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2010 RESULTS

HELPING EMPOWER LIVES AND
BUILD RESILIENCE IN ASIA-PACIFIC

Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific
United Nations Development Programme

UNDP REGIONAL BUREAU FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC 2010 RESULTS REPORT

HELPING EMPOWER LIVES AND BUILD RESILIENCE IN ASIA-PACIFIC



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1. DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES



▲ *Multan (Punjab Province), Pakistan, August 2010. People in flood-affected areas lost their homes, belongings and crops. (Visual News Pakistan)*

Countries in the Asia-Pacific region have diverse economic, political, and sociocultural contexts and face very different development challenges, requiring specific responses. Inequality and exclusion, which continue despite a growing gross domestic product and significant recovery from the recent financial and economic crises, characterize the majority of the countries in the region. To address the region's development challenges requires a greater focus on reducing disparities within countries – addressing imbalances not only in terms of income, livelihoods, and economic opportunity but also access to justice, dignity, voice, and representation across all groups.

Asia-Pacific's share of natural disasters – some the direct results of climate change – also compound problems in the region, as states are often ill-equipped to provide a comprehensive response. The human development impact of such disasters in terms of displacement, loss of lives, and property damage can undo many years of development progress.

Other challenges abound. The disastrous floods in **Pakistan** devastated much of the country and affected more than 20 million people. Other countries, such as **Nepal**, **Sri Lanka**, and **Timor-Leste**, are recovering from decades of prolonged conflict and are encountering the twin challenges of rebuilding their economies and political structures at the same time. These states face the additional challenge of delivering on the promise of democracy and peace dividends despite their fragile institutions.

Still other countries in the region are undergoing political transition from monarchies to representative democracies, such as **Bhutan** and **Tonga**; some, such as **Indonesia** and the **Philippines**, are recent entrants to middle-income status; and others, such as **Thailand** and **Malaysia**, are trying to move beyond middle-income status.

At present, across most of Asia and the Pacific, the coverage of social protection is low. This means that in most countries more than half of the workforce is left without protection, and it primarily involves more women workers than men.

For example, only 30 percent of Asia's elderly receive pensions, and only 20 percent of the unemployed have access to unemployment benefits or labour market programmes. Households in the region have the world's highest rates of out-of-pocket health care expenditure. Across the region there are good examples of what can be achieved, from **Thailand's** universal health care scheme, to conditional cash transfer schemes in **Cambodia** and **Indonesia**, to well-developed school feeding programmes in **Bangladesh** and **India**.

OVERVIEW OF KEY DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES ACROSS THE REGION

■ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Achievement – Poverty and Hunger

- Largest mass of income poverty in the world (over 900 million people)
- Widespread hunger in the midst of high economic growth and rising food availability (642 million of the world's 1,002 million chronically hungry people – an increase of about 75 million since 2006)

■ Gender Equality

- Growing gender inequality, particularly in South Asia, and continuing high levels of domestic violence in Cambodia, Malaysia, Mongolia, Thailand, Timor-Leste, and others. Gender inequality remains a barrier to progress on a majority of the MDG targets, and continues to deprive the region of the significant source of human potential as outlined in the Asia-Pacific Human Development Report for 2010
- Regional inequalities are still evident in the majority of countries

■ Quality of Growth – Rise in Inequality

- Economic growth reported in the majority of countries in the region that have now recovered from the global financial crisis
- High unemployment and underemployment, and high youth unemployment in the Pacific, Cambodia, Indonesia, Maldives, Mongolia, the Philippines, Timor-Leste, and Sri Lanka
- A number of countries, including Cambodia, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, and Timor-Leste, are embarking on the development of natural resource management policies with provisions for equitable distribution of proceeds from oil, gas, copper, gold, and other natural resources exploitation

■ Increased Frequency of Disasters – Undoing Development Gains

- Region has experienced an increase in the number and scale of natural disasters
- These disasters compound existing food, fuel, and economic crises
- The Asia-Pacific accounted for a staggering 85 percent of deaths and 38 percent of global economic losses due to natural disasters over the last three decades¹

■ Vulnerability to Climate Change

- Climate Change affects the capacity of countries for economic growth, poverty alleviation, and achievement of the MDGs
- Climate change is now seen as a human development issue as well as an environmental issue

■ Governance and Democratic Space

- Equality and non-discrimination
- Participation and inclusion
- Accountability and Rule of Law

2. PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

In 2010, UNDP delivered \$1.35 billion of assistance through its programme in the Asia-Pacific region, of which \$148 million came from UNDP core resources and \$1.2 billion was mobilized by country and regional offices.

Almost 60 percent of UNDP's Asia-Pacific programme resources (\$775 million) were engaged in Afghanistan, which is also the largest UNDP programme globally. Other large programmes include Bangladesh (\$90 million), China (\$64 million), Pakistan (\$58 million), Indonesia (\$51 million), Nepal (\$43 million).

Given the disproportionately large expenditure on Afghanistan, charts 1 and 2 present the breakdown of expenditure by sub-region, including and excluding Afghanistan.

UNDP's core focus areas are: Poverty Reduction and Achievement of the MDGs; Democratic Governance; Crisis Prevention and Recovery; and Environment and Sustainable Development. HIV/AIDS is addressed under Poverty Reduction and Achievement of the MDGs, and Gender Equality and Capacity Development are crosscutting themes.

CHART 1: GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF 2010 PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE

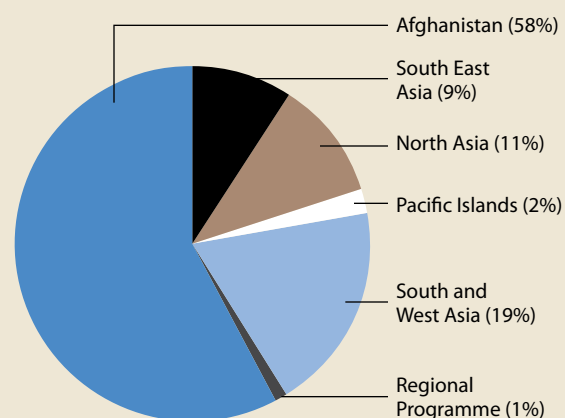
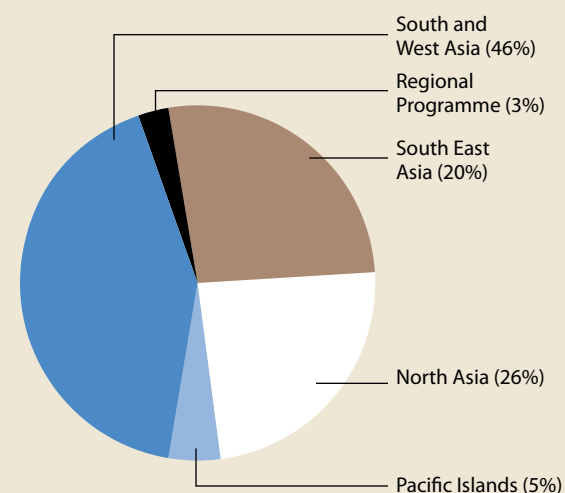


CHART 2: GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF 2010 PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE (WITHOUT AFGHANISTAN)



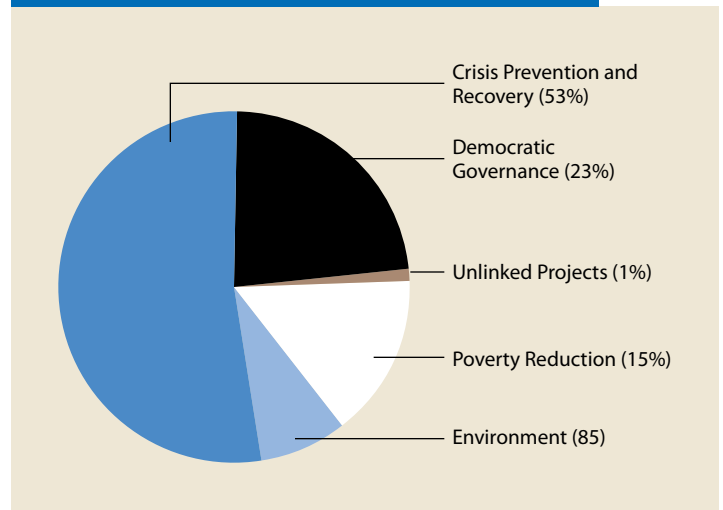
The disproportionately large expenditure on Crisis Prevention and Recovery reflects the large projects in Afghanistan, as well as the costs related to early recovery from natural disasters in the region.

In 2010, UNDP's Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP) took a number of steps to further improve the way it manages and delivers assistance in its partner countries.

Strengthening UN Development Assistance Frameworks

UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) provide a single coherent, overarching strategy that identifies the ways in which all UN agencies will respond to the respective government's development agenda. An unprecedented number of new UNDAFs are being developed in the Asia-Pacific region, including 19 between 2009 and 2011. This is a significant opportunity, and UN Country Teams have been encouraged to make a step change in the relevance and quality of this next generation of UNDAFs. In particular, UNDAFs should sharpen the focus on supporting the MDG achievement as part of national development frameworks and on addressing climate change.

