

# THE LOCAL CAPACITY STRATEGY

**Enabling Action for the  
Environment and Sustainable Development**



**UNDP ENVIRONMENT & ENERGY GROUP**







# THE LOCAL CAPACITY STRATEGY

**Enabling Action for the  
Environment and Sustainable Development**

Acronyms, [01](#)

Executive Summary, [03](#)

1. UNDP's Strategy for Local Capacity and Action for the Environment  
and Sustainable Development: Context for Action, [07](#)

1.1 Introduction to the Local Capacity Strategy, [07](#)

1.2 Goals and Objectives of the Strategy, [08](#)

1.3 Untapped Potential for Local Action, [09](#)

1.4 The Contribution of Local Organizations to  
Environment and Sustainable Development, [11](#)

1.5 The Challenges of Working at the Local Level, [13](#)

1.6 UNDP's Local Mandate, Comparative Advantages, and Strategic Roles, [14](#)

2. Scaling-up Local Capacity and Action for Results, [15](#)

3. Strategic Priorities for Scaling-up Local Capacity and Action, [19](#)

4. Operationalizing the Local Capacity Strategy, [29](#)

References, [31](#)

## [Annexes](#)

I. Synthesis Report on the Consultation Process to  
Develop the Local Capacity Strategy , [33](#)

II. UNDP Headquarters-Managed Programs with a Focus on the Local Level, [36](#)

III. UNDP's Environment & Energy Group's (EEG) Work at the Local Level, [37](#)

IV. UNDP Mandate to Work at the Local Level , [39](#)

V. How UNDP's Practices and Teams Can Advance the Local Capacity Strategy, [40](#)

VI . EEG's Global Network of Partners for Local Action, [41](#)

# ACRONYMS

<b>ALM</b>	Adaptation Learning Mechanism
<b>BDP</b>	Bureau for Development Policy
<b>CBA</b>	Community-Based Adaptation
<b>CBD</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>CBO</b>	Community-Based Organisation
<b>CC</b>	Climate Change
<b>CDG</b>	Capacity Development Group
<b>CI</b>	Conservation International
<b>CKS</b>	Community Knowledge Service
<b>CPAP</b>	Country Programme Action Plan
<b>CSD</b>	Commission on Sustainable Development
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organisation
<b>CWI</b>	Community Water Initiative
<b>ECOSOC</b>	Economic and Social Council
<b>EEG</b>	Environment and Energy Group
<b>ESD</b>	Environment and Sustainable Development
<b>FCPF</b>	Forest Carbon Partnership Facility
<b>GEF</b>	Global Environment Facility
<b>HRBA</b>	Human Rights-Based Approach
<b>ICCA</b>	Indigenous and Community Conserved Area
<b>IIED</b>	International Institute for Environment and Development
<b>IISD</b>	International Institute for Sustainable Development
<b>ITCP</b>	Integrated Territorial Climate Plans
<b>IUCN</b>	International Union for Conservation of Nature
<b>LIFE</b>	Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment
<b>MDBS</b>	Multi Donor Budget Support
<b>MDG</b>	Millennium Development Goal
<b>NBSAP</b>	National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan
<b>NGO</b>	Non- Governmental Organisation
<b>NSC</b>	National Steering Committee
<b>OP5</b>	5th Operational Phase of the Global Environment Facility
<b>PDP</b>	Partners in Development Programme
<b>PEP</b>	Poverty-Environment Partnership
<b>POP</b>	Persistent Organic Pollutant
<b>PPPSD</b>	Private Public Partnerships for Service Delivery
<b>PROWESS</b>	Promotion of the Role of Women in Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Services
<b>PRSP</b>	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
<b>REDD</b>	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation

<b>SGP</b>	Small Grants Programme
<b>TACC</b>	Territorial Approach to Climate Change
<b>TI</b>	Talamanca Initiative
<b>TNC</b>	The Nature Conservancy
<b>UNCDF</b>	United Nations Capital Development Fund
<b>UNDG</b>	United Nations Development Group
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UNFCCC</b>	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNPFII</b>	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
<b>UNV</b>	United Nations Volunteers
<b>WRI</b>	World Resources Institute
<b>WSP</b>	Water and Sanitation Programme
<b>WSS</b>	Water Supply and Sanitation
<b>WWF</b>	World Wildlife Fund

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Strategy's Intended Use and Audience:** *The Strategy is designed to be used as a reference guide and framework in support of action for UNDP staff in Country Offices, Regional Bureaux and Regional Service Centres, the Bureau for Development Policy, the Environment and Energy Group and UNDP Management to support the implementation of the key result area on local capacity and action for the Environment and Sustainable Practice articulated in UNDP's Strategic Plan 2008-2013. The Strategy will also be shared with external partners, including governments, donors and other interested institutions and stakeholder groups to articulate UNDP's position and approach to strengthening local capacity to manage environmental and energy resources.*

**Strategy's Intended Impact:** *The Strategy presents a vision for how the UNDP Environment and Sustainable Development Practice can approach, prioritize, and integrate its work to create the enabling conditions for effective local action and to significantly speed the scale-up of local-level best practices. The Strategy is designed to elucidate and strengthen how UNDP works with and supports community-based initiatives and national governments to scale up local-level successes.*

## Rationale Underpinning UNDP's Strategy

Local action—action that reflects and supports the demands, perspectives, and commitment of local actors—is critical to sustainably managing the environment and energy to reduce poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Local actors are the chief stewards of the world's ecosystems, and they make the vast majority of daily environmental management decisions with their land use and investment choices. Over generations, they have used their traditional ecological knowledge to manage natural resources, conserve and maintain ecosystems, and adapt to environmental changes.

Yet despite the extensive knowledge and experience of local people, their transformative potential to manage the environment to achieve development goals has not been adequately recognized or harnessed. This stems from a systematic failure to deliver the rights, access, and finances that local actors need to fully tap their natural resource assets and frame their own development solutions.

The Strategy presented here is designed to help UNDP address this failure, and in so doing better harness the untapped potential of local communities to parley their environmental resources into sustainable sources of income and empowerment. It presents a vision for how the Environment and Sustainable Development Practice (ESD) can approach, prioritize, and integrate its work to create the enabling conditions for effective local action and to greatly speed the scale-up of local-level best practices. The Strategy is designed to elucidate and strengthen how UNDP works with and supports community-based initiatives and national governments to scale up local-level successes. As such, the Strategy is meant to be an integral element of the MDG Breakthrough Strategy, stressing the key role that local initiatives will play in accelerating progress toward the MDGs.



## Objectives of the Strategy

- Clarify and enhance the UNDP mandate to support community-based environment and energy initiatives.
- Strengthen and amplify local voices in policy-making.
- Direct investment and environmental finance to the local level.
- Build local capacity to manage environmental and energy resources.
- Improve government capacity to respond to local needs and scale-up local success.
- Bridge “upstream” policy work (national and international enabling conditions) and “downstream” delivery work (local resource management and project delivery).
- Build UNDP capacity to capture and disseminate lessons learned from the ground and what is needed to scale up local best practice.
- Support local and community actors to establish baselines and long-term monitoring and evaluation processes that can demonstrate impacts and sustainability.

## Mandate and Experience Supporting Local Approaches

UNDP is expressly mandated to support local approaches to development. This mandate is reflected in numerous policy documents, including the [UNDP Fourth Global Programme 2009-2011](#) and [UNDP Strategic Plan 2008-2013](#). Local work is seen as an essential counterpoint and complement to UNDP’s work at the national and international levels to mainstream environment, energy, and poverty concerns into national planning and development processes. Indeed, one of the four key results for the Environment and Sustainable Development Practice described in the UNDP Strategic Plan is to ***strengthen local capacity to manage the environment and expand access to environmental and energy services, especially for the poor.***

In support of this mandate, UNDP—and the Environment and Energy Group (EEG) in particular—have accumulated a significant body of experience in local approaches to sustainable development. The UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), the Equator Initiative, the Energy Access Programme, and the Community Water Initiative have together facilitated more than 12,500 local interventions and provided working examples of how to effectively localize the MDGs. This wealth of experience in diverse local contexts offers a strong foundation on which to build the Local Capacity Strategy.

## Strategic Priorities and Activities

Four strategic priorities will guide UNDP’s activities under the Strategy. While each priority has a distinct scope and modality, they are all strongly correlated and interdependent:

### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: PROMOTE RIGHTS, ACCESS, AND FINANCE MECHANISMS.**

**Strengthen institutional, policy, and legal frameworks to broaden local access to environment and energy resources and services, and to enable finances to flow to the local level.**

Strategic Priority 1 recognizes that the poor often face a lack of legal entitlement and access that prevents them from tapping the full range of environmental benefits and energy resources available in local ecosystems. Addressing these lacks requires devolution of specific resource rights that grant individuals and communities the ability to manage local ecosystems and capture the benefits of this management. Access to sufficient finance is also necessary to enable local actors to make the investments they need to sustainably and profitably manage local ecosystems. An array of established and new sources of finance—such as carbon finance and payments for other ecosystem services—offer potential sources for local financing, but weak linkages between national governments and local actors often stand in the way. Activities under this Strategic Priority will focus on:



- Strengthening the rationale for devolving substantive resource rights by improving communication between local and state actors, demonstrating the benefits of community-driven approaches, and increasing the ability of state officials to identify local best practices
- Supporting current government efforts to extend secure land and resource tenure to individuals and communities
- Increasing the flow of funds to the local level by ensuring that existing and new financing mechanisms include a local component that can provide responsive, demand-driven financing and grant-making to community-based initiatives.

#### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: ENHANCE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE CAPACITY.**

Enhance the capacity of local actors to access environmental finance and plan, implement and monitor environment and energy programmes, enterprises and service delivery.

While Strategic Priority 1 aims to get the necessary legal and institutional conditions in place to increase local rights and resource access, Strategic Priority 2 will build the capacity of local actors to use their rights and effectively manage these resources, including gaining access to financial resources. Working through SGP and other mechanisms, UNDP will support local capacity development in two main areas:

- Capacity to understand and demand access to natural resources and financing mechanisms for nature-based projects and enterprises. This includes capacity in the areas of resource rights, effective participation, and demonstration and documentation of success.
- Capacity to scale up sustainable implementation of natural resources and environment and energy programmes, enterprises, and service delivery. This includes capacity in the areas of institutions, finances, business development, social mobilization, networking, and leadership development.

#### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: FACILITATE LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING.**

Promote peer-to-peer learning, knowledge sharing, and documentation of best practices to make local action more effective, sustainable, and replicable.

Facilitating the peer-to-peer sharing of best practice between local actors is a powerful tool of local empowerment and a highly effective means of scaling up best practice to meet the MDGs. UNDP experience shows that uptake time of a best practice can be reduced by half or more when shared peer-to-peer or community-to-community, allowing local actors to avoid past mistakes. Activities under this Strategic Priority will focus on:

- Establishing an integrated local-global learning and knowledge management facility to foster best practice information exchange among local communities and national and international policy makers.
- Facilitating dialogues and visits between local groups and helping communities establish ongoing learning platforms for sharing best practices.
- Supporting the implementation of new knowledge and lessons learned when a good practice has been successfully shared between local actors.

#### **STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY VOICES IN POLICY PROCESSES.**

Ensure that local actors are positioned to advocate for their rights and entitlements related to environment and energy in national and international fora.

The contributions local actors make to achieve sustainable development targets such as the MDGs are often insufficiently recognized. UNDP is in a strong position to facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues and strategically position local and indigenous voices in national and international policy-making processes. In

this way, local actors can advocate for policies that make sense on the ground and ensure that sustainable conditions are in place under which they can operate. Activities under this Strategic Priority will focus on:

- Equipping local actors with the communication and organizing skills to advocate for themselves
- Furnishing opportunities, through multi-stakeholder dialogues and other mechanisms, to integrate local voices into environment and energy policy formation (e.g. Convention on Biological Diversity, UN Commission for Sustainable Development, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, etc.).

## Implementing the Strategy

Much of the inspiration for the Local Capacity Strategy comes from successful local action already underway with UNDP's support. Indeed, the activities under the Strategy endeavour to build on that momentum and spread the effects more widely and systematically. As such, the Strategy will work directly with and through existing UNDP global, regional, national and sub-national programmes and projects with a focus on local capacity and action.

SGP will also play a crucial role in delivering the Local Capacity Strategy. SGP provides an effective modality to deliver funding and a range of services directly to the local level, through a tried and tested decentralized institutional governance architecture operating across 122 UNDP Country Offices, and which guarantees the highest levels of international fiduciary accountability. Funding will take the form of either co-financing for GEF-eligible activities, or new funding to non-GEF eligible activities in participating SGP countries. The guiding principle in implementing the activities of the Local Capacity Strategy will be to allow local NGOs and CBOs easy and expedited access to funds to ensure their timely and targeted utilization.

When fully implemented, the Local Capacity Strategy will contribute to the MDG Acceleration Framework, which is the central element of the MDG Breakthrough Strategy. Years of experience have taught us that truly "localizing" the MDGs requires tackling the obstacles to effective action at the local level and providing local actors the capacities, connections, and support they require to drive their own development agendas.



## 1

# Local Capacity and Action for the Environment and Sustainable Development:

## Context for Action



### 1.1 The Scope of the Challenge

Local action—action that reflects and supports the demands, perspectives, and commitment of local actors—is critical to sustainably managing the environment and energy to reduce poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Local actors are the chief stewards of the world's ecosystems, and they make the vast majority of daily environmental management decisions with their land use and investment choices. Over generations, they have used their traditional ecological knowledge to manage natural resources, conserve and maintain ecosystems, and adapt to environmental changes.

