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**Contents**

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction .....	1	2
Situation analysis .....	2-6	2
Past cooperation and lessons learned .....	7-9	3
Proposed programme .....	10-17	4
Programme management, monitoring and evaluation .....	18-23	6
<b>Annex</b>		
Results and resources framework for Benin .....		8



## Introduction

1. This document contains the 2009-2013 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) draft country programme for Benin. It was drafted together with the Government on the basis of an ongoing dialogue with national and international partners and other entities of the United Nations system. It follows the main guidelines of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Benin, which is aimed at helping to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

### I. Situation analysis

2. Benin is a West African country with a surface area of 115,762 km<sup>2</sup>. The average annual growth rate of its population — estimated at 8,053,690 inhabitants in 2007 — is 3.25 per cent. Nearly 48 per cent of the population is under 16 years of age, and life expectancy at birth is 56.9 years. Since 1991, Benin has made macroeconomic progress, including an average economic growth rate of 5 per cent between 1991 and 2002. However, between 2003 and 2005, that growth rate barely exceeded 3 per cent per year owing to external and internal factors (cotton, energy, ports and public financial management).

3. Despite this economic performance, poverty has increased. In 2006, 37.4 per cent of Beninese nationals lived below the poverty line versus 28.5 per cent in 2002. This poverty rate is more pronounced in rural areas, where it has increased from 31.6 per cent in 2002 to 40.6 per cent in 2006. The incidence of poverty jumped from 10.9 per cent in 2002 to 13.8 per cent in 2006; in rural areas, the increase was even greater (11 per cent in 2002 and 14 per cent in 2006). This situation is largely a result of modest economic growth, unequal income distribution and the lack of diversification in an economy where cotton predominates. Lastly, it is the result of limited access to productive and energy resources, especially in rural areas.

4. Analysis of social indicators shows that the situation remains challenging: (i) 22.6 per cent of children are still underweight; (ii) although the overall primary school enrolment rate was 96 per cent in 2005/2006, girls lagged behind boys by 18.7 points; (iii) maternal and infant mortality rates continued to decline but remained high, reaching, respectively, 397 and 125 per 1,000 live births in 2006; (iv) more than half of Beninese nationals lack access to drinking water and two thirds do not have toilets; and (v) the labour market is characterized by significant underemployment, as 95 per cent of the economically active population is engaged in precarious work in the informal sector; young persons constitute the segment hardest hit by this form of underemployment. This challenging situation is reflected by the low human development index of 0.437 in 2005, earning Benin the rank of 163rd out of 177. UNDP has strengthened national capacities with respect to needs assessments for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and Goals-based planning.

5. As was shown by the country review report of the Republic of Benin under the African Peer Review Mechanism, this situation can be explained in part by problems of governance, in both economic areas (corruption, impunity, inefficient public resource management and poor coordination of interventions with partners) and political areas (low level of participation, slow implementation of the

decentralization process, breaches of accountability, a surfeit of political parties and a weak electoral system). Other problems hinder the achievement of the Goals: (i) insufficient capacity for planning, implementation of development programmes and results-based monitoring and evaluation; and (ii) delays in the implementation of administrative and institutional reform.

6. To overcome these constraints the Government has resolved to take up the challenge of fostering growth and achieving the Goals, as clearly stated in the Strategic Development Guidelines established within the framework of its *Stratégie de Croissance pour la Réduction de la Pauvreté* Poverty Reduction and Growth strategy (SCRPG), which takes into account a review of the Goals. The Government hopes to lay the basis between now and 2011 for Benin to become an emerging economy by 2025, and to strengthen governance.

