

# 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.*

## **SPECIAL EDITION: UNDP ROUND-UP 2006 MEETING CHALLENGES, CREATING OPPORTUNITIES**

UNDP is the UN's global development network, on the ground in 166 countries. Our focus is helping countries build and share solutions to the challenges of democratic governance, poverty reduction, crisis prevention and recovery, energy and the environment, and HIV/AIDS. In these activities, we encourage the protection of human rights, the empowerment of women, and an active role for the private sector.

As we enter the new year, we'd like to take this opportunity to review UNDP's work from 2006.

UNDP's 2006 edition of our flagship [Human Development Report](#) highlighted the global water crisis as well as the annual Human Development Index.

Our recently-released [Arab Human Development Report](#), discussed gender inequality in the Arab world. This report is the final volume in a four-part series that has made a significant contribution to the debate on the development challenges facing Arab societies.

**Some highlights from UNDP's work in countries of interest follow. We will keep you abreast of developments into 2007.**

### **AFGHANISTAN**

Since November 2001, UNDP has played a central role with the UN system and donors to coordinate support for Afghanistan. To aid the implementation of the Bonn Peace Process, UNDP set up the Afghan Interim Authority Fund -- an innovatively flexible mechanism for quick resource mobilization, disbursement, and initial institution building. This fund paid for the emergency Loya Jirga, the traditional Afghan Grand Council that UNDP helped to convene. UNDP also helped the Afghan Interim Authority set itself up; resuscitate the national civil service as well as the police force; draft a new constitution; hold three successful elections; and establish a new Afghan National Assembly.

UNDP remains highly engaged in Afghanistan. Since the Bonn Agreement was signed, UNDP has delivered close to \$1 billion of assistance to Afghanistan. Guided by the Interim Afghanistan's National Development Strategy, UNDP focuses its activities on crisis prevention and recovery, democratic governance, and poverty reduction.

UNDP established the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan to cover police costs during the transition period. The project began its fourth phase last April and is expected to ensure payment of police salaries in all 34 provinces.

Launched by UNDP in 2005, the Anti-Personnel Mine and Ammunition Stockpile Destruction Project continues its work to ensure that ammunition safe to be moved is transported to secure storage facilities while the remainder is destroyed. Since the implementation of the project, more than 1,130 caches of ammunition have been surveyed, 189,163 landmines and over 12,475 anti-tank mines have been destroyed.

In October, UNDP supported the launch of the Alice-Ghan Project, largely designed by the Afghan Ministry of Urban Development and Housing and the Ministry of Refugees and Repatriates. UNDP manages the project to construct approximately 1,400 houses for landless Afghan returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) north of Kabul, and to assist urban poverty reduction.

UNDP's Counter Narcotics Trust Fund started three new projects to benefit 12 provinces in Afghanistan -- creating alternative livelihoods to opium production and increasing agricultural production. A Honey Bee Farming Project; a Gardens, Forests and Small Dams Project, and a Silk Worm Industrial Project will provide considerable employment to local communities and provide support for many farmers.

## **DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)**

UNDP supported parliamentary and presidential elections in the DRC; this was the largest and most complex UN electoral assistance mission ever undertaken. In preparation for voting, UNDP and its partners carried out civic education around the country -- of particular importance to citizens as they faced their first democratic elections. UNDP also taught electoral procedures to approximately 264,000 electoral workers -- 160 national trainers, 1,700 provincial trainers, 11,800 polling station supervisors and 250,000 polling station workers.

In July, UNDP helped the Congolese distribute 30 million ballots and election supplies to around 50,000 polling stations in a country the size of Western Europe, with few functioning roads or other infrastructure. This major endeavor had to be repeated for the October run-off elections.

The October presidential run-off was the culmination of a process which saw the DRC register 25.7 million voters, adopt a new constitution by referendum in December 2005, and conclude the first round of national elections -- with voters narrowing down a field of 33 presidential contenders and selecting a parliament. With an estimated budget of \$432 million, the DRC elections constituted the largest and most complex UN electoral-assistance mission ever undertaken, a joint initiative of UNDP and the UN Organization Mission in the DRC. UNDP managed a budget of more than \$330 million in support of the historic polls.

