declaration, Copenhagen, July 2008.
21. Cutoff date for 2008 expenditure figures: 30 September 2008. Source for all financial information: UNDP Argentina (based on ATLAS figures).

Figure 3. UNDP: Programme Expenditure 2000-2008



Source: For 1990-1998, see World Bank (2000 p.5 Table 3), *Poor People in a Rich Country: Poverty Report for Argentina*; Report No. 19992-AR, Volume I, March 23. For 1999-2002, see World Bank (2003 p.6, Table 1.2), *Argentina - Crisis and Poverty 2003: A Poverty Assessment*, Report No. 26127 -AR, July 24. For 2003-2006, see Concejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Públicas Sociales (2007 p.19), *Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, Informe País 2007*, Octubre, Argentina: Presidencia de la Nación

Figure 4. UNDP: Allocation of Resources by Practice Areas

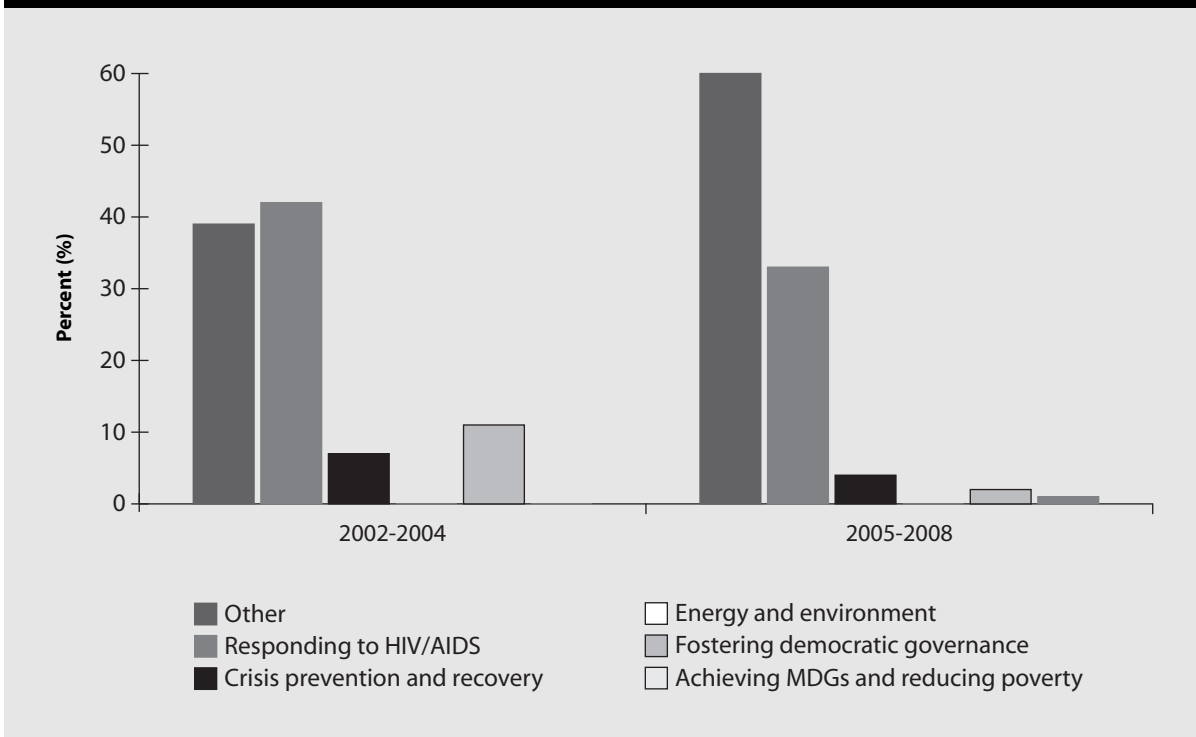


Figure 5. UNDP: Evolution of Resource Allocation by Practice Areas

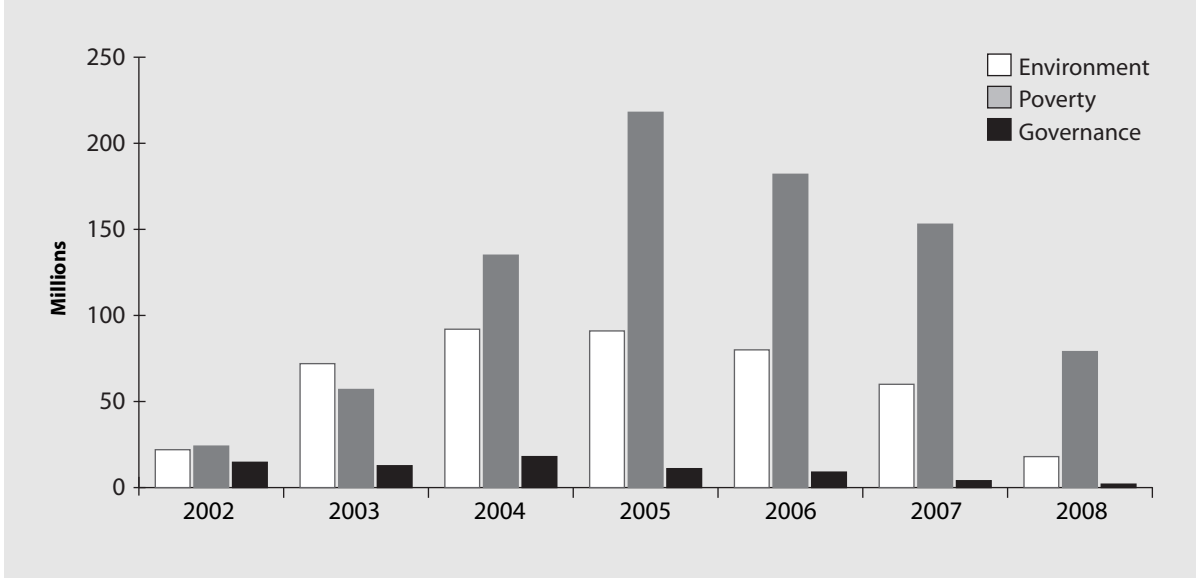


Figure 5 demonstrates the continuity in the pattern of allocation of resources among the different practice areas over time. In addition, the focus on the importance of the poverty practice area has increased over the years.

It is worth mentioning that the importance of projects that include capacity development (or

have a more substantive nature) has increased significantly during the current programming period, representing 50 percent of the total allocation, as seen in Figure 6.

Government resources are, by far, the most significant source of financing for UNDP Argentina: 97 percent of total financing for the

Figure 6. UNDP: Allocation by the Type of Project

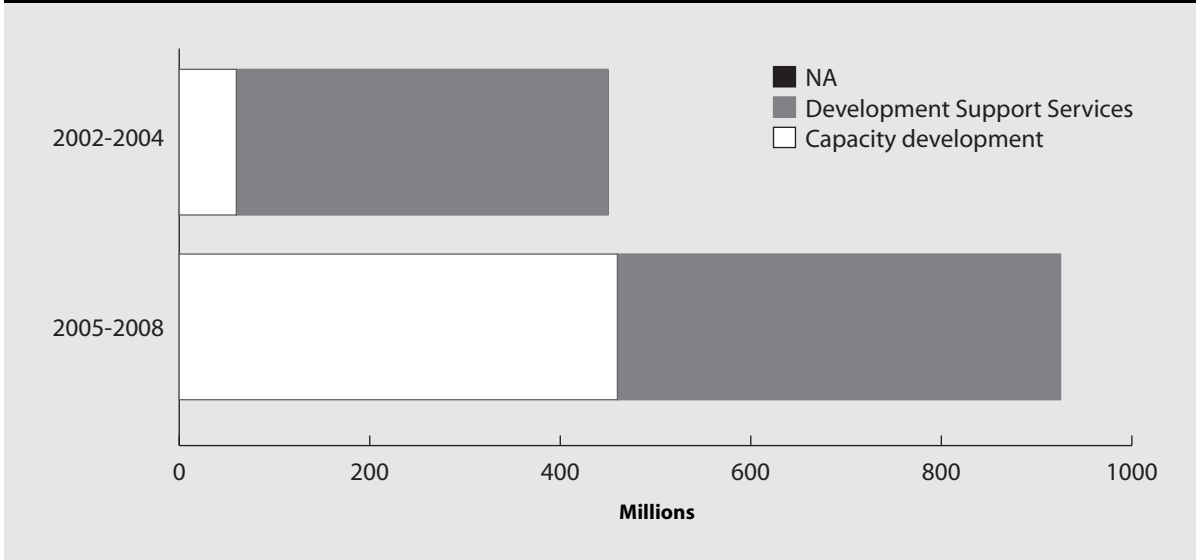
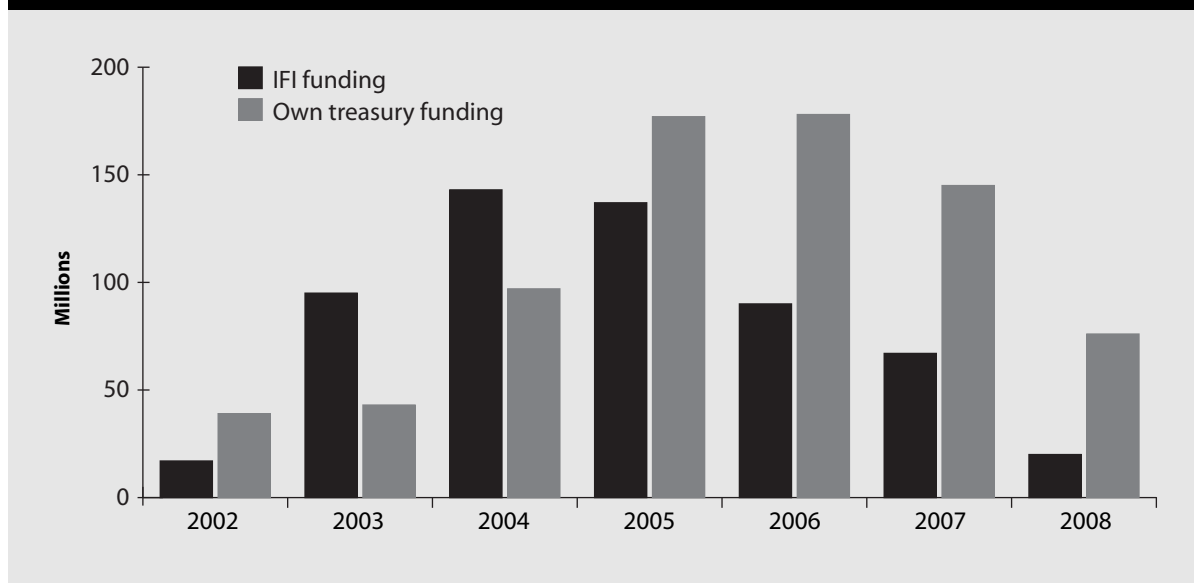


Figure 7. UNDP: The Structure of Government Funding



last two programming periods. The government funding to UNDP consists of treasury funds and funding coming from IFIs, in Argentina's case the World Bank (WB), and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). Most of the IFIs' cooperation is in the form of loans. The government's own treasury funding surpassed in 2005 the previously dominant IFI funding as seen from Figure 7.

As can be observed from Figure 8, it is noteworthy that an important percentage of government resources come from provincial and municipal governments. Diversification to sub-national projects is considered important since it allows for a closer link to align interventions with poverty reduction at the local level. The reason for the diminishing share of funding from provincial government since 2006 includes the closure of various "pure" DSS projects.