## II. Past cooperation and lessons learned

7. The various UNDP activities in Benin during the 2004-2008 period have focused on three areas: (i) combating poverty; (ii) good governance and strengthening democracy and (iii) combating HIV/AIDS. The main thrust of these activities has been: (i) support for the incipient decentralization process, in partnership with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), by strengthening planning and community management capacities, establishing social and economic infrastructures and increasing the income of vulnerable groups by offering them access to credit; (ii) environmental management by assessing the vulnerability of populations and ecosystems and identifying strategic areas for adaptation to climate change; (iii) support for the organization of (presidential and legislative) elections and support for the National Assembly; and (iv) combating HIV/AIDS by supporting the management of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and establishing a federative network of associations of persons affected by HIV/AIDS.

8. The 2006 midterm review of the country programme action plan has made it possible to take stock of the difficulties and weaknesses relating to: (i) the fragmentation of activities into a vast number of minor projects; (ii) the failure to establish clear synergies among the various components of the programme; (iii) the ineffectiveness of the framework for mobilizing resources, which focuses largely on the development of one-off partnerships (Global Fund, elections) without cultivating sustainable links to other strategic activities of the programme; (iv) unimpressive results of joint development projects with other United Nations entities; (v) insufficient capacity of some national agencies to implement results-based management projects; and (vi) the lack of an effective framework for monitoring and evaluation and failure to document lessons learned. To deal with this situation, the UNDP Regional Bureau refocused its efforts in 2006 on combating poverty, promoting good governance and protecting the environment, while taking into account gender equality and HIV/AIDS in a cross-cutting manner. This shift in position has made it possible to concentrate on the emerging needs of Benin and the Bureau strategy, which are taken into account in this draft country programme, as well as the final Assessment of Development Results of the 2004-2008 country programme under way.

9. Scarce basic resources must be used strategically by channelling assistance into areas in which UNDP has proven experience. This has made it possible to target interventions by consolidating projects along a few lines, and to provide better support for key Government projects while building capacity to implement pro-poor policies. Measures taken include: (i) adopting a strategic role in development policies (Strategic Development Guidelines, a Goals-based Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy) and an advocacy paper to mobilize resources for the financing of the Goals; (ii) the building capacity of civil society to ensure that the concerns of local communities are more fully reflected in policies; (iii) developing the idea of cooperative governance; and (iv) implementing the African Peer Review Mechanism. UNDP has entered into a partnership with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Millennium Challenge Corporation in order to spur job creation for young persons and women through private-sector development of agricultural growth industries and pro-poor investment. This programme will capitalize on the lessons learned from this change in position, consolidate and expand on efforts to introduce public policies to promote the Goals and strengthen governance.

### **III. Proposed programme**

10. To bolster Benin's efforts to accelerate growth and achieve the MDGs, this programme is taken directly from the 2009-2013 UNDAF and seeks to realize two of the three outcomes established by the United Nations system. On the basis of the UNDP strategic plan, 2008-2011, and lessons learned from the implementation of the Assistance Framework for the 2004-2008 period, the goals of this programme are as follows: (i) combating poverty by continuing to advise the Government in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Goals-based Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy, acceleration of growth in rural areas and the promotion of decent employment; and (ii) the promotion of good governance and participatory development. As is stated in the 2009-2013 UNDAF, gender equality and environmental issues will be considered in a cross-cutting and comprehensive manner in all UNDP initiatives. With respect to environmental protection, the programme will give particular attention to building the capacities of communities to mitigate the impact of climate change on the living conditions of rural populations and ensure the sustainability of rural development efforts. UNDP will also help the national and local authorities to build their capacities in the area of crisis and natural disaster prevention and management.

#### **3.1 Poverty reduction and sustainable development**

11. **Support and advice in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy.** In view of its strategic role in drafting planning documents (a vision of an emerging economy in Benin, the Strategic Development Guidelines and Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy), UNDP will continue to provide support and advice in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Strategy and the Secretary-General's initiative to accelerate the implementation of the Goals in Benin.