## **GEORGIA**

As Georgia continues efforts to consolidate democracy, UNDP in 2006 worked to advise the government on economic reforms. Under a region-wide effort to share the experience of successful transition economies, UNDP engaged Former Estonian Prime Minister Laar to serve as senior advisor to the Georgian President; Miroslav Beblavy, a former Slovak Deputy Minister of Labor, also advised on difficult social sector reforms. To provide for informed decision-making, UNDP assisted the Department of Statistics in obtaining an accurate picture of Georgia's informal economy. In addition UNDP provided assistance to the Georgian agency responsible for public administration reform, as well to the Parliament, its subsidiary bodies, and key government institutions. This assistance focused on updating management practices, training staff, modernizing law making, supporting judicial reform, fighting corruption, and improving communication with the public.

Raising public awareness of environmental issues, UNDP assisted the Ministry of Environmental Protection in developing skills for natural resource management, and encouraging the sustainable use of agro-biodiversity. One UNDP project promoted renewable energy with a pilot geothermal hot water supply system; a feasibility study also was prepared on expanding the use of hydro- and geothermal power.

Importantly, working across Georgian borders, UNDP is helping develop a water-basin management system.

UNDP fosters innovative approaches to crisis prevention, early warning, and conflict resolution. In the conflict areas of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, UNDP works with residents to address everyday social and economic problems. UNDP is active in the ethnically mixed region of Samtskhe-Javakheti as well. UNDP supports national reforms that ensure that IDPs receive the same social, legal, and employment rights as those afforded to permanent residents.

## HAITI

The international community has contributed US\$78 million in support of the electoral process in Haiti. In 2006 UNDP managed donors' funds and worked in close cooperation with partners to support historic legislative and presidential elections in February. Local elections, which took place in December, completed this process.

To make this happen, UNDP, together with Haiti's Provisional Electoral Council and the UN peacekeeping operation (MINUSTAH) hired and trained 40,000 poll workers; in addition 5,000 civic agents and 4,000 electoral guards were recruited during the registration and voting phases. About 500 registration offices were opened throughout the country and 3.5 million voters registered -- 60% of whom never had any kind of ID before.

In addition to raising contributions to finance the electoral process, UNDP also facilitated payments, without which the process would not have been able to progress. To prevent delays between donor pledges and actual payments, UNDP agreed to advance the sums promised on behalf of donors.

UN Volunteers, a program administered by UNDP, were also critical in the elections. Stationed in ten Haitian departments, these highly-skilled volunteers from around the world worked closely with the electoral authorities to set up counting centers and gather voting material.

## IRAQ

UNDP staff, based in offices in Jordan and Kuwait, work throughout most of Iraq in the midst of an extremely challenging environment. UNDP activities in the country concentrate on rehabilitation of physical infrastructure; governance, institution building, and civil society; poverty reduction and human development; and mine action.

UNDP administers the UN Development Group Iraq Trust Fund on behalf of itself and other participating UN organizations. This trust fund, along with another administered by the World Bank, was created to help donor nations (including the United States) channel resources and coordinate support for reconstruction and development in Iraq. To date, 25 donors have agreed to contribute funds amounting to just over US\$1 billion to the UNDG Iraq Trust Fund in order to ensure responsive financing for priority investments in the country.

Working on governance, UNDP has strengthened the capacities of the Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation as well as five other ministries. In 2006, UNDP focused on establishing an Aid Coordination Unit and a donor assistance database. With committed donations of almost \$9 billion, this is the largest known database of this kind in the world. UNDP's support has included the provision of technical expertise, hardware, and software for this endeavor.

In 2006 UNDP assisted the Ministry of Municipalities and Public Works through the training of 90 middle managers on modern management skills. We supported local government by building local capacity for strategic planning and decentralization of service delivery. UNDP also helped to train the Board of Supreme Audit of Iraq, the country's independent audit institution: two courses for 54 auditors were conducted over eight weeks last year. In full coordination with the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), UNDP trained 40 senior employees from the human rights and justice ministries in management and public administration and provided key legal texts to develop both ministries' libraries.

