

BULLETIN

United Nations Development Programme
Washington Liaison Office



April 2008

The UNDP Washington Bulletin is a regular update of UNDP activities and events by the Washington Office.

UNDP IN HAITI: ADDRESSING FOOD INSECURITY BY CREATING JOBS

Last week, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon wrote to more than a dozen key countries, asking for their urgent assistance in addressing the situation in Haiti, which has witnessed violent protests in recent weeks over rising food prices and a rapid deterioration in socio-economic conditions that threaten the nation's short and long term development. While all parts of the Haitian population are affected by this crisis, the country's already precarious rural poor and marginalized urban dwellers have felt the impact most acutely.

In partnership with the Haitian government and USAID, the UN team in Haiti has mobilized to create a multisectoral response plan to food insecurity for the next six months aimed at providing immediate relief while setting the stage for agricultural recovery. The plan is understood as a stepping stone of the larger national strategy to fight poverty, focusing on the most vulnerable people and regions of the country. It has three pillars: food aid (managed by the World Food Program and UNICEF), support to indigenous agriculture (managed by the Food and Agricultural Organization), and job creation (spearheaded by UNDP, the International Labor Organization, and the International Organization for Migration).

UNDP already carries out extensive poverty reduction programs in Haiti to combat the disquieting statistics: only 25% of Haitian families can boast a regular source of income; approximately 70% of Haitian youth is unemployed. As part of the six-month emergency response plan, UNDP is intensifying its efforts in the short term by looking to put thousands of poor Haitians to work in labor-intensive jobs that include building dikes, cleaning clogged canals, recuperating watersheds, and revamping critical infrastructure. Through this attention to civil works, UNDP will also repair some of the damage caused by the 2007 hurricane season and prepare for potential natural disasters this summer. This initiative will generate jobs and revenue to help alleviate the impacts of food insecurity.

UNDP's Work and Key Results in Haiti

During the years of crisis preceding the fall of the Aristide government in 2004, UNDP's work focused on humanitarian recovery while continuing to prepare the country for the re-engagement of the international community. Since 2004, UNDP's program has focused on stabilization of the country, devoting particular attention to the organization of elections, demobilization and disarmament of gang members, and the facilitation of national dialogue. UNDP also has supported reforms of the state, the justice system, and local governance structures. To reduce poverty UNDP integrated the management of funds for infrastructure projects with strategic policy advice. Additionally, UNDP supported the government's effort to elaborate an action plan for the environment and to better respond to and mitigate risks of natural disasters. Notable outcomes include:

- Successful organization of the presidential, legislative and local elections. UNDP efficiently managed \$68.5 million to support the work of MINUSTAH (the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti), the Organization of American States, and the Provisional Electoral Council.
- UNDP supported the environmental recovery of eight communities of the Northeast through elaboration of communal and environmental investment plans. In Gonaives in particular, UNDP supported a pilot initiative to protect the city from flooding while creating work for men and women.

- UNDP supported reform of Haiti's justice system by computerizing court clerks in four judicial jurisdictions and provided technical advice to reorganize the Ministry of Justice and Public Security. UNDP also supported the *Forum Citoyen* as a platform for civil society to voice their opinions about the reform of the justice system.
- UNDP supported the improvement of the penitentiary system through the creation of a database on the penitentiary population. UNDP also rehabilitated prisons to improve the conditions of inmates.
- UNDP reduced violence at the community level through community development and social participation. UNDP also gave technical advice to disarmament and reintegration efforts of the government and MINSUTAH.
- UNDP improved aid coordination and management structures through needs assessments and advice.
- UNDP published crucial analyses on poverty which will be key inputs for Haiti's National Strategy against Poverty.
- UNDP increased resources for public investment through access to debt relief by supporting the elaboration of the interim-Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper presented to the World Bank and IMF boards.
- UNDP improved the government's capacity to manage natural disaster risk by mobilizing funds and providing technical assistance.
- UNDP supported the rehabilitation of 37km of roads, reducing transport costs and improving road security.

For more information about UNDP's work in Haiti (in French), [click here](#).