Although the annual expenditure levels of UNDP Argentina are considerable, in financial terms, UNDP is a small player. UNDP's core

programming resources (Target for Resource Assignments from the Core – TRAC) correspond to less than 1 percent of the total expenditure during the evaluation period 2002–2008. UNDP agrees with the government on how to use the scarce TRAC resources. Having reached the status of a Net Contributor Country (NCC), Argentina did not receive TRAC resources beginning in 2000. It was not until 2002, after the crisis, that Argentina became eligible for core resources again. UNDP Argentina is expected to receive TRAC funds at least until 2011. According to the country programme 2005–2008, the scarce ordinary resources are designated as "soft" and are intended for strategic activities related to the promotion of dialogue and consensus on public policies and the application of a human development concept and the MDGs. UNDP considers TRAC highly relevant for financing strategic activities to position UNDP in Argentina, together with the so-called "Extra-Budgetary (XB)²² funds" The evolution of the TRAC funds is illustrated in Figure 9.

22. Extra-budgetary funds are received as a result of cost-recovery activities from resource partners such as governments, bilateral and multilateral agencies, and private entities. The XB funds are highly relevant for financing the operations of the COs in middle-income countries where the regular budgetary funds are limited.

Figure 8. UNDP: Government Resources by Level of Government

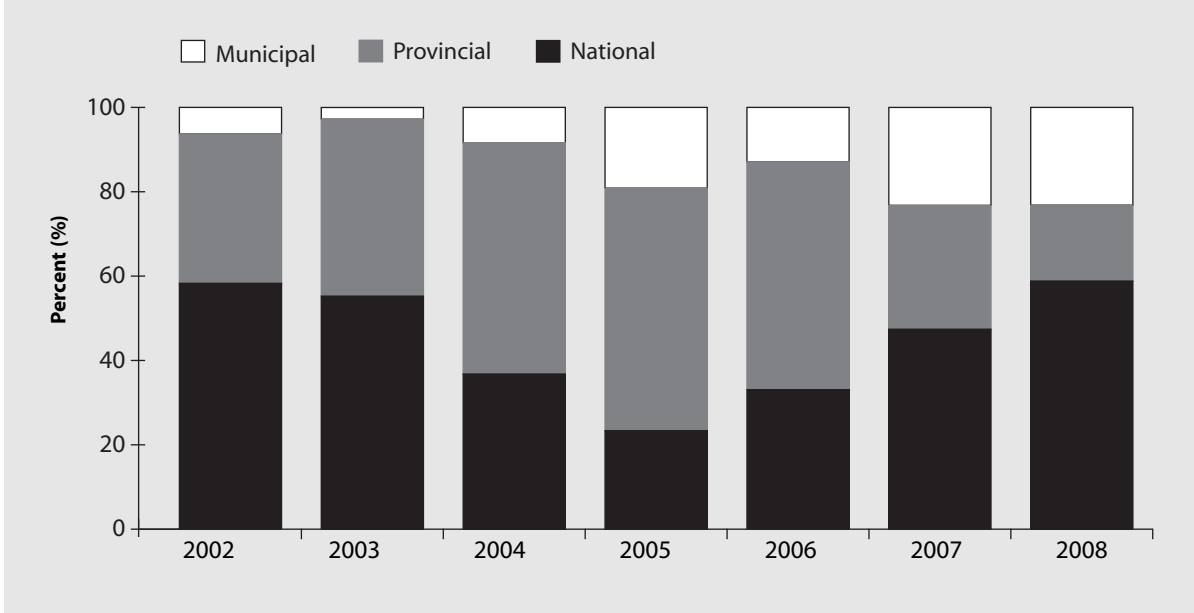
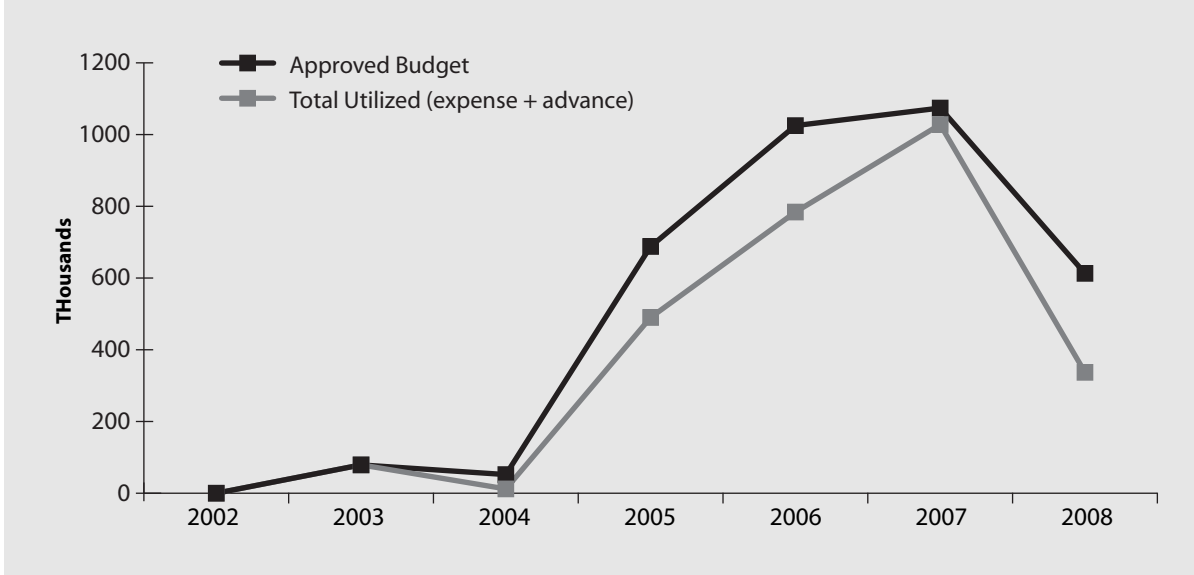


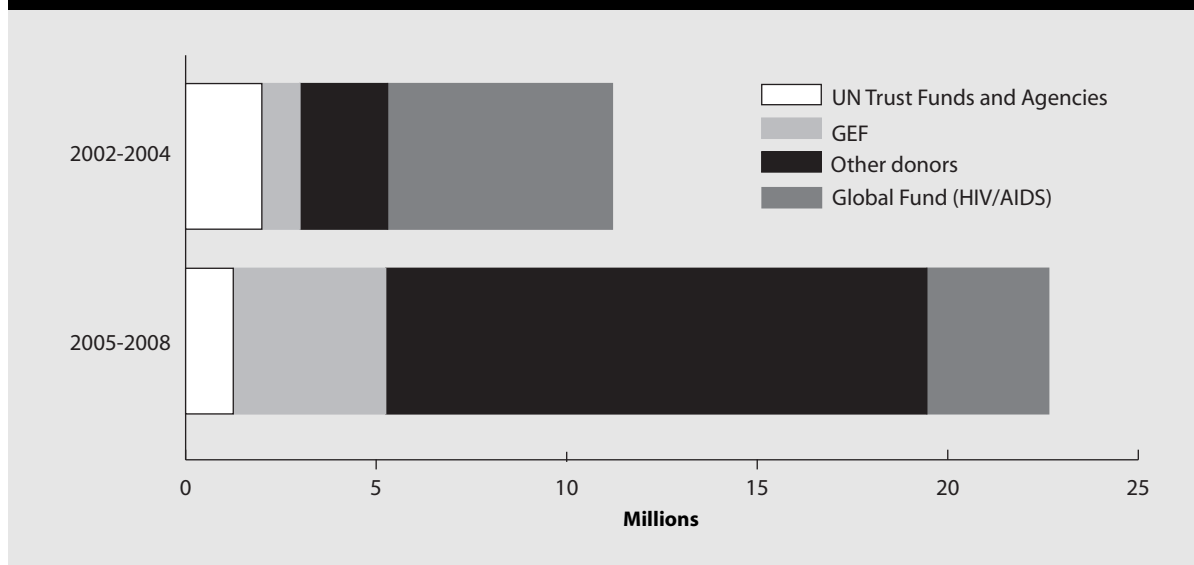
Figure 9. UNDP: Evolution of TRAC Funds



Besides the government and TRAC, the other main sources of funding are the UNDP Trust Funds, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, and bilateral donors. The importance of

GEF and bilateral funding has increased during the current programming period, as seen in Figure 10. UNDP has been successful in diversifying funding sources during the current programming period.

Figure 10. UNDP: Sources Other Than Government and TRAC Funding



3.2 FOSTERING DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

UNDP’s strategy for sustainable human development and reduction of inequalities and poverty depends on the quality of democracy and the effectiveness of institutions and public policies in each country. Yet, it also depends on the terms of the international social, political, and economic relations. To respond to national needs from its mandate in the area of governance, UNDP Argentina has established four outcomes for the 2005-2008 programming period as shown in Table 5. These outcomes are in line with the main themes covered in the previous programming period (2002-2004), namely dialogue on public policies, justice, decentralization and public sector accountability. Thus, they demonstrate continuity of UNDP’s democratic governance strategy.

Incorporation of a culture of dialogue into the country’s different sectors. The governance programme has been effective in promoting a culture of dialogue in particular themes and in specific moments. The promotion of a culture of dialogue was notably effective to get out of the crisis in 2002. UNDP also supported a dialogue

process that aimed to reach consensus on the need for political reforms at the provincial level (Buenos Aires) in 2005. In addition to playing its role of an honest broker, UNDP offered its technical assistance and experience on successful methodologies regarding dialogue processes. Through a “Citizen’s audit” initiative, UNDP has supported the establishment of civic forums at the local level. The evaluation found good practice in the civic forums, in their importance for well-articulated and well-organized citizen participation and empowerment.

The success of the “Dialogo” was marked by its own phasing out, when the political process fully assumed its formal role and a new government was elected in 2003. At the end of 2004, the country office took the initiative to commission an independent evaluation of the experience of the Dialogo. This evaluation underscored the importance of information in following social processes to ensure adequate and timely understanding of complex social tensions. The Dialogo left a most valuable legacy in the form of a proven social capital or collective public good to which the country can recur if the need arises.

Increased knowledge and awareness of human rights with special emphasis on economic, social and cultural rights. UNDP has contributed to the strengthening of the Human Rights Secretary of the Ministry of Justice, Security and Human Rights. The initiative related to institutional strengthening of national policies for the promotion of education and the advocacy of human rights contributed to a positive unexpected result, namely, the creation of the Sub-Secretary for the Promotion of Human Rights²³. Traditionally, work related to human rights in Argentina has concentrated on political and civil rights, particularly those related to the violations that took place during the military dictatorship. Through the alliance with the Human Rights Secretary, UNDP has supported the placement of economic, social and cultural rights on the public agenda. The creation of the Sub-Secretary for the Promotion of Human Rights demonstrates the importance given to human rights education. The modernization of the national archive of memory is an important individual output contributing to the expected outcome of fostering reconciliation, justice and human rights.

Strengthening the government management capacity at the national, regional and municipal levels. The governance programme has been partly effective in enhancing government management capacity. UNDP has been successful in supporting the application of new management systems; for example in the frame of “Modernization of the State in the Province of Córdoba” programme. The creation and establishment of an integral administrative system has improved the transparency of public management. Other important outputs include the implementation of “Scorecards” which enable the provincial government to monitor the administration of all the ministries, and the unique system to attend to the citizens. In the province of Buenos Aires, UNDP has collaborated in the area of technical support for accurate computerization of the population registry. This has led to a strengthened institutional capacity of the province’s population registry.