UNDP and the International Organization for Migration implemented the Iraqis Rebuilding Iraq project in coordination with the Iraqi Ministry of Planning and Development Cooperation. The project matches Iraqi needs with qualified expatriate Iraqi applicants. These professionals undertake short- and long-term assignments to strengthen the institutional capacity of Iraqi ministries and other public-sector institutions. There are currently 48 experts deployed and 503 applications were received as of the end December 2006.

In collaboration with Reuters Foundation, UNDP created a web-based news exchange called *Aswat al-Iraq*, or *Voices of Iraq* to address the information gap caused by the absence of a national news agency. Employing over 50 reporters countrywide and some 50 photographers, the site currently publishes over 600 news items a month and is a credible source of information for more than 200 media institutions. In 2006, a journalists' handbook, drawn from the wide experience of Reuters staff, was published and made available online.

Within UNAMI, UNDP is the lead agency on poverty alleviation. Its main role is to support the adoption of poverty reduction policies (such as the provision of social safety nets), to revitalize the private sector providing employment and income-generating opportunities, and to offer policy advice. UNDP worked on addressing the complex water issues in Iraq and coordinated with the Ministries of Planning and Development Cooperation as well as the Ministry of Water Resources to establish a National Water Council and an international water conference. During 2006 the UNDP Iraq Reconstruction and Employment Program generated over 300,000 workdays, employed more than 11,000 workers, and streamlined its web and interactive database. UNDP initiated local planning mainly in the deteriorated marshlands to promote local governance and effective service delivery.

Since January 2004, UNDP also has been the lead UN agency supporting mine action in Iraq. UNDP assisted the National Mine Action Authority in creating an indigenous and sustainable mine action program. UNDP helped to develop a national mine action strategy, provided technical advice, funded a senior advisor to the Landmine Impact Survey through the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation, and built the capacity of national NGOs responsible for mine clearance, mine-risk education, and victim assistance.

UNDP's work on health infrastructure, in coordination with the Iraqi Ministry of Health, Ministry of Higher Education, and the World Health Organization, includes the rehabilitation of Al-Kadhimiya Teaching Hospital in Baghdad. This hospital serves a population of approximately 750,000 people and provides essential training to healthcare workers. In addition UNDP has been renovating Umm Qasr Hospital in Basra Governorate.

UNDP has worked with donors and the Iraqi Ministry of Electricity to repair 18 major transmission lines; purchase and deliver 165 diesel generators; rebuild electrical distribution networks in nine major hospitals; purchase mobile substations and large-scale testing equipment; and rehabilitate the National Dispatch Center, Iraq's distribution network, as well as units in four major power plants across the country. UNDP secured additional funds to provide technical assistance to local authorities and central ministry staff, equip them with important safety and testing equipment, and provide electrical teams with tools.

UNDP also works on transportation in Iraq, focusing on waterways management, as well as shipwreck removal, hydrographic, bathymetric, and other surveys. In November, UNDP led a mission of experts to assess Iraq's Civil Aviation infrastructure.

UNDP is working with the Ministry of Public Works and Municipalities to develop and implement plans for potable and wastewater management as well as solid waste disposal; UNDP is also helping to rehabilitate key facilities. Last year UNDP completed electrical work on two lines of the water treatment plant that brings potable water to approximately one million Baghdad residents. We also are focused on bringing water and sanitation to Basra, including the port city of Umm Qasr.

## LEBANON

The summer of 2006 witnessed a devastating war in Lebanon and a severe humanitarian crisis. Building on its strong presence in Lebanon before the conflict, UNDP was called upon to provide added capacity and coordination support for the High Relief Committee (HRC), which is led by Prime Minister Fuad Siniora at Cabinet level and is the national entity leading the response to the humanitarian crisis. UNDP helped the HRC to establish a data management system and a daily situation report. Within one week of the outbreak of the crisis, UNDP procured basic relief supplies from the local market and delivered them directly or in partnership with national NGOs and civil society organizations to the thousands of IDPs who sheltered in Mount Lebanon. After the UN Flash Appeal – and humanitarian convoys to the south were organized, UNDP continued to deliver its remaining stocks of locally-purchased relief supplies to both IDPs and vulnerable population groups who remained under siege. UNDP provided approximately \$500,000 from its own resources to support the humanitarian response. In partnership with the government, UNDP prepared quick-starting and high impact early recovery initiatives, endorsed by the Prime Minister, to be launched after the cessation of hostilities.