CHART 3: BREAKDOWN OF 2010 PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE ACROSS FOCUS AREAS



More Strategic Country Programmes

In its own country programmes, UNDP is moving to improve the quality of assistance through streamlining the number of activities, focusing on upstream policy support and results that can lead to transformational change. The ability to demonstrate and communicate results is key, and positive outcomes are already evident from investments made in earlier years to strengthen the capacity within Country Offices in this area.

3. POVERTY REDUCTION AND ACHIEVEMENT OF THE MDGs

At the global level, by 2005 the number of people living on less than \$1.25 a day fell to 1.4 billion from 1.8 billion in 1990. For the same period, the rate of poverty declined from 46 percent to 27 percent. In East Asia and the Pacific, 14 countries have already more than halved the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1.25 a day. China and Viet Nam account for the largest reductions in the poverty rate, and India accounts for much of the reduction within South Asia.

Despite an impressive performance in poverty reduction, the region is still home to the largest number of poor and hungry. Over the past few years a significant number of once-poor countries have reached middle-income country (MIC) status, set by the World Bank at \$1,000 per person per year. Five developing countries worldwide officially

lost their “poor” status in 2010, among them Viet Nam; and when viewed with the fact that 22 other countries have ceased to be considered officially poor since 2000, it becomes evident that quite a profound global change is underway. In short, the nature of global poverty has changed, such that most of the world’s poor no longer live in “poor” countries.

On the whole, this is a “good news” story, but there is a sad underside to it as well, since poverty remains high in terms of absolute numbers in the MICs. In fact, 960 million poor people, or 72 percent of the world’s poor, now live not in poor countries but in MICs, and most of these are in stable states. Only a quarter of the world’s poor live in the remaining low-income countries (LICs), largely in sub-Saharan Africa. This is a dramatic change from just two decades ago, when 93 percent of the world’s poor lived in LICs. China and India, with the world’s two largest populations, together account for about half of the world’s poor.

The Regional MDG Report for 2010-2011 “Paths to 2015: MDG Priorities in Asia and the Pacific 2010–2011,” prepared in partnership with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Asian Development Bank was launched during the MDG Review Summit in September 2010 in New York. According to it, the region overall is well on track to meet the MDG poverty reduction goal and has already achieved some other targets, such as reducing gender disparities in primary, secondary, and tertiary education

Dr. Ajay Chhibber, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director for Asia-Pacific, presents the findings of the Regional MDG Report for 2010–2011. (Rositsa Todorova/UNDP)





▲ UNDP Bangladesh has supported the 'bricks and mortar' education in Hill Tracts, helping build 60 new community schools that are now teaching 1500 children. Communities were also mobilized through School Management Communities that helped with school design and teacher recruitment. (Salman Saeed/UNDP Bangladesh)

enrolment; for preventing a rise in HIV prevalence; and for stopping the spread of tuberculosis, to name a few. On the other hand, the region has been slow in reducing the extent of hunger, in ensuring that girls and boys reach the last grade of primary education, in reducing child mortality, in improving maternal health provision, and in providing basic sanitation.

In **Bangladesh**, UNDP's poverty reduction efforts benefited nearly 13 million people, with sophisticated targeting and community empowerment focusing on the poorest. Following the collection of detailed data down to the household level in 23 towns by UNDP, targeting of the most needy by government agencies was greatly improved, mobilizing 402,000 slum dwellers into development committees, providing 133,000 with better sanitation, and keeping nearly 10,000 children (67 percent of whom are girls) in school.

In **India**, the government is now scaling-up nationally the UNDP pilots of using biometric technology to ensure accountability and transparency and to reduce the time and bureaucratic hurdles for poor people to access their entitlements under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). Biometric technology – that is, a fingerprint, touch screen, sound, and icon-based system – captures all MGNREGS processes, such as registration for work, employment cards, receipts for wage payments, and information on worksites. This enables a largely uneducated and



▲ Workers register their attendance at a biometric system at the MGNREGS worksite in Bhikwara, Rajasthan. (Jay Mandal/UNDP India)

Women farmers plowing a rice field in Viet Nam.

▼ (Cao Anh Khoa/UNDP Picture This)



poor workforce to directly access information themselves. Such technology also allowed survey results mapping 60,000 homeless in Delhi to record these people for the first time in the National Population Register and to include them in the national initiative underway to provide each individual with a unique identification number.

In **Mongolia**,² the results of poverty mapping and MDGs geographical mapping are now being used for better targeting and resource allocation in government actions. In its effort to support evidence-based policy formulation, UNDP contributed to an improvement in data collection from statistical and administrative sources as well as to its ready access. In addition, poverty and MDGs data has been disaggregated to the local level, and a method to map the spatial distribution of poor households to the smallest administrative and territorial units has been developed.

In **Thailand**, as a direct result of UNDP's advocacy initiative on the National Human Development Report, Thailand's Reform

Committee recommended that each province consider the Human Achievement Index as a criterion for budget allocation so as to better plan and monitor the achievement of human development at the provincial level. UNDP provided technical support – a policy report developed with and adopted by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board as a key input to the Creative Economy National Strategy and the government's 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan.

In **Viet Nam**, with UNDP support, a draft comprehensive national strategy on social protection has been formulated for the first time, focusing on addressing the chronic poverty among ethnic minorities. The strategy charts a new development course, moving away from the reliance on investment, cheap labour, and overexploitation of natural resources, and instead leaning towards a sustainable and inclusive growth model based on a balance among economic, social, and environmental protection priorities that would be conducive to human development.

Similarly, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security of **China**, working with UNDP, passed a law in June 2010 requiring private contractors to provide migrant construction workers with disability insurance that would cover treatment and rehabilitation. This legislation will benefit the majority of the estimated 175 million migrants working in the Chinese construction sector.

In **Cambodia**, the Trade Integration Strategy focused on 19 products for export with the potential to improve the livelihoods of 2.5 million farmers. UNDP helped the government to refine

its economic growth policy agenda to be diversified, inclusive, and pro-poor through high-quality research on national competitiveness and MDG monitoring. The oil and gas and mining conferences organized with UNDP support helped the government in developing policies to build a responsible extractive industries sector.

The Integrated Framework for Trade (Window II) for contributions allocated to specific and clearly identifiable programs for trade capacity building was concluded in the **Maldives**. UNDP supported the establishment of a multi-sector national coordination mechanism, automation of trade registration, and enhancement of trade information that is made available to the public. As UNDP's support in this area was critical given the Maldives' graduation from LDC status and the consequential expected loss of preference for its exports, technical advice was provided to the government relating to the country's positioning in trade negotiations under the South Asia Free Trade Area agreement and the World Trade Organization.

In the **Pacific Island Countries**, **Vanuatu** has brought the MDGs into its budgetary frameworks by completing MDG-based and costed interventions in the education sector. **Fiji**, **Tonga**, and **Tuvalu** undertook national MDG monitoring/progress assessment exercises, and have strengthened their capacity for poverty analyses at the national level. Tuvalu has begun the monitoring of vulnerable groups at the community level. In **Papua New Guinea**, the government re-tailored the national MDG targets and indicators and integrated them into the national Medium-Term Development Plan



▲ *A Cambodian farmer waters his vegetable garden in Battambang province in northwestern Cambodia. The area where the farm is located used to be littered with land mines but support from UNDP has helped Cambodia remove land mines to free land for productive use. (Isabelle Lesser/UNDP)*

(MTDP) 2011–2015. The Department of National Planning and Monitoring has requested all government agencies and development partners to align their plans to the MTDP, therefore ensuring MDG achievement as a core government focus over the next five years.



▲ *A local bank employee demonstrating the use of a machine to social welfare beneficiaries in Fiji who will be receiving electronic payments. PFIP has partnered in this project to help “bank the unbanked.” (Shobhna Decloitre/UNDP Pacific Centre)*

Another major problem that has long affected most of the estimated one billion poor people in Asia and the Pacific is the lack of access to financial services, but today there are many more opportunities for achieving greater financial inclusion. In Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, **India**, specialized financial solutions at the household and enterprise level have benefited some 15,000 women, and many are making their way into the world of banking for the first time. In Rajasthan, UNDP’s work with women has led to recognition of and reference to girls and women with disabilities in the State Policy and Action Plan.

Across the least banked sub-region in the world, where 6.5 million Pacific islanders representing 75 percent of the population are excluded from the financial sector, the Pacific Financial Inclusion Programme (PFIP) provides quality and affordable

financial services to over 250 000 people in **Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu** and **Samoa**. This initiative works directly with policy-makers, industry leaders, community organizations and the unbanked population. The PFIP focuses on development and replication of innovative systems and products that allow people to make financial transactions over their mobile phones or smart cards. Mobile money platforms, launched with grants from PFIP, service 228 000 subscribers in **Fiji** alone. In **Papua New Guinea**, cocoa farmers receive their payments over mobile phones. To maximize the use of the technological innovations, the PFIP developed new quality services like flexible deposit accounts, microcredits and microinsurances, and offered seed money to providers to deliver these services. As a result, more people living in low income rural areas and small and micro entrepreneurs become cost-efficient to bank.

The establishment of the Ruhunu Economic Development Agency (RUEDA) in **Sri Lanka** brought together local development economic actors and provided a mechanism through which public and private institutions maximized economic potential by providing access to credit, technical assistance, marketing services, and value chain analysis to micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises or cooperatives in the South. This has enabled RUEDA to provide loans to 47 Southern Province SMEs, amounting to \$200,000 – with an impressive 100 percent repayment rate – to support business activities in various sectors, including dairy, food processing, and tourism. UNDP provided support to the establishment and capacity development of the RUEDA.