12. **Increase in income and the creation of decent employment.** A study of the prospects for an emerging economy in Benin had identified the agricultural sector as an important area for growth acceleration and its equitable distribution, which was confirmed by the Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy. This led to UNDP collaboration with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and Millennium Challenge Corporation to strengthen the role of agriculture in public policies by implementing the reforms necessary for the development of the agricultural growth industries. By developing this partnership, UNDP seeks to promote decent employment and to increase the income of poor segments of the population, particularly young persons and women, and encourage the creation of agricultural and non-agricultural enterprises. It will do so mainly by promoting institutional reform, including reform of rural land ownership, and establishing partnerships between the private and public sectors which could promote and professionalize microenterprises and small rural business and the running of markets at all levels of society, especially young persons and women. Support and assistance will be provided for training in order to improve productivity and the quality and competitiveness of products and develop exports with the support of the Songhai Centre.

13. **Capacity-building of communes in combating poverty.** UNDP will build on the achievements of its partnership with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) which has made communal institutions an instrument for poverty reduction. The local programming system has opened up vast opportunities for investment and capacity-building for all local development partners. UNDP and UNCDF will continue to make efforts to increase the resource mobilization capacities of communes for the implementation of communal development plans by emphasizing the development of capacities and ownership and leadership by stakeholders of the essential local development processes.

14. **Adaptation of local practices to climate change.** The programme will ensure the necessary advocacy and dialogue for providing assistance in drawing up community support strategies and implementing technologies for adaptation to the impact of climate change. These measures will be coupled with the promotion and facilitation of access by the most vulnerable segments of the population to energy services and the development of rural land ownership plans for the protection and sustainable management of lands.

### 3.2 Promotion of good governance and participatory development

15. **Development of capacities for administrative and economic governance.** In accordance with the recommendations of the African Peer Review Mechanism, UNDP will support the Government in guiding administrative and institutional reform. Within the framework of the implementation of development policies, it will assist in the evaluation of the national capacities of the State and of the various players and the development of responses. This process will affect Goals-based planning and programming, and the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes. Within this framework, gender equality and human rights will be emphasized in programming and budgeting. As absorptive capacity is limited, measures will be taken to find solutions which ensure the effective and transparent implementation of programmes and projects with a view to accelerating the achievement of the Goals. These measures will be carried out urgently by five

ministries (Education, Health, Agriculture, Infrastructure, Water) pending the completion of administrative and institutional reform. This capacity-building will be bolstered by improved systems of public works procurement, monitoring and evaluation, and coordination of assistance, taking into account HIV/AIDS, and by reliable and coherent statistics.

16. **Democracy-building.** To ensure that the implementation of public policies is in compliance with laws and procedures and that these policies contribute to the achievement of the Goals, UNDP will, in accordance with the recommendations of the African Peer Review Mechanism evaluation, step up its efforts to build the Parliament's capacity to draft and interpret legislation and monitor Government action. To improve governance in public administration, the oversight capacity of the Office of the Inspector-General for Public Service and Employment will be strengthened. To enhance the obligation of the Government to account to the public for its actions, UNDP will strengthen the capacities of civil society organizations to monitor public policies, including through a social audit of the budget. Cooperative governance will provide the framework for implementing these measures, and its principles will be promoted.

17. **Crisis prevention and management.** Beyond its policies relating to climate change adaptation, UNDP, together with other entities of the United Nations system, will contribute to improving environmental governance by strengthening national capacities to manage crises and natural disasters in order to mitigate their impact on the most disadvantaged segments of society.

## **IV. Programme management, monitoring and evaluation**

### **4.1 Programme management**

18. National execution will remain the preferred modality. Other options include direct execution by UNDP, execution by agencies cooperating with the United Nations system and management by non-governmental organizations. The harmonized approach to cash transfer will make it possible to identify the most appropriate transfer modality. UNDP will use these modalities to develop capacities in the spirit of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Moreover, it will use the United Nations Volunteers, whose support is extremely cost-effective. UNDP will also draw on South-South cooperation resources.

