

Human Development
Lifetime Achievement Award

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej
of Thailand

26 May 2006



The Human Development Award

A special *UNDP Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award* is presented to individuals who have demonstrated outstanding commitment during their lifetime to furthering the understanding and progress of human development in a national, regional or global context. This is the first time such a Lifetime Achievement Award has been awarded.

Other Human Development Awards include the biennial *Mahbub ul Haq Award for Outstanding Contribution to Human Development* given to national or world leaders – previously awarded to President Fernando Henrique Cardoso of Brazil in 2002 and founder of Bangladesh’s BRAC Fazle Hasan Abed in 2004 – as well as five categories of awards for outstanding National Human Development Reports.

Human development puts people and their wellbeing at the centre of development and provides an alternative to the traditional, more narrowly focused, economic growth development paradigm. Human development is about people, about expanding their choices and capabilities to live long, healthy, knowledgeable, and creative lives. Human development embraces equitable economic growth, sustainability, human rights, participation, security, and political freedom.

As part of a cohesive UN System, UNDP promotes human development through its development work on the ground in 166 countries worldwide and through the publication of annual *Human Development Reports*.





H.M. the King of Thailand: A Lifetime of Promoting Human Development

This first *UNDP Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award* is given to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand for his extraordinary contribution to human development on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of his accession to the throne.

At his coronation, His Majesty the King uttered the Oath of Accession: *"We shall reign with righteousness, for the benefits and happiness of the Siamese people"*. Ever since, His Majesty has selflessly devoted his time and effort to the wellbeing and welfare of the Thai people.

During his 60 year reign, His Majesty the King of Thailand has tirelessly promoted rural development and helped improve the lives of poor people across Thailand. For His Majesty, the people come first, and he has relentlessly travelled across the entire country visiting communities even in the most remote areas, making him the most widely travelled king in Thai history.

With emphasis on small-scale agriculture, appropriate farming technologies, sustainable use of water resources, conservation, and flood and drought mitigation, His Majesty the King's projects have brought benefits to millions of people in rural areas across Thailand, regardless of their citizen status, ethnicity or religion.

His Majesty's achievements include successful integrated rural development projects in Northern Thailand that have helped to significantly reduce the production of opium harvests through crop substitution. This has greatly benefited ethnic groups living in the mountainous areas along the borders with Myanmar and Lao PDR, and brought improvements to their access to health care and education.



His Majesty has also given his Royal patronage and active support to a wide range of important social causes: promoting the health and wellbeing of children; supporting polio eradication campaigns; combating iodine deficiency and leprosy; improving access to formal and informal education; and providing scholarships to orphans. The list goes on.

His Majesty the King has made an invaluable contribution to human development through his development thinking. His Majesty's philosophy of "Sufficiency Economy" provides a more balanced, holistic and sustainable development approach by stressing the principles of moderation, reasonableness and resilience to change with proper adherence to appropriate social values. This philosophy, which has been widely adopted in Thailand, emphasises the importance of responsible consumption, the diversification of household-level production as well as appropriate conduct at individual, community, business, and government levels. Through his philosophy and the vast knowledge accumulated from decades of implementing thousands of Royal development projects, His Majesty has made an invaluable contribution to the global development discourse and helps to further deepen the human development paradigm championed by UNDP.

For His Majesty, knowledge and innovation are essential for the advancement of human development. Through the creation of Centres for Development across the country, His Majesty has put great emphasis on applied research and experimentation that are relevant to the diverse socio-geographic conditions across Thailand's regions.

Over the years, His Majesty has displayed a deep and unwavering commitment to democracy, peace, justice, and national harmony. His Majesty's reign has provided a pillar of stability during this fast changing and tumultuous period of Thailand's history. As upholder of all religions, His Majesty gives equal attention to the protection of all forms of worships and to the interests of all religious communities in Thailand.

About UNDP

UNDP is the UN's global development network, an organization advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. UNDP is on the ground in 166 countries, working with people on their solutions to global and national development challenges. UNDP's mission is to support all developing countries to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

In Thailand, as part of a dynamic UN Country Team, UNDP engages in a mutual exchange of knowledge and expertise with the Royal Thai Government, civil society organizations, and academic institutions. As the UN's global development network, UNDP is a crucial gateway for Thailand in accessing international expertise, policy advice, and best practices. Conversely, Thailand is an indispensable link in UNDP's global development network, allowing UNDP to assist other countries using the Kingdom's knowledge and development experience.

The main focus of UNDP's Country Partnership in Thailand are: (i) promoting good governance through democracy and decentralization; (ii) ensuring the sustainable use of environmental resources; (iii) supporting an effective and human rights-based response to HIV and AIDS; (iv) strengthening Thailand's statistical system to monitor key indicators of poverty, health, education, environment and gender equality, and in so doing enhancing evidence-based policy-making at national, provincial and local levels, and (v) supporting Thailand as an emerging "donor of the South" providing development assistance to neighbouring countries and beyond.