

BULLETIN

United Nations Development Programme
Washington Liaison Office



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The UNDP Washington Bulletin is a regular update by the Washington Office of UNDP activities and events. We invite you to share the Bulletin with interested colleagues.

METS, RED SOX, UNDP HIT HOME RUN FOR THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

This past summer 2004 World Series champions David Ortiz, Manny Ramirez and Pedro Martinez were reunited at Boston's Fenway Park to celebrate another triumph: their generous support to UNDP's relief and recovery efforts in the Dominican Republic in the aftermath of devastating floods in Jimaní.

Fans at the sold-out stadium joined Dominican Ambassador Flavio Dario Espinal in saluting the Dominican superstars, Boston Red Sox principal owner John Henry, and the team's charitable foundation. The crowd roared when Ortiz and Ramirez embraced their former teammate Martinez, now pitching for the New York Mets, in a ceremony at home plate before the game. They cheered even louder after viewing a video of thanks from the people of Jimaní.

In May of 2004, torrential rains in the Dominican Republic caused catastrophic flooding of the River Blanco. Jimaní, a town of 5,800 in the country's mountainous southwest, was inundated by raging waters. More than 700 people perished; roads were swept away and telecommunications connections destroyed.

UNDP immediately launched its emergency response to the disaster in Jimaní and other flood-ravaged areas of the Dominican Republic and neighboring Haiti, working with the government and civil society to provide short-term relief and begin recovery. After helping organize rescue operations in the hours and days after the floods, UNDP provided financial assistance and counseling to victims and began the task of rebuilding Jimaní.

As UNDP went to work, it secured the help of new partners: the Red Sox.

Sluggers Ortiz and Ramírez and ace pitcher Martínez responded to news of the floods with donations, rallying their teammates, ball club and fans to pitch in. The result: More than \$200,000 in funding was donated to the U.S. Committee for UNDP. UNDP and its local partners put the money to work, supporting the construction of 50 new homes in the first phase of the Jimaní project. These residences have kitchens, dining areas, bathrooms and back porches – and innovative architecture designed to withstand future flash flooding. In addition, the government has built entirely new roads, power lines and sewage systems for the rebuilt village.

For more information, including video from the Jimaní project and the Fenway Park ceremony, click [here](#).

AS MICROFINANCE CAPTURES GLOBAL ATTENTION, UNDP TAKES IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

This month, attention resulting from Professor Muhammad Yunus' receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize has put microfinance in the spotlight as a successful poverty-fighting model and highlighted the link among poverty, peace, and security.

Microfinance is one tool of many that UNDP uses to engage the private sector to help create economic growth, jobs, and increased incomes in the developing world. Following up on the success of its landmark publication *Unleashing Entrepreneurship*, UNDP is acting on the report's findings and recommendations.

Within microfinance, UNDP works closely with the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), an independent fund closely affiliated with UNDP and a recognized UN center of technical expertise for microfinance. UNCDF focuses its microfinance work on helping developing countries build more inclusive financial sectors. This means expanding access of poor households and micro and small enterprises to a full range of financial services (savings, short and long-term credit, mortgages, insurance, pensions, remittances, and leasing).

In Sierra Leone, for example, UNCDF and UNDP, together with KfW (Germany) and Cordaid (Netherlands) have launched a \$10.3 million program that invests in a variety of local financial service providers. The service providers supported by the program have already nearly tripled their number of active clients.

At the global level, UNDP together with UNCDF and the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs has recently established a high-level UN Advisors Group on Inclusive Financial Sectors. The group -- consisting of experts from government, Central Banks, regulatory agencies, microfinance institutions, the private sector, civil society, development agencies, donors, and academia -- guides the UN on issues related to inclusive finance.

UNDP's Unleashing Entrepreneurship: Making Business Work for the Poor, was presented in March of 2004 to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan by then Prime Minister Paul Martin of Canada and Ernesto Zedillo, Director of the Yale Center for the Study of Globalization and former President of Mexico. Access the report [here](#). Of additional interest is the UN's [Building Inclusive Financial Sectors for Development](#), launched in January of this year.

UNDP ADMINISTRATOR, KEMAL DERVIŞ, ON THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY

Excerpts from Derviş' statement on October 17th follow:

"The theme for the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2006 signals that eradicating poverty requires a collective commitment to address the diverse dimensions of poverty... There is real progress towards this objective. Current long-term forecasts suggest that extreme poverty would be almost eliminated by 2015 in Central Asia, Europe, and the Pacific regions. All regions are expected to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of reducing poverty by 50 percent from its 1990 level - with the notable exception of sub-Saharan Africa. In many parts of East Asia, the target has already been achieved.

However, significant challenges remain. Notwithstanding the inroads that are expected, projections suggest that by 2015 about one-third of the world's population would still be living at or below US\$2 per

day. And in sub-Saharan Africa, some 38 percent of the population is projected to still be living in extreme poverty by 2015, with the absolute number of people living in poverty anticipated to increase by 30 million...

Thus, it is important to greatly improve economic growth, especially in Africa. But growth alone will not eradicate poverty. The pattern and sources of growth, as well as the manner in which its benefits are distributed, are vitally important for poverty reduction. Income distribution affects the effectiveness of growth in being able to lift people out of poverty. And broader economic performance considerations, such as the ability to generate productive and remunerative employment, also determine the extent to which economic growth can be pro-poor.

This complex process, involving many actors, is what makes working in partnership so crucial for poverty reduction. Governments in developing and developed countries, working together and with the private sector and civil society, all bear some responsibility not only in promoting economic growth, but in ensuring that growth is pro-poor...

Today we are all reminded of our common humanity and our common commitment, as encapsulated in the MDGs, to continue the fight against poverty and promote equitable global development.”

Follow this [link](#) to access the full statement.

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UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.

For additional information on the above news, please contact communications officer Cara Santos Pianesi at **UNDP's Washington Office** at 202.331.9130 or cara.santos@undp.org.

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