### **4.2 Risks**

19. During the past decade, the development process was often undermined by corruption, resistance to change, cumbersome administrative procedures, regional competition, natural disasters, high turnover of managers, a strongly politicized administration, resistance to the implementation of structural reforms, the lack of an entrepreneurial culture, failure to comply with standards of integrity, ethics or professional conduct, the existence of various catalysts of reform, institutional duplication and repeated strikes. The success of the present programme will depend on the efforts and sacrifices made by all stakeholders for the development of the country to lay the basis for Benin to become an emerging economy by 2020.

Consequently, a risk management plan will be proposed when the country programme action plan is drafted.

### **4.3 Monitoring and evaluation of the programme**

20. The national monitoring and evaluation mechanisms of the Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy and UNDAF — which constitute the framework for monitoring and evaluating the present programme — will be strengthened. An ex ante baseline study will be conducted before the programme is launched. Within the framework of monitoring and evaluation, and with a view to facilitating the monitoring of the Goals, UNDP will work with other United Nations entities to support the development of a national statistics system, including the BenInfo database.

21. Annual reviews of the country programme will be conducted jointly with other entities of the United Nations system. They will be the subject of results-based annual reports. In-depth reviews will be conducted in accordance with the evaluation plan of the country-programme outline annexed to this document.

22. The annual audits of projects and programmes will continue to be systematic and mandatory. The financial monitoring of the programme will be conducted under the sliding three-year core resources plan and the results and resources framework.

### **4.4 Partnership and resource mobilization strategies**

23. The global strategy for the new programme will be based on concerted and coordinated management with a view to enhancing the synergy among interventions and will depend on the efforts of the Government, local communities, UNDP and other development partners. Within this framework, joint projects and strategic partnerships with other United Nations entities, IFAD, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the African Development Bank and the European Union will be put in place in the areas of poverty eradication in rural areas and capacity-building for the implementation of development programmes. These measures will be complemented by a stronger partnership with the Bretton Woods institutions within the framework of implementing the Secretary-General's initiative on the Millennium Development Goals in Africa. UNDP interventions will be harmonized with those of other partners through nationally established coordination mechanisms. Moreover, partnership with civil society organizations will be strengthened within the framework of monitoring the Goals (Social Watch) and citizen oversight through cooperative governance. Collaboration with the media will also be given priority in the implementation of this programme.

## Annex

## Results and resources framework for Benin, 2009-2013

<i>Country programme outcomes</i>	<i>Programme outputs</i>	<i>2013 indicators, baselines and targets</i>	<i>Roles of partners</i>	<i>Resources (in thousands of dollars)</i>
<b>National priority: Promotion of economic revitalization</b>				
<b>UNDAF outcome 1:</b> By 2013 the most disadvantaged sections of the population, including young persons and women, will have increased employment opportunities and income-generating activities and greater food security				
<b>Poverty reduction through faster rural growth and the promotion of decent employment</b>				
1. The Government improves and operationalizes strategic frameworks and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the five key Millennium Development Goal sectors (agriculture, education, health, water and infrastructure).	1.1 The strategies for the five priority MDG sectors are operational. 1.2 The monitoring and evaluation reports are available during the annual review of the Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy.	<b>Indicators:</b> 1.1.1 Number of sectoral strategies. 1.2.1 Number of annual reports. <b>Baseline:</b> 1.1.1 No strategy. 1.2.1 Inappropriate reports. <b>Targets:</b> 1.1.1 5 Available sectoral strategies. 1.2.1 Annual reports based on the indicators set out in the sectoral strategies.	UNICEF, UNFPA (technical and financial support), WHO, FAO, UNAIDS, IMF (technical support), World Bank (financial support), Social Watch (technical support, advocacy, awareness campaigns).	TRAC* 1 and 2: 1 000  Other: 874
2. Disadvantaged sectors of the population, including young persons and women, have better access to financial services, markets and relevant technologies with a view to the creation of decent employment through the promotion of entrepreneurship in rural areas and development of the agricultural sector.	2.1 Sustainable financing opportunities are increased. 2.2 The national food industry development strategy is available. 2.3 Support programmes to increase investment under public/private partnerships take effect. 2.4 State employment agencies have sufficient resources and improve their services for young persons and women.	<b>Indicators:</b> 2.1.1 Percentage of young persons and women in rural areas with access to credit and public subsidies within the framework of the programme. 2.2.1 Availability of the national rural investment strategy paper. 2.3.1 Number of programmes developed. 2.4.1: Number of organizations supported. <b>Baseline:</b> 2.1.1: 10%. 2.2.1: Strategy not available. 2.3.1 No programme. 2.4.1: One organization is supported.	Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), CTB, Netherlands, Millennium Challenge Corporation, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (financial support), Benin Chamber of Commerce and Industry, FAO, Songhai Centre (technical support),	TRAC 1 and 2: 2 000  Other: 8 874
* TRAC — target for resource assignment from the core.				