Yet despite the extensive knowledge and experience of local people, their transformative potential to manage the environment to achieve development goals has not been adequately recognized or harnessed. This stems from a systematic failure to deliver the rights, access, and finances that local actors need to fully tap their natural resource assets and frame their own development solutions.

The strategy presented here is meant to address this failure, and in so doing harness the untapped potential of local communities to parley their environmental resources into sustainable sources of income and empowerment. Environment and Sustainable Development Practice<sup>2</sup> can approach, prioritize, and integrate its work to create the enabling conditions for effective local action and to greatly speed the scale-up of local-level best practices. The Strategy is designed to elucidate and strengthen how UNDP works with and supports community-based initiatives and national governments to scale up local-level successes. As such, the Strategy is meant to be an integral element of the MDG Breakthrough Strategy<sup>3</sup>, stressing the key role that local initiatives will play in accelerating progress toward the MDGs.

<sup>1</sup> The term “local actors” covers a spectrum of groups, formal and informal, rural and urban, that include: communities, indigenous peoples, village associations, local NGOs, micro-enterprises, youth and women's groups, cooperatives, self-help groups, savings groups, local authorities and municipalities.

<sup>2</sup> The Environment and Sustainable Development (ESD) Practice includes all of UNDP's staff in Country Offices, Regional Bureaux and Regional Service Centres around the world working in the focus area of Environment and Sustainable Development.

<sup>3</sup> UNDP has developed an MDG Breakthrough Strategy to help all countries accelerate their progress towards achieving the MDGs. It involves working with programme countries to identify the barriers to progress, and then designing and implementing programmes to address them.





A range of environmental challenges increase the urgency for such a strategy. The 2005 Millennium Ecosystem Assessment found that two-thirds of the world's ecosystem services—which provide a vital lifeline for the world's poor—are now in decline, including a widespread loss of biodiversity<sup>4</sup>. Climate change promises to exacerbate this decline, challenging local communities to adapt their environmental practices to preserve their livelihoods and cultures. However, these challenges also offer opportunities: for new paradigms in the valuation of environment and ecosystem services; for a reorientation of market mechanisms to provide incentives for sustainable development; and for a rethinking of how to most effectively deliver pro-poor programmes in environment and energy.

At the current crossroads of challenge and opportunity, UNDP is well positioned to usher in a normative transformation that acknowledges that solutions to the poverty and environmental challenges of our time will not come primarily by the actions of governments, but will be forged farmer by farmer, household by household, and community by community, with governments enabling this local transformation through policy reform and capacity enhancement.

Work at the local level is a reliable way to build real resilience to the challenges of climate change and the many other environmental, social, and economic challenges the poor face today. Such resilience stems

from simultaneous improvements in the health of local ecosystems, in the diversity and availability of local economic options, and in the social capacity of community members to work collectively for common development objectives. By providing a coherent scheme for delivering the appropriate resource rights, capacity development, and financing to local actors, UNDP will contribute directly to such community resilience and the “localization” of the MDGs.

## 1.2 The Goals and Objectives of the Strategy

As stated above, the overall goals of the Local Capacity Strategy are to foster an enabling environment for effective local action and promote the scale-up of best practices in environmental management that sustain and enhance local livelihoods. In this way, the Strategy aims to localize the MDGs, providing the capacity, finance, and policy support local actors need to speed up their achievement of development goals. In the UNDP context, these broad goals translate into the following specific objectives:

- Clarify and enhance the UNDP mandate to support community-based environment and energy initiatives.
- Strengthen and amplify local voices in policy-making.
- Direct investment and environmental finance to the local level.
- Build local capacity to manage environmental and energy resources.

<sup>4</sup> According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, “The degradation of ecosystem services is harming many of the world’s poorest people and is sometimes the principal factor causing poverty.” ([Millennium Ecosystem Assessment 2005](#))

- Improve government capacity to respond to local needs and scale-up local success.
- Bridge “upstream” policy work (national and international enabling conditions) and “downstream” delivery work (local resource management and project delivery).
- Build UNDP capacity to capture and disseminate lessons learned from the ground and what is needed to scale up local best practice.
- Support local and community actors to establish baselines and long-term monitoring and evaluation processes that can demonstrate impacts and sustainability.

### 1.3 Untapped Potential for Local Action

Although local actors are frequently the target of development efforts, capabilities for self-organization and action with regard to natural resource management are often ignored or undermined. For example, they are frequently excluded from meaningful participation in environment and energy policy-making processes. At the same time, they often do not possess secure resource tenure, or access to technology, markets or credit — the bases for productive investments in their nature-based livelihoods. Such exclusion and lack of entitlements has served to weaken the impact, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability of initiatives, funding mechanisms, and programmes implemented by national governments and international development agencies.

In spite of these obstacles, communities have successfully undertaken thousands of sustainable and effective community-driven projects, from constructing local water systems, to managing local fisheries, to establishing ecotourism enterprises. Indeed, experience shows that successful development solutions centered on the environment often originate at the local level. Even so, national governments and donor agencies have continued to perceive local people as ineffective at delivering development outcomes. This misconception is brought about by dysfunctions at two levels: on the part of states, a lack of capacity to provide the enabling policy and financial environment for scaling up local best

practice; and on the part of local actors, a lack of both empowerment and capacity to increase the scale and impact of their work. It is underpinned by mainstream mindsets that fail to value local and traditional knowledge of poor people who lack formal education.

#### Box 1: THE IMPERATIVE OF WORKING THROUGH LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Effective local organizations are an asset at the end of the MDG ‘delivery chain;’ local government, clinics, schools and CSOs deliver, not central government or donors.
- Effective local organizations empower poor people to relate better to authorities, landlords, employers and service providers.
- Effective local organizations necessarily take a holistic approach – integrating economic, social, and environmental objectives in local realities.
- Local organizational knowledge and long-term presence can help ensure ‘aid effectiveness.’

Source: Steve Bass, IIED, December 2008

Local level involvement in policy and programme formulation, implementation and monitoring is not just critical for community-driven projects, but to the success of national and international initiatives as well. For example, community-based adaptation initiatives are key to informing national adaptation efforts. Similarly, a global scheme for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) will surely not succeed without the legitimate empowerment and engagement of local actors. Indeed, strengthening local institutions and providing for the meaningful and inclusive participation of local actors is a principal means of increasing aid effectiveness at all levels. In addition, experience over the last decade has shown that when the MDGs are effectively localized—that is, when activities to achieve the MDGs are rooted in local demand and draw upon local initiative—progress is measurably enhanced (see Box 2).

## Box 2: THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE LOCAL CAPACITY STRATEGY TO ACHIEVING THE MDGs

Local actors and local solutions are central to achieving the MDGs. As such, the Local Capacity Strategy supports the larger UNDP “Breakthrough Strategy” designed to quicken the pace toward the 2015 MDG targets. Local organizations are on the front lines in the delivery of health and educational services. They are key partners and participants in nature-based enterprises and essential to the management of local ecosystems. In effect, they are the business end of the MDG delivery chain. Improving the capacity of local actors, therefore, is a straightforward route to quicker achievement of the MDGs. Section 1.4 below describes the link between the Local Capacity Strategy and attainment of MDG 7, but the Strategy will contribute measurably to the achievement of the other MDGs as well:

### **Local organizations are central to food production, nutrition, and farm-related employment.**

Despite the importance of the global food trade, most of the world’s food is still produced, processed, and consumed locally. Particularly in the South, small producers—small farmers with less than a hectare of land, artisanal fishers, and livestock owners with small herds—are responsible for the majority of the food produced, especially that consumed by the poor (Pimbert 2005:129-131). Such local food production is also the principal source of employment of the rural poor. Local organizations such as farmer and fisher cooperatives, farmer schools, grazing societies, and irrigation associations are intimately involved in this food production, processing and distribution. Farmer and fisher organizations are the prime route through which new technologies and techniques are disseminated to small rural producers to increase production and improve the environmental sustainability of their work. Local cooperatives lower the costs and increase the profitability of production through efficiencies of scale and joint marketing and processing facilities. Intermediary groups such as the NGO Claveria Landcare Association (CLCA) in the Philippines provide additional aid to help local producers transform their production and expand their markets, as well as facilitating interaction and knowledge-sharing among producers. CLCA has helped form farmer-led “landcare” groups that link local farmers in a learning network and has conducted training sessions in soil and water conservation reaching some 15,000 farmers (FAO 2004). All of these are essential in increasing the income potential of farming, fishing, and livestock rearing to relieve rural poverty and secure a reliable food supply—goals at the heart of MDG 1 (World Resources Institute, et al. 2008: 71-109)

### **Local women’s organizations are at the front lines of gender equality and the empowerment of women.**

Local groups such as women’s craft collectives, savings groups, and women-focused producer cooperatives give women experience in financial and business roles that build economic independence and the kind of functional empowerment that MDG 3 envisions. The Songtaab-Yalgre Association in Burkina Faso is a women-run group that unites some 3100 women in 11 villages in the collection, processing, and marketing of shea butter on the international cosmetics market. The ability to process shea nuts locally at the Songtaab-Yalgre facility has increased the economic benefits of shea nut collection by about 50 percent over the former practice of selling raw nuts and has given women technical expertise and solidarity (WRI et al. 2008:97). Indeed, solidarity and skill building, in addition to increased income, are the benefits that many women ascribe to their membership in local women’s groups. In India, the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) acts as a federation of local trade cooperatives specifically oriented toward building the skills of women in the informal sector, from home-based workers to farm day laborers and street vendors. The cooperatives generally develop a range of training programs from basic literacy to specialized skills such as nursery management and small animal husbandry. Solidarity is built not only within local coops, but across communities and states through visitation programs, newsletters, and other networking tools (SEWA 2009; WRI et al 2008:91).

## Box 2 (CONTINUED)

**Local organizations and local initiatives often directly deliver health and education services or contribute to such services as indirect benefits.** Many local organizations and ecosystem-based initiatives are intimately involved in providing education and health opportunities or funding schools, health clinics, and water and sanitation systems—the basic infrastructure needed to realize MDGs 2, 4, 5, and 6. By enabling a sustainable harvest of crocodile eggs and skins, the Sepik Wetlands Management Initiative in Papua New Guinea has helped Sepik communities realize some \$90,000 per year in crocodile-related revenue. The money is paid into a community fund that in turn pays for school fees for local children (UNDP 2009). The Shampole Community Trust formed by Kenya's Masai Community is part owner of an ecotourist lodge that generates \$2000-\$5000 in revenue per month for the community, which uses it to pay for health care, water provision, and teachers' salaries (UNDP 2009). The ability of local organizations to undertake critical infrastructure projects that directly contribute to raising the health status of the poor is perhaps best illustrated by the success of the Community Water Initiative, which supports community-based water supply and sanitation projects. Since 2004, the CWI has funded 89 community-originated projects on three continents, allowing low-income communities to bring clean water and sanitation services to more than 260,000 residents (See Annex VI). Even in conflict zones, a community-based approach using local organizations to organize and execute projects that reflect community priorities is often the best way to achieve development goals. In the Jurm Valley in northeast Afghanistan, direct grants made to village councils have funded small-scale water and road projects and supported health and education programs much more effectively than programs carried out by the central government. In the village of Fargamanch, for example, the community grants enabled women's literacy classes and the establishment of a girls' high school, raising girls' enrollment by 65 percent since 2004. Midwife training has increased the availability of midwives by a factor of four—an important achievement in an area with one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world (Tavernise 2009).

## 1.4 The Contribution of Local Organizations to Environment and Sustainable Development

Local actors, working through local organizations, are key players in the livelihoods and social welfare of communities. The diversity of local actors and local organizations is wide, depending on their purpose and the social and environmental setting in which they arise. What links them is that they are embedded in the local culture and conversant with local environmental knowledge and livelihood patterns. Their importance to sound environmental management and sustainable local livelihoods derives from at least four qualities:

### Local organizations can successfully manage environmental resources

Particularly in rural areas, local groups are central actors in managing environmental resources at a day-to-day level (Bigg and Satterthwaite 2005:6;

Satterthwaite and Sauter 2008:2). Historically, local resources from farm land to fodder and timber to fisheries were controlled through socially based rules applied by customary authorities such as tribal leaders (Ostrom 1990). Even though many of these traditional resource management systems have declined, the number of local groups involved in managing local ecosystem resources has continued to increase in the form of forest user groups, grazing societies, watershed committees, irrigation associations, farmer associations, fishery management committees, and similar groups. Some estimates put the number of such local environment-related groups formed in the last 20 years in the hundreds of thousands as national governments have begun the process of decentralization and donors have financed and encouraged such groups in their work (Pretty and Ward 2001:214).

The effectiveness of these groups depends on many factors, including their experience, cohe-



siveness, and legal empowerment. But extensive field work shows that in many cases such local groups can successfully implement management strategies that improve both environmental conditions and local livelihoods, as in the village of Andavadoaka, Madagascar, where the fishers' cooperative has increased the local fisheries base by creating a marine protected area and imposing seasonal harvest rules on its members, even as it has increased local fishing incomes (World Resources Institute et al. 2008:18). Indeed, there is evidence that environmental outcomes for resources managed locally can sometimes be significantly better than for similar resources under state control. (Chhatre et al. 2009). In the Brazilian Amazon, lands under indigenous control (terras indiginas) show markedly lower deforestation rates and fewer forest fires than surrounding forest (Hatcher 2009:3 and Ricketts et al. 2010); similar results have been found on community-managed forests in the Peten in Guatemala compared with nearby national parks (Nittler and Tschinkel 2005:3; World Resources Institute et al. 2008:126, 133-134).