UNDP-SUPPORTED 'KANDAHAR MODEL' PAVES THE WAY FOR COMMUNITY-LED DEVELOPMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

Last week in Kabul, President Karzai approved the new five-year Afghanistan National Development Strategy, reflecting the government's vision for the general direction of the country as well as implementation of the Afghanistan Compact benchmarks set in 2006.

UNDP plays an important role in helping the Afghan government achieve its development and security goals. Since the 2001 Bonn Agreement, UNDP has delivered more than US\$1.4 billion of assistance to Afghanistan, including \$336 million from the United States.

One recent example of UNDP's commitment to the country is its support of the National Area-based Development Program (NABDP)—a new model of community-led development that has successfully implemented vital infrastructure projects in Kandahar province. The NABDP has piloted an approach, now known as the 'Kandahar Model', which speeds the delivery of urgently-needed infrastructure in one of the provinces worst-affected by poverty and security challenges.

The model has proven to be a tremendous success, with over 180 projects completed so far in the province. NABDP intends to build on this track record by applying local variations of the Kandahar approach to other provinces around the country.

How does this model work?

Afghanistan's District Development Assemblies (DDAs) are made up of local district members and provide a participatory body for local development and decision making. Approximately 41% of Afghanistan is represented by DDAs. The participation of women is required for DDAs to be formed; 27% of DDA members are women.

These DDAs are directly involved with the identification, implementation, and monitoring of priority NABDP projects. They also guarantee the security of Afghan Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) engineers and facilitators visiting their district. Projects identified through DDAs then are implemented with the assistance of the NABDP, which coordinates the work of MRRD units with local communities to effectively complete projects. The UNDP-supported NABDP also builds the capacity of the MRRD through the setting up of regional ministry offices and the introduction of improved systems and procedures, such as project cycle management.

The key to NABDP's success lies in how it combines community development at the district level with a strong focus on developing the capacity of the MRRD at the provincial and national levels. This approach empowers

both local communities and the government to work together towards sustainable reductions in poverty and improved livelihoods across Afghanistan.

Background

The NABDP was established in 2002, following an invitation from the Afghan Assistance Coordination Authority to UNDP to take the lead in developing a long-term rural reconstruction program. Phase one of the NABDP focused on ten of Afghanistan's most severely war-affected regions through three components: immediate recovery, capacity development, and macroeconomic regeneration. Through this phase, 269 rural infrastructure projects, such as schools, clinics, roads, and water systems, were successfully completed.

NABDP's second phase, exemplified by the Kandahar Model, aims to provide communities with opportunities to express their priorities, and to enable the Afghan Government to support rural rehabilitation and development in an integrated and participatory manner. The second phase also aims to continue building the institutional and technical capacity of MRRD so that it is better able to deliver rural development services.

To learn more about UNDP's extensive work in Afghanistan, please click [here](#).

UNDP APPOINTS AJAY CHHIBBER NEW DIRECTOR OF BUREAU FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

The UNDP Administrator is pleased to announce the appointment of Ajay Chhibber of India as Assistant Secretary-General, Assistant Administrator of UNDP and Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific.

Chhibber will lead the UNDP bureau responsible for activities in the most rapidly growing region in the world. In Asia and the Pacific UNDP's work is particularly complex; while the region can boast impressive progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, there remain significant problems of poverty, environmental constraints, and equity. UNDP concentrates its efforts on supporting the governments of the region in facing these challenges and consolidating the progress made.

Chhibber has had a diverse 25-year career at the World Bank covering both research and policy issues, and has worked across Asia. Most recently he was the World Bank's Country Director for Vietnam, and has previously been Director of the Independent Evaluation Group, a manager in the Eastern European and Asian Departments, Staff Director on the World Development Report in 1997, and Senior Economist. Chhibber has published widely on development and policy issues.

Before joining the World Bank Chhibber was a consultant for FAO and the International Food Policy Research Institute. Prior to that he worked at the Indian Planning Commission and was also a lecturer in economics at the University of Delhi. He holds a PhD from Stanford University and an MA from the Delhi School of Economics.

###

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 learn more about UNDP's Washington Liaison Office, go to www.us.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