Country programme outcomes	Programme outputs	2013 indicators, baselines and targets	Roles of partners	Resources (in thousands of dollars)
		<b>Targets:</b> 2.1.1: 30%. 2.2.1: Available strategy and implementation. 2.3.1: Support programme for at least three sectors. 2.4.1: Four organizations supported.	IFAD, West African Development Bank, World Bank (financial and technical support).	
3. Local communities have the resources and skills necessary for sustainable development.	3.1 Local communities plan for and mobilize resources by implementing, monitoring and evaluating local development strategies and action plans.	<b>Indicators:</b> 3.1.1 Percentage of communes of the UNDP/UNCDF intervention areas with communal development plans (PDC) and budgets in accordance with a human rights and gender equality approach. <b>Baseline:</b> 3.1.1 0% <b>Target:</b> 3.1.1: 100%	UNCDF, CTB, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Fond belge de survie (financial support), European Union (technical and financial assistance).	TRAC 1 and 2: 1 500  Other: 3 874
4. Poor populations and vulnerable groups enhance their food security and their right to food is guaranteed.	4.1 Local governments, communities and households have adequate capacity to promote the food and nutritional security of vulnerable groups.	<b>Indicators:</b> 4.1.1 Number of communes which benefit from the programme. <b>Baseline:</b> 4.1.1 44 in 2006. <b>Target:</b> 4.1.1: 64	DANIDA, CTB, IFAD (financial support), FAO, GTZ (technical support), Coopération française (technical and financial support).	TRAC 1 and 2: 500  Other: 791
<b>Environment and climate change</b>				
5. The capacities of local communities are developed with a view to protecting the environment and better adapting to climate change.	5.1 Strategies and techniques to adapt to the impact of climate change on water resources in dry zones and humid regions are developed and implemented. 5.2 Vulnerable populations have increased access to renewable sources of energy.	<b>Indicators:</b> 5.1.1 Number of strategies updated or developed; rate of crop loss from climate change. 5.2.2 Proportion of households supported which use renewable sources of energy. <b>Baseline:</b> 5.1.1 no strategy; 35%. 5.2.1 1%. <b>Targets:</b> 5.1.1: 20%. 5.2.1: 20%.	German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), UNCDF, Wetlands International (technical support), Global Environment Facility (GEF) (financial support).	TRAC 1 and 2: 1 000  Other: 8 633