Advancing Gender in Asia-Pacific

Investments in women and girls have multiplier effects across all the MDGs. Collection and analysis of gender-specific data should be followed by the legislative and other changes needed to ensure that women have greater control and ownership over assets, have equitable access to employment and all public services, and are fully represented in public and political life. The lack of gender statistics and sex-disaggregated data across the region has limited a fact-based understanding of the social, economic, and political positions of women in many countries. UNDP is addressing this situation by helping national institutions throughout the region to generate sex-disaggregated information to inform policy and programme development, recognizing the differential needs and impacts of such initiatives on men and women. Policy support is being provided to a large number of governments to ensure gender responsiveness in national planning by integrating gender equality issues into all levels of their work. Many governments are also being supported to systematically integrate gender equality issues into their development needs

assessments, costing, and financing frameworks. The strengthening of national institutions also extends to women's equality in ministries and departments to enable them to contribute to policy-making and to influence other line ministries to work on gender equality concerns within their own sectors.

The Asia-Pacific region has made significant progress in advancing gender equality. This increases girls' school enrolment, women's labour force participation and life expectancy, with the most rapid gains occurring in East Asia and the Pacific.

In 2010, UNDP Administrator Helen Clark launched the Asia-Pacific Human Development Report on International Women's Day in New Delhi, India. (Jay Mandal/UNDP India)



UNDP REPORT PROMOTES GENDER EQUALITY

The 2010 Asia-Pacific Human Development Report "Power, Voice and Rights: A Turning Point for Gender Equality in Asia and the Pacific" has raised awareness of gender equality issues across the region. Launched on International Women's Day (8th March 2010) in New Delhi, the report received significant media attention; and at the time of this writing the report's website has been visited over 12,000 times. Two BBC films "Silk Ceiling" based on messages of the report have been broadcast 26 times in five Asia-Pacific countries, as well as globally. Policy linkages of the Report need to be traced over a longer time frame, but early results are promising.

However, gender inequality remains entrenched and gender gaps have not closed. Women remain more vulnerable to poverty than men, not just because they have lower incomes but also due to discriminatory attitudes that limit their access to economic opportunities. For example, a mere 7 percent of farms in Asia and the Pacific are headed by women, compared to 20 percent in most other regions.

Beginning in 2010, for the first time women have been linked to the Government of **India's** unique identification number initiative, which aims to provide better access to schemes and pensions. UNDP provided technical advice on mapping the vulnerabilities of women beyond traditional economic indices to cover such new dimensions as gender discrimination, migration, and occupational

BHUTAN: MDG-BASED NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Overarching national policies, such as the Economic Development Policy and the National Human Resource Development Plan that were adopted in 2010, have enabled key government agencies to address the issues of employment and private sector growth in a comprehensive manner. For the first time, the Economic Development Policy articulated regulatory and fiscal incentives to create an environment conducive for business and investment. UNDP policy and technical support helped identify capacity gaps and ensure pro-poor orientation of these policies.

Food security of 718 households in remote and poor villages in 10 districts has significantly improved, and self-help groups have been formed enabling farmers to engage in additional income-generating activities. Home gardening had the dual impact of improved household nutritional intake and increased economic opportunities for over 400 women. Such an integrated approach ensures long-term benefits for poor communities through better food security, economic opportunities, and mutual support systems.

The availability, quality, analysis, and use of data and social indicators, including poverty Gross National Happiness indicators, used for MDG-based planning and monitoring helped strengthen the pro-poor orientation of the 10th Five-Year Plan.



The Government of Bhutan has recognized the need to address gender gaps by, inter alia, pursuing gender-responsive budgeting and responding to cross-border human trafficking issues. UNDP, working with other UN agencies, has advocated the importance of gender and women's empowerment at the highest decision-making levels in 2010, and has organized gender-sensitization workshops for Cabinet Members, Members of Parliament, and Ministry executives.

◀ *Villagers showing their cane and bamboo products made by the self-help group supported by UN/UNDP, helping improve food security and income generation among small holder farmers in targeted rural areas in Bhutan. (Fumie Arimizu/UNDP Bhutan)*

capabilities, as well as such spatial positioning as homelessness in both rural and urban contexts.

In **Papua New Guinea**, local communities and grassroots women are actively lobbying their MPs to support more women in Parliament. A year-long campaign to advance women's representation in Parliament that reached almost a million people across 22 provinces of the country was supported by UNDP's Women in Leadership programme.

In **Indonesia**, the country has made important advances at the national level, seen not only in the consistent annual reduction in the rates of poverty but also in the annual real increases in the national budgetary allocations for pro-poor development. In 2010 the budget allocation for MDG-related development activities at the provincial level, specifically in 18 districts, increased by an average of 17 percent, and the share of direct (as opposed to operating) development expenditures averaged 60 percent of expenditures, versus 48 percent last year. Gender has been integrated into the methodology and tools of the pro-poor planning, budgeting, and monitoring implemented in 18 districts of three disadvantaged provinces. In addition, a gender-sensitive data-base system has been developed and will be operational in the 18 districts and replicated in other regions across Indonesia. Through a pilot process, UNDP worked with officials in the 18 districts, and has trained more than 1,000 district government officials, local parliamentarians, and NGO leaders to use poverty maps and MDG scorecards. The national planning agency has formally agreed to adopt the pro-poor planning and budgeting methodology and to promote its integration across all provinces and districts in the country.

Addressing HIV and AIDS

The region as a whole is doing well in addressing MDG 6 – Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and other Diseases. However, the picture regarding HIV specifically is much more mixed, with rising prevalence in some **Pacific Island nations**. There is evidence that the progress on HIV as part of MDG 6 – even in **Thailand, China, India**, and other Asia-Pacific countries that have shown progress – may be at risk due to HIV prevalence increases in gay men, other men who have sex with men (MSM), and transgendered people, as well as continued high rates of HIV among people who use drugs throughout the region.

The number of new HIV infections annually in the Asia-Pacific has stabilized, yet HIV infections among women are on the increase. Of all HIV-positive people in the region, the proportion of women living with HIV rose from 19 percent in 2000 to 35 percent in 2008. The region is also home to a large number of women migrants who



▲ UNDP India works towards halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and putting it at the centre of national development strategies, and protecting the rights of affected. Various workshops and seminars were conducted across the country generating awareness. (UNDP India)

often move under unsafe conditions, which greatly increases their risk of HIV infection. Unsafe migration also leads to trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation, which is highly fraught with the risk of HIV infection.

One of the beneficiaries of the support provided by the Positive Club in Tebran, a centre supported by UNDP's HIV/AIDS project in Iran. (UNDP)



As key countries in the Asia-Pacific region have continued down the road of decentralization, this increasingly includes decentralization of HIV responses as well. In 2010, action plans aimed at improving the quality and scope of prevention and health-based services regarding MSM. UNDP supported this work through an initiative involving six Asian cities (Chengdu, Hong Kong, Manila, Jakarta, Bangkok, and Yangon).

The Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions integrated into its “Human Rights, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity” report the results of a research study undertaken in more than 20 countries on increasing access to health and HIV services for MSM and transgender persons. The report, which was undertaken by UNDP and the Asia-Pacific Coalition on Male Sexual Health,

IRAN: THE BREAKING OF AN OFFICIAL TABOO

The spread of HIV/AIDS in Iran is generally considered to have occurred in three waves. The first was through blood transfusions, the second through injecting drug user infections, and the current wave is considered to be occurring through sexual transmission. UNDP advocacy helped break the official taboo on the issue of HIV/AIDS in Iran so that high-ranking officials and government ministers are now openly speaking about this issue, including the third wave of HIV infections. In addition, there is now an understanding of the need to ensure that women are adequately accounted for in national plans to address the spread of HIV and to support those already infected. The third National Strategic Plan on HIV/AIDS has a specific goal to establish Women’s Drop in Centres and Sleep-in Centres to support women at high risk of HIV. The engagement of the state broadcasting organization and welfare organization has now brought about greater public awareness regarding HIV/AIDS. The Ministry of Education has developed a tailored curriculum for teachers in primary, secondary, and tertiary education focusing on skill-based education on HIV/AIDS. Over 270,000 teachers and more than 500,000 students were trained in 2010, and as a follow-up the government has decided to expand the trainings throughout the country. UNDP has supported the establishment of surveillance systems, such as Bio-Behavioural Surveillance Surveys, as well as improvement of the national monitoring system and training and advocacy on HIV/AIDS.

received considerable policy attention from governments, judiciary, parliamentarians, and academia in the region. Based on the study's recommendations, in **Papua New Guinea**, the Ministry of Community Development and the Ministry of Justice called for a review of punitive laws relating to same-sex behaviour and sex work. Also, the **Malaysian** National Human Rights Commission is developing a review of the human right issues relating to access to services among these highly marginalized groups.

Since 2006, UNDP has provided support to **Indonesia's** national HIV/AIDS programme, helping to establish the National AIDS Commission, and to coordinate multi-donor resources to the new commission through the Indonesia Partnership Fund. In 2010, the commission was assessed as having sufficient capacity to manage donor funds directly without UNDP oversight, which also led the government and donors to entrust UNDP with a similar task of developing the capacity of the Principal Recipient of the Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM). As a result, the GFATM, which had temporarily suspended disbursements to Indonesia, resumed making transfers in 2010.