### **Local organizations foster empowerment and self-reliance**

Local groups offer opportunities for political participation, mutual assistance, and community organizing that can empower local actors to formulate and execute their own development solutions (Uphoff 1992:2-3; World Resources Institute et al. 2008:72-73). Women's saving groups, for example, have provided effective forums for poor women to pool their financial resources for small business investments, offering microloans to their members without the usual collateral requirements demanded by banks. In Niger, the "Women on the Move" savings and loan program, in which village groups of about 30 women pool savings and make local loans, has helped some 170,000 women mobilize over \$5 million in savings to fund family business projects (World Resources Institute et al. 2008:74).

Because of their origins within and knowledge of local culture, local organizations are often effective at articulating and advocating for community needs and translating development into appropriate local terms. In Peru, the Association for Nature and Sustainable Development (ANDES) is an indigenous NGO recognized for its work in

the Andes region defending indigenous rights to genetic resources and conserving the area's cultural and ecological resources. They have been instrumental in the formation of several Indigenous Biocultural Heritage Areas—tracts that are sustainably managed by community associations using traditional knowledge to preserve and enhance local livelihoods and culture (Satterthwaite and Sauter 2008:13; Argumedo and Stenner 2008:3, 21). In Puerto Rico, the grassroots citizen group Casa Pueblo originally formed to oppose a large open-pit mine in the island's central region, but has evolved to promote self-reliance through community enterprises like coffee production, as well as the conservation of local music and culture. In both these instances, the local organization has stressed the importance of enabling local communities to determine their own development paths, building on the solid foundation of their existing culture—something that central authorities are not as well-placed to do (Satterthwaite and Sauter 2008:13).

### **Local organizations catalyze joint action and environmental compliance**

Local organizations function through face-to-face interactions among their members, allowing them to form bonds of trust and shared values. This "social capital" forms one of the most important bases for collective action, where members of the group act together for mutual benefit (Pretty and Ward 2001:209-227). The ability to act jointly toward a common management goal is, in turn, one of the foundations of sustainably managing ecosystem resources, which are often accessible to many users and thus subject to overexploitation unless these users agree to a joint management effort (Ostrom 1990; Ostrom 2004:1). Local organizations are often successful in catalyzing collective resource management where others are not because they have an intimate understanding of how these resources are used and their connection with livelihoods and social relations in a given setting, and therefore the benefits that collective action can bring (White and Runge 1995:1683-1698).

Another reason local groups can succeed at collective resource management is that they are more apt to be able to enforce rules on resource use (Pimbert 2006:6; Pretty and Ward 2001:211; Gibson et al. 2005:273-284). The rules that local groups adopt tend to reflect the

social norms and work ethic of their communities, giving them credibility. Since the membership of local organizations is typified by strong social ties, social pressure alone is often enough to inspire compliance. It's no surprise then that local groups given the autonomy and legal authority to adopt management rules experience a high rate of resource management success (Pagdee 2006:45).

### **Local organizations are the locus for adaptive management**

Local groups are attuned to the environmental, social, and market changes taking place in their localities over time. They are thus the crucible for adaptive management of ecosystem resources—management that responds with flexibility and innovation to challenges such as climate change or globalization that affect the productivity of ecosystems and the demand for ecosystem services (Pimbert 2006:6). For example, research in Southern Africa has shown that local farmer associations have become an important mechanism for experimentation among rural farm communities to cope with changing rainfall patterns. The associations give poor farmers access to new farm technology, crop varieties, and planting and soil management techniques, and serve as an information exchange on how these tools have performed within specific locations and communities. Researchers report that 45 percent of those interviewed had adopted more drought-resistant varieties of maize, rice, cassava, and sweet potato as a direct result of their involvement with a farmer association. They have been a breeding ground for new enterprises and new approaches because they spread the risks of experimentation among the association members and increase the speed of technical and social learning (Thomas et al. 2005:17-18). Given the current international focus on fostering adaptation and resilience as a response to climate change, the crucial role of local organizations such as local farmer associations and resource user groups in adaptive ecosystem management takes on special significance.

## **1.5 The Challenges of Working at the Local Level**

While there is great potential for local actors to lead development efforts at the community level and

to manage ecosystems so that they support local livelihoods, working at the local level is not without significant challenges. For one, communities are not monolithic. A given village or locale can contain a great diversity of local actors, often with interests that diverge or compete outright. Social divisions based on class, caste, gender, and livelihood can exacerbate this divergence, and make it difficult to come to agreement on how ecosystems should be managed or to inspire collective action among disparate groups.

At the same time, many local actors are plagued with a sense of disempowerment, leading to a culture of reliance on government and other external actors. Even when they have been granted significant resource rights and development authority, they often must learn how to take the initiative to exercise these rights and to develop a coherent development scheme informed by local needs and capacities. In the same way, local groups may require time to grow into a culture of inclusiveness that allows ample space for the poor, women, and other traditionally excluded groups.

Dealing with these challenges requires building competent local institutions based on principles of participation, so that competing visions of successful development and enterprise can be reconciled, a commitment to joint action forged, and the benefits and costs of ecosystem management apportioned fairly among local stakeholders. UNDP has an established record of supporting local processes that result in such reconciliation and institution building, and in providing appropriate support to local groups starting community-based enterprises structured to distribute benefits equitably among the participants.

Working at the local level requires partnership between international, national, local and non-state actors. In particular, a broad coalition of partners committed to a rights-based approach and cognizant of the importance of gender in local environment and energy management is essential to ensure that local level investments – of resources, services, and finance – reach the poorest and most vulnerable. UNDP is well positioned to assume a leadership role in demonstrating the benefits of scaling up local action through cross-sector and multi-stakeholder collaboration.

## 1.6 UNDP's Local Mandate, Comparative Advantages, and Strategic Roles

One of the purposes of the Local Capacity Strategy is to clarify and elaborate UNDP's mandate to work at the local level. UNDP is expressly mandated to support local approaches to development. This mandate is reflected in numerous policy documents and global agreements that have shaped UNDP's conceptual and operational frameworks for engagement with local actors, indigenous peoples, and community-based organizations (See **Annex IV**). The [UNDP Fourth Global Programme 2009-2011](#) and [UNDP Strategic Plan 2008-2013](#) outline the need to work at the local level and the importance of integrating approaches to local development. Indeed, one of the four key results for the Environment and Sustainable Development (ESD) Practice described in the UNDP Strategic Plan **is to strengthen local capacity to manage the environment and expand access to environmental and energy services, especially for the poor.**

In carrying out this mandate, UNDP can call on a number of comparative advantages. For one, UNDP has accumulated a significant body of experience in local approaches to sustainable development. In addition to the considerable work underway through UNDP Headquarters (See **Annex II**), UNDP Regional Bureaux, Regional Service Centres and Country Programmes are widely and actively engaged in local capacity building and action with the help of a range of technical experts<sup>5</sup>. EEG<sup>6</sup> in particular has been at the forefront of local work (See **Annex III**). The UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), for example, has a network, operational capacity, and accumulated experience that gives it one of the world's most effective delivery mechanisms for local assistance. SGP has funded over 12,500 projects locally initiated and managed in collaboration with NGOs, CBOs, and indigenous groups in 122 countries. Likewise, the Equator Initiative has helped more than 1400 community-based natural resource management initiatives raise their profile, link with technical and

business support, and connect with their peers to share best practices. At the same time, hundreds of community projects carried out under UNDP's Energy Access Programme and the Community Water Initiative have demonstrated the feasibility of local interventions in these crucial sectors and provided working examples of how to effectively localize the MDGs. This wealth of experience in diverse local contexts offers a strong foundation on which to build the Local Capacity Strategy.

In addition to this foundation of local work, UNDP is also well-known for its upstream work at the national level; it's Resident Coordinators/Representatives, for example, have access to the highest levels of government. In fact, UNDP has established trusted relationships across all levels of society – from governments to grassroots – in the 166 nations in which it has a presence, positioning itself both as an effective convenor of inclusive, multi-stakeholder processes and an advocacy leader capable of linking practical experience with policy-making.

These capabilities give EEG the ability to play several strategic roles in order to achieve the goals of the Local Capacity Strategy:

- **Local-National Link:** Link capacity building and empowerment of local actors with action to strengthen the enabling environment through appropriate national and international policies.
- **Convenor:** Convene multiple stakeholders to coordinate support for local action.
- **Funding Facilitator:** Establish long-term funding facilities that support local action.
- **Capacity Builder:** Build capacity and provide support services to enable the scaling up of documented best practices and innovations.
- **Communicator:** Demonstrate the positive social, economic, and environmental contributions to sustainable development made by local communities and the rural poor, emphasizing the interdependency of these contributions.

<sup>5</sup> Recent analysis of UNDP's programme alignment with the UNDP Strategic Plan 2008-2013 reveals that UNDP country programmes are already widely and actively engaged in local capacity and action. For example, 66% of surveyed project outcomes, and 73% of project outputs, relate to the result area of "expanding environmental and energy services for the poor." In addition, many GEF projects include local components. For example, 54% of GEF International Waters projects have identified their outcomes as aligned primarily with those of the Local Capacity Strategy.

<sup>6</sup> The Environment and Energy Group (EEG) is part of the broader Environment and Sustainable Development (ESD) Practice and includes UNDP staff located in Headquarters, within the Bureau for Development Policy (BDP).

## 2

## Scaling-up Local Capacity and Action for Results

There is a growing need to scale-up and scale-out local best practices in environment and energy and to link local experience and knowledge with national and international policy-making. Doing so represents one of the most effective means to localize the MDGs and realize quicker gains in poverty reduction, educational attainment, the availability of health care, and the sustainability of local livelihoods—the entire suite of MDGs.

The Local Capacity Strategy outlines the rationale, scope, modalities, and institutional arrangements that UNDP is deploying to meet this need and achieve the fourth key result area of Environment and Sustainable Development (ESD) in the UNDP Strategic Plan 2008-2013. The Strategy proceeds from a Model of Change (see **Box 3**) that calls on national governments and international organizations to acknowledge the potential of local action to achieve development and adaptation goals and to provide the resources, rights, training, and opportunities for local actors to realize this potential. In essence, the Strategy is designed to make good on the unfulfilled promise of decentralization, in which communities command the authority, capacity, and means to

drive their own development, and the incentive to manage their environmental resources responsibly.

The Strategy's activities will be guided by four Strategic Priorities:

- i. **Promote Rights, Access, and Finance Mechanisms:** Strengthen institutional, policy, and legal frameworks to broaden local access to environment and energy resources and services, and to enable finances to flow to the local level.
- ii. **Enhance Environmental Management and Finance Capacity:** Enhance the capacity of local actors to access environmental finance and plan, implement and monitor environment and energy programmes, enterprises and service delivery.
- iii. **Facilitate Learning and Knowledge-Sharing:** Promote peer-to-peer learning, knowledge-sharing, and documentation of best practices to make local action more effective, sustainable, and replicable.
- iv. **Strengthen Community Voices in Policy Processes:** Ensure that local actors are positioned to advocate for their rights and entitlements related to environment and energy in national and international fora.

### Box 3: MODEL OF CHANGE

The Local Capacity Strategy is predicated on a model or scenario of change drawn from UNDP's years of local experience and supported by a robust development literature. It is founded on the observation that local natural resources and local institutions are keys to the livelihoods of the poor. Improving local peoples' access to these resources and their capacity to manage them sustainably as sources of income and sustenance can help them break the cycle of poverty, increasing their material and social assets. Increasing the capacity and inclusivity of local institutions can increase the quality of resource management, the productivity of local resource-based enterprises, and the equity with which benefits are shared within the community.

The change sequence to achieve these outcomes and UNDP's contribution, in line with the Strategic Priorities above, are summarized below. In every step of this sequence, UNDP has an important role in catalyzing the needed change among the principal actors, which are national governments and

### Box 3 (CONTINUED)

local organizations, including local governments, natural resource management groups, formal and informal associations such as cooperatives or savings groups, NGOs, and individuals.

- Reorient toward community-driven development. Introduce the primary of local action to the development model.
  - UNDP interventions: provide capacity development to governments so that they can more fully assess the potential of local actors, and can recognize and support best practices. Improve the capacity of local organizations and enterprises to communicate their successes in community-based resource management and the local and national benefits that accrue.
- Strengthen the enabling conditions for local action by granting local resource rights and improving access to finance. Empowering local actors—both individuals and community institutions—with enforceable resource rights provides them with the incentive and security they need to invest in sustainable resource management. Improving access to sources of finance—sub-national, national and international—provides the means to make the appropriate investments.
  - UNDP interventions: Advocate for continued devolution of resource rights from central governments to local institutions and actors, and ensure that recognition of such rights is a central theme in international processes such as UNFCCC and CBD. Ensure that international environmental finance mechanisms are accessible by local actors, and provide incentives for banks, donors, and businesses to invest at the local level.
- Strengthen the capacity of local institutions and individuals to take advantage of their resource rights and advocate for their interests in national and international forums. Technical and institutional capacity to manage ecosystems, business capacity to pursue viable nature-based enterprises, and social capacity to participate in joint decisions and activities—both locally and in national and international processes—are all necessary if the poor are to turn resource access into improved livelihoods.
  - UNDP interventions: Through SGP and other mechanisms, and working through local NGOs and CBOs, provide knowledge, technologies, and opportunities to build local resource management capacity, craft appropriate business models for small and medium enterprises, and develop leadership and conflict resolution skills. Broker multi-stakeholder dialogues that allow local actors to participate in national and international policy processes, so that local interests are protected and obstacles to progress identified.
- Create mechanisms to enhance learning and build adaptive capacity. Shared learning is a powerful tool that communities can use to quickly develop their own capacities, pooling their knowledge and sharing the risks of adopting new practices and undertaking new enterprises.
  - UNDP interventions: Facilitate peer-to-peer dialogue and sharing through site visits. Establish training and demonstration centers and on-line learning platforms and networks to encourage on-going exchanges. Help local actors document best practices, both in local languages for targeted audiences and for broader sharing.
- Identify and scale up successful models of ecosystem management, adaptation and enterprise. Without efforts to scale up, best practices will remain isolated successes and MDG, biodiversity and adaptation goals will remain unmet.
  - UNDP Interventions: Help document and communicate best practices and successful management and business models, conduct analysis and research to extract scalable elements, and advocate for their incorporation into UNDP Country Program Action Plans, National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plans, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, and other national policies.



