

BULLETIN

United Nations Development Programme
Washington Liaison Office



April 2007

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.

UNDP ADMINISTRATOR: CLIMATE CHANGE IS A DEVELOPMENT ISSUE

Earlier this month, UNDP Administrator Kemal Derviş expressed support for the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Derviş called on governments, donors, and development agencies to better recognize the existing capacities of the developing world to adapt to the challenges of global warming, and to bolster support to those most vulnerable to its damaging immediate effects.

“For many people in the developing world...climate change means drought, famine and the loss of their homes, land, or even their lives,” Derviş said. “These people have been coping ably with the variability of weather patterns for many years. Now, they face a challenge of adaptation they simply cannot deal with alone. With better support from their own governments and from their partners in development, they can and will deal with this challenge.”

The IPCC report, released on April 6th, paints an unsettling picture of the advance of climate change—and its potential harm to the lives of millions. The assessment projects that many millions more people will be threatened by serious flooding every year by the latter part of this century, especially in densely populated, low-lying areas, where adaptive capacity is relatively low, and which already face other challenges such as tropical storms and local coastal sinking.

The assessment states that vulnerability to climate change can be exacerbated by the presence of other stresses like “poverty and unequal access to resources, food insecurity, trends in economic globalization, conflict, and incidence of disease such as HIV/AIDS.” UNDP, which is focusing its annual global Human Development Report later this year on climate change, can support governments’ response to this composite challenge by helping them weave climate-change adaptation integrally into their national development strategies, said Derviş: “Global warming can’t be looked at solely as an environmental issue anymore: It is undoubtedly a threat to human development as a whole. All development strategies must therefore account for climate-related risk.”

Derviş echoed the report’s conclusion that sustainable development can reduce vulnerability to climate change. “Wider distribution of sustainable forms of economic growth will be a powerful ally in our adaptation efforts. It is clear that as societies advance and become more prosperous, they become better able to cope with climate change. As we approach the halfway mark to the 2015 target for the Millennium Development Goals, this is yet another powerful motivation for us to redouble our efforts to foster sustainable development, and to achieve the goals.”

UNDP, the broader UN family, and their partners in development must themselves adapt to effectively address the challenge of climate change, Derviş said. “We need to do more, more effectively, to support

poorer nations and people as they continue to adapt. As we continue the process of UN reform, we will all keep in mind the contents of the IPCC report, and what's at stake in our work: The difference between prosperity and poverty for millions of people who are now suffering from the effects of climate change right now—people in places like Dira Dawa, Ethiopia, where more than 300 people died and 10,000 were made homeless by flash flooding last August induced by the region's heaviest rains on record. Adaptation is a challenge for the development community, too. UNDP is ready to do its job effectively and efficiently to meet the challenge.”

THE ELIMINATION OF LANDMINES ALSO CONCERNS DEVELOPMENT

During this month, the UN General Assembly commemorated the April 4th International Day for Mine Awareness. While many know that landmines remain in the ground for years, often decades, after conflicts cease, killing and maiming 15,000-20,000 people (mostly civilians) annually, how many consider that landmines, cluster munitions, and other explosive remnants of war impede development? Sectors such as agriculture, health, education, water supplies, and infrastructure are particularly affected. Explosive remnants of war also prevent industrial and commercial growth and domestic and foreign investment.

While the international community increasingly recognizes that mine action is a development issue, additional efforts are needed to effectively integrate mine action with development plans. UNDP advocates for the sustainability of mine action programs by mainstreaming mine action in development planning, programming, and budgeting. This involves:

- encouraging mine-affected countries to integrate mine action into their national development plans and budgets
- promoting the funding of mine-action projects through *development* budgets, supplementing traditional funding that is earmarked for mine action
- encouraging international financial institutions to increase loans for mine action to mine-affected countries
- working with local actors to plan, implement, and coordinate mine action.

Through its Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, UNDP supports mine action in Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Cyprus, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Peru, Russian Federation, Senegal, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, Uganda, Ukraine, Yemen and Zambia.

UNDP funds mine action through a multilateral framework, which promotes a coordinated approach and ensures that funding is available to all mine-affected countries -- not only those that are at the center of international attention as they emerge from emergency and post-crisis situations.

For more information about UNDP's work on mine action, go to www.undp.org/bcpr/mineaction.

IN HAITI, UNDP/UNCDF PROJECT BOOSTS & DIVERSIFIES LOCAL AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION

UNDP and the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) are helping local communities in northeastern Haiti to increase and diversify their agricultural production -- reducing poverty and regenerating the region's fragile ecosystem in the process. The initiative aims to help some 200,000 Haitians.

The \$5.5 million project was launched in 2000 and will run through 2010. It is comprised of two local development funds: one to support public infrastructure and the other to bolster environmental and

agricultural initiatives. As a result, in addition to improved pineapple and sugar cane production as well as the introduction of new varieties of mangos and citrus, residents now have access to essential basic services that were long lacking, such as drinkable water and healthcare centers. Local commodities are delivered more easily thanks to rehabilitated roads. In addition, the funds have built schools and agricultural facilities.

The project began with a community consultation process that involved an investigative team and two workshops where the community determined the scope of the project. Ultimately, the project seeks to enhance local Haitian capacity for natural resource management.

UNCDF is an independent UN organization affiliated with UNDP. UNCDF works exclusively in the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), where it concentrates its investments on two areas: local development and microfinance.

- Local development programs support national decentralization strategies in the LDCs and seek to improve social services, governance, and pro-poor economic infrastructure by providing technical assistance and investment capital directly to local authorities.
- Microfinance programs help poor households and enterprises by promoting inclusive financial sectors and making investment capital available for emerging microfinance and financial service providers – so that they can offer a full range of services such as savings, short and long-term credit, mortgages, insurance, pensions, remittances, and leasing.

###

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.

To subscribe send a blank email to dc-bulletin-subscribe@groups.undp.org

To unsubscribe send a blank email to dc-bulletin-unsubscribe@groups.undp.org