In **Papua New Guinea**, civil society organizations (CSOs) working on HIV/AIDS are today better able to manage their financial resources and effectively mobilize additional funds for delivering HIV-related services on behalf of the government. In 2010, for the first time four of the country's twenty provinces channelled funds through CSOs to scale-up HIV response at the community level. These CSOs have now taken up advocacy for most-at-risk populations, including married women,

UNDP Administrator Helen Clark speaks to members of the Friends Foundation during her visit to PNG in February 2010. The Friends Foundation is an NGO that supports HIV-positive mothers and orphans.

▼ (Rositsa Todorova/UNDP)



MSM, and sex workers, and have developed advocacy strategies aimed at creating an enabling environment for access to HIV and health-related services. UNDP has provided technical assistance to the institutional development of CSOs in the country since 2008.

In the **Philippines**, local responses to mitigate the effects of HIV/AIDS have been strengthened through the work of 206 local government units, 17 regional AIDS assistance teams, and 250 "local champions" – all of which have formulated action plans and started to implement effective response to HIV/AIDS. UNDP strengthened the skills of local organizations and social workers through training in care and support services to people living with HIV and their families, prevention and management of sexually transmitted infections, reporting and referral systems, and psychological care. Further, more than 20 Foreign Service personnel have been provided with knowledge and skills in handling HIV/AIDS issues among overseas Filipino workers.

4. DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE

In the Asia-Pacific region, UNDP's democratic governance programming efforts have responded to the diverse challenges and operational constraints of the countries. This has included innovative approaches towards building capable institutions, enabling inclusive participation, and upholding transparency, accountability, participation, and fair contestation. UNDP has assisted in the complex task of conducting elections across geographically dispersed populace, in capacity assessment for governance institutions and in capacity development of national and sub-national governance institutions.

In **Thailand**, the Ministry of Justice has carried out a legal reform to identify obstacles and provide appropriate means to improve access to justice for the poor. The poor and the underprivileged in some communities in northern and eastern provinces have begun to benefit from a better system of community justice initiated and implemented by the Ministry, with support from UNDP.

In **India**, a government directive enables marginalized groups, such as the transgender community, to access free legal aid. UNDP has supported the government to improve the inclusive implementation of this programme.

UNDP Administrator Helen Clark and UNDP Director for Asia-Pacific Ajay Chhibber interact with women residents of Char Kukri Mukri to understand the challenges they face and the measures they have adopted to build resilience, following UNDP's community-based response approach. This remote island, with a population of around 20,000, is on the front-line of Bangladesh's work to adapt to climate change. During her visit, the Administrator jointly inaugurated with the Prime Minister the Union Information and Service Centre (UISC) in Char Kukri Mukri over a live video-conference, marking the successful establishment of 4,501 UISC throughout the country. (Rositsa Todorova/UNDP)

The Government of **Viet Nam** has accepted independent policy assessments with citizens' feedback to evaluate reform results, thus making its approach to policy review more participatory and transparent. A Public Administration Performance Index was created and rolled out to 30 provinces, and a database for monitoring services at the national and sub-national level was created. Local assemblies have developed the capacity for interacting with voters and citizens through new public consultation mechanisms launched by UNDP. Many other provinces have replicated this model by conducting self-initiated public consultations financed from their own budgets.

UNDP has enabled some of the **Pacific Island Countries** to pool institutional resources and use of information and communications technology (ICT) and other technological platforms for shared services responding to their specific efficiency, equity, and effectiveness challenges. UNDP has also coordinated advocacy campaigns in areas such as political representation and gender-based violence to build popular awareness and mobilize support for appropriate legislation.



Village sustainable development plans are being used in all 366 villages in **Samoa** as the basis for delivering services. The methodology for these plans was adopted and scaled up from similar planning processes used in the 22 communities that had been affected by the 2004 tsunami, emphasizing data collection and the prioritization of village goals through an inclusive process involving traditionally marginalized groups. Prior to this UNDP-introduced methodology, decision-making was left to all-male chiefs.

The Prime Minister's Office in **Bangladesh** has rolled out dozens of e-services, accessed by millions of previously underserved people, as part of the "Digital Bangladesh" agenda. Over 2 million government bills were paid using mobile phones already in the hands of the poor, cutting out middlemen and related costs. More than 350,000 persons used ICT for services such as university e-admission, agriculture permits, e-tax payments, or digital classrooms, breaking down barriers of culture, class, and distance. Union Information Service Centres (50 percent run by women) went to scale in all 4,501 Union Parishads (lowest-tier government), providing access to these services – a fact widely announced by a live inauguration broadcast on national TV by the Prime Minister and UNDP Administrator to some 45 million people.

In **Timor-Leste**, 2010 saw the launch of the Justice Sector Strategic Plan for 2011–2030, which focuses on institutional development, legal framework, human resource development, and access to justice issues. In addition, the Timorese Personnel Management Information System, which captures data of the country's 24,000 civil servants and thereby allows for their more transparent and just management, has now been completed.

Lao PDR – for the first time – took part in a Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of its Human

School boys from Laolo, Timor-Leste, read copies of the Constitution handed out at a community meeting organized by the Ministry of Justice. (UNDP)



Rights Instruments before the Human Rights Council in May 2010. In the lead up to the UPR, the country actively engaged in a dialogue about key human rights issues and prepared thoroughly for the frank and candid review to which it was exposed. Out of 107 recommendations the country has accepted 71, and is now actively pursuing their implementation through various government-led working groups. Such commitment to the progressive realization of human rights combined with a growing commitment to transparency and accountability (the country is currently engaged in the UN Convention against Corruption self-assessment/peer-review process) is a transformational change, to which UNDP has contributed through advocacy and technical support provided to the government over the past 10 years.

Conflict and post-conflict countries, as well as those recovering from natural disasters, face specific challenges. In many instances, state legitimacy in the aftermath of a crisis is of primary importance,

and a state's ability to address this challenge plays an important role in recovering and consolidating the peace and state-building process. For countries in conflict and post-conflict situations, the state's ability to deliver basic services, promote social cohesion, and provide internal security are critical factors. Support to core governance institutions that lay the foundation for a democratic process has been well received by most national partners. Among the root causes of conflict there is often a denial of economic, social, and cultural rights through unjust allocation of power and resources, as well as a lack of voice and effective grievance mechanisms. Hence, widening of the democratic space for inclusive participation and representation of all citizens in decision-making processes remains a vital goal.

Afghanistan held its parliamentary elections in 2010, led by the Afghans themselves, and despite some challenges, these were widely recognized as technically successful, including by the international community. The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), with support from UNDP, procured and delivered 342 tons of election related materials to 5,497 polling centres, and conducted registration of some 2,500 candidates and the accreditation of 380,000 candidate agents and observers. An approximate 4.2 million Afghans cast their vote on Election Day, including 1.6 million cast in 'women only' polling stations. The elections resulted in 27 percent female candidates elected to the Parliament, which exceeded the 25 percent minimum provision of the Constitution. With this election, the IEC and its officers have acquired skills and experience to lead and manage future elections. In addition, the Electoral Complaints Commission, which was functioning under international leadership in 2009, has moved to national leadership to handle the election-related complaints.

Afghanistan's subnational governance policy has been actively promulgated by the government, with

the aim to strengthen the ability of critical institutions at the provincial, district, and municipal level to provide public services. Elected District Development Authorities (DDAs) formulated their district development plans (DDPs), and eight new DDAs have been established, 61 DDAs re-elected, and 68 DDPs updated. UNDP has contributed towards comprehensive capacity development of the Independent Directorate of Local Governance, and continues to provide support for capacity development at various levels of governance, including the provincial and district level.

UNDP continues to support transformational change in **Nepal**, which is transitioning to a democracy in the aftermath of 10 years of Maoist conflict, the 2006 peace agreement, and the election of a Constituent Assembly in 2008. In 2010, UNDP organized 14 Federalism Dialogues and worked with women, indigenous peoples, Dalits, and Madhesi to promote essential cross-party dialogue on issues affecting historically marginalized communities. UNDP's technical support to court-referred mediation was noted as a best practice by an outcome evaluation in 2010, which specifically noted UNDP's contribution to improving rule of law and access to justice in the country. UNDP also supported the Local Governance and Community Development

UNDP supported the discharge of minors in the Maoist army: verification taking place. (UNDP Nepal)



Programme, building capacity at the central, district, and community level. Community-based initiatives delivered justice and resolved disputes in villages where it operated. Specifically, paralegal committees in 2010 assisted in some 1,200 cases; community mediation centres resolved 835 disputes; and legal aid desks addressed 790 gender-based violence cases. UNDP helped pave the foundations of a modern judicial system by contributing in drafting of a new Civil Code, Code of Civil Procedure, Criminal Code, and Code of Criminal Procedure, as well as a Sentencing Policy Act.

In **Sri Lanka**, a national policy on legal aid has been drafted, and an increased number of legal awareness and legal aid clinics of the Legal Aid Commission are now available to the most vulnerable. Whereas previously such support was only available once a defendant was presented before the high court and not at lower magistrates courts, aid has now been introduced for all criminal cases. UNDP provided support to the capacity development of the Legal Aid Commission, as well as the refurbishment of a prison for female prisoners with children less than five years old – the first and the only such facility in Sri Lanka. Support was also provided to get court houses functioning in the Northern Province, which has had a great impact on giving access to justice to the local population.