These priorities were identified in response to an extensive consultative process undertaken to develop the Strategy with, among others: Environment and Energy Focal Points in UNDP Country Offices, Regional Service Centres and Regional Bureaux; UNDP Bureau for Development Policy Practice (BDP) Groups and Teams; GEF-Small Grants Programme National Coordinators and Programme Assistants; UNDP Partner Organizations (including representatives of Governments, UN Agencies, NGOs, local leaders, academia and private foundations); UNDP CSO Advisors and UN Country Team Civil Society focal points; UNDP Indigenous Peoples focal points; and Equator Initiative's network of Community Initiatives (**See Annex I**).

The consultations provided guidance on local needs and demands, UNDP's niche and comparative advantage, and EEG's current portfolio of activities. While each Strategic Priority has a distinct scope and modality, they are all strongly correlated and interdependent, where positive outcomes in one area result in positive outcomes in the others, as depicted in Figure 1.

Scaling up successful local initiatives and best practices requires: (i) that national governments and donors have the capacity to recognize and support local level best practice and integrate lessons learned into policy formulation and practice; and (ii) that local actors have the capacity to articulate needs, access resources, inform policy, and sustain initiatives that have been scaled up. Capacity development and support will be provided to both national governments and to local actors to bridge gaps and facilitate effective national-local partnerships for scaling up.

Though resources exist to support local environment and energy initiatives, they are often out of reach for local actors due to institutional, regulatory and legal conditions that serve to exclude them. Without the necessary rights and entitlements, local actors cannot qualify for or benefit from finance flows. UNDP is positioned to work at national and international levels through global outreach, working at the policy level, and creating linkages to assure and increase local access to resources. In addition to working upstream, it is also important



FIGURE 1: THE LOCAL CAPACITY STRATEGY FOCUSES ON SCALING UP LOCAL ACTION TO IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS IN THE AREAS OF ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY, AND POVERTY REDUCTION.

for UNDP to strengthen local capacity and to build upon existing local institutions downstream.

Where national, sub-regional and local capacity is improved, knowledge exchange both among local actors and between local actors and national policy makers becomes possible. UNDP is well positioned to facilitate these learning exchanges. With increased access to resources, strengthened local capacity, and facilitated learning exchanges, local actors are better positioned to influence and inform national and international policy as well as to take action locally. When local actors are able to influence policy, they can lower the barriers that limit their access to resources and institutional support, aligning local needs with global and national sustainable development targets.

To achieve the Local Capacity Strategy, UNDP recognizes the need for integration, collaboration and

partnership in working at the sub-national and local level. Thus, the Programme is responding with cross-practice and interagency initiatives<sup>7</sup>. There is opportunity to build on this collaborative approach in a more systematic manner, and UNDP will do so by:

- Integrating local work across EEG thematic areas (biodiversity and ecosystem services, land, water, energy, community-based adaptation (CBA) to climate change, and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD));
- Integrating local work into other EEG pillars (Mainstreaming, Environmental Finance, and Climate Change Adaptation) (See **Box 4**);
- Collaborating with the Bureau for Development Policy Practices and Teams working on local capacity and action (See **Annex V**);
- Delivering through UNDP country and regional offices and SGP;
- Mobilizing a global partnership (See **Annex VI**).

#### BOX 4: LOCAL CAPACITY AND ACTION IS INTEGRAL TO THE SUCCESS OF EEG'S OTHER PILLARS

**Mainstreaming:** Local level involvement in policy and programme formulation, implementation and monitoring is critical to the success of national policies. Local level best practice can make national policies more effective and efficient and provide valuable opportunities for scaling-up. To be effective, national policies need to be relevant on the ground.

**Environmental Finance:** For markets to provide solutions to sustainable development challenges, local actors on the front lines need to be able to access and must have the capacity to receive and manage environmental finance. Improved linkages between national governments and local actors will facilitate the flow of international financial resources to the local level—to those who need them most and who are most capable of delivering concrete action and impacts. CBA, REDD, the Territorial Approach and MDG Carbon Facility mechanisms will be more effective through engaging and benefiting local actors.

**Climate Change:** Communities have been adapting to their changing environments for generations. There is a wealth of knowledge at the local level on adaptation techniques. Support to local actors to scale-up successful community-based adaptation approaches will strengthen national adaptation strategies. Similarly, a successful REDD mechanism requires that local actors are involved in programme formulation, implementation and monitoring. On behalf of the UN-REDD Programme, UNDP is advancing this type of stakeholder engagement.

<sup>7</sup> Examples include the creation of a UNDP–UNCDF–UNV Working Group on local development; a global cross-practice project on MDG localization managed by the BDP Poverty Group in partnership with UNCDF; and UNDP and UN-HABITAT co-chairing a UNDG task team on local development under the MDG working group. Additionally, BDP's CDG includes a concentration on "[Local Service Delivery](#)" and BDP's Governance Practice has a focus on "[Decentralization and Local Governance](#)."



## 3

## Strategic Priorities for Scaling-up Local Capacity and Action



### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1: PROMOTE RIGHTS, ACCESS, AND FINANCE MECHANISMS

– STRENGTHEN INSTITUTIONAL, POLICY, AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS TO BROADEN LOCAL ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY RESOURCES AND SERVICES, AND TO ENABLE FINANCES TO FLOW TO THE LOCAL LEVEL.

### Rationale

Institutional and policy barriers and lack of legal entitlements often exclude the poor from accessing the full range of environmental benefits and energy resources, acting as a primary impediment to achieving MDG 1. Addressing the lack of entitlement and access of the poor requires devolution of specific resource rights that grant individuals and communities the ability to manage local ecosystems and capture the benefits of this management. This can encompass a range of property and resource rights regimes, including private and

communal tenure. It also includes co-management arrangements that allow the poor to take the lead in managing parcels of state-owned forests, fisheries, or rangelands and claim a major share of the production. Such secure resource access provides a much more certain basis for nature-based enterprises, which are a principal route to greater income and social empowerment for the poor. Thus, successful environment and energy programmes must promote a political, social, and legal environment conducive to the devolution and exercise of such rights.

Participation is a second necessary condition for true resource access. Participatory assessment and planning in policy formulation can be advantageous by: enabling the institutional, political and social issues that lie at the root of the environment and energy problem to be identified; ensuring that goals and activities match local needs and priorities; and guaranteeing that local skills and resources are available for managing and sustaining the services planned. If institutional conditions, policies, legal frameworks and fiscal arrangements lack equity and buy-in on the ground, they will not be successful in achieving their intended outcomes. Integrating local concerns into institutional and financial mechanisms upstream saves resources and time downstream. Ultimately, it is local actors that deliver environment and energy programmes and they are more likely to support and benefit from policies they have had a say in formulating.

Access to sufficient finance is also necessary to enable local actors to make the investments they need to sustainably and profitably manage local ecosystems. Carbon finance and payments for other ecosystem services is emerging as a potentially powerful new funding source for sustainable development. EEG is investing significantly in tapping these new global environmental financing mechanisms and has developed a set of facilities, such as the Energy Facility, Community-Based Adaptation, Territorial Approach, etc.<sup>8</sup>, with the potential to redirect resources to the local level. However, weak linkages between national governments and local actors diminish the ability of financial resources to flow to those who need them most – to those most capable of delivering concrete action and impacts.

## Scope

UNDP will provide the following services to meet this priority:

At the global level:

- Coordinate work within EEG and with others, to ensure that key international environmental financial mechanisms benefit the local level and provide responsive, demand-driven financing and grant-making;
- Contribute substantial programmatic and technical input, supported by pilot country experience, to the UNFCCC process in order to inform decisions on a pro-poor and inclusive REDD scheme and an adaptation plan that includes a strong CBA component;
- Contribute to the CBD process to inform decisions in support of Article 8 (j)<sup>9</sup>, Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs), inclusive markets and micro-enterprise involvement in sustainable supply chains;
- Consolidate best practices and promote successful action-oriented community approaches and modalities on water and sanitation provisions at international fora
- Contribute to global effort to achieve universal access to energy services by 2030 as per the recent recommendation by the UN Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Energy and Climate Change (AGECC).

### Targeted Results:

- Increased and facilitated flow of international environmental financial resources to the local level;
- REDD work is designed, implemented and monitored to maximize payments/benefits for local and indigenous peoples participating in REDD;
- Donors, banks and businesses investing in climate change adaptation appreciate the important role of ecosystem assets as a basis for adaptation strategies and community resilience, and increase allocation of resources to CBA activities;
- Governments are spurred by international law to adjust their own policy and fiscal conditions to align with and deliver CBD decisions;
- National and local governments, donors, development agencies and other practitioners devote particular attention and financing to sustainability in water supply and sanitation (WSS) systems and services, including resource conservation, pollution control, climate change adaptation and gender aspects, in supporting and scaling up community-based rural water supply and sanitation activities
- Effective approaches developed for energy service delivery through strengthened national and sub-national institutional capacity to deliver modern energy services at the local level.

At the national level:

- Strengthen the relationship, understanding and communication flows between state and non-state actors by:
  - Facilitating sustained government involvement in key local initiatives;

<sup>8</sup> UNDP EEG Environmental Financing Facilities include: the UN Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD Programme), Community-based Adaptation (CBA), Energy Facility, Green Commodities, Territorial Approach, MDG Carbon Facility, Multi Donor Budget Support (MDBs), Climate Change Risk Transfer, Regional Adaptation Programme, and Carbon Auction.

<sup>9</sup> Article 8 (j) calls for the participation of indigenous and local people in decisions about sharing their knowledge, innovations and practices concerning conservation and sustainable uses of biological diversity.

- Facilitating sustained SGP National Coordinator and local actor involvement in national policy-making;
- Convening national multi-stakeholder policy formation sessions;
- Organizing networks and workshops that introduce officials to successful local initiatives and the actors involved, enabling them to appreciate their potential contribution to national and local objectives.
- Encourage government efforts to devolve land and resource rights to the local level, so that local actors have the legal basis and financial incentive to:
  - Undertake investments in sustainable management of local ecosystems on private or communal lands;
  - Join with the state in co-management of state forest, fishery, water, and range resources.
- Strengthen government capacity to identify local best practices and support local efforts to scale them up by backing government efforts to:
  - Catalyze corporate and private investments into local-level environment and energy programmes and service provision;
  - Utilize cross-sector programmes to deliver services and distribute finances at the local level;
  - Integrate local approaches and solutions into national environment and energy policy formulation (UNDP Country Program Action Plans (CPAPs), National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plans (NBSAPs), Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), MDG Strategy and other national legislation and policies).
- Support national governments to provide enabling policies and investments required for the effective implementation of EEG's Financing Facilities at the local level by:
  - Ensuring that the design and operation of the Facilities include a local component;
  - Assisting in the design and/or provision of institutional and fiduciary arrangements for the transfer of resources to the local-level;
  - Improving national-local service delivery and communication mechanisms.

**Targeted Results:** National policy and investment conditions which:

- Build on, support and integrate local contexts, solutions and lessons;
- Enforce community-based and indigenous intellectual property rights (genetic and traditional knowledge), land tenure and rights to ecosystem services (and therefore, carbon credits and payments for ecosystem services, including REDD payments);
- Provide economic incentives for banks, donors and businesses to invest at the local level;
- Develop financial infrastructure that facilitates distribution of resources to the local level;
- Extend the provision of clean energy, water and sanitation services to rural areas and marginalized groups on a sustainable basis.

## Modalities

The Global Environment Facility-financed Small Grants Programme (SGP), implemented by UNDP, will play a crucial role in delivering the Local Capacity Strategy. SGP provides an effective modality to deliver a range of services directly to the local level, through a tried and tested decentralized institutional governance architecture operating across 122 UNDP Country Offices, and which guarantees the highest levels of international fiduciary accountability.

Building on the example of the institutional arrangements of the Africa 2000 and LIFE programmes, where UNDP provided co-financing to SGP for implementation, UNDP will support SGP's infrastructure on the ground through the provision of additional financial and human resources, based on agreed-upon full cost recovery principles. Activities will advance UNDP's and SGP's shared sustainable development goals around local capacity and action in ecosystem services, biodiversity conservation, energy, water, community-based adaptation, and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD).

SGP has already demonstrated the capacity of its institutional mechanisms to take on broader functions in the Community Water Initiative, which has channelled external financing to small grants for CBO- and NGO-led rural water supply and sanitation programmes in 12 pilot countries. In cases where an SGP office has effectively expanded its capacity to deliver additional services, National Coordinators will be supported to share their experiences and best practices with other National Coordinators, in order to replicate their model of success.

UNDP is actively engaged in UNFCCC processes and is providing convincing evidence of the benefits and impacts of local level inclusion, engagement and action, based on experience with CBA pilot programmes and the UN-REDD Programme. SGP National Steering Committees, made up of a cross-section of civil society, academia, government and the private sector, provide a model for improved dialogue between stakeholders and for making connections with appropriate local and national authorities. SGP Steering Committees often include relevant UN Convention focal points, which can further inform Convention processes and decisions.