The relevance of some projects such as the “Generalization of Computerized Systems in the Ministry of Economy and Production” project, especially the “develop and keep updated the Ministry’s network infrastructure and equipment”

Box 1. The Argentinean Dialogue

The Argentinean dialogue is a process that was carried out in 2002 and 2003. Owing to the vast participation of civil society and other actors, this process was able to contribute to the reconstruction of the most important foundations of social coexistence, especially during a time when Argentina faced a difficult period, characterized by a political, institutional, economic and social crisis. President Duhalde called for the Catholic Church and UNDP to facilitate and lead the process of dialogue.

The official objectives of the first phase of the dialogue were to find a solution to the emergency situation and to design a profound institutional reform. The immediate results of the dialogue were: a) regaining the process of dialogue as an instrument to facilitate consensus, b) contributing to social peace, c) taking into account all the necessary actions to face the social emergency, and d) identifying basic consensus. The dialogue was surprisingly successful in the “reconstruction of statehood”, and the recovery of basic institutionality in the country (this was somehow an unexpected outcome of the process). According to national stakeholders, the process also had positive externalities in fostering common knowledge and in the construction of social capital. The dialogue was able to create public trust and to promote expansion of citizen participation whose influence is increasing in public life. There were some shortcomings as many of the suggested proposals, especially those related to institutional and political reforms, were not implemented.

The Argentinean dialogue is a clear example of how UNDP can best use its reputation for neutrality to make the construction of consensus possible. Stakeholders pointed out that the word “dialogue” has been part of their day-to-day popular vocabulary since the emergence of this process. In July 2002, after the president concluded the initial call, civil society assumed the leadership of the process.

23. Created by Decree No N21/2007.

component, is questionable. UNDP has provided DSS for the Ministry since the late 1990s. It is difficult to justify this kind of prolonged DSS support, even though the need for “appropriate technology” and UNDP’s value added for procurement purposes have been confirmed.

Reform of the electoral system and political parties and improvement of justice management.

Major contributions to the design and application of political reforms could not be verified. The political reforms were part of Argentinean dialogue and of the dialogue held in the province of Buenos Aires. Even though the main authorities subscribed to the “federal agreement for the reform of the political system” during the Argentinean dialogue, that process did not have tangible outcomes²⁴. In the case of the dialogue in the province of Buenos Aires, the actual results remained modest, due mainly to certain delays in seizing political momentum. The NHDR 2002 included interesting proposals for political reforms, but they never got fully off the ground.

3.2.1 FINDINGS

Results obtained in the area of governance are mixed. Effectiveness has been demonstrated through the promotion of a culture of dialogue, an increase in knowledge and awareness of human rights, and partly through strengthening the government-management capacity at the national, regional and municipal levels. Effectiveness in the design and implementation of political reforms has been limited.

UNDP’s contributions to democratic governance in Argentina have focused on strengthening management capacities through UNDP administrative services. There was a demand for UNDP support in fostering public administration through better information and administration systems. In practice, projects aimed at “informatization” of state institutions contain the risk of a certain trade-off between efficiency in

the short run and sustainability in the long run if the basis for sustainability is not built in from the beginning. Well-focused technical assistance together with political support has demonstrated the potential to generate permanent changes in administrative practices. UNDP has been successful in supporting increased knowledge and awareness of human rights, and in promoting well-articulated and well-organized citizen participation and empowerment, which had positive effects on re-establishing confidence between the governed and those who govern. There is, however, a way to go to fully incorporate the culture of dialogue into the country’s different sectors. UNDP’s contribution to results in the design and implementation of political reforms has been limited, mainly because of changes in government’s priorities and restricted conditions for putting the generated proposals into effect.

The interventions included in the governance programme sample are relevant as they focus on the central challenges of governance in Argentina. The selected strategic outcomes of the governance programme respond both to the development needs and to corporate priorities. Government officials interviewed during the evaluation confirmed that improving management capacity and increasing the coherence of public policies are central goals for the government. Other stakeholders placed emphasis on the important role of some initiatives to stress the fact that “democracy influences the quality of life”.

UNDP’s support in the governance area has been efficient. Stakeholders put emphasis on fast and transparent implementation which has been possible owing to UNDP’s administration, especially in DSS and capacity-building initiatives. Overall, the stakeholders pointed out the professionalism and high technical capacities of UNDP staff as a success factor for effective and efficient project implementation. UNDP

24. UNDP Argentina, “Evaluación del diálogo argentino”, UNDP, Buenos Aires, Octubre 2004.

generated some synergies between different initiatives. For example, experience sharing on how to strengthen government management capacity was extremely useful at the provincial level (Córdoba and Tucuman provinces).

The conditions contributing to the sustainability of UNDP's governance initiatives have improved during the evaluation period. However, in some cases, the lack of proper exit strategies has compromised sustainability.

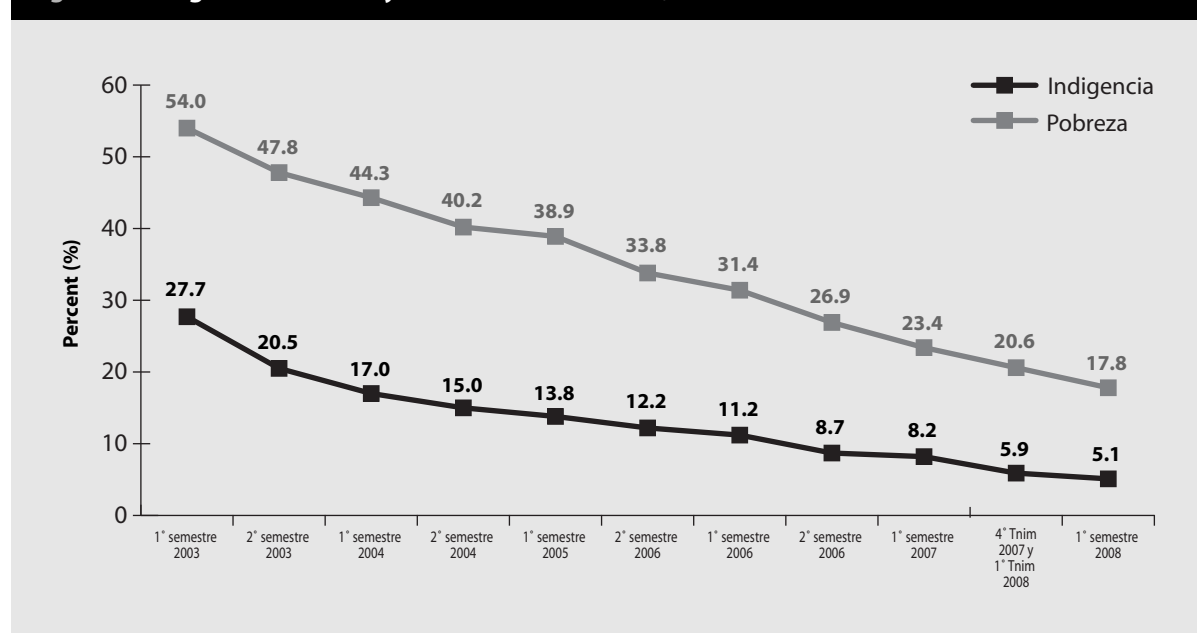
In contrast, in the project related to the institutional capacity of the population's registry in Buenos Aires, where DSS was used only in circumstances considered strategic, and in which UNDP's collaboration was narrowed to offering technical assistance, the pillars for sustainability are solid. In the case of the Córdoba project, UNDP's support was focused on DSS²⁵. In both

cases, the provincial governments promoted the necessary changes in the normative or legal frameworks to consolidate the basis for the strengthening of government management.

3.3 POVERTY REDUCTION

Argentina's recovery from this crisis came rather quickly and was noteworthy in several dimensions. First, economic growth jumped to 8.7 percent in 2003 and has been around that level until 2008. Secondly, and as a result of targeted social support measures, poverty dropped in 2004 and by 2006 it was below what it had been in 2000. Figure 11 shows that by the first semester of 2008 poverty had dropped to 17.8 percent. Extreme poverty had fallen to 5.1 percent. This is a remarkable accomplishment. The urban unemployment rate fell to 8.7 percent in 2006 and to 8.0 percent in the first quarter of

Figure 11. Argentina: Poverty Reduction Evolution, 2003-2008*

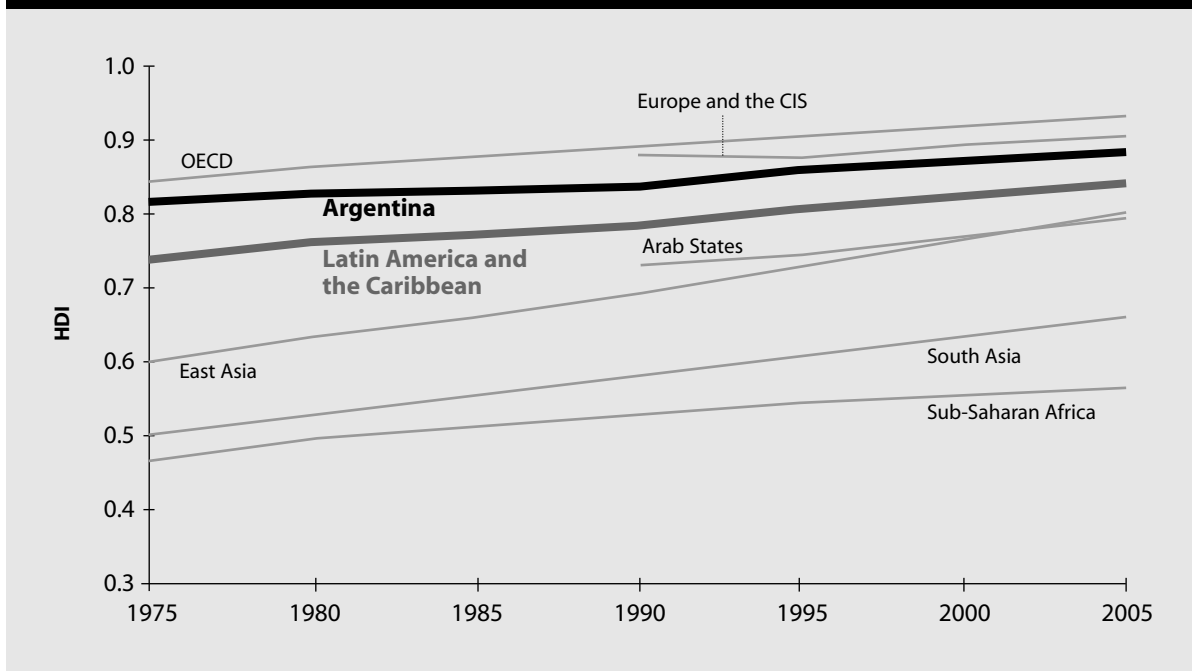


* Individuals

Source: INDEC, (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos), Encuesta Permanente de Hogares, Incidencia de la Pobreza y de la Indigencia, Available online at <http://www.indec.mecon.ar/>

25. The total expenditure of the programme was over US\$ 200 million. The main components were related to building social infrastructure under crisis conditions.

Figure 12. Argentina: Human Development Index, 1975-2005



Source: Indicator Table 2, HDR 2007/2008.

