

# 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.*

## UNDP HELPS SOW NEW SEEDS OF JUSTICE IN SOUTHERN SUDAN

After two decades of civil war with four million people displaced and its infrastructure all but destroyed, Southern Sudan is now finally starting to rebuild – with a new rule of law, effective courts, police and prisons topping the priority list.

Since the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Sudan People's Liberation Army in January of 2005, UNDP has been working closely with the Government of Southern Sudan and its people to put these basic governance structures in place.

According to Supreme Court member Justice Ruben Madol, in many instances this means starting from scratch: "We are struggling to establish the Judiciary of Southern Sudan, trying to figure out its legal basis according to the constitution; trying to recruit judges, support and administrative staff and trying to ensure they have offices to work in. We are looking for the tools – the legal textbooks – they need to do their job," he said.

Despite the scale of the challenge, progress is being made. "Two years ago there was no Government of Southern Sudan," said Patrick Sweeting, Head of UNDP's office in Southern Sudan. "Now we are seeing justice institutions being established and staffed at all levels, and UNDP's team in Southern Sudan is supporting this process with training, technical advice and support, and infrastructure development."

Since gaining autonomy, Southern Sudan has adopted a constitution that operates through a common law system in line with the systems of neighboring Kenya and Uganda. UNDP is working with the judiciary to train judges in the principles underlying the common law approach and to overhaul the administration and management of the courts in line with this new system. The organization also works with local communities to increase understanding of the importance of the rule of law.

"Getting the law right is the most important part of helping rebuild the State," according to UNDP's Rule of Law Team Leader Sue Tatten. "People need to know that they will be able to resolve their disputes in a way that's impartial and equitable according to Southern Sudanese standards," she said. This includes keeping both options open - the formal court system and the customary law courts, but adapting the way the latter works so that it is in line with constitutional principles and protects human rights.

Although the new justice system is far from perfect, local experts believe that Southern Sudan has already come a long way towards forging working governance structures after decades of civil war. "It is at this stage that the assistance from UNDP and our other partners is crucial," said Justice Madol.

**For more information about UNDP's extensive work in Africa, access this [Fast Facts](#).**

## **LEBANON: ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF LAST SUMMER'S CONFLICT, A REVIEW OF UNDP ASSISTANCE**

In Lebanon, the summer of 2006 witnessed a severe humanitarian crisis in the wake of war. 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, the Lebanese national entity leading the response to the humanitarian crisis. UNDP was at work within one week of the outbreak of the crisis to ameliorate its effects.

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.

Detailed information about UNDP's critical early recovery initiatives can be found [here](#).

### **Personal Accounts of UNDP Assistance**

Hassan Mohamad Saleh, known as Hajj Abou Nazih, is a farmer residing in Adshit. In August, immediately after the ceasefire, he was safely able to return to his village. Yet, this winter due to the massive destruction in the water infrastructure, Hajj Abou Nazih's house flooded with rainwater.

Hajj recently thanked UNDP for its work to clean up and rehabilitate drainage and storm water conduits. "Now my wife, daughter and I can sleep deeply at night without being afraid of waking up flooded with water. Even our neighbors can now walk to their houses and rainwater is no longer a threat to them or to us. All of this is due to the UNDP quick intervention in our village where storm water conduits were restored."

Nicolas M. Farah is the mayor of Alma Al Chaab, a town in Southern Lebanon. He told UNDP, "During this last war...I remained in the village until July 27<sup>th</sup> helping the families with food distribution, securing a safe place for the children and ensuring their evacuation to safer villages or to Beirut...UNDP was always the prime supporter for us. Many organizations visited the village and promised to help us, only UNDP acted so quickly and implemented its intervention as of the cessation of hostilities. We were impressed by its integrity, honesty, transparency and legitimacy...UNDP's capacity for constant supervision, follow up and technical assistance will avoid any wasting of resources and funding. Moreover, I believe that the direct coordination with local authorities in the villages and the long experience of the UNDP field officers and their knowledge of the area and its needs is the reason for [UNDP's] effectiveness."

In addition to its recovery and rehabilitation work, UNDP's program in Lebanon supports legislative reform, implementation of the rule of law and partnerships with civil society. UNDP also encourages pro-poor development through integrated regional partnerships and strengthening of local governance.

## **DID YOU KNOW? UNDP PLAYS A SPECIAL ROLE IN FOSTERING PEACE AND COOPERATION IN CYPRUS**

The Bi-Communal Development Program (BDP) for Cyprus was launched in 1998, funded by USAID and UNDP. Its main role was to help foster cooperative relations between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots by helping them to design and implement projects of common concern. Over seven years the

BDP invested almost \$67 million and worked with over 300 different Cypriot organizations to support some 220 projects.

In October of 2005 the BDP completed its work in Cyprus and UNDP launched a new initiative called Action for Cooperation and Trust (ACT). ACT builds on the successes of the BDP, with the financial support of USAID, supporting projects that highlight multiculturalism and European values. ACT provides Greek and Turkish Cypriots resources and opportunities to jointly build the foundations for a sustainable solution to the Cyprus problem.

In order to further reach out to civil society and youth, ACT recently has created podcasts (audio files) that feature its successful projects -- an innovative way for stories to reach people in their local languages. ACT's use of this internet technology aims to reach out and empower people, especially youth, with information and news about actions taking place in their own communities.

**Brush up on your Greek and Turkish and click [here](#) to listen to four podcasts (on preserving natural heritage, civil society strengthening, and empowering youth) that highlight some recent successes of ACT.**

**Or access ACT's June [newsletter](#) for up-to-date news on current activities.**

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

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