The UN-REDD Programme's work on REDD+ Readiness will provide insight into the best means to broker national-local dialogue on sensitive issues such as forest and land tenure, and benefit sharing arrangements. Links will also be made at the local level through SGP's global network of grant recipients; through local actors associated with EEG's Biodiversity Programme, Equator Initiative, Energy Programme, and Community Water Initiative; and through UNDP's Civil Society Division.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2: ENHANCE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE CAPACITY – ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL ACTORS TO ACCESS ENVIRONMENTAL FINANCE AND PLAN, IMPLEMENT AND MONITOR ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY PROGRAMMES, ENTERPRISES AND SERVICE DELIVERY.**

## Rationale

While Strategic Priority 1 contributes to getting the necessary legal and institutional conditions in place to increase local rights and resource access, Strategic Priority 2 will build the capacity of local actors to use their rights and effectively manage these resources, including gaining access to financial resources. Working on the front lines of environment

and poverty challenges, local actors understand prevailing conditions “on the ground” and are well positioned to identify interventions with the highest probability of success. Often, however, these same actors lack the business, technical, and management skills to advance and scale up their work.

As environmental finance mechanisms evolve, international agencies and governments will be looking to channel financial resources to local actors. It would be a missed opportunity if local actors were unaware of these opportunities or, as is often the case, simply lacked the capacity to fulfill mandatory financial, accountability, and documentation requirements. Moreover, it would be inopportune if financial resources were available, but local actors were unable to apply these resources to scale up delivery of their work and best practices, and to ensure their sustainability over time. Unfortunately, this has often been the case, where local actors lack the capacity to scale up, expand their reach, and fulfill good governance requirements due to a lack of management proficiency, financial acumen, technological advice, or skills transfer.

Local actors require capacity development in a range of areas, from public expenditure management and business development to partnership and networking skills, from resource diversification and adaptation techniques to documenting local practices and mapping assets. Local actors need to have the tools and skills to manage projects and programmes accountably in a way that can be communicated both to local stakeholders and to governments and donors and that provides for sustainability of the activity when funding flows decrease. Such skills are also essential to turn these projects and programmes into successful enterprises in which local ecosystem assets become sustainable sources of income and opportunity. Helping to develop these skills is one of the first steps in localizing MDGs 1 and 7.

## Scope

Working through SGP and other mechanisms, UNDP will support local capacity development in two main areas. The first area relates primarily to the goal of creating the enabling conditions for local action, while the second relates directly to the skills and capacities needed for effective scaling of local activities.



- Capacity to understand and demand access to natural resources and financing mechanisms for nature-based projects and enterprises:
  - Rights and Access: understand and negotiate for specific legal rights over local ecosystem resources; understand existing and emerging finance opportunities (e.g. CBA and PES, including REDD), the implications of these opportunities, the rights of communities to benefit and how to effectively claim these rights or apply for financing or services (e.g. grants or prizes).
  - Effective Participation: understand global and national policy formation processes, negotiate and communicate effectively with representative bodies and government authorities and hold these parties responsible.
  - Demonstration and Documentation: understand how to demonstrate (i) the positive environmental and socio-economic impacts of their work to funders, donors, and national governments; and
    - traditional ecological knowledge.
- Capacity to scale-up sustainable implementation of natural resources and environment and energy programmes, enterprises and service delivery:
  - Institutional Development: build local resource management groups that are inclusive and based on principles of participation and accountability; learn conflict resolution techniques; practice asset mapping, needs identification, and monitoring and assessment.
  - Financial Development: understand and execute strategic and investment planning, banking, annual budgeting, asset management, internal controls, accountability requirements, and reporting.
  - Business Development: understand and execute sustainable business development practices such as formulating business plans, undertaking market research and product development to tap new markets.
  - Network Development and Social Mobilization: understand how to map, engage with, learn from, exchange experience, consolidate and expand activities with other local stakeholders and potential partners.
- Leadership Development: Understand how to lead group visioning processes, build consensus for action, and deploy human resources to best advantage; take the lead in enforcing internal policies and rules and in resolving conflicts that

arise; be capable of representing the local group or enterprise in negotiations with local and national governments as well as with international partners or funders.

## Modalities

UNDP will build on SGP's local networks and National Steering Committees (NSCs), to scale up successful pre-existing models and continue to pilot new and innovative demonstration projects. NGOs and CBOs within this network of over 12,500 small grants recipients have a proven track record in community forest management, community-based adaptation, income generation and renewable energy projects. They will provide an invaluable source of expertise and mentoring through exchanges and provisions for technical backstopping, capacity development, and South-South cooperation. Equator Initiative partners and prize winners and Equator Net participants also constitute a highly valuable resource for this purpose and their experience will be further documented and made available through such exchanges.

This Strategic Priority will build on UNDP's work on community-based adaptation (CBA) through SGP, with support from specific donors. This work enhances local capacity to autonomously adapt to climate change through alternative livelihood practices, enhancement or revival of traditional coping techniques, capacity building, and the removal of barriers. UNDP is currently supporting the development of as many as 90-100 community-driven climate change risk management projects in 10 pilot countries. UNDP's support includes the provision of technical assistance for assessments of vulnerability to climate change and community capacity to adapt to negative consequences, design of feasible and cost-effective projects as well as monitoring and oversight services. Lessons from projects are also extracted, documented and disseminated to the development community. These activities will soon be expanded to more than 30 countries in the Asia-Pacific and African regions.

The UN-REDD Programme is breaking new ground in its effort to reach out to local and indigenous groups to ensure they are aware of the opportunities available through REDD+ and their right to benefit from the mechanism. UN-REDD pilot and partner countries will hold capacity building workshops to help local and indigenous peoples engage

in REDD programme formulation, implementation and monitoring.

Relevant activities will be coordinated with UNDP's Private-Public Partnerships for Local Service Delivery (PPPSD) Programme, which assists UNDP Country Offices and UN Country Teams in promoting enabling policy, regulatory and institutional environments for public-private partnerships for local service delivery. It also works to build the capacity of key local partners, including local governments, local businesses and communities.

Activities under Strategic Priority 2 will result in increased local capacity to design and manage environmental and energy programmes and deliver services. Improved local capacity will lead to a proliferation of best practice cases, which, when documented, can benefit other communities in similar situations. Strategic Priority 3 will harness this potential by facilitating learning at the local level.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3: FACILITATE LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING** – PROMOTE PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING, KNOWLEDGE SHARING, AND DOCUMENTATION OF BEST PRACTICES TO MAKE LOCAL ACTION MORE EFFECTIVE, SUSTAINABLE, AND REPLICABLE.

## Rationale

Local actors have critical knowledge and expertise, and have demonstrated successful application of this knowledge in sustainable natural resource management, energy provision, biodiversity conservation, and adaptation to climate change. However, local actors often lack the resources to effectively share their expertise, or may need incentives to begin sharing. Local best practice in isolation is opportunity lost. Facilitating the peer-to-peer sharing of best practice between local actors is a powerful tool of local empowerment and a highly effective means of scaling up best practice to meet the MDGs. UNDP experience shows that uptake time of a best practice can be reduced by half or more when shared peer-to-peer or community-to-community, allowing local actors to avoid past mistakes (see **Box 5**).

In its work with local actors, UNDP has frequently encountered a clear request from local communities for greater long-term and targeted investment in community-to-community knowledge exchange. This demand has been heard consistently at Equator

### Box 5: COSTA RICA - KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE AND INNOVATION

Historically for the people of Talamancan turtle eggs have been a regular part of their diet. The Talamancan Initiative (TI) was created as a partnership of three local networks of NGOs to improve biodiversity conservation and livelihoods in the region. In response to a noticeable decrease in the turtle population, the biologists of the TI initiated a programme to protect the turtles and make a profit from turning the egg laying season into a tourist attraction. The process of transforming habits from eating turtle eggs to creating a profitable eco-tourism programme took about seven years. A few years later, nearby communities requested guidance from the Talamancan Initiative on how to replicate this success. With assistance from TI, a neighbouring community was fully operational within two years. This is an impressive example of successful replication and clearly demonstrates the value of local knowledge and learning exchange.

Initiative community dialogue spaces and is well documented in a series of community declarations. Demand for more long-term investment was, in fact, the impetus for creation of the Community Knowledge Service (CKS), a platform for peer-to-peer knowledge exchange that now connects over 300 community-based organizations. In addition, as part of the consultation process used in assembling the current Local Capacity Strategy, stakeholders have repeatedly requested UNDP to identify, analyze, systematize, and disseminate community knowledge and lessons learned as a way to influence policy and leverage resources. Assistance with knowledge management is thus one of the highest priorities voiced by local actors.

UNDP is uniquely positioned, and has the political space and mandate, to respond effectively to this demand by facilitating South-South knowledge exchange and the systematic analysis and communication of lessons learned. SGP, the Community Water Initiative, the Equator Initiative, and the Energy Access Programme all provide a wealth of communities—some 14,000 strong—from which to draw knowledge and experiences and extract best practices. Knowledge management is a priority for UNDP, BDP and EEG, and activities under this

priority will be channelled to and through existing knowledge management platforms.

## Scope

UNDP will provide the following services to meet this priority:

- Facilitate dialogues and meetings between groups of local actors – by region, area of work, common challenges, etc – to share best practices;
- Facilitate peer-to-peer dialogue and site visits where communities face common challenges and could benefit from direct, on-the-ground knowledge exchange;
- Support communities to maintain ongoing learning platforms, both virtually and through regional and national focal points;
- Establish “centres of excellence” for training and demonstration where a local actor or initiative is well positioned to replicate best practice on a more permanent basis -- rather than through one-off exchanges;
- Support the implementation of new knowledge and lessons learned when a good practice has been successfully shared between local actors;
- Support local actors to document best practice and acquired knowledge in locally relevant and understandable forms (e.g. not only through documentation/publications, but also demonstration, public art, video, radio, etc);
- Adapt existing information and training materials to be more useable for community groups;
- Develop training kits and support information-sharing workshops, analytical case studies, and open source information exchanges.

## Modalities

Several UNDP programmes have undertaken pioneering work in facilitated learning and knowledge management. These initiatives will be expanded through the Local Capacity Strategy, raising the level of interaction while strengthening cross-programme synergies. Knowledge management and dissemination activities will be aligned with those of BDP’s practices and programmes.

The Equator Initiative is strategically positioned to assist this priority through (i) its extensive roster of best-practice community organizations nomi-

nated for the Equator Prize, hailing from more than 50 countries; (ii) the EquatorNet network, which brings together over 700 community-based organizations and local development practitioners for advocacy and dissemination purposes; (iii) the Equator Knowledge Zone, which synthesizes local best practices for learning, exchange and peer mentoring; (iv) the Community Dialogue spaces, which provide local and indigenous communities with opportunities to share experiences, participate in international forums and communicate directly with policymakers; and (v) the Community Knowledge Service (CKS), which allows community-based organizations to share local experience and lessons through a web-based service and regional working groups. The synchronized application of these mechanisms raises the potential to influence global and national policies and programmes that affect the local level. Among these, the Equator Initiative is particularly well-positioned to assist local dialogue, knowledge sharing and exchange initiatives through the Community Dialogue spaces and the CKS. Forums and exchanges supported by the Equator Initiative will be expanded to include successful local initiatives beyond the scope of biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction, and to include other EEG thematic streams (e.g. CBA, energy, water, etc.).

SGP has been reaching out to more than 12,500 communities in developing countries, sharing best practices and building their capacity to address environmental problems while enhancing their livelihoods. At the local level, each country programme works directly with communities to (i) capture lessons learned; (ii) conduct knowledge exchanges; (iii) organize training workshops; (iv) establish and promote expansion of CBO and NGO networks; (v) collaborate with government officials in achieving national environmental priorities; (vi) and promote replication and scaling up of best practices and lessons learned.

At the global level, SGP provides guidance in specific focal areas; organises regional and global workshops to share lessons and conduct trainings; establishes partnerships with a variety of partners to upscale best practices in environmental conservation; and works to capture and disseminate the lessons learned and best practices of its massive portfolio in case studies, publications, and new media. In particular, SGP has pioneered innova-



tive methods to exchange knowledge with their communities, such as participatory video, GIS mapping, and photo stories, and is testing technologies like tri-dimensional modelling, cyber-tracking and aerial photography. Moreover, the program has been conducting a global study of ex-post impact in consultation with many of its grant recipients that will provide insight into the dynamics of project success and sustainability using small grants.

The Energy Programme's work at the local level in UNDP Country offices has been codified in synthesised knowledge products with lessons that are critical for building capacity at the local level. The Energy Programme has a network of community and district-level partners involved in local energy access and service delivery. With the Gates Foundation, the Energy Programme has implemented projects in more than 500 villages of West Africa and Nepal – supporting local energy enterprises, attracting investment for rural electrification and disseminating energy-saving equipment. Validated working models drawn from these experiences will be transferred through documentation, dialogue and exchanges, as well as the building of peer-to-peer mentoring relationships.

Additionally, in partnership with the World Bank and the United Nations Environment Programme, UNDP is implementing the Adaptation Learning Mechanism (ALM), a \$1 million project capturing and disseminating adaptation experiences and good practices via an open knowledge platform. Launched in December 2007, the ALM Web site provides access to adaptation resources, including project case studies, best practices and other tools, such as the UNDP-developed database of adaptation profiles of individual countries.

Building on the successes of these diverse programmes, EEG will develop an integrated local-global learning and knowledge management facility to foster best practice information exchange among local communities and national and international policy makers.

Increased local knowledge and capacity, facilitated by activities under Strategic Priority 3, will contribute to the achievement of Strategic Priority 4. Local actors will be better positioned to influence policy

by demonstrating the effectiveness of their work and the multiple benefits arising from increased investment at the local level.