Following the cessation of hostilities, a Recovery and Reconstruction Cell was established in the Office of the Prime Minister and attached to the UNDP Policy Advisory Unit. UNDP provided critical support to the Lebanese government in preparing the document presented to the August Stockholm Conference, which marshalled some \$900 million in international aid, almost double the government's expectations. A UN Development Group Multi-Donor Trust Fund was created as a pooled funding mechanism for channeling donor contributions; UNDP is its Administrative Agent.

UNDP's critical early recovery initiatives involved the restoration of key public administration and municipal infrastructure and reactivation of their services, including removal of rubble and debris; repair of access roads; and rehabilitation of public schools, clinics, electricity and water supplies. UNDP provided funds to reactivate the infrastructure and services of 101 municipalities in Southern Lebanon, the four municipalities of Beirut's southern suburb (Dahya), and the Bekaa -- enabling them to assist IDP resettlement.

The bombing of the Jiyeh Power Plant led to 10,000-15,000 tons of fuel oil spilling across 150km of the Lebanese coastline, with serious ramifications on health, biodiversity, fisheries, and tourism. The Lebanese Ministry of Environment, in collaboration with UNDP and other partners, launched a detailed assessment of the affected areas and led a comprehensive clean-up operation. The oil spill and blockade cost an estimated 3,500 fishermen their livelihoods. UNDP quickly disbursed funds to help fishermen associations to repair damaged boats, provide nets and engines, and rebuild the fish market in Ouzzai. Even during the conflict, UNDP initiated a rapid environmental impact assessment in order to develop ready-to-implement recommendations to mitigate impact and undertake recovery with minimal damage.

UNDP Administrator Kemal Derviş addressing heads of states and other delegates at last month's donor conference in Paris, underlined the need for a "speedy, effective recovery process....crucial for Lebanon's human development."

## KOSOVO

Working with the UN Mission in Kosovo and Kosovo's government, UNDP is the implementing agency for the return of IDPs to the territory. By the end of 2006, UNDP had assisted some 12,000 people in nearly 100 locations to restart their lives – by ensuring new livelihoods, including jobs, houses, roads, and other infrastructure. UNDP launched *Dialogue for Kosovo*, a magazine focused on returnee issues, in partnership with the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms. In addition, UNDP helps returnee organizations better manage their role in the effective promotion of return.

On governance, UNDP and the EU established a capacity-building fund for training and technical support to civil servants. UNDP also has increased information flow to citizens on key issues such as local government, decentralization, and anti-corruption measures.

Kosovo's unemployment rate of nearly 50% led UNDP, together with the Minister of Labor and Social Welfare, the local private sector, and other donors, to manage a program to promote employment -- particularly among rural youth.

In December, UNDP introduced a security sector reform report after consultation with representatives of all ethnic groups in Kosovo. This report assesses key threats and identifies institutional arrangements and legal frameworks needed to make Kosovo more secure.

## **PAKISTAN**

In 2006 UNDP Pakistan focused its efforts on helping the country recover from the October 2005 earthquake. As the lead UN agency for early recovery and reconstruction in Pakistan, UNDP responded immediately to provide emergency shelter, rehabilitate primary and health infrastructures, rebuild schools, reopen roads, provide gas and other fuel for heating and cooking needs, and establish close relationships with local partners.

Longer-term UNDP recovery initiatives include technical support for the Pakistani government's Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority; improving donor aid coordination and accountability; soliciting local participation in planning, execution, and monitoring of recovery activities; restoring livelihoods through skills training; and strengthening agriculture through the promotion of fertilizer and higher-yield crops. UNDP's environmental recovery efforts include the disposal of waste from damaged buildings and infrastructures, solid and human waste from temporary shelters, clinical waste associated with the care of approximately 79,000 injured persons, and hazardous materials including agro-chemicals.

**“UNDP remains committed to doing its part to translate the ambitious new partnership for development launched in 2000 into better policies, stronger institutions, and greater resources more effectively deployed -- all with the aim of achieving concrete improvements in the lives of those who need and deserve our strong support.”**

**– UNDP Administrator Kemal Derviş**

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**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](mailto:cara.santos@undp.org).

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