2008²⁶. This vigorous recovery places Argentina's poverty rates well below the regional average. As expressed in the National Human Development Report 2005, economic growth is not an end in itself but a mean to enhance human capabilities and enrich the array of peoples' possibilities. Poverty is not only defined by income but has also cultural dimensions. Human development as a social construction reaffirms that values, beliefs and expectations are as important as markets and institutions for a better life. The impressive recovery of Argentina cannot be understood without taking into consideration its social fabric: citizens who were able to organize and defend their rights, who were able to act responsibly and trust on the quality of their institutions²⁷.

Increased access to basic social services and income rise for the population in a situation of poverty

UNDP's contribution to development results in the area of poverty reduction can be organized

around two periods. First, the immediate years after the crisis from 2001 to 2004, when the urgent need was for targeted contributions to contain the increases in poverty levels, and the period from 2004 until 2008 when poverty decreased to levels below what they had been in 2000 before the crisis. In both periods, UNDP's contribution was deemed relevant and effective as well as largely sustainable in that the overall macroeconomic conditions turned favourable.

It would be difficult to find an event that could underscore more the relevance, timely response and effectiveness of UNDP in Argentina than the role it played during the 2001-02 crises and in the following years.

The special multilateral and institutional character of UNDP allowed it to respond with a transparent advocacy role and to provide much needed coordination and operational support.

26. See INDEC, (Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos), 'Encuesta Permanente de Hogares, Mercado de Trabajo, Principales Indicadores', Available online at www.indec.mecon.ar, accessed 9 December 2008.

27. PNUD Informe Nacional de Desarrollo Humano: Argentina después de la crisis, un tiempo de oportunidades. 2005

More specifically, the country office forged a partnership with the government, religious groups and civil society organizations to develop and implement key social projects such as the “Plan de Jefas y Jefes de Hogar”, the Remediar programme as an immediate response to the crisis. The aim of Remediar was to provide basic medications for public health centres nationwide, using national government funds.

In some cases, these projects also had unexpected benefits and contributed to institutional development and capacity, as was the case with the medicine supply project in the municipality of La Matanza. This was a mostly “service provider” project that led to positive externalities in the form of new information on optimizing health-related services. One of the unintended but very valuable positive externality of this project was that it led to lowering “transaction costs” throughout the procurement lines and health services chain.

Poverty-reduction projects may have a tendency to be afflicted by the “fly-paper effect”. Once resources are assigned to provide some relief, it is difficult to phase out of such programmes, at times because some legitimate new need is discovered. There is no easy way out of this bind, as has been the case with food security and school-breakfast projects.

MDGs advocacy and human development concept application

Two reports were produced in Argentina with the support of the UN system on progress towards achieving the MDGs, one in 2005 and the other in 2007. They indicate that the country is well on its way to meet those targets, as seen from Table 6. What is more, Argentina has made significant progress towards an additional goal

that it established for itself in the area of employment and its quality. In such critical areas of human development as poverty, education, employment, gender equity, health and the environment, Argentina has made significant progress, particularly during the last five years.

Recognizing the federal structure of Argentina and the high “local” content of several of the MDGs, the government, through its Council for the Coordination of Social Policies of the Office of the President, has implemented agreements with the provinces to ensure common approaches and methodologies in the achievement of the MDGs. At the municipal level, there are specific UNDP projects to support the achievement of the MDGs. The main experiences for adapting MDGs to the local level took place in the cities of Morón (Buenos Aires Province) and Rosario (Santa Fe Province). Both cities were covered by the project (00042492-UNDP1) implemented in 2006-2007. This project aimed at mainstreaming human rights in the development approach. The process was completed successfully since the local governments formally adopted the proposed framework for public policy planning. Additionally, adaptations have been carried out in several other provinces (La Rioja, San Juan, Tucumán, and Mendoza). Other initiatives underway include the institutional strengthening of the city of Corrientes²⁸ and another one engaging youth in the city of Santa Fe²⁹. By the end of 2007, 12 agreements had been formalized between the Council and several provinces³⁰. One of the advantages of this policy is that it contributes to strengthening the “monitoring capacity” to keep track of the different processes. It also helps to better understand the complex causalities between projects targeted at one MDG but the success of which may benefit another “unintended” goal³¹.

28. See PNUD, ‘Proyecto: Fortalecimiento de la gestión municipal de la Ciudad de Corrientes para el logro de los OMD’, Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo, Buenos Aires Septiembre, 2007.

29. See PNUD, ‘Casas de Juventud para la inclusión ciudadana: una experiencia innovadora en Argentina’, Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo, ARG/08/007, Buenos Aires Agosto, 2008.

30. See Consejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Públicas Sociales, *Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, Informe País 2007*, Presidencia de la Nación, Argentina, Buenos Aires Octubre, 2007, p.77.

31. Success in reducing the proportion of people living in slums (Goal 7, Target 10) would save the lives of children and help in their education. See UNDP, *Human Development Report 2006, Beyond Scarcity: Power, Poverty and the Global Water Crisis*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York 2006, p.4.

Table 6. Argentina: Progress towards the MDGs, 2000-2007

INDICATORS	2000	2005	2006	2007	2015
MDG 1 – Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger					
Percentage of population below the indigence line	9	12.2	8.7	<10.8%	Eradicate
Percentage of population below the poverty line	33.4	33.8	26.9	<30%	
MDG 2 – Achieve Universal Basic Education					
Graduation rate (EGB)	66.3	66.4	...	90.7	
Graduation rate (Polymodal)	50.8	48.5	...	48.5	
MDG 3 – Promote Decent Employment					
Unemployment rate	...	13.5	11	12	<10%
Unregistered employment rate	...	42.8	40.6	39	<30%
Percentage of unemployed population with social security coverage	...	11.8	7.8	28	60%
Proportion of workers earning salaries lower the total Basic Basket	...	54.9	52.2	48	<30%
Children Employment Rate (5 to 14 years of age)	...	...	...	3	Eradicate
MDG 4 – Promote Gender Equality					
Female ratio in EGB and Polymodal, Tertiary and University educational level, combined	101.4	104.2	111.0	100	100%
Urban Total Literacy percentage of women 15-24 of age. Urban Total	99.4	99.5	99.5	100	100%
Literacy percentage of men 15-24 of age. Urban Total	99.1	99.2	99.4	100	100%
Share of women in wage employments in the non-agricultural sector. Urban Total	40.1	42.5	42.4	40	45%
Income wages gap between women and men. Urban total	0.76	0.66	0.7	0.6	0.8%
Ratio between women and men in private and public executive positions. Urban Total	0.5	0.35	0.41	0.4	0.6%
Percentage of seats held by women in the National Congress	...	35	...	30	45%
Percentage of seats occupied by women in the Provincial Legislatures	22.2	26.6	...	30	45%
MDG 5 – Reduce Child Mortality					
Child Mortality Rate (per a thousand live births)	16.6	13.3	...	12.6	8.5%
Child Mortality Rate of minors under 5 years age (per a thousand live births)	19.3	15.5	...	14.6	9.9%
Gini Coefficient for the Child Mortality Rate.	0.124	0.104	...	0.116	0.090
Total Country Gini Coefficient for the Child Mortality Rate under 5. Total Country	0.126	0.102	...	0.117	0.102
MDG 6 – Improve Maternal Health					
Maternal Mortality Rate (per 10,000 live births) Total Country	3.5	3.9	...	3.7	1.3%
Gini Coefficient for the Maternal Mortality Rate. Total Country	0.436	0.311	...	0.344	0.311
Percentage of births attended by physicians or midwives	99.1	99.1	...	99	99%

Table 6 (cont-d). Argentina: Progress towards the MDGs, 2000-2007

INDICATORS	2000	2005	2006	2007	2015
MDG 7 – Combat HIV/AIDS, The Chagas Disease, Tuberculosis, Malaria					
Percentage of HIV pregnant women between 15 and 24 years	0.64	0.37	...	0.35	0.32%
HIV/AIDS Mortality Rate (per 100,000 inhabitants)	4	3.4	...	3.8	3.5
AIDS Incidence Rate (every 1,000,000 inhabitants)	58	40	...	42	37
Mortality Rate for Tuberculosis (per 100,000 inhabitants)	2.64	1.85	...	2.1	1.21
Number of cases of Tuberculosis reported	31.8	29.1	...	...	...
Malaria: Evolution of Parasite Annual Index	0.148	0.065	...	<0.1*	<0.1*
MDG 8 – Ensure Environmental Sustainability					
Proportion of surface covered by native forest	...	...	...	10.4	10%
Proportion of total surface of area protected for biodiversity per year	6.30	7.67	7.71	7.3	> del 10%
Percentage of population with coverage of safe drinking water of public network	66.2	77	79	80	90%
Percentage of population with coverage of sewerage	34.3	42.5	45	48	75%
MDG 9 – Promote a Global Partnership for Development**					

Note: *Annual Parasite Index (every 1,000 inhabitants). **No se desarrollan indicadores para medir progreso. *** No data.

Source: National Council of the Coordination of Social Policies, Millennium Development Goals: Country Report 2007, The Office of the President, Argentina, November, 2007.

In Argentina, for example, the La Matanza Poverty Reduction Project led to positive externalities in improved health and child care.

UNDP contribution was made through these specific projects as well as through more multi-sectoral interventions such as the National Human Development Reports.

The country office led the formulation of two National Human Development Reports. The first, in 2002, was prepared as the crisis was evolving and focused on poverty reduction, cooperative federalism and sustainable competitiveness. It produced an extended Human Development Index to include social measurements, at the provincial levels, that did not previously exist. This innovation revealed large

inter-province disparities in the quality of life and competitive conditions across the country. The “enhanced index” has had an impact on the design and implementation of policies and strategies for local development. The 2002 NHDR received in 2004 the UNDP award for excellence in policy impact.

The second National Human Development Report entitled “Argentina Después de la Crisis: un Tiempo de Oportunidades, Informe de Desarrollo Humano 2005”, continued to expand the decentralization themes. This was a good and relevant choice; as Liliana De Riz³² has put it, “the federal organization is a strategic theme”. This report also examined themes related to beliefs, perceptions and expectations on the part

32. De Riz, Liliana, ‘Acto de Clausura’, *La Construcción del Federalismo Argentino: Perspectivas Comparadas*, PNUD, Buenos Aires, Argentina, 2004, p.99.

of Argentineans for themselves and for their government and the “social contract”³³. This conceptual innovation produced by an “in-house” interdisciplinary team was highly relevant and has great potential to favourably influence the effectiveness of democratic governance, of poverty reduction policies and in the achievement of the MDGs. After all, beliefs and expectations are now considered to be key components in the formulation of public policies. In brief, fairness perception matters for economic and social development.

Increased opportunities for unemployed

Progress made in this area is less evident; however, in the case of the project “Unemployed Heads of Household”, there has been a clear downward trend in the number of beneficiaries. At the time of its launch in 2002, it included 2.2 million beneficiaries. In 2008, this number was down to 589,000. This decrease is due to: i) inclusion of the previously unemployed beneficiaries into the labour market, which accounts for one third of this reduction, ii) changes in the family situation, when there are no longer children of the required age or there is loss of any other requirement such as the work done in exchange for the payment received, which accounts for one fourth of the decline, iii) transfer of a part of the beneficiary group to another Plan (Families) that grants family allowances, which decreased the number by 17 percent, and, iv) Unemployment and Training Insurance, which helped towards a four percent decrease.