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4: STRENGTHEN COMMUNITY VOICES IN POLICY PROCESSES** – ENSURE THAT LOCAL ACTORS ARE POSITIONED TO ADVOCATE FOR THEIR RIGHTS AND ENTITLEMENTS RELATED TO ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL FORA.

## Rationale

The contributions local actors make to achieve national and international sustainable development targets, such as the MDGs or the 2010 Biodiversity Target, are often insufficiently recognized. UNDP is in a strong position to develop a global partnership in support of scaling up local initiatives through facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues and strategically positioning local and indigenous voices in national and international policy-making processes. In this way, local actors are able to advocate for policies that make sense on the ground and ensure that sustainable conditions are in place under which they can operate.

Heightening the visibility of successful local environment and energy initiatives in this way is expected to encourage international donors, national governments and the private sector to invest in and support local efforts to scale up. However, increasing the capacity of local groups to engage these institutions and communicate their successes and advocate for their needs is not enough. The capacity of governments, donors, and the private sector to hear and respond to these stronger voices must also be raised. Thus, this Strategic Priority also places an emphasis on “upward” capacity building, in order to give these institutions the skills and training to recognize local opportunities and extend appropriate help.

## Scope

UNDP will provide the following services to meet this priority:

- Spearhead partnerships and constituency building for strategic advocacy of local action in environment and energy;
- Broker multi-stakeholder dialogues to integrate local voices into national and international

environment and energy policy formation (e.g. CBD, CSD, UNFCCC, UNPFII, World Water Forum, REDD conferences and other fora);

- Equip local actors with the communication and organizing skills to advocate for themselves;
- Highlight and disseminate—both vertically and horizontally—innovative community-based experiences;
- Through knowledge sharing, publications, demonstration and media outreach UNDP will: (i) heighten the visibility of local action in environment and energy; (ii) facilitate the legitimization of local work and the acceptance of local actors as necessary participants in effective policy formulation; and (iii) disseminate analytical studies that document the contributions of local actors across environment and energy fields.

## Modalities

Articulating diverse local perspectives and aspirations into consensus-based positions that can mobilize constituencies and influence policy requires coordinated actions at various levels. Across UNDP, there is successful experience with preparing case studies and analytical studies that can effectively demonstrate local level success in environment and energy. The networks of CBOs, NGOs, development agencies and donor governments linked to the Equator Initiative and SGP offer communication and partnership chains from local to global levels. Non-governmental organizations (including CARE, Conservation International (CI), International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), World Resources Institute (WRI), World Wildlife Fund (WWF), etc.) will also have important contributions to make.

At the global level, achievement of Strategic Priority 4 will build on the strengths, experiences and services of the Equator Initiative. The Community Dialogue Space model (See **Box 6**) and the Equator Prize model – both highly successful at increasing the visibility and policy impact of local and indigenous communities – will be expanded beyond

their current biodiversity scope to include all EEG thematic areas. The Equator Initiative and Poverty-Environment Partnership<sup>10</sup> model of employing strategic partnerships to achieve effective advocacy – with each partner contributing a unique comparative advantage – will be the basis of an integrated strategy to improve and heighten the visibility of successful local action in environment and energy, and to help government and private sector actors reframe their roles as partners with local groups. Partners will employ various forms of media and technology (e.g. aerial photography, video cameras, GPS mapping) to increase the visibility of successful local practices.

The UN-REDD Programme will help strengthen local governance by investing in multi-stakeholder dialogue, advocacy and support for communal forest and tenure rights. In doing so, it will help rural communities and indigenous groups build consensus and develop positions on government policies and programmes.

The successful achievement of Strategic Priority 4 will be reflected in policies which reinforce local capacity and representation in the legal, financial and institutional systems – thus contributing to the achievement of Strategic Priority 1.



10 The Poverty-Environment-Partnership (PEP) is a network of development and environment agencies focused on the role of sound and equitable environmental management in fighting poverty and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. PEP member organizations include many bilateral and multilateral/UN agencies and international NGOs.

### Box 6: COMMUNITY DIALOGUE SPACES

Since its inception in 2002, the Equator Initiative has hosted a series of community dialogue spaces in support of grassroots efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Well over a thousand representatives of local and indigenous groups have participated in these unique events – community-directed meetings held in conjunction with international conferences and policy-making fora, where local actors share best practices, inform policy, and build lasting partnerships. Official conference participants, including government and international organization representatives, visit the space, both to participate in organized panels and exchanges as well as on an informal basis. Community participants have an opportunity to meet with high level government officials and to participate in meetings organized by other “major groups” to learn from their experience in influencing the conference process.

The inaugural dialogue space – the **Community Kraal** – was organized as part of the *World Summit on Sustainable Development* in Johannesburg, South Africa, 2002. The dialogue space won the award for “Best Conference Facility,” gave voice to local success stories, and was visited by tens of thousands of participants in the WSSD as well as by the President of South Africa, the Prime Minister of Canada, and many other global leaders. Subsequent dialogue spaces have resulted in diverse outcomes, a few are highlighted below.

At IUCN’s World Conservation Congress in Barcelona, Spain, in 2008 the **Community Poble** was the first “community space” inside the official conference venue. It was made available by IUCN. Community representatives self-organized and appointed regional leaders to carry out collaborative work focused on sharing experiences in the field of biodiversity conservation, sustainable enterprises, and poverty reduction.

Representatives from all Equator Prize 2006 winners participated in the Community Dorf at CBD COP9 in Bonn, Germany in 2008. Many of them, such as those from Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Kenya, and the Philippines held information and productive meetings with their national delegations; representatives from Senegal and the Philippines were invited to become official members of their national delegations. For the first time, a community representative was invited to give a statement at the High Level Panel that closed the meeting: Juan Chavez Munoz of AIDER (Peru) shared the podium with representatives from the CBD, GEF, UNDP and GTZ and highlighted the importance of the work the Equator Initiative is doing and the need for national governments to respect the rights of local and indigenous peoples.

The **Community Taba** at CBD COP8 in Curitiba, Brazil in 2006 facilitated exchange among grassroots indigenous and local community leaders, leveraged their skills and knowledge towards achieving concrete conservation results, and connected them with national and international policymakers and funders. The Taba attracted a significant amount of media coverage and political attention, including a visit from the Governor of the State of Parana who invited all Taba participants to lunch at the Governor’s Palace.

At the UN Meeting for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was held in Mauritius in 2005. Secretary-General Kofi Annan and other high-level officials were hosted in the **Community Vilaj** dialogue space, which addressed issues critical to the mobilization and scaling up of local sustainable development initiatives in SIDS. The role of communities in reducing poverty, mitigating vulnerabilities, preventing disasters, and achieving the MDGs was the focus of the conversations.

Five representatives of the Community Commons were selected for inclusion in formal UN Civil Society Organization Hearings and spoke compellingly on behalf of local and indigenous community issues. This took place in the lead-up to the *Millennium Review Summit*, in New York in 2005. Several of their positions were reflected in the final document that was submitted to the General Assembly.

Other community dialogue spaces include: **Community Shamba** at the *International Ecoagriculture Conference* in Nairobi in 2004, the **Community Mubaan** at the *World Conservation Congress* in Bangkok in 2004, **Community Park** at the *World Parks Congress* in Durban in 2003 and the **Community Kampung** at CBD COP7 in Kuala Lumpur in 2004.

See [equatorinitiative.org](http://equatorinitiative.org) for more information.

## 4

## OPERATIONALIZING THE LOCAL CAPACITY STRATEGY

The proposed strategy will be utilized and implemented by existing UNDP regional, national and sub-national programmes and projects with a focus on local capacity and action. Scaling up and expanding the efforts of UNDP at the local level will require the involvement of UNDP staff throughout the world in a well-coordinated manner.

As described earlier, SGP will play a key role in delivering the Local Capacity Strategy. While other fund delivery mechanisms will be organized as needed, SGP provides a ready and well-established framework and delivery mechanism to quickly disperse resources for local activities. Through its sustainable development approach, which complements community livelihoods with the GEF focal areas of climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, international waters, and persistent organic pollutants (POPs), SGP creates opportunities to scale up local capacity and action. When additional UNDP resources are matched to GEF funding to support emerging programmatic areas that are not currently eligible for GEF funds, the opportunities are even greater.

TEAM	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
Country Office Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate the implementation of the strategy at the national level.</li> <li>• Represent/lead UNDP in high-level discussions with the government and development partners.</li> <li>• Promote and facilitate the incorporation of local-level considerations in relevant sectors of the economy and ultimately in the national development strategy and/or PRSP of the country.</li> <li>• Ensure coordination with (a) national activities supported by other development partners, and with (b) UNDP's regional and global activities to ensure maximum impact of efforts.</li> <li>• Initiate and provide coordination and oversight of fundraising and partnership development at the national level to implement the strategy.</li> </ul>
Regional Service Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respond to country demand and provide front line technical support to Country Offices for specialized advice.</li> <li>• Coordinate implementation of the strategy at the regional level, including integration with regional UNDP programmes related to local capacity and action, as well as other relevant regional programmes.</li> </ul>
Regional Bureaux	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist in setting priorities regarding scaling up local capacity and action in their regions, in cooperation with ongoing regional and global activities, and in response to country requirements.</li> <li>• Initiate and provide coordination and oversight of resource mobilization and partnership development at regional and national levels to implement the strategy.</li> <li>• Propose amendments to the strategy in light of lessons learnt at the regional and national levels.</li> </ul>
Global Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide knowledge management, global technical backstopping and implementation oversight to UNDP staff.</li> <li>• Develop and monitor the implementation of results-based indicators and impact criteria and amend the implementation of the strategy accordingly.</li> <li>• Provide coordination and oversight of fundraising and partnership development at global, regional and national levels to implement the strategy.</li> <li>• Update UNDP staff on progress in implementing the strategy.</li> <li>• Propose amendments to the strategy in light of evolving international developments.</li> <li>• Evaluate existing/ongoing initiatives among diverse stakeholders to identify partnership opportunities within the UNDP niche.</li> </ul>

Building on the example of the institutional arrangements of Africa 2000, LIFE, and more recently, the proposed framework for the UNDP-UNV-UNESCO Collaborative Programme on Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change in Developing Countries (UN-CBA), UNDP will build on SGP's existing organizational structures. This will involve utilizing the SGP National Coordinator (NC), multi-sectoral SGP National Steering Committee (NSC) and SGP local networks to scale up successful pre-existing models and continue to pilot new and innovative demonstration projects. Using the current SGP governance structure, which assures the participation of the country's civil society, government and the UNDP Country Office, will ensure that activities are country-driven, sustainable, and benefit from a participatory management approach—features that have been the hallmark of SGP success.

Funding will take the form of either co-financing for GEF-eligible activities, or new funding for non-GEF eligible activities in participating SGP countries. A firewall mechanism will be set up and additional operational funding provided to make sure that implementation of activities under the Local Capacity Strategy will synergistically strengthen the implementation of GEF-related tasks. The NSC structure in each country will also be reviewed with respect to the existence of expertise on activities proposed under this strategy, and if necessary, expanded to include relevant skills. The guiding principle in implementing the activities of the Local Capacity Strategy will be to allow local NGOs and CBOs easy and expedited access to funds to ensure their timely and targeted utilization.

Activities, including grant-making, workshops, trainings, consultations, dialogues and knowledge manage-

ment, will advance UNDP's and SGP's shared sustainable development goals around local capacity and action in ecosystem services, biodiversity conservation, energy, water, community-based adaptation, and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD). NGOs and CBOs within this network have a proven track record in community forest management, community-based adaptation, income generation and renewable energy projects. They will provide an invaluable source of expertise and mentoring through exchanges and provisions for periodic technical backstopping, capacity development, and South-South cooperation.

UN Resident Coordinators are invited to play a key role in support of these activities in their strategic leadership of the UN Country Team and relationships with national authorities. Resident Coordinators support the overall programme design at the national level and can reach out for additional support to national and local governments, non-resident UN agencies, and international actors active in strengthening local capacity for the environment and sustainable development.

When fully operationalized in this manner, the Local Capacity Strategy can contribute to the MDG Acceleration Framework, which is the central element of the MDG Breakthrough Strategy. Years of experience have taught us that truly "localizing" the MDGs requires tackling the obstacles to effective action at the local level and providing local actors the capacities, connections, and support they require to drive their own development agendas. By acting on these lessons of localization the Local Capacity Strategy will encourage the rapid scaling up of successful local initiatives, providing the motive force for the desired MDG "breakthrough."



## 5

## REFERENCES

Bigg, T., and D. Satterthwaite. 2005. *How to Make Poverty History: The Central Role of Local Organizations in Meeting the MDGs*. London: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

Chhatre, A., and A. Agrawal. 2009. Trade-offs and synergies between carbon storage and livelihood benefits from forest commons. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 106 (42).

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). 2004. *World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT): Impact Analysis, LANDCARE, Claveria Landcare Association*. Berne, Switzerland: WOCAT.

Gibson, C., J. Williams, and E. Ostrom. 2005. "Local Enforcement and Better Forests." *World Development*, 33(2):273-284.

Hatcher, J. 2009. *Securing tenure rights as a forest-based climate change mitigation measure: Some costs and lessons to inform policy decisions and priorities*. Washington, DC: Rights and Resources Initiative.

Nittler, J., and H. Tschinkel. 2005. *Community Forest Management in the Maya Biosphere Reserve of Guatemala: Protection Through Profits*. Paper submitted to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Steering Committee on Nature, Wealth, and Power, and the Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Program, University of Georgia. Washington, DC: USAID.

Ostrom, E. 1990. *Governing the Commons: the Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ostrom, E. 2004. "Understanding Collective Action." Brief 2 in *Collective Action and Property Rights for Sustainable Development*. R. Meinzen-Dick and M. Di Gregorio, eds. Washington, DC: International Food Policy Research Institute.