The ability of the country's national institutions to deliver essential civic documentation through digitized documentation registries has improved from as much as eight weeks to only a few minutes, thus transforming the way in which communities in the conflict-affected areas and marginalized sectors access basic services, such as education, health care, and justice. In 2010, 15 mobile clinics provided legal documentation to over 14,800 people in the north and east. As a result, divisional secretariats are now able to address emerging challenges of land disputes, which are an obstacle to the recovery process.

Replication of community radio outreach in the 47 poorest districts in **Lao PDR** and increased space for marginalized groups to participate in the constitution-making process in **Nepal** resulted from UNDP support to access to information, communications for empowerment, and inclusive media development. Application of media development indicator assessments, in collaboration with UNESCO and other development partners, provided the analytical basis for reforms in the regulatory frameworks and capacity development in **Bhutan** and **the Maldives** to enhance freedom of expression, independent media development, and digital communications. Addressing a key constraint on all sections of society to share progress towards the MDGs, UNDP's support has contributed to widening the democratic space for inclusive participation and representation of all citizens in decision-making processes. UNDP developed a diagnostic tool to assess information and communication needs and opportunities, particularly at the local/community level. This has been applied in **Cambodia**, **Indonesia**, **Lao PDR**, **Nepal**, and the **Philippines**, and has paid particular attention to the exclusion of indigenous peoples.

In 2010, **Bhutan**, **Lao PDR**, **Maldives**, **Mongolia**, and **Viet Nam** all launched UN Convention against Corruption self-assessments with support from the Regional Consortium, established by UNDP. The self-assessments in **Bhutan** and **Mongolia** have already led to the development of revised anti-corruption strategies. In **Mongolia**, the lead was taken by the Independent Agency against Corruption, established in 2007 with UNDP support. UNDP has contributed to developing and strengthening the professional and institutional capacities of the anti-corruption agency, although the impact is still limited at this time due to changes required to improve the efficiency of the judicial system that should follow up on the cases submitted by the anti-corruption agency.

5. CRISIS PREVENTION AND RECOVERY



▲ *The small, low-lying atoll islands of Maldives are highly vulnerable to flooding and coastal erosion. Sea level rise and climate change effects on weather patterns compound underlying trends of increasing coastal erosion and pressure on scarce land resources, and increase physical vulnerability of island populations, infrastructure and livelihood assets. Through the “Integrating Climate Change Risks into Resilient Island Planning in the Maldives” project, UNDP is working to address the increasing vulnerability to climate change in the country through systematic adaptation planning and practice; including island land use planning and coastal development and protection policies and practice. (UNDP Maldives)*

In understanding the threats posed by crisis, it is important to consider the degree to which frequent disasters and complex conflicts undermine development progress and cumulatively erode national coping capacities. UNDP has provided assessment, planning, and implementation support to partner governments, and has worked closely with others, including CSOs and the larger network of UN agencies, to build resilience and empower people in

addressing the complex and vital issues related to crisis prevention and recovery. The recent evaluation of UNDP’s contribution to Disaster Prevention and Recovery (DPR)³ reconfirms the importance of UNDP’s DPR work in the region, specifically in [Fiji](#), [India](#), [Indonesia](#), [Myanmar](#), and the [Maldives](#).

Natural disasters

The Asia-Pacific region disproportionately suffers from natural disasters, including earthquakes, floods, tropical cyclones, landslides, volcanoes, droughts, and tsunamis. Experts predict that the number and severity of disasters associated with natural hazards are likely to increase in the region due to the effects of climate change, population growth, urbanization, desertification, and environmental degradation. These disasters cause enormous human suffering – as witnessed by last year’s catastrophic floods in Pakistan, affecting some 20 million people – and undermine decades of development gains. According to a recent report, the region has accounted for a staggering 85 percent of deaths and 38 percent of global economic losses due to natural disasters over the last three decades.⁴ Women are 14 times more likely to die than men during natural disasters, as seen in the aftermath of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, where 70–80 percent of deaths were women. Persistent conflicts and cyclical and reoccurring natural disasters, coupled with low national capacities and scant resources, have increased the region’s level of risk and vulnerability and, in turn, had reduced its progress on the MDGs.

Countries in the region have already begun to make explicit linkages between disaster risk reduction and climate-change adaptation. In support of these efforts, UNDP has increasingly begun to integrate its work on disaster reduction with climate-change adaptation in ongoing programmes. A notable example is UNDP's support in the **Maldives**, where the integration of disaster-risk reduction and climate change adaptation has been well established, as commended in "Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Crisis Prevention and Recovery."⁵

Similarly, the 2010 report "Evaluation of UNDP Contribution to Environmental Management for Poverty Reduction"⁶ notes that addressing the poverty/environment nexus is essential to achieving UNDP's mission, and that UNDP has been effective in advocating for a coherent approach to poverty and environmental concerns, as reflected in the Poverty and Environment Initiative, a joint programme with the UN Environment Programme.

In **Bangladesh, China, Lao PDR, Pakistan, and Viet Nam**, UNDP has been vigorously supporting governments in integrating pro-poor concerns into sound environmental and climate change policies. In **Pakistan** UNDP supported the formulation of the National Policy on Climate Change as well as the recently adopted National Forest Policy and Energy Conservation Act. Such advocacy also helped ensure that environment and climate change are priority areas in the country's Five-Year National Plan, 2011-2015.

Also in **Pakistan**, the National Disaster Management Bill – adopted as an Act of Parliament in 2010 – now serves as the legal framework to strengthen the national disaster management system and mainstream disaster risk reduction in all sectoral plans and humanitarian responses, as well as to raise the level of public awareness and community preparedness. As a consequence, such key disaster management institutions as the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority, the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), and Provincial and District DMAs now have a legal operating platform. NDMA has played a pivotal role in the coordination of the response to the devastating floods, and seven Disaster Management Authorities (four provincial, one state, one regional, and one agency level) are now functional. Following the floods, UNDP has scaled-up and expanded ongoing recovery responses in 36 districts, and has supported



▲ *Women from Mianwali, Punjab Province, during the floods in Pakistan in 2010. (Hira Hashmey/UNDP Pakistan)*



▲ Hazard mapping exercise, part of community-based disaster risk management activity provided by UNDP enables villagers to visualize potential hazards in Myanmar. (UNDP)

livelihood restoration of vulnerable people through a labour-intensive cash-for-work programme and by restoring basic and critical community infrastructure and services.

In **Myanmar**, Cyclone Giri hit in October 2010 killing at least 45 people, destroying more than 20,000 houses, with a total of at least 52,000 households or 260,000 people affected. This was the most serious natural disaster to hit the country after Cyclone Nargis of 2008. UNDP, through its outreach presence in the affected provinces, responded immediately to support the affected communities through distribution of food items received from WFP and shelter covers received from UNHCR. UNDP also initiated cash for work

activities in approximately 90 villages that helped generate immediate and much needed income to the cyclone-affected communities and resulted in debris cleaning, repair of embankments and small infrastructure repairs.

In 2010, **Indonesia** designated disaster management as one of the central priorities in its Medium-Term Development Plan 2010-2014, and the government has dramatically increased domestic allocations – from \$2.1 million in 2010 to \$21.4 million for 2011. Two provinces have revised their 30-year spatial plans to incorporate disaster risks, including climatic disasters. UNDP's assistance to the government to shift disaster management towards preemptive risk reduction has been a key programmatic priority over the past five years. After supporting the development of Indonesia's Disaster Management Bill in 2007 and the establishment of the National Agency for Disaster Management in 2008, UNDP is now helping to translate legislation into action on the ground by providing a comprehensive capacity programme to disaster management agencies at all

▼ Safe demolition of damaged buildings in Padang city. (UNDP Indonesia)



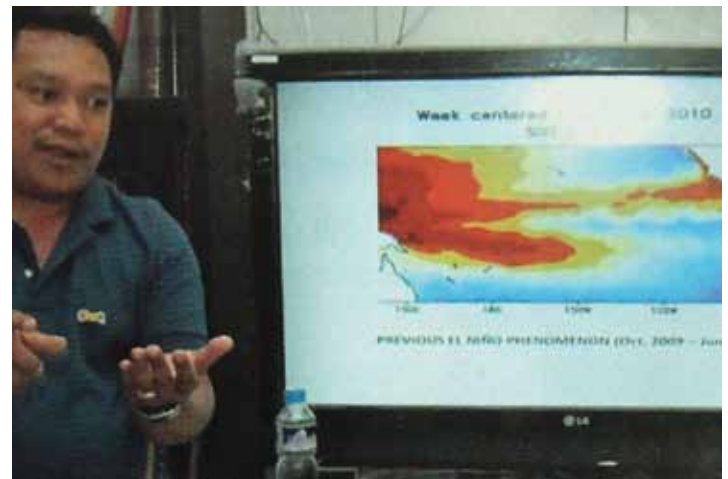
levels, and through advocacy to promote inclusion of disaster risk reduction approaches in the local development plans.