Another initiative that could be considered relevant for this outcome is the Global Compact. In April 2004 under the leadership of UNDP

and with the partnership³⁴ of the ECLAC and the ILO, a group of private-sector firms convened to organize and expand the “Red Pacto Global” Global Compact as one of the most important UN initiatives³⁵ for corporate social responsibility involving the private sector, social organizations and academia to address the challenges posed by unemployment. In 2005, the steering committee of the Argentine Global Compact Network was set up with companies, business associations, NGOs, the mass media and universities. Since then, the network of the Argentine Global Compact has grown uninterruptedly (it currently has 314 signatories), the steering committee has been reinforced and its contributions have been reflected in the companies’ submission of communications on progress reports³⁶.

3.3.2 FINDINGS

Overall, it can be said that the projects and interventions in the area of poverty reduction were relevant and pertinent in the sense that they responded to Argentina’s needs, to the perception of those needs by the government, and were consistent with the overall institutional UNDP mandate, priorities and strategy. They responded also to emergencies requiring prompt answers and initiatives in uncharted roles, as was the case with the “Dialogo Argentino”. The answer to the question of relevance at the end of 2008 and its evolving conditions and circumstances is more complex. The urgency of reducing poverty and inequalities is still a relevant problem. On the other hand, in the current circumstances and outlook for 2009 and 2010 another relevant challenge may lie in protecting macroeconomic stability and avoiding the loss of employment and

33. Martinez, Carlos Felipe calls this “the imaginario colectivo”. See Martinez, Carlos Felipe, ‘Prologo’, *Informe de Desarrollo Humano 2005, Argentina Después de la Crisis: un Tiempo de Oportunidades*, PNUD, Argentina, 2005, p.III.

34. See Oficina del Pacto Global en Argentina, ‘El Pacto Global en Argentina: Documento de Adhesión del Sector Privado Argentino’, Buenos Aires, Argentina, April, 2004, p.7.

35. “Ten years on, the Global Compact stands as the world’s largest corporate sustainability initiative. We boast more than 6,000 business participants in more than 130 countries. The Global Compact has become a by-word for corporate responsibility.” The Secretary-General’s Plenary Speech “The Global Compact: Creating Sustainable Markets”, The World Economic Forum, Davos, 29 January 2009.

36. CEPAL, “Alcances, logros y desafíos del pacto global en Argentina: una visión desde los integrantes, Naciones Unidas, May 2007.

income that comes with volatility. The “new” relevant challenge may be ensuring the capacity of social institutions to respond to changing circumstances. In this context, the country office interventions retain relevance particularly through the development of partnerships at the provincial level and through the forthcoming 2009 National Human Development Report and its focus on the role of the state as the key social and political coordinator.

The expected and achieved results and benefits of most projects in the area of poverty reduction seem sustainable. There are several reasons to support this judgement. Poverty has fallen and, in many cases, the causes that generated it (unemployment) have receded. The general conditions that demanded the intervention have changed for the better. But there was one case in which those conditions became less propitious (ARG-01-011, Sistema de Insumos Medicos del Chaco). The project has not been extended.

More generally speaking, the issue is not only of sustainability but of adaptability to new challenges³⁷ and circumstances. As was suggested above, what may be more relevant in terms of poverty reduction is preventing significant drops in such levels and strengthening the safety nets to protect particularly the poor when these events come as part of evolving business cycles or of unanticipated sudden stops. In brief, there is some risk of low resiliency to changing circumstances in the immediate future. But at the same time, much has been learned from past experiences.

3.4 ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The objectives of the environment and sustainable development area in UNDP Argentina coincide with the ones expressed by the government and

are pursued to mainstream an environmental approach to the development process by promoting projects that contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction. However, environment and sustainable development are not major features in UNDP programme in Argentina, representing 7 percent of resources in the first country cooperation framework 2002-2004, and 4 percent in the 2005-2008 programming period.

Integrating an environmental approach into public policies, along with risk assessment and prevention of natural disasters

The outcome of mainstreaming environmental approach and risk management and natural disaster prevention into public policies was satisfactorily achieved. UNDP support to the *Plan Estratégico de Ordenamiento Territorial 2006-2016* (ARG 05/020) has contributed to the prevention of natural disasters. With a thorough mapping of vulnerabilities and environmental threats in all provinces, the Subsecretaria Nacional de Planificación Territorial de la Inversión Pública has strengthened the platform for risk management and prevention³⁸. A national law entails the federal strategy for risk prevention and includes it as a selection criterion for future federal investments. The law aims to promote the prevention of natural disasters as a public policy. The challenge remains to translate the federal law into practice at the provincial level, but the normative framework provides initial evidence of the potential sustainability of the initiative. National representatives highlighted the role played by UNDP in providing technical assistance and piloting the conceptual framework in the provinces of San Juan and Chubut.

Stopping current levels of desertification

As the MDG report³⁹ states on the progress made toward environmental goals, in the last decades Argentina has been facing one of the

37. See Concejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Públicas Sociales, *Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, Informe País 2007*, Presidencia de la Nación, Argentina, Octubre, 2007, p.21.

38. Project ARG/05/020 “National Programme to Prevent and Reduce Risks and Disasters and Favour Territorial Development”, contributed to including risk prevention and natural disasters management in the Strategic Territorial Plan.

39. See Concejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Públicas Sociales, *Objetivos de Desarrollo del Milenio, Informe País 2007*, Presidencia de la Nación, Argentina, Octubre, 2007, p.60.

highest rates of deforestation in its history. The real decrease in the proportion of native forests and the changes in the use of land as a result of the expansion of the agriculture frontier are posing threats to the country's population by increasing the risks of floods and droughts. UNDP's support for native forests by sharing local experiences of sustainable management of forests established the bases for developing a new policy for the preservation and management of native forests.

Increasing conservation and utilization of biodiversity

A typical DSS project is the Consolidation and Implementation of the Patagonia Coastal Zone Management Programme for Biodiversity Conservation, (ARG 02/018). UNDP managed funds from a GEF portfolio financed by the WB for the Government of Argentina. The project was efficiently executed and UNDP's support in managing the funds and the procurement system were commended. According to a midterm evaluation report,⁴⁰ "the project implementing agency (UNDP) has shown a capacity for adaptive management, and has made important corrections based on practical experience. The project has been implemented extraordinarily well, and is under budget, on time, and more activities have been undertaken than are included in the project design". The assessment was confirmed by the evaluation team through interviews with national counterparts.

The support to the Small Grants Programme in Northwestern part of the country, where poverty is concentrated and the Human Development Index reaches its lowest level, showed good results. The project strengthens grass-roots movements and civil society organizations, including indigenous people and small farmers, to manage environmental projects at local level.

These projects include integrated watershed management, conservation and reforestation of local species, small productive projects and the management of solid waste in small cities of Tucuman. These interventions change the rationale of environment programmes. Civil society organizations implement the projects and state institutions like National Institute of Applied Technology (INTA) support them. The project identified ongoing initiatives and leveraged their scope. The approach of adaptive experimentation together with benefits and real economic gains for participants produce more tailored solutions to local environmental needs.

Controlling emissions of ozone-depleting substances and persistent organic pollutants

There were other projects, such as controlling emissions of ozone-depleting substances and persistent organic pollutants, whose outputs were achieved but whose progress on outcome is difficult to measure. Assessing UNDP's contribution to outcome presents methodological challenges related in some cases with the absence of base lines and the initiatives undertaken simultaneously by other development actors⁴¹.

3.4.1. FINDINGS

UNDP support for the preparation of a strategic plan for territorial organization as a normative framework for sustainable development is a good example of a contribution to mainstreaming environmental issues into public policies. The combination of GEF funds available together with UNDP project management capacity allowed for addressing national environmental challenges in an appropriate manner. However, the scale of resources allocated to environmental projects is insufficient for tackling Argentinean challenges, as expressed in the progress report on the MDG. Providing water and sanitation, for example, remains a huge challenge that will

40. Global Environment Facility GEF Mid-Term Evaluation Report – Consolidation and Implementation of the Patagonia Coastal Zone Management Programme for Biodiversity Conservation, 2005

41. One exception is the project ARG/05/G61 Institutional Strengthening under the Montreal Protocol, Phase IV, Montreal Protocol Funding. The baseline set by the Ozone Unit, National Environment Secretariat, refers to the amount of tons/year of ozone-depleting chemical substances imported by Argentina. The information is provided by INDEC, Foreign Trade Statistics.

require innovative approaches from the three tiers of government plus the active involvement of local population. The efficiency of environmental projects was compromised in some cases by institutional changes in the government. For instance, the Secretary of Environment has changed its location in three different ministries in the period under evaluation, causing operational delays after each change.

UNDP effectively provided support to local environmental initiatives with the use of its own resources (XB funds) and a bottom-up approach. However, closing the gap between current trends and targets requires much more attention from national authorities and UNDP. Environmental issues at national and provincial levels still did not benefit from the prioritization other areas have in the formulation of development policies⁴².

3.5 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

3.5.1 GENDER MAINSTREAMING

Gender aspects were not mentioned in the programming document for 2002-2004. The country programme for 2005-2008 establishes that, as far as gender equity is concerned, efforts will be directed to ensuring reproductive health services and promoting women's participation in the process of decision making. The country programme states that it is necessary to take gender aspects into consideration in order to facilitate the establishment of higher levels of equity between men and women.

UNDP has demonstrated its commitment towards the establishment of higher levels of equity between men and women. Indeed, it has

established a gender unit with two officers. The unit coordinator reports directly to the senior management. Since 2006, UNDP has contributed with XB funds for gender mainstreaming in the country programme. UNDP has developed a strategy for gender mainstreaming, reflecting the course UNDP Argentina has chosen in support of the country in its mission to reach gender equality⁴³. The strategy is framed in the central international and corporative principles and agreements⁴⁴ and contains action lines for internal work in the office, external work with stakeholders, as well as projects and initiatives, and inter-agency work of the UN system. Building gender capacities is a central issue. The internal work in the office is considered relevant as it promotes the sensitization towards the issue of gender and cultural changes. This is essential for creating a basis for successful gender mainstreaming work outside the office. The gender team has worked with the programme clusters and counterparts to include a gender focus into the projects and programmes since their design.

Although UNDP has clearly intensified its efforts to ensure that a focus on gender is well integrated into its initiatives, the results are not yet visible in the ongoing interventions. This observation is understandable given that more concentrated work on gender mainstreaming has begun only recently. There has been the active participation of women in the sample project and initiatives⁴⁵. Stakeholders pointed out that in some DSS projects questions regarding gender were not relevant⁴⁶. In some cases, stakeholders admitted that gender mainstreaming is still “a pending issue” and that the main obstacle for successful work is a “certain cultural resistance”.

42. Homero Bibiloni, Algunas condiciones para el salto cualitativo a la cuestión ambiental en la Argentina. En Brown, A; Martínez Ortiz, U; Acerbi, M y Corcuera, J. *La situación ambiental argentina* 2005. FVSA, Buenos Aires, 2006. p. 507

43. UNDP Argentina, Challenges of Gender Equality in Argentina. A strategy by the United Nations Development Programme, UNDP, Buenos Aires, 2008.

44. These include the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995; International Human Right Treaties; and UNDP Gender Equality Strategy, 2008-2011.

45. Heads of Household, Political reform of Buenos Aires, Water authority in the municipality of Moreno, Citizens' audit, and Food Management Policy programme.

