

UNDP Results

Rule of Law



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

Approach

The rule of law implies that every citizen is subject to the law, and that the laws in place in a country are fair, non-discriminatory and respect human rights. A fair and functioning legal system in conformity with international human rights standards is the cornerstone of economic growth, security and poverty eradication. Currently, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is strengthening rule of law in **over 100 developing countries, including 37 affected by crisis**.

UNDP rule of law programmes include providing legal empowerment to the poor and marginalized groups, including women, young people, the disabled and migrants; improving justice and security institutions and access to justice; and helping communities to deal with a legacy of conflict through methods such as truth commissions, the prosecution of conflict-related crimes and establishing community-based violence prevention initiatives.

UNDP also helps governments and concerned organizations to draft stronger legislation in areas such as domestic violence, gender-based violence and trafficking, and to improve the institutional response to these crimes.

R E S U L T S

Strengthening justice and security institutions in crisis situations

UNDP provides support to countries to improve oversight and accountability of their justice and security institutions and services. For example, UNDP provides expert advice, training and necessary infrastructure like IT systems, new courthouses and police services and facilities.

- In **Afghanistan**, UNDP has provided critical support to the establishment of a 138,000-strong national police force and pioneered the development of community policing initiatives.
- In **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, UNDP support for the establishment of mobile courts and legal-aid centres resulted in the conviction of 193 members of the police and army for mass rapes and crimes against humanity.
- In **El Salvador**, UNDP's community security programmes brought together police and community leaders in 20 of the country's most violent areas. In 2011, this resulted in a marked reduction of rates of murder, theft and assault by an average of 12 percent.

Countries where UNDP supports rule of law work: 2012



Source: UN Cartographic Unit and UNDP

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Final boundary between the Republic of Sudan and the Republic of South Sudan has not yet been determined. Dotted line represents approximately the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir agreed upon by India and Pakistan. The final status of Jammu and Kashmir has not yet been agreed upon by the parties.

- Recognizing the systemic weaknesses and lack of resources across all areas of **Somalia's** justice and security sector, UNDP has provided support, from building courts and police stations, to training police units and members of the judiciary, as well as establishing nine mobile courts and numerous legal aid clinics. UNDP also supported the appointment of 14,000 police officers, substantially increasing the capacity and reach of the police force.

- In **South Sudan**, UNDP has helped to establish 50 police posts in remote areas where crimes like cattle raiding have become the major cause of conflict; the training of over 1,000 police recruits and the swearing-in of more than 500 police, prison, customs and fire brigade officers has resulted in a major improvement in the country's justice and security infrastructure.

Promoting rule of law and access to justice

UNDP supports the transformation of formal and informal justice systems to serve the need of people and protect the rule of law, including through the provision of free or low-cost legal aid and legal education.

- In **China**, UNDP supported the national scaling up of a legal empowerment network of 31 organizations with more than 150 full-time staff, 70 percent of them lawyers. This network has settled more than 19,000 cases for migrant workers resulting in awarding more than US\$40 million in owed salary, workplace injury compensation and other forms of compensation.

- In **India**, UNDP supported a training programme that educated 1.5 million poor people – a third of them women – on their legal rights and entitlements. The programme also trained an additional 4,000 paralegals, community justice workers, self-help group members and elected women representatives to assist people in accessing justice.

- In **Mozambique**, UNDP helped transform the justice system to one that now reaches the poorest and most marginalized. In 2011 over 4,400 people received free legal assistance and a string of Palaces of Justice were established in the country's most remote rural districts, providing a one-stop service for victims of violence.

- Over 450,000 poor and disadvantaged people facing legal problems have benefited from a legal empowerment and assistance project supported by the Government of **Indonesia** and UNDP.

- In **Iraq**, UNDP's work helped bring about the adoption of Kurdistan's first domestic violence law. UNDP also helped to establish three pilot courts in Baghdad, Basra and Erbil; the organization also supported the creation of the Iraqi Legal Database, containing over 27,000 legal texts and consulted by an average of 30,000 people a month.

Support to the rule of law in Arab States in transition

UNDP is working with newly formed Governments in the Arab States region as they begin the difficult process of transition. Re-establishing trust in the judiciary, security services and police will be critical to help found stable democracies that respect human rights.

- In **Tunisia**, UNDP aided more than 50 political parties in 2011, working with their representatives to promote collaboration and support for a peaceful and more consensus-based transitional process.

- Along with more general electoral support in the run-up to **Libya's** July 2012 National Congress election, UNDP provided expert advice and support for a security plan for the country's first election since 1952. UNDP also trained lawyers and judges to resolve electoral disputes.

For more information:

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