UNDP has also provided technical expertise in the development of Indonesia's disaster risk index, which serves as the basis for the allocation of funds from national to district governments for contingency and risk reduction. In 2010, UNDP supported Indonesia's response to the Padang earthquake in West Sumatra, providing emergency funding and recovery support. More than 700 families were employed for rubble clearance and community restoration activities, amounting to some 11,000 days of work. Families were also able to earn much needed income by selling scrap metals disposed through the rubble clearance programme. In addition, the importance of UNDP assistance in establishing and supporting so-called "disaster risk reduction platforms/fora" at the national and local level was evident following the multiple eruptions of Mt. Merapi in October 2010. As a result of these preparations, the provincial forum for Yogyakarta, near Mt. Merapi, was instrumental in devising strategies for preparedness and emergency responses in Central Java and Yogyakarta. Specifically, the local forum coordinated the emergency response, with support from NGOs, and it established a response centre to assist those who had been displaced by the Mt. Merapi eruptions.

The **Philippines** Disaster Risk Reduction and Management (DRRM) Act, which strengthens institutional capacity on DRRM and resilience of local communities to disasters and climate change impacts, was passed in 2010. UNDP has provided technical support for the development of the guidelines on DRR mainstreaming into national

and local development plans, which ensures a comprehensive approach to DRRM. UNDP has also supported the development of multi-hazard mapping and risk assessments for 14 priority vulnerable provinces where community early-warning systems for flooding and tsunami have been successfully established.

In the Pacific, national governance systems were strengthened in **Fiji**, **Solomon Islands**, and **Tonga**. In Solomon Islands, the National Disaster



▲ *Illustration of how disaster-prone Albay province in the Philippines is mainstreaming climate change adaptation. (Mau Victoria)*

Management Office was better able to coordinate early recovery efforts and donor response to extensive floods. In the wake of floods and cyclones in Fiji, UNDP has ensured a supply of cash crop seedlings and fertilizers to some 3,000 affected farms. In Tonga, on Niuatoputapu Island, which was struck by the tsunami at the end of 2009, UNDP has identified essential capacity development priorities for building back better, and has pioneered a cash-for-work programme.



▲ *A Mongolian herder looking at her dead animals before being transported to a burial pit. (UNDP Mongolia)*

In **Mongolia**, the implementation of the National Framework of Action and Material Acquisition and Resource Mobilization strategy helped the transformation of the military-based disaster response agency to a civilian agency, the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). As no formal mechanism existed previously, the framework helped establish a link with other government organizations to cooperate on disaster risk reduction. UNDP, through training and guidance, advice on standard operating procedures, and provision of equipment, has provided steady support to NEMA over the last decade; and today NEMA has a modern proactive mandate for disaster preparation, mitigation, and effective response. UNDP projects helped NEMA develop its capacity, particularly in recovering from a dzud – the Mongolian term for an extremely snowy winter in which livestock are unable to find fodder through the snow cover, and

large numbers of animals die due to starvation and cold. In 2010, UNDP assisted NEMA in recovery efforts, particularly to remove over 2 million livestock carcasses to reduce health risks in dzud-affected areas; provide over 18,000 herders with supplementary income; and gear up around 90 herder groups for the upcoming winter by improving their winter shelters and preparing fodder for their animals.

Conflict and post-conflict situations

In 2010, a number of the countries in Asia and the Pacific were facing a violent conflict or challenges of transition from conflict to peace. The root causes of both the new and historical conflicts in the region are varied and complex. These conflicts exacerbate the development challenges of addressing poverty reduction and achievement of the MDGs. There are additional challenges for states as well,



▲ *A group of Muslim women beneficiaries from Mannar, in Sri Lanka's Northern Province, trained in coir production through the Communities for Peace project of UNDP Sri Lanka. The women are seen at the Coir Production Centre in Mannar. (B. Irfan, TRP Mannar, UNDP Sri Lanka)*

which must struggle to deliver on the promise of democracy and peace dividends when institutions are weak or fragile.

While some countries like **Bhutan** are opening politically, others such as **Nepal** are making slow progress towards peace. Yet others, such as **Timor-Leste**, have made significant strides towards peace and development. **Sri Lanka** is striving to build peace following a civil conflict, while **Afghanistan** continues to grapple with enduring low-grade, on-going insurgency. Not least, **Pakistan** is facing a challenging situation in the border areas with Afghanistan, compounded by the country's recurrent natural disasters, including the most recent devastating floods.

In **Sri Lanka**, following the end of a three-decade-long armed conflict, some 300,000 internally displaced persons, of which more than 50 percent were women, were resettled as a result of UNDP's demining actions of 444 square kilometres of land. UNDP helped over 6,500 conflict-affected people, including at least 2,600 women, in the war-affected communities to rebuild their homes, re-start sustainable income-generating activities, restore organizational capacities, and rehabilitate access roads, irrigation channels, markets, and community halls that are integral to their livelihoods. UNDP's role in the areas of mine action, socio-economic recovery, and early recovery coordination was pivotal in supporting the safe and sustainable return of those men, women and children who had been displaced and affected by the war in the north and east of the country. The government's establishment of a fully functional National Mine Action Centre was a result of UNDP's sustained advocacy through the previous four years.

UNDP has facilitated a multi-country initiative on strengthening the role of women in building and restoring peace. During conflict, non-state actors are well placed to provide social services. Representatives from civil society, government, and UNDP from **Indonesia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Timor-Leste** have established a network called N-PEACE (engage for Peace, Equality, Access, Community, and Empowerment). The main focus of the network is to address common knowledge and capacity gaps, to create a platform for stronger advocacy, and to provide a space for women's organizations and grassroots groups working in post-conflict contexts to connect.



▲ *A female Cambodian de-miner walks her mine-sniffing canine in a mine-clearing area in Samlot district, Banteay Meanchey province, northwestern Cambodia. Support from UNDP has helped Cambodia remove land mines to free land for productive use. (UNDP)*

As of end 2010, of the 4008 ex-military personnel in **Nepal**, 58 percent had made contact with the UN Interagency Rehabilitation Programme, 46 percent received career counselling and 30 percent were engaged in or had already taken a package, thus transitioning from military to civil life. The UN Interagency Rehabilitation Programme was established to support such transition, under the leadership of UNDP, to deepen peace and stability in the country.

The **Cambodian** Mine Action Authority (CMAA) was able to take greater ownership of the sector with the development of a strategic and policy framework, and with enhanced capacities to conduct quality assurance and to guide demining operators. A 10-year Mine Action Strategy was adopted, approximately 2,400 quality assurance visits were conducted and a first baseline survey was completed to identify priority demining areas. These mechanisms promote more efficiency and accountability in the allocation of demining resources and have raised the CMAA profile internationally. UNDP contributed to the clearance of 31 square kilometres, half of which have since been

put to productive use, and the rest is being used for roads and small infrastructure.

During the Tenth High-Level Roundtable meeting held in October 2010, the Government of **Lao PDR** and its development partners signed a compact on a new MDG 9 agreement to accelerate removal of unexploded ordnances (UXOs) by 2020. The government's leadership in advocating for a total ban of cluster munitions and on UXO issues in general has been recognized globally; and Laos hosted the First Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in November 2010. UNDP supported preparations for both high-level meetings.

Through the Refugees Affected and Hosting Areas Programme (RAHA) in **Pakistan**, the provincial Planning and Development Department and community mechanisms work together in delivering services for the vulnerable and disadvantaged population without discrimination, including women, Afghan refugees, and other minority groups. RAHA demonstrates that a demand driven, community-based participatory approach can lead to visible results at the grassroots level. UNDP and other UN agencies have collaborated in implementing the project's various activities.

In the **Philippines**, 2010 saw the passage of the Magna Carta of Women and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, intended to put an end to gender discrimination. Equally important is the adoption of the Philippine National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security. This Action Plan is the first of its kind in Asia, and UNDP was part of the UN advocacy group that had been providing support to the Philippine Commission of Women, which had been advocating for this legislation for more than 10 years.



▲ UNDP Administrator Helen Clark delivers the keynote address at the High Level Round Table Meeting in Vientiane, Lao PDR, 21 October 2010. (UNDP)



AFGHANISTAN

▲ *Religious leaders attend training on Family Law. Public Legal Awareness activities like these have increased the legal understanding of community and religious leaders, as well as the general public. (UNDP)*

UNDP Afghanistan is the largest programme worldwide, reflecting concerted international efforts to bring stability and security to the country through multilateral efforts. In 2010, UNDP Afghanistan delivered US\$ 775 million through its programmes, an estimated 16 percent of UNDP's global programme delivery for last year.

Afghanistan experienced a number of positive developments in 2010, despite the ongoing security challenges. The country held its first parliamentary elections in five years, bringing a new generation of leaders to the table. The government approved its first-ever Afghanistan Sub-national Governance Policy, which empowers institutions at the provincial and district levels to provide better government services to the citizens,



▲ *A woman sells vegetables that she has grown and marketed. By working with women in two provinces of Afghanistan on income generation, UNDP has provided 40 women with the opportunity to earn their own income – some, for the first time in their lives. (UNDP)*

and women began taking a larger role in society. UNDP has been involved in many of these areas of improvement, supporting the government's efforts.

UNDP has aligned its programme with the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and is contributing to its implementation through specific interventions to foster democratic governance, reduce poverty, create sustainable livelihoods, and ensure human security. To that end, 2010 witnessed two critical conferences, in January in London and July in Kabul, during which international donors committed to delivering 50 percent or more of their aid through the national budget.