46. Generalization of computerized systems in the Ministry of Economy, sanitary management programme in the municipality of Matanza.

A favourable political climate for promoting equality between men and women is observed. The governmental stakeholders share a strategic vision about the importance of gender mainstreaming. For example, the Ministry of Employment has established that all policies should include a focus on gender. There is a National Commission for Women. Equally, Argentina has ratified key international agreements. UNDP has produced several studies⁴⁷ related to the theme that could serve as access points for outreach and advocacy.

3.5.2 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Capacity development is one of the strategic action lines in the country programme for 2005–2008. Special attention has been given to the management of programmes and projects. UNDP has moved primarily to full national execution modality (NEX), according to which the government assumes the full execution responsibility of projects within a legal framework that allows for the benefits from the cooperation with UNDP.

A recent evaluation of the contribution made by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) to the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness states: “*The UNDG should increase the use of national systems for support services. This will benefit the partner countries; will strengthen national capacities and reduce transaction costs*”⁴⁸. Adhering to these recommendations, this chapter concentrates on the assessment of UNDP’s contribution to the strengthening of government’s implementation capacities.

UNDP Argentina has increasingly combined administrative services (DSS) with technical

assistance for capacity building. Simultaneously, the government’s demand for administrative services continues to be strong. A recent UNDP evaluation of the government purchase and recruitment system acknowledged that, in recent years, there has been a tendency from national jurisdictions to ask third-party organizations, for example UNDP, to offer their procurement services⁴⁹. This is because jurisdictions have found UNDP’s mechanism to be highly competent, efficient, economical, and transparent, compared with the mechanism used by the government.

Government stakeholders are well aware of the need for strengthening the public administration system but as several national counterparts have declared, “UNDP tools are still needed”. Evaluation of the government purchase and recruitment system confirms that the administration and especially procurement services for programmes, which began at the time of the crisis, has not ceased. In addition, there is no evidence to suggest a tendency that jurisdictions would have the incentives to administer procurements by their own means, through the public procurement systems.

According to stakeholders, one of the requirements for an effective public administration is to knock down certain cultural barriers that affect civil servants. UNDP has been successful in improving work motivation through the provision of more meaningful work content. In the Modernization of the Province of Córdoba programme, the learning process related to human resources was a success as the use of information by means of modern systems was incorporated into the culture of public administration. In other cases, the efficient, effective and transparent way of administration required

47. For example, the analysis on the existing gender gaps in Argentina “*Negociación colectiva y equidad de género en el periodo 2003–2007*” (Collective negotiation and gender equality in 2003–2007), carried out with the support of the Poverty Reduction Thematic Trust Fund on “Poverty reduction, gender equality and female labor market”. “*Las Legisladoras. Cupos de Género y Política en Argentina y Brasil*” (Women legislators. Gender Quotas and Politics in Argentina and Brazil), Editorial Siglo XXI, Instituto Di Tella and UNDP, 2007.

48. United Nations Development Group, ‘Evaluation of the UNDG Contribution to the Implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness’, UNDP, 2008, p. 48.

49. UNDP, ‘Evaluación del sistema de compras y contrataciones gubernamentales (Evaluation of the government purchase and recruitment system)’, UNDP Argentina project FO/ARG/06/011, July 2007.

Box 2: Capacity Development in Medicine Supply Programmes

In La Matanza and Chaco, UNDP development support services have been combined with technical assistance for capacity building to facilitate provision of medical supplies to citizens. Essentially, UNDP has promoted the improvement of mechanisms, methodologies and quality control of medicine procurement under an integrated vision of public health combining informatization of procurement processes with different types of expertise. In the municipality of La Matanza, a special division of public health procurement has been established within the institutional structure of the provincial Secretary of Public Health. In Chaco, the establishment of a Provincial Commission of Medicine Management has encouraged a multidisciplinary and specialized approach to medicine procurement. In the case of La Matanza, the monitoring and evaluation practices for quality control of public procurements have been integrated into other areas of the municipal administration. However, in the province of Chaco the utility of the procurement systems developed was compromised because of the unwillingness of certain other areas of provincial administration to modify their practices. Since the required modifications for the normative frameworks were not approved, the project benefits were not generalized into the provincial procurement system. Both cases demonstrate UNDP's success in supporting management structures, processes and procedures under an integrated view that brings efficiency gains and reduced transaction costs by combining technical and administrative capacities.

by UNDP projects has served as an example for the counterparts⁵⁰.

During the current country programme, UNDP has been efficient in incorporating trained technical human resources (originally hired through UNDP-supported projects) into the ordinary structure of partner institutions. In the case of the “Heads of Household” programme, 100 percent of the Secretary of Employment was on UNDP's payroll in 2004. At present, over 75 percent of the workforce is part of the Secretary's payroll, including all ordinary line functions. A similar tendency is confirmed in other projects⁵¹. In addition, UNDP has increasingly started to work with the existing technical workforce of institutions, instead of hiring new personnel for project purposes⁵².

UNDP has been successful in its support for strengthening implementation capacities. A good practice of organizational development is found especially in the municipality of La Matanza and to some extent in the province of Chaco as illustrated in Box 2.

The use of the full NEX modality has increased during the last programming period, which, in principle, implies stronger national ownership through the institutional responsibility for project administration. In practice, many of the full NEX projects are still managed through separate project implementation units (PIUs). Generally speaking, stakeholders still perceive UNDP project implementation units as “isolated islands” within the institutions, with little relation to the regular administration structure. This was the case particularly for projects with IFI's funding. The national systems for procurement, recruitment, evaluation and monitoring are not normally used.

According to the stakeholders, UNDP offers regular training on NEX guidelines to ensure a transparent and efficient project management. New projects are also subject to “ex-ante evaluations” which focus on capacity building⁵³ and the estimation of risks involved. The stakeholders have also noticed UNDP's efforts to strengthen the exit strategies. Despite these initiatives, the

50. For example, local counterparts in the “Food management policy” programme

51. Projects include: Management of solid residues in the city of Mar de Plata, Sanitary management programme in the municipality of Matanza and, Conservation of biological diversity project.

52. For example: Institutional capacity of the population's registry in Buenos Aires.

53. Assessment of institutional capacity according to background, experience, strategies, priorities and the normative framework of the government's agency, in conjunction with the proposed specific institutional arrangements for the execution of the project.

strengthening of administrative implementation capacities of institutions has been limited, in some cases, to developing the capacity to execute the UNDP project in question.

Strengthening administrative capacity and public management systems in an integral way is still a challenge for UNDP. Effective capacity building demands a link to a broader set of institutional reforms. This requires building political commitment, sponsoring capacity development among key stakeholders and embedding capacity development into broader national development priorities⁵⁴.

The use of DSS may be justified in specific cases when combined with a clear exit strategy and technical assistance for the capacity development of public management. UNDP's technical assistance should contribute to resolving bottlenecks that make the administration services of UNDP essential. The use of pure DSS involves the risk of substituting the implementation capacity of the public institution in question as a consequence of efficiency gains in the short run, an unplanned outcome counter to the core capacity mandate of UNDP⁵⁵.

The Argentina country office worked for the reinforcement of an "evaluation culture". There were several examples of self-evaluations and of in-house initiatives in terms of monitoring, evaluation and compliance with a 2005 internal audit recommendations. Senior staff is fully aware that evaluations are a major source of learning and can enhance the developmental effectiveness of projects and interventions. There is also a formal process for strengthening monitoring and evaluation on several work fronts, including the possibility of providing it as a service line. However, outcome evaluations in main UNDP practice areas were not conducted in the period under evaluation.

UNDP proposes, as a part of the management, monitoring and evaluation of the 2005-2008 country programme, to deepen the topic of knowledge management and communication for development while recognizing the importance of effective communication so as to attain the desired development outcomes.

3.5.3 UNITED NATIONS COORDINATION

The resident coordination of the UN System in Argentina was strengthened during the period under evaluation. Various stakeholders pointed out the important role played by the UN with one voice in at least three different occasions. The first and most visible was in the preparation, implementation and follow-up to the *Dialogo Argentino* with dialogue roundtables organized in 2002 to help the country get out of its political and economic crisis.

UNDP took a lead role in the facilitation of the political dialogue, and the participation of all agencies, funds and programmes present in Argentina was necessary to provide adequate technical support for the negotiation processes. The priority goal was the fight against poverty; additionally several thematic roundtables were organized to address issues such as, health, education, reform of the judiciary, reform of the political system and, most importantly, the roundtable on socio-labour and productive issues. The role played by the UN system helped to rapidly identify social security programmes like the Heads of Households programme that transferred cash to poor families.

Secondly, under the leadership of the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies (*Consejo Nacional de Coordinación de Políticas Sociales*), the government launched in 2007 a third country report tracking progress on the achievement of the MDGs. The UN agencies, funds and programmes were actively involved in the

54. UNDP, 'Supporting capacity development – The UNDP approach', Capacity Development Group, Bureau of Development Policy, New York, June 2008.

55. The UNDP Corporate Strategic Plan, 2008-2011, attributes capacity development to the organization's core contribution to development.

preparation of the MDG reports with data and technical expertise.

Thirdly, the UN country team, consisting of ECLAC, FAO, ILO, IMF, PAHO/WHO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNIC, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNIFEM and World Bank, is actively engaged with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the preparation of the first UNDAF. UNDAF is not a corporate requirement for Argentina, however, the Government and senior management in the UNCT have deemed it appropriate to have a strategic framework orienting and coordinating the UN system efforts in support of national development goals.

Various stakeholders recognized the coordination role played by UNDP within the UN system. However, there were also expressions of concern regarding the “distracting” role that its concentration on DSS could exercise over advocacy initiatives of other UN agencies, funds and programmes and the normative role the UN system can play in the country.

The coordination of the UN System has been strengthened in the period under evaluation and several members of the UN Country Team reaffirmed the need to have a common strategic framework to align the initiatives from UN agencies funds and programmes to the government’s priorities in a more cohesive and effective manner.

3.6 STRATEGIC POSITIONING

The key partners acknowledge UNDP as a prestigious organization with the potential to bring legitimacy, neutrality, credibility and knowledge into the development process. They also consider UNDP as a highly effective partner that has demonstrated accountability and

transparency. The private sector and civil society organizations appreciate UNDP’s proximity to the government, as it enables stronger partnerships with governmental bodies. Many of the governmental partners interviewed recognized the importance of maintaining strong alliances with other development actors⁵⁶.

However, some partners expressed concern about UNDP’s role in the administration of government resources since it may limit its advocacy role for public policies. In general, partners find positive UNDP’s move towards a strategic role as an advisory and knowledge organization. The direct counterparts have noticed a transformation in UNDP’s cooperation practices and working mechanisms. Explicitly, there is more of an emphasis on exit strategies, increased technical assistance and a stricter attitude towards DSS support.

The evaluation identifies an opportunity in using communication for development as a tool to position UNDP more strategically. Specifically, communication has great potential to deliver the ownership and participation required to achieve the MDGs and other development results. Further, communication for development has the potential to facilitate public debates, and to bring UN agencies together in the perception of broader development actors.

One feature contributing to the strategic positioning of the country office has to do with the human factor endowment. There is little doubt that in this respect the country office has been moving in the right direction and already has a highly qualified senior staff in charge of its programmes. There was not a single occasion in which stakeholders outside the country office did not praise the professional quality of that staff. Having a well-qualified technical staff is of immense relevance⁵⁷. Such human factor

56. Good experiences in partnering with civil society actors, for example, in the Heads of household and Food management policy programmes.