Pagdee, A., Y. Kim, and P.J. Daugherty. 2006. "What Makes Community Forest Management Successful: A Meta-Study from Community Forests Throughout the World." *Society and Natural Resources*, 19:33-52.

Pimbert, M. 2006. Reclaiming autonomous food systems: the role of local organizations in farming, environment and people's access to food. Paper presented at the International Conference on Land, Poverty, Social Justice, and Development, The Hague, Netherlands, Jan. 12-14.

Pimbert, M. 2005. "Supporting locally determined food systems: the role of local organizations in farming, environment and people's access to food." Chapter 6 in *How to Make Poverty History: The Central Role of Local Organizations in Meeting the MDGs*, Bigg, T., and D. Satterthwaite., eds. London: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED)

Pretty, J., and H. Ward. 2001. "Social Capital and the Environment." *World Development*, 29 (2):209-227.

Ricketts T., B. Soares-Filho, G. da Fonseca, D. Nepstad, A. Pfaff, A. Pestsonk, A. Anderson, D. Boucher, A. Cattaneo, M. Conte, K. Creighton, L. Linden, C. Maretti, P. Moutinho, R. Ullman, and R. Victorine. 2010. Indigenous Lands, Protected Areas, and Slowing Climate Change. *PLoS Biol*, 8(3): e1000331. Online at: <http://www.plosbiology.org/article/info:doi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pbio.1000331>

Satterthwaite, D., and G. Sauter. *Understanding and Supporting the Role of Local Organisations in Sustainable Development*. London: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

[Self-Employed Women's Association](#) (SEWA). 2009. *About Us*. Ahmedabad, India: SEWA.

Tavernise, S. 2009. "Afghan Enclave Seen as Model for Development." *New York Times* (13 November).

Thomas, D., H. Osbahr, C. Twyman, N. Adger, and B. Hewitson. 2005. *ADAPTIVE: Adaptations to climate change amongst natural resource-dependant societies in the developing world: across the Southern African climate gradient*. East Anglia: Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, University of East Anglia.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2009a. [Sepik Wetlands Management Initiative—Papua New Guinea](#). Equator Initiative. New York: UNDP.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 2009b. [Shampole Community Trust—Nairobi](#). Equator Initiative. New York: UNDP.

Uphoff, N. 1992. *Local Institutions and Participation for Sustainable Development*. London: International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED).

White, T.A., and C.F. Runge. 1995. "The Emergence and Evolution of Collective Action: Lessons from Watershed Management in Haiti." *World Development*, 23(10):1683-1698.

World Resources Institute, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Environment Programme, and World Bank. 2008. *World Resources 2008: Roots of Resilience—Growing the Wealth of the Poor*. Washington, DC: World Resources Institute.



A numerous series of in-person consultations and planning meetings to develop the Local Capacity Strategy were held in UNDP Headquarters, New York, from December 2008 – August 2009. The following groups contributed in-depth analysis and feedback to produce the draft Local Capacity Strategy including over 100 environment and development professionals and community leaders.

- EEG Local Capacity Pillar Steering Committee, composed of representatives from EEG's key focus areas, including: Community-Based Adaption to Climate Change (CBA), Community Water Initiative, GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP), Energy Access Programme, Equator Initiative, and the UN-REDD Programme
- UNDP Bureau for Development Policy Practice Groups and Teams, including the following: Environment and Energy, Democratic Governance, Poverty Reduction, HIV/AIDS, Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Capacity Development, and Gender
- UNDP Regional Bureaux Environment and Energy Focal Points
- UNDP Civil Society Division
- UNDP Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor
- UNDP Partnerships Bureau
- UNDP Evaluations Office
- UNDP Operations Support Group (OSG)
- UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)
- Local and Indigenous Representatives from the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII)

An E-Consultation on the Strategy, designed to gather feedback from key constituencies and individuals not present during the in-person consultations, was undertaken from 2nd – 26th June 2009. Invitations and tailored questionnaires were sent to the following constituencies:

- Environment and Energy Focal Points in UNDP Country Offices, Regional Service Centres and Regional Bureaux
- UNDP Bureau for Development Policy Practice Groups and Teams, Headquarters (Including the following groups: Environment and Energy, Democratic Governance, Poverty Reduction, HIV/AIDS, Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Capacity Development, and Gender)
- GEF-Small Grants Programme National Coordinators and Programme Assistants
- UNDP Partner Organizations (including representatives of Governments, UN Agencies, NGOs, academia and private foundations etc.)
- UNDP CSO Advisors and UN Country Team Civil Society focal points
- UNDP Indigenous Peoples focal points
- The Equator Initiative's network of Community Initiatives
- Indigenous Peoples Representatives from a previous consultation held during the 2009 UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
- HD2010 Platform Consultation Participants

Through the E-consultation, 86 individuals provided input and guidance: 75 completing questionnaires and 11 providing more general comments. Comments from the E-Consultation were collated and input was then used to inform the final draft of the Strategy and the work plans flowing from it. Following are some of the messages gleaned from the consultation on the ingredients of successful local action:

## 1. Initiatives should directly address immediate community needs

- Activities should be demand-driven and directly respond to needs identified by the community. Immediate community needs, including food security, income generation and education, must be

addressed. Linkages between proposed project activities and opportunities to generate livelihood and income benefits must be clear.

- Investments in undertaking the activity should be shared by all program partners, including the communities themselves. Local groups should be supported to mobilize additional resources that leverage UNDP and SGP investments.
- Undertaking participatory appraisals prior to project initiation is vital but not sufficient. Assessments need to be followed-up by immediate support actions to address needs identified during the appraisal.
- Initiatives that have been less successful have often been de-linked from local realities, where local communities or their partners have overestimated their capacity to achieve long-term impacts.

## 2. Local ownership is critical

- Successful projects are often driven by local leaders. However, the number projects where leadership is genuinely coming from the local level needs to be increased, particularly programs managed or governed by qualified local and indigenous peoples. There should be greater representation of these local actors on project governance and management committees.
- Community groups should be responsible for identifying, developing and monitoring projects, as well as undertaking associated administration and financial management activities, even if this results in delays while the capacity of community groups is developed.
- Projects developed in collaboration with local leaders and champions should guard against relying too much on specific individuals, in case they leave.
- On-site training and demonstration activities play a valuable role in shaping beneficiaries' perceptions and understanding within their local context.

## 3. Sustainable financing strategies must be in place

- Small grants or seed funds have proven effective catalysts for supporting local development initiatives. However, this must be accompanied by activities to develop sustainable income generation options for local groups involved. Projects funded from external sources with limited co-financing from community groups tend to be abandoned when finances are exhausted.
- Mobilizing additional funds to follow-up and scale-up successful initiatives also needs further attention. Project financing does not systematically build upon activities supported by previous grants. This has been a key limitation to enabling innovative initiatives to be scaled-up and replicated.

## 4. Rights-based approaches are critical; communities must be aware of their rights and supported to advocate for them

- Empowering communities to resolve conflicts and manage local resources, including through traditional laws, regulations and knowledge, is critical. Local community groups and initiatives should be supported to advocate for their rights to their natural resources, for example Protected Area co-management, and to ensure commitment from national and local governments to enforce enabling policies.

## 5. Networking, knowledge-sharing and partnerships play a key role in sharing information, mobilizing resources, and enhancing the scale of impact

- Strengthening linkages between community groups and development partners is critical. This should be undertaken with community groups taking leadership in the process. Community dialogue spaces and knowledge-sharing activities have been particularly valuable, as have investments to network community groups to collectively mobilize resources and develop collaborative initiatives.

- o date, establishing forums for stakeholders to share information and exchange ideas has not been as effective as it could be. For example, SGP has developed a large knowledge-base on local initiatives underway globally, but to date, it has not invested enough in enabling this knowledge to be documented, consolidated, shared, and used to inform and inspire.
- 6. Establishing clear baselines and long-term monitoring processes are crucial to ensuring that projects can demonstrate impacts and sustainability**
- As projects are developed, stakeholders should review and learn from the outcomes of previous Small Grants Programme and other projects.
  - Long-term monitoring processes are required after the close of a project to ensure the longer-term impacts are documented and understood.
- 7. Examples of local success cannot be fostered in isolation; complementary activities to create an enabling environment are imperative.**
- It has been difficult to make significant improvements in poverty reduction and environmental conservation at the national level just by supporting the actions of CBOs and NGOs alone. This work needs to be complemented by activities to convince policy makers and other national-level institutions of the vital nature of local work. So far, there have not been processes that systematically link outcomes of community-based initiatives with national-level decision-making processes, particularly policy formation.

- [\*Civil Society Division \(CSD\)\*](#): UNDP has a long and extensive history of partnership with non-governmental organizations extending over 30 years. In the early years of engagement, UNDP partnerships with CSOs were primarily for implementation of projects and delivery of services. In 1990, with the launch of the Human Development Report, whose inspiration was drawn in large part from civil society, UNDP partnerships with CSOs were increasingly integrated. Today, partnering with civil society is of central importance to UNDP. In its efforts to strengthen its policies and procedural methods to collaborate more effectively with Civil Society, UNDP created the NGO Division (now the Civil Society Division, within the Partnerships Bureau) in 1986. The Division provides programme support and guidance to country offices to strengthen their capacity to work with CSOs. In close collaboration with the Bureau for Development Policy and the Regional Bureaux, the division also supports strategic processes of civic engagement at local, regional, and global levels.
- [\*UN Capital Development Fund \(UNCDF\)\*](#) works with more than 700 local governments in 34 least developed countries. Besides financing pro-poor infrastructure and local service delivery, UNCDF builds local government capacities by providing budget support for public investments in addition to incentive funds. UNCDF also has a micro-finance programme that has supported environment-related projects for waste collection and crop insurance. Many local governments and community organizations require training, technical assistance and initial direct support for service delivery and budget management.
- The [\*Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor\*](#) (2005), hosted by UNDP, is working with governments to develop appropriate forms of title and legal property rights to recognize the informal management regimes and self-help strategies of the poor.
- The *Partners in Development Programme (PDP)* began in 1986 and was UNDP's first inter-regional small grants experience, reaching 16 countries. The UNDP Administrator's Annual Report highlighted PDP's awards for "highly innovative community initiatives" in food production, preservation and storage; water supply, sanitation and irrigation; primary health care; education; and income and employment generation. PDP was followed by the Africa 2000 and Asia-Pacific 2000 regional networks that broadened UNDP's engagement with NGOs and community-based organizations.
- The *Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE)* was launched by UNDP at the Earth Summit in Rio in 1992 as a global flagship programme to promote local-local dialogue and partnership between NGOs, CBOs, local governments and the private sector with the aim of improving living conditions and influencing policies for participatory local governance. LIFE gave small grants to NGOs and CBOs for participatory projects in poor urban areas; capacity development and policy dialogue through advocacy and pilot projects.
- The *PROWESS (Promotion of the Role of Women in Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Services)* programme began in 1983 as an interregional project to demonstrate to policy makers and practitioners that by focusing on women's roles as managers of water and hygiene at the household level, and ensuring their full participation in WSS interventions, project effectiveness and sustainability would be significantly enhanced. PROWESS components, managed primarily by local NGOs and CBOs, were integrated into WSS projects of other UN system agencies. They provided capacity building through gender analysis; participatory workshops that brought together community women and technicians; and community women's involvement in system management, maintenance and repair. In 1992, PROWESS was officially integrated into the World Bank/UNDP Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP).

Within EEG, the following initiatives have generated a wealth of experience from diverse contexts and bring new insight on the dynamics of community-based development processes:

- Since 1992, the [\*UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme \(SGP\)\*](#) has generated over \$500 million for local action. This has encompassed 12,500 initiatives in 122 countries with NGOs, CBOs and indigenous peoples, working in the areas of biodiversity, climate change, persistent organic pollutants (POPs), international waters and land degradation. Global recognition and demand for GEF-SGP support has expanded the number of SGP country programmes from 40 in the 1992 pilot phase, to 65 in 2003 at the end of the second phase, to 125 in 2010. Country programmes are managed by multi-stakeholder National Steering Committees (NSCs) that combine NGO, CBO, academia, private sector, government and other civil society members. A National SGP Coordinator ensures day-to-day management and serves as Secretary to the NSC. Over 1,000 volunteer NSC members have been mobilized by the SGP in the countries where it operates. An SGP website with a publications page offers profiles of the individual projects supported, case studies and other policy-relevant publications. In its current 5<sup>th</sup> Operational Phase (OP5), SGP also supports Indigenous Community Conserved Areas (ICCAs), helping to strengthen local management capabilities in the estimated 16 million square kilometers of ICCAs that exist globally.
- EEG is also working with SGP on a [\*Community-Based Adaptation to Climate Change Initiative\*](#) to pilot 90-100 community driven climate risk management projects in 10 countries. UNDP's support includes the provision of technical assistance for the assessment of vulnerability to climate change and community capacity to adapt to negative consequences, design of feasible and cost-effective projects as well as monitoring and oversight services. Lessons from projects are also extracted, documented and disseminated to the development community.
- The [\*Community Water Initiative \(CWI\)\*](#), which is implemented by SGP, supports community-based water resources management and innovative, low-cost water supply and sanitation projects in rural areas. It operates on the premise that local management and initiative play a key role in ensuring and sustaining successful water supply and sanitation services for poor communities. Since 2004, the CWI has funded 89 community projects in Ghana, Guatemala, Kenya, Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and Uganda, bringing water supply and sanitation services to more than 260,000 people directly with additional capacity benefits. These experiences offer an important body of local case studies with out-scaling potential. During the short period of implementation of CWI, it has achieved international recognition through its concrete impact on the ground. In 2008, two CWI projects won the Visions Award. In 2009, four CWI projects entered the semi-final top 30 nominees for the Grand Kyoto Prize contest.
- The [\*Equator Initiative\*](#) is a partnership that brings together the United Nations, governments, international and local civil society, businesses, and grassroots organizations to raise the profile and build the capacity of local efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Since 2002, the Equator Prize has recognized over 100 local community initiatives from 55 countries, awarding over US\$1.2 million and attracting extensive attention of the international press, as well as donor and partner organizations. The Equator Prize nomination process has produced a database of over 1,400 local level community-based natural resource management initiatives. The Equator Initiative also facilitates community dialogue spaces where leading local practitioners are provided with a platform to participate in international policy forums and to share best practice, inform policy, and expand partnerships. In addition to making lasting connections with each other, local representatives at dialogue spaces have been successfully integrated into international working groups, become part of national delegations, and contributed to national and international policy agendas. The Equator Initiative also maintains a 720-member listserv, EquatorNet, and has produced over 60 research and policy publications.