<i>Country programme outcomes</i>	<i>Programme outputs</i>	<i>2013 indicators, baselines and targets</i>	<i>Roles of partners</i>	<i>Resources (in thousands of dollars)</i>
<b>National priorities: Rebuilding public administration and promoting good governance</b>				
<b>UNDAF outcome 3:</b> By 2013 public institutions, local governments and civil society will abide more by the rules of good governance and better manage crises and natural disasters				
<b>Promotion of good governance and participatory development</b>				
<p>6. The Government improves its management of public policies by the implementation of recommendations of the African Peer Review Mechanism, particularly within the framework of administrative reform, the advancement of women and strategic reference frameworks (MDGs, Strategic Development Guidelines, Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy).</p>	<p>6.1 Administrative reform is in effect. 6.2 The Government has the capacity for planning, programming, monitoring and evaluating the growth and poverty reduction strategy and coordinating public assistance. 6.3 Special measures to improve the capacity for incorporation of the Goals in the five key ministries are operational. 6.4 Participation of women in decision-making bodies increases.</p>	<p><b>Indicators:</b> 6.1.1 The comprehensive reform strategy and the organizational frameworks for each ministry are available. 6.2.1 Capacities of programming and planning divisions (DPP) are developed. 6.3.1 The resource absorption rate increases. 6.4.1 % of women in various bodies. <b>Baseline:</b> 6.1.1 Diagnostic study under way. 6.2.1 Very low DPP capacity. 6.3.1: 60%. 6.4.1: 20%/9% (Parliament). <b>Targets:</b> 6.1.1: The strategy and organizational frameworks are available. 6.2.1: The strategies and reports on programming and monitoring and evaluation of budgets are produced in a timely manner by the Division of Programming and Planning. 6.3.1: 100%. 6.4.1: 30% (Government/Parliament).</p>	<p>DANIDA, Netherlands, World Bank, African Development Bank (Financial support)</p> <p>Coopération Française, Africa Capacity-Building Foundation, Canadian International Development Agency (technical assistance).</p>	<p>TRAC 1 and 2: 3 000</p> <p>Other: 7 748</p>

<i>Country programme outcomes</i>	<i>Programme outputs</i>	<i>2013 indicators, baselines and targets</i>	<i>Roles of partners</i>	<i>Resources (in thousands of dollars)</i>
7. The Parliament and Inspectorate General of Public Service and Employment carry out their missions effectively.	7.1 Legislative texts are drafted and voted on in a timely manner. 7.2 Public services and employment are better monitored and the results published.	<b>Indicators:</b> 7.1.1 Number of regulations voted on by the legislature. 7.2.1 Reports produced and published each year. <b>Baseline:</b> 7.1.: 1; 7.2.1: no report. 7.2.1: 1. <b>Targets:</b> 7.1.1: 3. 7.2.1: annual report starting 2010.	Netherlands, World Bank, European Union (financial support), ACBF, International Labour Office (technical support), Canadian International Development Agency (technical and financial assistance).	TRAC 1 and 2: 700 Other: 1 158
8. Real participation of the population and civil society organizations in decision-making and public administration is increased through a cooperative governance mechanism.	8.1 The capacities of civil society organizations are strengthened. 8.2 The recommendations set forth at meetings are translated into action plans.	<b>Indicators:</b> 8.1.1: Number of civil society organizations which have participated in meetings. 8.2.1: percentage of recommendations translated into action plans and implemented. <b>Baseline:</b> 8.1.10 recommendations of forums do not produce results. 8.2.1: 4 organized meetings. <b>Targets:</b> 8.1.1: 50%.	Social Watch, OLC (technical assistance), Netherlands, European Union (financial assistance).	TRAC 1 and 2: 750 Other: 2 437
<b>Crisis and natural disaster management</b>				
9. The capacities of the Government and local communities are strengthened with a view to enhanced crisis and natural disaster prevention and management.	9.1 An institutional framework and effective coordination mechanism exist. 9.2 The national disaster preparedness and response plan is updated and officials are familiar with it.	<b>Indicators:</b> 9.1.1: Amendment of the decree on the institutional framework and coordination mechanism. 9.2.1: Emergency plan is brought up to date. <b>Baseline:</b> 9.1.1: Frame of reference is cumbersome and non-operational. 9.2.1: Existence of a national disaster preparedness and emergency response plan. <b>Targets:</b> 9.1.1: Decree amended and published; 9.2.1: The plan is updated and made operational and at least 5% of the population has a good understanding of the risks of disasters and the appropriate attitudes to take.	DDC (technical assistance), World Bank, GEF (financial support).	TRAC 1 and 2: 839 TRAC 3: 2 000 Other: 2 488