57. In 2004, 70 percent of the staff had at least a university degree and in 2008 that percentage increased to 81 percent. As regards the number of staff members with Master’s and PhDs, in 2004 it was 42 percent and in 2008, 53 percent.

endowment in most likely the source of new information and information is the emerging paradigm to complete economic and political markets. Although a well-qualified technical staff is not a full guarantee of relevance success and developmental effectiveness, its absence is close to a guarantee of lacklustre performance.

The UNDP country programme recognizes the importance of working with a wide variety of partners at the central, provincial and local levels to achieve the expected outcomes⁵⁸. UNDP's primary partners are national governments. In the case of Argentina, the UNDP country programme puts emphasis on strengthening the coordination between different government agencies and different levels of government including the national, provincial and municipal authorities.

The evaluation finds that UNDP has strengthened its partnership with local and provincial governments. After the identification of the "critical zone" in 2005, UNDP has increased its partnership with Northern provinces and municipalities of the country. The evaluation finds that the support provided to local and provincial authorities is particularly strong in the areas of poverty reduction (promotion of the MDGs) and the environment.

Under the evaluation criteria that include relevance, responsiveness, equity and quality of partnerships to assess strategic positioning, the evaluation team considers that the country office is well poised to continue to nurture and expand a more strategic role for itself as a development partner in Argentina.

58. In addition to local, provincial and central governments, the country programme makes reference to faith groups, the private sector, civil society organizations, international financial institutions, bilateral donors and the media.

CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 CONCLUSIONS

The following are the main conclusions of the evaluation:

- 1. UNDP's cooperation programme in Argentina was aligned to national priorities and demonstrated a responsive capacity to emerging development challenges such as the crisis of 2001.** UNDP's cooperation frameworks and the objectives pursued were consistent with national development needs and were considered relevant. The organization has also demonstrated good capacity to adapt to changing development circumstances and flexibly adjusted the portfolio of projects to respond to the agreements that emerged from the Argentinean Dialogue after the crisis of 2001.
- 2. When requested by the national government, UNDP had the capacity to play the role of a convener and honest broker by bringing together development actors from government, civil society and the political system at the federal, provincial and municipal levels to face common challenges.** The most important development actors of Argentina, including political parties, faith-based groups among Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Muslims, civil society organizations, academics and the media gathered to deliberate at the Argentinean Dialogue and found solutions to the political, institutional and economic crises facing the country. UNDP played a key role in that process. After the crisis, the political system reassumed its capacity. However, the culture of dialogue continued and permeated discussions at the national, provincial and municipal levels with the support of various UNDP projects reaffirming the democratic values of Argentinean society.
- 3. The technical and analytical capacity of UNDP staff is widely valued and recognized.** Engaging in a policy dialogue in Argentina, a country with a sophisticated professional and intellectual capacity is challenging. UNDP had established not only a reputation for efficient project administration capacity but also a reputation for conducting significant contributions to the analysis of development challenges from a human development perspective. The design and implementation of new projects were praised by national counterparts along with the technical capacity of UNDP staff.
- 4. Some development actors perceive UNDP mainly as a resource administrator, hence, not recognizing its full potential role as a development partner in Argentina.** Key partners acknowledge UNDP as a prestigious organization with the potential to bring legitimacy, neutrality, credibility and knowledge into the development process. However, some partners expressed concern about UNDP's concentration on the administration of government resources. This concentration poses risks since it may limit its advocacy role for promoting public policies with a human development perspective.
- 5. The sustainability of some UNDP interventions was questioned and these did not always develop sufficiently their exit strategies.** More attention needs to be paid to the sustainability of the benefits and results of UNDP-supported interventions. In

some cases, it was identified that the benefits ceased after the conclusion of UNDP projects. The strengthening of administrative implementation capacities of institutions has been limited, in those cases, to developing the capacity to execute UNDP projects without clear exit strategies. That was particularly the case for projects of an administrative nature.

6. **The project portfolio dedicated to Development Support Services (DSS) did decrease significantly in the time under evaluation screening a positive trend towards a more value-added portfolio, in terms of technical assistance and attention paid to designing exit strategies.** Since 2003 UNDP has contributed to the formulation and, most importantly, to the execution of various government emergency programmes in response to the crisis. Many of these programmes had ended by 2005. In addition, the “strategic turn” implemented since 2005 has resulted in a more balanced programme portfolio, as the share of big DSS projects has diminished considerably.
7. **The “giro estratégico” has been a positive shift into the right direction.** The direction of the “strategic turn” encompassed an institutional and capacity-building strategy, focusing on the articulation of demands for a greater and better quality social bond to human development; strengthening citizens’ capacities for action and participation in a more complex and uncertain context; and deepening a territorial presence particularly in those provinces and municipalities with the lowest HDIs and greater disparities. These orientations together with more emphasis on designing exit strategies for new projects are seen as a positive shift.

4.2 LESSONS LEARNED

UNDP operations in Argentina bring two potential lessons learned for the organization corporately:

- a. **The importance of a highly qualified human factor endowment for providing technical assistance in middle-income countries.**

Having a well-qualified technical staff is of immense relevance for UNDP’s work. Understanding the needs and development challenges of the country in the areas of poverty reduction, fostering democratic governance and promoting environmental sustainability and being able to provide sound policy advice requires a sophisticated professional team. Such human factor endowment is most likely the source of new information and information is the emerging paradigm to complete economic and political markets. Although a well-qualified technical staff is not a full guarantee of relevance and developmental effectiveness, its absence is close to a guarantee of lacklustre performance.

- b. **The need of a strategic cooperation framework for the UN system, even if it is not a corporate requirement, enhances the opportunity for more coherent and effective UN cooperation.** An effective coordination of the United Nations system in a country that almost reached the status of net contributor country can be enhanced by a strategic framework such as the one developed by Argentina Country Team in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The existence of the UNDAF enhances the probabilities of indentifying synergies among agencies and more direct coordination around the achievement of development outcomes.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The main recommendations of the evaluation are as follows:

1. **Support institutional capacity development with a long-term perspective of recovering the strategic role of the state in promoting inclusive and sustainable human development.** Effective capacity building demands a link to a broader set of institutional reforms. This requires building political commitment, sponsoring capacity development among key stakeholders, and embedding capacity development into broader national development priorities.

2. **Continue supporting dialogue and deliberative mechanisms among different levels of government and society (national, provincial and municipal) to reach agreements on how to reduce regional and local disparities under the MDGs' conceptual framework.** UNDP should continue playing a convener role fostering democratic values embedded in the practice of deliberation and dialogue around the main development challenges faced by Argentina, particularly in the interfaces of the three levels of government. UNDP should fully capitalize the identified opportunities such as strengthening the use of knowledge network and products, and include more actors beyond the immediate stakeholders, to leverage and improve the quality of its partnerships.
3. **Continue developing and fostering inter-sector initiatives such as the ones recommended in national Human Development Reports and MDGs reports based on new diagnoses and empirical evidence about the development constraints faced by Argentina.** National Human Development Reports proved to be significant contributions to advancing the debate around public policies with a human development perspective and a multi-dimensional approach. The evidence-based quality of the analysis together with the advocacy capacity of UNDP can be further utilized to address sensitive development issues.
4. **Deepen the "Giro Estrategico" and the policy advice and technical cooperation role played by UNDP in the formulation of public policies with a human development perspective.** The Giro Estrategico is a shift in the right direction and needs to be sustained. The UNDP project portfolio still has room for improvement and the interventions can still work on the link to capacity development, its value added in terms of policy advice and a reduction of DSS projects of an administrative nature.
5. **Ensure the sustainability of the benefits of UNDP interventions once they are finished by properly considering exit strategies.** There are several ways to address the need for sustaining the benefits of UNDP-supported projects. These include ensuring the necessary institutional level of ownership over the interventions and ensuring the financial support from national funding sources once UNDP support has ceased.
6. **Support the systematization and lessons learned from good practices undertaken by the Argentinean government in the framework of South-South Cooperation.** The enhanced monitoring and evaluation of UNDP interventions can assist in the systematization of good practices and lessons learned that can be of relevance to other development initiatives within and beyond the purview of the UNDP cooperation programme for Argentina.
7. **Ensure the capacity response of UNDP to emerging consequences of global recession and its impact on Argentina by adopting a flexible approach to programming.** UNDP in Argentina should keep its capacity response to ever-emerging development challenges faced by the country. It will be necessary that the next country programme preserve a flexible approach to address, in close collaboration and partnership with the national government, the unexpected consequences of the current global financial crisis.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. BACKGROUND

The Evaluation Office (EO) of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) regularly conducts a number of country evaluations called Assessments of Development Results (ADRs) in order to capture and demonstrate the evaluative evidence of UNDP's contributions to development results at the country level. Undertaken in selected countries, the ADRs focus on outcomes and critically examine achievements and constraints in the UNDP thematic areas of focus, draw lessons learned, and provide recommendations for the future. The ADRs also provide strategic analysis for enhancing performance and strategically positioning UNDP support within national development priorities and UNDP corporate policy directions⁵⁹. The overall goals of the ADR are to:

- Provide substantive support to the Administrator's accountability function in reporting to the Executive Board.
- Serve as a means of quality assurance for UNDP interventions at the country level.
- Generate lessons from experience to inform current and future programming at the country and corporate levels.
- Provide stakeholders in the programme country with an objective assessment of the results (specific outcomes) that have been achieved through UNDP support and partnerships with other key actors during a given multi-year period.

An ADR is planned for the Republic of Argentina to be conducted during 2008. It will cover the last programming cycle from 2004-2008 as well as some of the previous years.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess UNDP's contributions to development results and strategic positioning in Argentina, draw lessons learned and outline options for improvements. The ADR in Argentina will:

- Provide an independent assessment of development results at the country level, which were achieved through UNDP support and in partnership with other development actors during the last five to seven years; particular emphasis will be placed on UNDP's Country Programme, assessing its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of results.
- Contribute to accountability and to learning from experience, taking into account self-evaluations (project and outcome evaluations) and the role of development partners.
- Provide an analysis of how UNDP has positioned itself to add value in response to national needs and changes in the national development context.
- Present key findings, draw key lessons, and provide a set of clear and forward-looking options for the management to make adjustments in the current strategy and next Country Programme.

3. RATIONALE FOR THE EVALUATION

The completion of the 2004-2008 Country Cooperation Framework (CCF) presents an opportunity to evaluate the achievements and results over the past programme cycle and before.

59. <http://www.undp.org/eo/documents/Evaluation-Policy.pdf>

The findings will be used as inputs to the 2009-2011 Country Programme Document (CPD) within the context of the new UNDAF.

4. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The ADR will review the UNDP experience in the Republic of Argentina and its contribution to the solution of social, economic and political challenges. UNDP programme in Argentina for the period 2005-2008 focuses on four key thematic areas: democratic governance, social development, development of local enterprise and environment for sustainable development. Annual programme expenditure during the last three years ranges approximately between US\$ 215 million and 321 million⁶⁰. These volumes are mainly due to development services provided to the government at the national and local level. UNDP country office in Argentina is a case in point for the analysis of the potential tensions between effective resource mobilization strategies and the relevance and effectiveness of UNDP contributions to human development at the country level.

Gender, environment and national capacity development will be addressed and analysed as cross-cutting issues.