UNDP has provided important support to enhance the ability of the Ministry of Finance to deliver on its mandate of a national budgeting process and aid coherence, including gender-based budgeting. In addition, the process has been initiated for provincial budgeting as well, which decentralizes the national budgeting process and helps move towards a more equitable allocation of resources.

A credible election is the corner stone of democratic governance. In 2010, amid challenging conditions, Afghan electoral bodies supported by UNDP, planned and implemented the Parliamentary elections. Specifically, UNDP provided technical and operational support to the Independent Election Commission (IEC) and the Electoral Complaints Commission (ECC). With UNDP's assistance, the IEC's capacity was strengthened to lead and manage the elections. During last year's elections, the IEC assumed full leadership, ownership and accountability for the conduct of the poll. Electoral complaints and fraud were handled with greater transparency by the ECC – an important step forward in Afghanistan's democratic development.

Following the issuance of a decree by the Afghan President to curb violence against women in October 2009, UNDP piloted the setup of eight Legal Help centres in two provinces and trained para-legal volunteers and community development council members. In 2010, the centres were registering approximately 100 cases a month, and nearly 40 percent were resolved – mostly relating to early and forced marriage. Also, trainings were conducted for Mullahs, including in workshops in other Islamic countries, to raise their awareness on women’s rights and to then utilize their influence in local communities. This has helped religious leaders to understand the value of educating young girls and the need for enhancing the role of women in society. UNDP also contributed to the establishment of a Gender Responsive Budget Cell within the Ministry of Finance, with additional advocacy work for a similar institutional set up within other ministries, thus paving the way for comprehensive gender-based budgeting practices.

Security continues to pose challenges, as only major regional and provincial centres are accessible. Overall, approximately 60 percent of the territories have serious difficulties in terms of accessibility, thereby limiting UNDP’s ability to function in a full-fledged manner. The need to ensure better delivery of services is fundamental for stability and to demonstrate a peace dividend to the people of Afghanistan. To this end, UNDP is mainstreaming security risk management in all aspects of its country programme to enable effective implementation of its projects.

Nonetheless, there are grounds to be optimistic that the situation will improve due to the professional training of the Afghan National Army and Police (ANP). The ANP force under the Minister of Interior is now transforming from a military body into a democratic civilian police force. The concept of democratic policing and the importance of a good police-civilian relationship is well recognized. UNDP has provided critical support in this transformation process contributing to enhancing the professional skills of the police force, and enrolment and training of women police officers. An Afghan Women Police Association – an informal body at the moment – has also been established, and is mandated to address issues related to women police.

Over 4 million voters cast their ballots in the September 2010 Parliamentary Elections. UNDP supported Afghan institutions to organize and execute the elections, and for the first time Afghan electoral bodies assumed lead responsibilities for all major decisions associated with the planning and implementation of the elections.
▼ (Fardin Waeza/UNAMA)



6. ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Addressing climate change requires a combination of parallel and long-term interventions, including institutional reforms – large in scale and systemic in approach. Forging a multi-sectoral approach to climate change requires significant investments in research, learning, and partnership building, bringing together individuals and organizations from all areas of policy and practice.

UNDP's climate adaptation initiatives grew significantly in 2010, such that today there are more than 30 national/regional climate adaptation policy interventions in [Bangladesh](#), [Bhutan](#), [Cambodia](#), [Lao PDR](#), [the Maldives](#), [Pakistan](#), [Samoa](#), [Solomon Islands](#), and elsewhere. Thematic priorities for climate adaptation work include coastal

zone management, freshwater resources, health, agriculture and forestry, and disaster management. Geographic priorities are set on the basis of vulnerability to, and the economic impacts of, anticipated effects from climate change, and UNDP's comparative advantage in developing adaptive capacity.

To further strengthen climate change adaptation efforts in the region, UNDP has supported the access of governments to \$29 million from the newly established Adaptation Fund. In addition, UNDP has continued to assist countries to develop integrated climate change strategies, and has incorporated climate risk management into all UNDP development programmes. All climate mitigation programmes in the region together resulted in a cumulative reduction of 59 million tonnes of carbon dioxide, almost equivalent to Sweden's annual greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

In 2010, UNDP has been working as the lead agency for the phase out of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFC) in [Bangladesh](#), [China](#), [Fiji](#), [India](#), [Indonesia](#), [Malaysia](#), and [Sri Lanka](#) and, in cooperation with UNEP and other agencies, in [Cambodia](#), [Nepal](#), and [Thailand](#). Throughout the region, unsustainable land management practices are destroying croplands, devastating livelihoods, and exacerbating desertification and dust storms in arid and semi-arid areas. Currently, UNDP is demonstrating sustainable management of croplands across more than 100,000 hectares in South Asia. These demonstrations will help farmers and agricultural extension systems to improve agricultural



▲ For millions of people affected by cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh, UNDP has constructed 15,746 disaster resilient houses for vulnerable families. (Salman Saeed/UNDP Bangladesh)

productivity and livelihoods while reducing the loss of crucial arable land, which many poor and marginalized communities particularly depend upon. In **Cambodia**, for example, UNDP assisted in establishing the 19,000-hectare Preah Vihear Protected Forest. Alternative income sources for rice farmers were developed by encouraging wildlife-friendly farming practices and purchasing the produce at a premium. This emanates from earlier lessons that for a protected area to serve its purpose more effectively, alternative livelihoods for local farmers also need to be supported at the same time.

Regional attention to forest conservation and work on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) has increased significantly during 2010, during which time UNDP continued to assist countries to prepare and implement national REDD+ strategies. UN-REDD is currently implementing or preparing to implement country programmes in six partner countries in the Asia-Pacific: **Cambodia, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Viet Nam**. UN-REDD also assists other countries in **their** conservation efforts, including **Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, and Sri Lanka**.

Women's needs for specific forms of household energy, particularly for cooking and heating, have been given priority in the design of biomass energy projects for **Bhutan, Cambodia, and Timor-Leste**. UNDP is supporting women in their efforts to engage directly with decision-makers to ensure that these decision-makers are well aware of women's needs and can pursue the most appropriate responses. A new initiative on gender mainstreaming, which started as a UNDP pilot in **Cambodia**, aims to support the inclusion of gender equality considerations in national policies, strategies, and programmes on the environment and energy.



▲ *Men weigh “Wildlife Friendly Ibis Rice” in the award-winning ecotourism village of Tmatboey in Cambodia’s northern plains in Preah Vihear province. The wildlife-friendly rice is part of the Conservation Land Area Management project supported by UNDP and executed by Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) in collaboration with Cambodia’s Ministry of the Environment and the Forestry Administration. One innovative incentive scheme that the project has successfully introduced is the production of wildlife-friendly rice. Farmers receive a premium price for their rice if they agree to abide by conservation agreements that are designed to protect rare water birds and other species. (Eleanor Briggs/UNDP)*

With **Nepal** and **Timor-Leste** having completed their National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), all LDCs in the region are now equipped with such and have identified their most urgent and immediate needs to adapt to climate change.

In **Bangladesh**, pro-poor environmental concerns were successfully integrated in national development strategies, such as poverty reduction strategy papers and MDG implementation plans. UNDP support through a sustainable land management project has led to the drafting of the first land zoning law and village improvement act (covering areas related to sustainable land utilization and long-term poverty perspectives), training of approximately 350 government scientists and agriculture officers, and the promotion of service lifecycle management concepts through media outreach.

Many **Small Island Developing States** in the Pacific are making good progress in mainstreaming environmental sustainability. UNDP's contribution resulted in the integration of environment and climate issues concerns in national policies and plans in many countries in the sub-region.

In the Pacific, more than 80 percent of the population lives in coastal areas. As the sub-region is especially vulnerable to climate change, UNDP has successfully mobilized significant resources to support the design and implementation of adaptation initiatives at both the national and community level. Several Pacific Island countries have consequently developed NAPAs to address the adverse effects of climate change. Many countries are also making strong progress in improving effective and sustainable management of environmental and natural resources, especially at the community level. Technical assistance was also provided to the implementation of a regional renewable energy programme covering 11 PICs as well as national renewable energy programmes in **Fiji**, the **Marshall Islands**, and **Palau**.

In **Papua New Guinea**, the government made an allocation of \$250,000 to the design of the Environmentally Sustainable Economic Growth Policy, and a further \$1 million to the Small Grants Programme to provide grants to CSOs to empower communities to undertake biodiversity conservation and to sustainably use their resources to improve livelihoods. The Policy will significantly enable PNG to move to a more environmentally sustainable development pathway in the future. UNDP support has enhanced the country's mainstreaming capacity of all natural resources sectors, including relevant central government agencies.

In the **Middle-Income Countries**, UNDP's work in environment and sustainable development, particularly through upstream technical and policy support, has played an increasingly influential role in assisting governments in integrating environmental and climate issues into their development planning. In several MICs, UNDP is the lead agency helping the governments to intensify their progress in complying with the Montreal Protocol and phasing-out the consumption and use of ozone-depleting substances. UNDP has also contributed to the development of REDD+ readiness to reduce GHG emissions from deforestation and forests and peat lands degradation, and to expanding countries' access to funds to support REDD+ activities. Many MICs have benefited from UNDP's Global Environment Facility (GEF). To date, there has been quite a number of innovative community-based works with the use of the GEF Small Grants Programme in MICs.