- The Equator Initiative also oversees the *Community Knowledge Service (CKS)* – an international partnership that comprises over 300 community-based organizations – mostly from Equator Prize-winning communities. These organizations are now engaged in what is fast becoming a global movement of local expertise in environmental conservation, poverty reduction, and food security. The CKS includes an International Steering Committee of 20 community-based and international partner representatives. The CKS program provides ongoing access to local experience and lessons learned through two main components: a web-based service, CKS Online; and regional working groups in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean, which are supported by regional focal points and steering committees to coordinate on-the-ground knowledge exchange.
- The *Biodiversity Programme* is designed to enable UNDP projects and others engaged in biodiversity mainstreaming initiatives to exchange and apply knowledge of experiences and good practices. It informs decision-makers on the costs, benefits and trade-offs of productive activities in areas of high biodiversity, and has developed a set of decision-making tools for supply chain transformation to simultaneously address biodiversity management and economic development needs. The Biodiversity Programme also works on payment for ecosystem services (PES) supply chains. It has allocated almost US\$200 million in 39 projects globally that work with local indigenous communities. In addition, nearly \$400 million have been provided to 50 projects around the world that establish or support institutions for co-management of natural resources by local CSOs
- The *United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation* in developing countries (UN-REDD Programme) was established in June 2008 to assist developing countries prepare and implement national REDD+ strategies, and builds on the convening power and expertise of FAO, UNDP and UNEP. The Programme has two components: (i) assisting developing countries prepare and implement national REDD strategies and mechanisms (national programmes); and (ii) supporting the development of normative solutions and standardized approaches based on sound science for a REDD+ instrument linked with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (global programme). The UN-REDD Programme collaborates closely with the World Bank's Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) and Forest Investment Program (FIP), and also cooperates with GEF's Tropical Forest Account and other GEF programs in a number of countries, as well as with several bilateral programmes.
- UNDP's *Energy Access Programme*. Energy access has always been a priority area within the UNDP and it includes efforts to expand access to a variety of energy technologies such as solar, wind, mechanical, micro-hydro, improved cooking stoves, biogas, and LPG. Since 1996, UNDP has supported more than 600 energy-related projects, reaching more than 5 million beneficiaries. From 2001 to 2007, UNDP energy-related project financing rose to \$1.7 billion, an increase of 57% over the financing level for the previous 10 years. At the regional level, the largest growth in the energy access portion of UNDP's portfolio has been in Africa. Between 2001 and 2007, UNDP support for energy-related projects in Africa rose to over \$170 million, with more than 70% of that spent to increase access to energy services at the local level. UNDP has played a lead role in raising \$20 million for local energy service delivery in West Africa, developing local capacities for energy service management, and promoting public and private investments in rural electrification. Local experiences from West Africa and Nepal, among others, have generated working models for community-based service delivery and more efficient and effective energy technologies that are being replicated on a wider scale. Additionally, through the Small Grants Programme, UNDP has helped implement over 1,000 community-based energy projects in over 90 countries.
- The *Territorial Approach to Climate Change (TACC)* helps sub-national authorities prepare Integrated Territorial Climate Plans (ITCP) to identify priority mitigation and adaptation measures (negative costs/no-regrets/urgent initiatives). Support is given in three phases to develop sub-national governance capacity for climate change adaptation; assisting 50 regions in preparing ITCPs; promoting partnerships and experience sharing; and implementing pilot projects, PES modalities and other activities related to the ITCPs. To do this, the Facility will leverage more than US\$ 70 million.

The Local Capacity Strategy draws on, complements and further develops other historical, recent and emerging corporate frameworks, including:

- [United Nations Charter \(1945\)](#)
- [Agenda 21 \(1992\)](#)
- [UNDP Public Information and Documentation Disclosure Policy \(1996, revised 2008\)](#)
- [UN Millennium Declaration \(2000\)](#)
- [UNDP and CSOs: a Policy of Engagement \(2001\)](#)
- [UNDP Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples \(2001\)](#)
- [Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development \(2002\)](#)
- [UN Common Understanding on a Human Rights-Based Approach \(2003\)](#)
- [UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples \(2007\)](#)
- [UN Development Group \(UNDG\) Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues \(2008\)](#)
- [Resource Kit on Indigenous Issues \(2008\)](#)
- [UNDP Strategic Plan 2008-2013](#)
- [4th UNDP Global Programme 2009-2011](#)
- [UNDP Global Strategy to Strengthen Civil Society and Civic Engagement: Voice and Accountability for Human Development 2009-2011](#)
- [Gender Equality Strategy 2009-2011](#)

The United Nations Charter gives the UN a clear mandate to work with civil society organizations and local actors. The provision in Chapter X of the Charter stating that ECOSOC should arrange consultations with NGOs was reaffirmed at the Millennium Summit 2000, when the Secretary-General asserted the centrality of civil society and its organizations to the mission of the United Nations in the twenty-first century:

*"Not only do you [civil society organizations] bring to life the concept of 'We, the Peoples,' in whose name our Charter was written; you bring to us the promise that 'people power' can make the Charter work for all the world's peoples in the twenty-first century."*

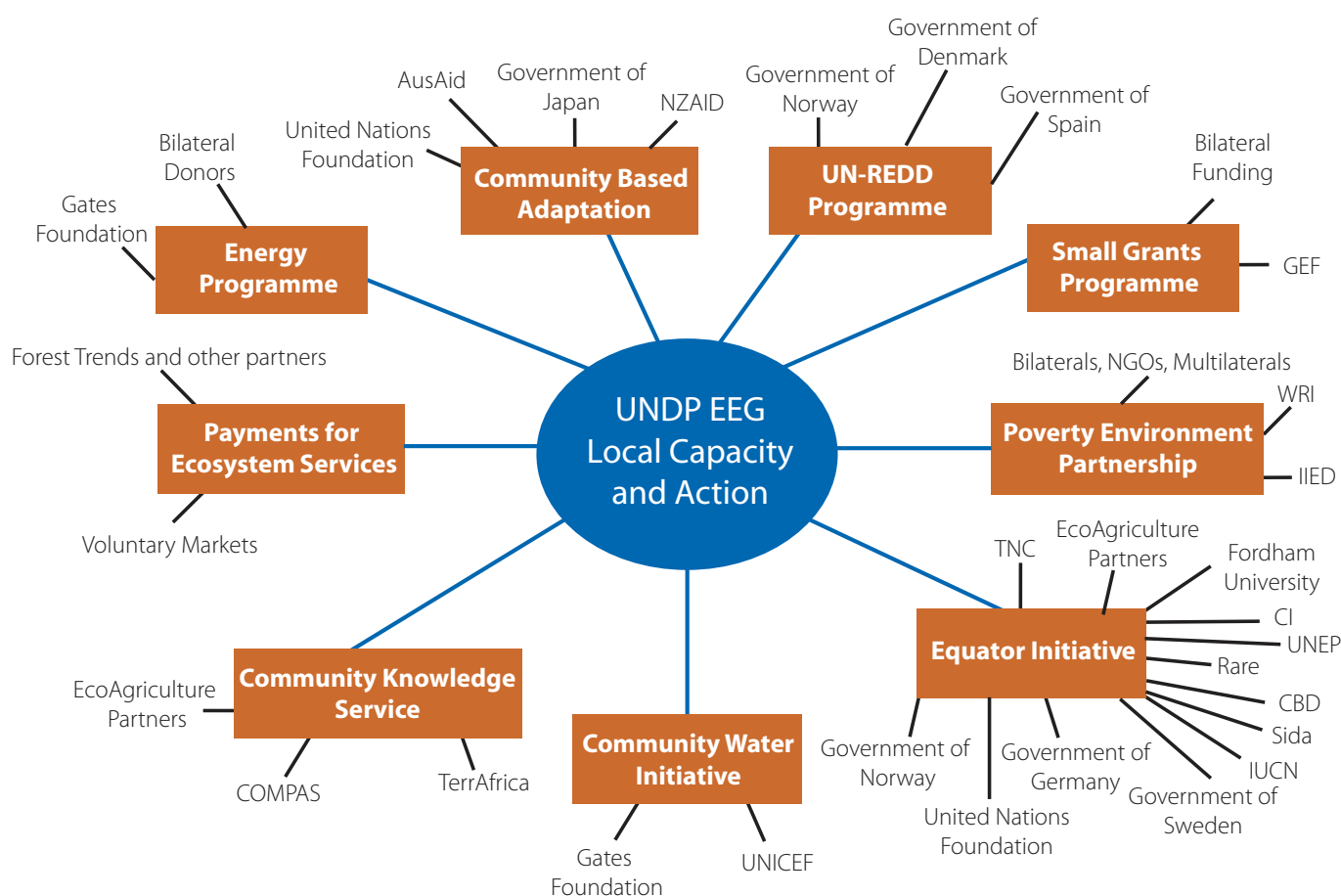
This mandate is echoed in the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, which reaffirms "the vital role of the indigenous peoples in sustainable development"; and the UN World Summit in 2005, where the UN Secretary General's "[In Larger Freedom](#)" report recommended a greater engagement of the United Nations with civil society and emphasized its critical role in poverty eradication. Likewise, UNDP's Agenda 21 commitment to Major Groups includes women, NGOs, local authorities and indigenous peoples. From a human rights perspective, UNDP, along with Member Governments, have duties and obligations to ensure the inclusion of local actors in policy formation and the recognition of local rights and entitlements. To fulfill these obligations, UNDP must engage with and involve a range of local actors in its programmes.

The *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, adopted by the General Assembly in 2007, is a powerful policy document obliging states to consult with indigenous peoples to obtain free prior and informed consent to any project affecting their lands, territories or resources. The UNDG Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples Issues of February 2008 further mainstreams indigenous issues in UN Country Teams. The 2001 UNDP Policy on Engagement with Indigenous Peoples provides staff with a framework to guide their work in building sustainable partnerships with indigenous peoples and their organizations.

## ANNEX V : How UNDP's PRACTICES AND TEAMS CAN ADVANCE THE LOCAL CAPACITY STRATEGY

DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE	POVERTY REDUCTION	CRISIS PREVENTION AND RECOVERY
Promote national legislation that advances local access to justice and participation in resource governance, brokering dialogue and sharing good practice to ensure better delivery of basic services to those most in need.	Promote sustainable community-based natural resource management, increasing local access to environmental and energy entitlements and services, and ensuring access to environmental finance mechanisms and local awareness of the multiple values and benefits of resource management and stewardship (e.g. PES, REDD, carbon credits, intellectual property, etc). Enhance the capacity of local institutions and the ability of local actors to share best practice in poverty reduction through the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.	Promote recognition of local land and resource entitlements to reduce incidents of resource conflict; Environment and energy management techniques that hedge against natural disasters resulting from climate-change (e.g. protection of forests, mangrove restoration, etc.).
CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	GENDER	HIV/AIDS
Advance a commitment to capacity development as process through a set of ongoing interventions that use the existing base of local capacities as a starting point, building on local skills, knowledge, institutions, and relationships for effective local leadership planning, aid coordination and financial management skills.	Develop local capacity to strengthen women's empowerment, equality, and gender mainstreaming in environment and energy management; work with local actors to recognize women's rights and the invaluable leadership role women play in community-based natural resource management initiatives and response to climate change.	Enhance cross-practice support for community leadership, knowledge exchange, and cross-disciplinary approaches at the local level to achieve the MDGs.

## ANNEX VI : EEG's GLOBAL NETWORK OF PARTNERS FOR LOCAL ACTION









The first part of the paper discusses the importance of the research and the objectives of the study. It highlights the need for a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter and the role of the researcher in this process. The second part of the paper presents the methodology used in the study, including the selection of participants, the data collection methods, and the analysis techniques. The third part of the paper discusses the results of the study and the conclusions drawn from the data. The final part of the paper provides a summary of the findings and discusses the implications for future research.

The research was conducted in a systematic and rigorous manner, following the principles of scientific inquiry. The data collected was analyzed using statistical methods to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. The results of the study indicate that there is a significant relationship between the variables studied, and this relationship is consistent across the different groups of participants.

The findings of this study have important implications for the field of research. They provide a new perspective on the subject matter and suggest areas for further investigation. The results also have practical implications for the application of the research findings in the real world.

In conclusion, the study has provided valuable insights into the subject matter and has contributed to the body of knowledge in the field. The findings suggest that there is a need for further research in this area, and the results of this study can be used as a basis for future studies.



For Further Information:

Veerle Vandeweerd  
Director  
UNDP Environment & Energy Group  
304 East 45th Street  
Room FF-982  
New York, NY 10017  
Email: [veerle.vandeweerd@undp.org](mailto:veerle.vandeweerd@undp.org)  
Phone: +1 (212) 906 5020

© Copyright United Nations Development Programme, September 2010. All rights reserved.