The evaluation will undertake a comprehensive review of the UNDP programme portfolio and activities during the period under review. It will assess key results, specifically outcomes – anticipated and unanticipated, positive and negative – and will cover UNDP assistance funded from both core and non-core resources. Specifically, the ADR will address:

a) **Relevance.** The evaluation will examine how relevant UNDP programmes are to the country needs and priorities. In other words, did UNDP apply the right development strategy within the specific political, economic and social context of the Republic of Argentina?

- b) **Effectiveness.** Did the UNDP programme accomplish its intended objectives and planned results? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the programme? What are the unexpected results? Should it continue in the same direction or should its main tenets be reviewed for the new cycle?
- c) **Sustainability.** Are development results, achieved through UNDP contribution, sustainable? Do they ensure sustainability with a focus on national ownership, an enabling policy environment, capacity development, gender equality, human rights and other key drivers UNDP considers in assessing development effectiveness?

In addition, the evaluation will analyse the strategic positioning of UNDP by:

- ascertaining the relationship of UNDP support to national needs, development goals and priorities, including its relevance and linkages to the goal of reducing poverty and other MDGs
- assessing how UNDP anticipated and responded to significant changes in the national development context affecting poverty reduction and governance reform for sustainable development
- reviewing the synergies and alignment of UNDP support with other initiatives and partners, including the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), the Global Cooperation Framework (GCF) and the Regional Cooperation Framework (RCF) as well as how UNDP has coordinated its work with other development partners
- considering the influence of systemic issues, i.e. policy and administrative constraints affecting the programme, on both the donor and the programme county sides, as well as how the development results achieved and

60. ATLAS SNAPSHOT at 12 March 2008

the partnerships established have contributed to ensure the relevance and strategic position of UNDP.

5. METHODOLOGY

The assessment will use a multiple-method approach that includes desk reviews, workshops and meetings, group and individual interviews at both headquarters and field levels. The appropriate methodology will be refined during the scoping mission and after discussions between the team of evaluators and various stakeholders.

The evaluation team will examine, when appropriate, overall programming frameworks (UNDAF, CCA, CPD, CPAP SRF/ROAR etc.) which give an overall picture of the country context. The team will also consider select project documents and Programme Support Documents as well as any reports from monitoring and evaluation at country level. Statistical data will be assessed where useful. The evaluation team will triangulate among different data sources and type to validate the findings.

A strong participatory approach, involving concerned stakeholders is envisaged. The identification of the stakeholders, including representatives of government ministries/agencies, civil society organizations, private sector, UN agencies, multilateral organizations, bilateral donors, and beneficiaries will take place. The team will visit significant project/field sites as required.

The ADR will follow the guidelines developed by the Evaluation Office in 2006. According to these guidelines, the process can be divided in three phases, each including several steps.

PHASE 1: PREPARATORY PHASE

- Desk review – The EO will carry out a desk review in close consultation with the evaluation team leader, the country office and the Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean (RBLAC) based on the key questions for the evaluation developed by the EO task manager and evaluation team leader in consultation with RBLAC.

- Scoping mission – The evaluation team will conduct a brief mission to the country to define the scope, identify stakeholders, and collect additional data and complete the evaluability assessment. The team leader and the EO task manager will participate in the scoping mission.
- Inception report – An inception report including the final evaluation design and plan will provide the background to the evaluation, key evaluation questions, detailed methodology, information sources and instruments and plan for data collection, design for data analysis, and format for reporting.

PHASE 2: CONDUCTING ADR AND DRAFTING EVALUATION REPORT

- ADR mission of data collection and validation – The main mission of two weeks will be conducted by the independent evaluation team, led by the evaluation team leader.
- Analysis and reporting – The information collected will be analysed in the draft ADR report by the evaluation team within three weeks after the departure of the team from the country. The draft will be subject to factual corrections by key clients and to a technical review by the EO. The team leader shall be responsible for finalizing the ADR report based on these final reviews. While finalizing the report, the team leader will consult closely with the EO task manager.

PHASE 3: FOLLOW-UP

- Stakeholder meeting – A meeting with the key national stakeholders will be organized to present the results of the evaluation. The comments will be incorporated into the final evaluation report by the team leader.
- Management response – The preparation of the management response and tracking its implementation will be undertaken internally by UNDP.
- Learning events – The dissemination of the report's findings shall serve the purpose of organizational learning, as part of the overall EO dissemination and outreach strategy.

6. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The expected outputs are:

- An inception report (maximum 20 pages)
- A comprehensive final report on the Republic of the Argentina Assessment of Development Results. (maximum 50 pages plus annexes)

The final report of the ADR to be produced by the evaluation team should at the least contain:

- Executive summary of conclusions and recommendations
- Background, with analysis of country context
- Strategic positioning and programme relevance
- Programme performance
- Lessons learned and good practices
- Findings and recommendations
- Annexes (terms of reference, list of persons met, documentation reviewed, statistics, etc.)

7. EVALUATION TEAM

An international consultancy firm will undertake the assessment and will designate an evaluation team. The team will comprise three consultants, one of whom will be the team leader, a team specialist with specific skills in topical areas relevant to the evaluation, and a national consultant with extensive knowledge of the country situation. The team leader must have a demonstrated capacity in strategic thinking and policy advice and in the evaluation of complex programmes in the field. The team members should have in-depth knowledge of developments in Latin America and Argentina in particular. Familiarity with internal functioning of UNDP, its different execution modalities,

financial arrangements and cost recovery strategies will be a plus.

The composition of the evaluation team shall reflect the independence and the substantive results-focus of the evaluation. The evaluation international consultancy firm will be selected by UNDP EO.

8. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND DURATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

EO will manage the evaluation and ensure coordination and liaison with RBLAC and other concerned units at headquarters level. The EO task manager will manage the evaluation process, in close consultation with RBLAC and Argentina CO management.

The CO will take a lead role in organizing dialogue and stakeholder meetings on the findings and recommendations, support the evaluation team in liaison with the key partners and discussions with the team, and make available to the team all the material that is available. The office will provide support to logistics and planning.

The expected duration of the assignment may range between 45 to 60 working days for the team leader and 30 to 40 working days for the international consultant. The engagement of the national consultant may not exceed 25 days.

The EO will meet all costs directly related to the conduct of the ADR. These will include costs related to participation of the team leader, international and national consultants, as well as the preliminary research and the issuance of the final ADR report. The CO will contribute support in kind. EO will also cover costs of any stakeholder workshops as part of the evaluation.

Annex 2

LIST OF PEOPLE CONSULTED

- Rodolfo Ojea Quintana, Secretary, International Cooperation and Coordination Secretariat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship
- Luis Franganillo, Chief Advisor to the Secretary of International Cooperation and Coordination, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship
- Pedro Avalos, Project General Coordinator, International Cooperation and Coordination Secretariat, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship
- Julia Levy, National Director for International Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship
- Florencio Aníbal Randazzo, Minister of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior
- Marcio Barbosa, Secretary of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior
- Emilio Pereyra Iraola, Advisor to the National Director, National Civil Registry, Ministry of the Interior
- Mora Arqueta, National Director, National Civil Registry, Ministry of the Interior
- Juan Carlos Tedesco, Minister of Education, Ministry of Education
- Juan Manuel Abal Medina, Cabinet and Public Management Secretary, Chief of Cabinet Ministry
- Pamela Nilus, Director, Strengthening of Democracy, Chief of Cabinet Ministry
- Marta A. Oyhanarte, Under-secretariat for Institutional Reform, Chief of Cabinet Ministry
- Marcela Lacueva Barragán, Coordinator of the Project “Building Bridges”, Citizens’ Audit Programme, Under-secretariat for Institutional Reform, Chief of Cabinet Ministry
- Fernando Jaime, Coordinator, Cabinet and Public Management Secretariat, Chief of Cabinet Ministry
- José Maria Musmeci, Under-secretary for Planning and Environmental Policies, The Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat
- Antonio De Nichilo, General Coordinator, Project on Marine Biodiversity, The Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat
- Marcelo Morando, Technical Coordinator, Project on Desertification Control in Patagonia, The Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat
- Sergio Mario la Rocca, Coordinator, Unit for the Management of Native Forests and their Biodiversity, The Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat
- Laura Lucia Belfer, Coordinator, Project on Coastal Pollution, The Environment and Sustainable Development Secretariat
- Mario Daniel Arce, Management Coordinator, Ministry of Defense and Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces
- Ruben Oscar Barros, Head of Environmental Safety Department, Environmental Protection Directorate Safety Bureau, Argentine Coast Guard
- Enrique Deibe, Secretary of Employment, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security
- Marta Novick, Under-secretary for Technical Programming and Labour Studies, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security
- Norberto Ciaravino, Chief Advisor to Minister, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security

- Héctor Palomino, Director, Studies on Labour Relations, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security
- Martín Pablo Abeles, Economic Policy Secretary, Ministry of Economy
- Aldo Rosenberg, Director, Automated Systems, Ministry of Economy
- Gabriela Gallarati, Advisor, Legal and Technical Secretariat, Ministry of Economy
- Aldo Ferrer, Former Finance Minister, Ministry of Economy
- Roberto Lavagna, Former Finance Minister, Ministry of Economy
- Jorge Carreras, Deputy Manager for Research, Argentine Central Bank
- Martín Grass, Under-secretary for Human Rights Promotion, Human Rights Secretariat, Ministry of Justice, Security and Human Rights
- Gustavo F. Bianchi, Advisor, Human Rights Secretariat, Ministry of Justice, Security and Human Rights
- Matilde Morales, Executive Secretary, National Council for Social Policy Coordination – The President’s Office
- Luis Di Pietro, Coordinator, Project on Millennium Development Goals, National Council for Social Policy Coordination, The President’s Office
- Víctor Houdin, Operational Director, National Programme for Food Security, Ministry of Social Development
- Miriam Rangone, General Coordinator, Project to Support Food Policy Management, Ministry of Social Development
- Liliana Paredes de Periotti, Under-secretary, Food Policies, Ministry of Social Development
- Carlos Daniel Castagneto, Secretary, Institutional Monitoring and Coordination, Ministry of Social Development
- Graciela Oporto, Under-secretary, Territorial Planning for Public Investment, Ministry of Federal Planning, Public Investments and Services
- Jorge Fernández Bussy, General Coordinator, National Programme to Prevent and Reduce Risks and Disasters and to favour Territorial Development, Under-secretariat of Territorial Planning for Public Investment
- Ministry of Federal Planning, Public Investments and Services
- Juan Pablo Cafiero, Former Minister, the President’s Representative at the Dialogue Table and currently Argentine Ambassador to the Vatican, Ministry of Social Development / Secretariat of Minister’s Cabinet
- Daniel Arroyo, Minister, Ministry of Social Development, Buenos Aires Province
- Mariana Maza, General Coordinator, Project for the Secretariat’s Technological Streamlining, Under-secretariat for Public Revenue, Buenos Aires Province
- Victoria Rubbini, Advisor, Archives General Manager’s Office, Under-secretariat for Public Revenue, Buenos Aires Province
- Monseñor Jorge Casaretto, Bishop of San Isidro and former president, CARITAS
- Cristina Calvo, Regional Coordinator, CARITAS
- Daniel Pomerantz, Executive Director, AMIA
- Raul Beate, Former Chairman, Youth Christian Association
- Roberto Frenkel, Researcher CEDES, University of Buenos Aires
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Annex 3

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