The **China** Human Development Report 2009-2010 "China and a Sustainable Future: Towards a Low-Carbon Economy and Society," prepared with UNDP support, suggests policy options for the future. Also in 2010, the State Council launched the China National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, developed with technical support from UNDP, which goes beyond the traditional protected areas approach and provides guidance on how regional planning may be used to accommodate wild species and human activity in a single landscape.

In **Thailand**, a joint declaration on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Preparedness was signed by seven key national agencies in 2010, confirming the Thai Government's commitment to address climate change as part of its national agenda. UNDP support



▲ *Trainees building a disaster resilient home as a demonstration during their carpenter training organized jointly by UNDP and UNHABITAT in Thailand. (UNDP)*

towards this process contributed to stronger partnerships among government agencies, civil society, and communities. In addition, UNDP technical expertise and training programs helped enhance the capacity of local governments and provinces to use greenhouse gas inventory development and sub-global assessments as techniques to design their own pro-poor and environment-related policies.

In **Viet Nam**, a new focus on green production was adopted through the 2010 Law on Energy Efficiency and the government's decision not to accept foreign direct investment projects with low technologies that cause environmental pollution. Demonstrated results of a UNDP pilot project to promote energy efficiency for small and medium enterprises across five sectors (brick making, ceramics, textiles, paper production, and food processing) was translated into a major policy change, with its findings now being used for the formulation of new environmental protection laws.

In **Indonesia**, UNDP through the UN-REDD programme has contributed significantly to the development of the country's REDD+ strategy by raising awareness and developing the capacity of the Ministry of Forestry and other stakeholders on key principles such as safeguarding the rights of local communities, and multi-stakeholder participation in policy making. In addition, UNDP is supporting the implementation of a \$1 billion climate change partnership between Indonesia and Norway to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation of forests and peat lands. During the initial \$30 million preparatory phase, UNDP supported the government by providing fiduciary management services and REDD+ technical expertise, including strategies for gender mainstreaming and participation of indigenous communities, high level inputs to the REDD+ financing mechanism, and the establishment of a REDD+ agency, as well as REDD+ preparatory work in the pilot province Central Kalimantan.

In **India**, a "Common Framework for the preparation of State Level Action Plans on Climate Change" has been adopted by the government. Each state within the country has been directed to develop a State Climate Change Action Plan, and six states have already completed their plans. For the first time, an exhaustive inventory of industries using bio-resources has been prepared, thus filling a key gap in the implementation of the country's Biological Diversity Act. UNDP is also helping the Indian Government meet its obligations under the Montreal Protocol, and has assisted in reducing ozone depleting substances in the country's pharmaceutical industry by 70 percent over 2009–2010.

In **Iran**, the 5th National Development Plan prescribes sustainable use of resources and biodiversity mainstreaming, as well as integrated, participatory, and ecosystem-based approaches to environment and natural resource management and improved land-use planning. The plan also calls for the application of Strategic Environmental Assessment tools and techniques to guide decision-making at the national and subnational level and within all development sectors. These prescriptions are primarily based on capacity support, upstream advice, and pilot projects supported by UNDP. Iran has been able to achieve major global milestone under the Montreal Protocol, that is, the scheduled phase-out of the 1st group of ozone-depleting substances. The national strategy for the phase-out of the 2nd group of the controlled substance was submitted in 2010.



▲ *The assembly line at one of the manufacturing companies assisted by the National CFC Phase-out Project in Iran. UNDP has assisted by providing CFC-free technology so that Iran can meet its CFC Phase-out obligations under the Montreal Protocol. (UNDP)*

The Government of **Malaysia** adopted the National Green Technology Policy and the National Climate Change Policy in 2010, thus clearly affirming renewable energy as a national priority and moving towards an advanced phase of green technology implementation in the energy, water, transportation, and building sectors. UNDP contributed to the strengthening of Malaysia's energy security policy through a variety of project initiatives.

In **Pakistan**, environment and climate change are priority areas in the Five-Year National Plan for 2011–2015, especially following the disastrous floods in 2010. UNDP has supported the formulation of the National Policy on Climate Change and National Plans of Actions for Adaptation and Mitigation, as well as the adoption of the National Forest Policy and the Energy Conservation Act. Private sector funding (\$2 million from the COFRA Foundation) was mobilized for providing renewable energy appliances, such as solar lighting, solar pumps, and solar heaters, as well as energy-efficient houses for flood-affected households in the Sindh province. The design and implementation of the new housing units was undertaken through the research and engineering support of academic institutions and NGOs, with technical support from UNDP.

7. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

In September 2010, the Government of **China** and UNDP signed a Memorandum of Understanding committing themselves to work together to share China's development experiences with other developing countries under the framework of South-South cooperation, with the aim of achieving the MDGs. In addition, the agreement designated the International Poverty Reduction Centre in China as the window for transferring China's knowledge and expertise on MDGs to other developing countries.

As part of this agreement, a two-day **Africa-China** Poverty Reduction and Development Conference was held in November 2010, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, with 250 participants, including government officials from more than 23 African countries, China and Viet Nam, regional African institutions, academic institutions, civil society organizations, private sector representatives.

Leveraging knowledge

One of the most significant constraints in the **Pacific SIDs** is the small scale of their national administrations and their dispersion across a vast geographical area. The Pacific Solutions Exchange helps overcome this capacity constraint by offering a low-cost option of



▲ In September 2010 in New York, UNDP and the Government of China signed an agreement to enhance their long-standing cooperation, centering on strengthening South-South cooperation, building on China's success in lifting 500 million people out of poverty and advancing the MDGs. The signing was witnessed by UNDP Administrator Helen Clark and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. (Paulo Filgueiras/UN Photo)

connecting policy makers and practitioners across the sub-region.

In May 2010, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the governments of **Iran** and **Afghanistan** to enhance cooperation in the area of customs administration. One specific objective of the agreement is the implementation of ASYCUDA-World software – designed to speed up the release of goods and cargoes – in the customs offices along the countries' shared border.

The 2010 conference on mining provided a good opportunity for Cambodia to learn about the experiences of other countries in regulating the mining sector and about its various social, environmental, and governance aspects. The conference gathered experts from **China**, **Lao PDR**, **Mongolia**, and **Viet Nam**; and Cambodia particularly engaged with Mongolia on the human and social development aspects of the country's rapid mineral development.

UNDP Asia-Pacific, jointly with the ADB, UNESCAP, and the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS), helped built the South Asia Economic Summit (SAES) into a credible, broad-based platform, which has proposed concrete initiatives to policy makers for comprehensively addressing the barriers to intraregional economic cooperation as a driver for poverty alleviation. A number of Summit recommendations, including those based on UNDP's recommendations for equitable regional integration for the LDCs, are being taken forward by the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Secretariat. The proposal to set up a SAARC Seed Bank has been accepted at the Association's 16th Summit, held in Bhutan in December 2010.

To identify the areas of the region most vulnerable to disaster, UNDP partnered with the Asian Institute of Technology, **Thailand**, and the SAARC Disaster Management Secretariat to develop a 'multi-hazard risk profile'. The Disaster Management Centre (DMC) and the Thai Ministry of Environment Climate Change Secretariat partnered with the Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Forum to develop a national adaptation platform. In addition, DMC and the Meteorology Department of **Sri Lanka** were supported to form a partnership with

the **Indian** Meteorology Department for cyclone modelling. Similarly, training on the multi-hazard risk in coastal areas was conducted in **Sri Lanka** in collaboration with the **Indonesian** Institute of Research, with support from the UNDP Asia-Pacific Regional Centre in Bangkok. Indonesia shared its experience on early warning, community-based disaster management and standing operation procedures, while Sri Lanka shared its experience in sophisticated inundation modelling of coastal areas and risk-estimation techniques.

UNDP and the **Malaysian** Ministry of Defence are currently implementing a project that aims to strengthen the capacity of peacekeepers and peacekeeping trainers from countries in **Africa** and **Asia** to meet the demands of 21st century peacekeeping and peace-building operations, at the same time enhancing South-South cooperation between Malaysia and the countries of Asia and Africa. The project supports the development of training modules on civil-military coordination and on gender dimensions, and will enhance and sustain the capabilities of the Malaysian Peacekeeping Training Centre to become a regional centre that will train both national and international armed forces personnel, civilian police and staff for operational duties in UN peacekeeping missions.

At an International Seminar on Gender-Responsive Policing in **Nepal**, the practices and experiences of police responses to gender issues, including gender-based violence, were shared, and lessons were distilled from common challenges in different cultural contexts. Successes and best practices on police responses to cases of gender-based violence were discussed in depth, which in turn will be fed into the curriculum and training of the Nepal Police.



Notes

- 1 "Protecting development gains: reducing disaster vulnerability and building resilience in Asia and the Pacific," UNISDR & UNESCAP, 2010.
- 2 "Mongolia Assessment of Development Results," draft report, 2010.
- 3 See www.undp.org/evaluation/thematic/par.shtml.
- 4 "Protecting development gains: Reducing disaster vulnerability and building resilience in Asia and the Pacific," UNISDR & UNESCAP, 2010.
- 5 See www.undp.org/evaluation/thematic/par.shtml.
- 6 See www.undp.org/evaluation/documents/thematic/pen/Eval_PEN.pdf.



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