



# UNDP FOR BEGINNERS

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE  
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT  
PROGRAMME

4.1.1 Edition  
June 2011

# Introduction



It has been a longstanding wish for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to establish a brief yet concise overview of the organization's multifaceted structure, its intricate jargon and its ongoing transformations. To respond to this need the UNDP JPO Service Centre prepared a UNDP Guide for Beginners in 2004. The Guide was updated in 2006 and 2008, and this is the fourth edition of the Guide.

As a large, multilateral organization, the United Nations Development Programme is a complex structure. Internal jargon and the use of abbreviations also make it difficult for outsiders to understand what UNDP does and how it does it.

This Guide for Beginners is written to give you a snap-shot of where UNDP stands now, as well as to provide an overview of the basic structures and systems of UNDP. It targets new staff members and people who work with UNDP, and it is intended to make it easier to understand the basics of the organization.

Naturally, an introductory guide is necessarily selective and therefore subjective. However, we tried to provide hyperlinks for those who want more information. This overview is for guidance only, and may not necessarily reflect the views of UNDP.

The UNDP JPO Service Centre would like to thank Thomas Winderl, a former JPO who drafted and updated the guide, and the JPO alumni network for reviewing earlier drafts of the Beginner's Guide.

For suggestions and/or updates, please send us an email to: [jpo.registry@undp.org](mailto:jpo.registry@undp.org)

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[www.jposc.org](http://www.jposc.org)

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# What does UNDP do?

## What is the UN?

The **United Nations** (UN) ⇒[www.un.org](http://www.un.org) is a unique international organization of 192 sovereign states established in 1945. Its goal is to maintain international peace and security, to develop friendly relations among nations, and to promote social progress, a better living standard and human rights. Its member states are bound together by the principles of the **UN Charter** ⇒[www.un.org/aboutun/charter/](http://www.un.org/aboutun/charter/), an international treaty that spells out the rights and duties of member states.



Although best known for peacekeeping, peace building, conflict prevention and humanitarian assistance, there are many other ways the United Nations and its system (specialized agencies, funds and programmes) affect our lives and make the world a better place. One of the central mandates of the United Nations is the promotion of **economic and social development**.

## What is UNDP?

The **United Nations Development Programme** (UNDP) ⇒[www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org) is the **UN's global development network**. UNDP is currently present on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges.

UNDP emanated from the merging of the United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, created in 1949, and the United Nations Special Fund, established in 1958. UNDP, as we know it now, was established in **1965** by the General Assembly of the United Nations.



UNDP's headquarters are located in New York. UNDP has liaison offices in Geneva, Brussels, Copenhagen, Tokyo, and Washington D.C. Further, UNDP has Regional Centres in Bangkok, Bratislava, Cairo, Colombo, Dakar, Johannesburg, Panama and Suva.

## What does UNDP want to achieve?

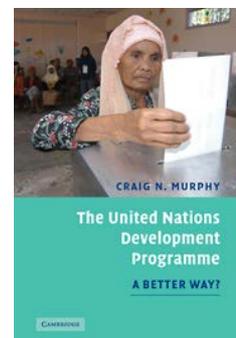
### Human Development

**UNDP's mandate is human development.**

UNDP supports national processes to accelerate the progress of **human development**. It aims at **eradicating poverty** through development, equitable and sustained economic growth, and capacity development. Ultimately, UNDP wants to achieve **real improvements in people's lives and in the choices and opportunities open to them**.

The **Millennium Declaration** and other summits provide a solid set of values for UNDP's work. The **Millennium Development Goals** - including the overarching goal of cutting poverty in half by 2015 - have set the benchmarks for concrete levels of progress to be achieved by 2015.

#### The history of UNDP



The United Nations Development Programme - A Better Way?, Craig N. Murphy, Cambridge 2006

## The Millennium Development Goals

In 2000, the members of the United Nations set the international agenda for the beginning of the new century. The resulting **Millennium Declaration** ⇒[www.un.org/millennium/](http://www.un.org/millennium/) is a broad commitment of all UN member states. The declaration applies the principles of the UN Charter to a new world and a new millennium.

The **Millennium Development Goals** ⇒[www.un.org/millenniumgoals/](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/) extract and refine those elements of the Millennium Declaration which are related to development. The goals are time-bound, starting in 1990 and to be achieved by 2015.

The first seven goals stress the responsibility of **developing countries** to undertake policy reforms and enhance good governance. Goal eight focuses on the responsibility of **developed nations** to relieve debt, increase aid and give developing countries better access to its technologies and markets.

The Millennium Development Goals include **21 targets** for the eight goals. One goal is normally defined by one or two targets. For each target, a number of indicators make progress measurable. There are **60 indicators** in total.

Guided by the UN Core Strategy, **UNDP's work on the MDGs** ⇒[www.undp.org/mdg/](http://www.undp.org/mdg/) focuses on coordinating global and local efforts:

- Campaign and mobilise for the MDGs through advocacy;
- Share the best strategies for meeting the MDGs in terms of innovative practices, policy and institutional reforms, means of policy implementation, and evaluation of financing options;
- Monitor and report progress towards the MDGs; and
- Support governments in tailoring the MDGs to local circumstances and challenges.

## Poverty, Governance, Crisis Prevention, Environment

The Strategic Plan is UNDP's comprehensive corporate planning instrument which outlines the **vision and mission** of the organization, as well as the **concrete goals and objectives** to be pursued over the four year cycle to support programme countries in achieving national development objectives.

For the 2008-2013 period, UNDP organizes its work along four focus areas:

The Millennium Development Goals



### UNDP's Strategic Plan

UNDP uses a global **strategic plan** covering four years to set the overall direction for UNDP operations. The current strategic plan covers the period 2008 – 2011. The plan defines the areas in which UNDP will work based on its mandate and comparative advantage.

⇒[www.undp.org/excecbrd/](http://www.undp.org/excecbrd/)

- Achieve the MDGs and reduce human poverty
- Foster democratic governance
- Support crisis prevention and recovery
- Manage energy and environment for sustainable development

## UNDP's four areas of work

### Poverty Reduction

UNDP works to make real improvements in people's lives and in the choices and opportunities open to them. Guided by the Millennium Declaration and its key benchmarks for measuring progress – the Millennium Development Goals – UNDP promotes inclusive development and works to reduce poverty in all its dimensions. ⇒[www.undp.org/poverty/](http://www.undp.org/poverty/)

As part of this effort, UNDP is a trusted development partner, and co-sponsor of UNAIDS, helping countries put HIV/AIDS at the centre of national development and poverty reduction strategies, working to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and reduce its impact. UNDP also helps build national capacity to mobilize all levels of government and civil society for a coordinated and effective response to the epidemic and protect the rights of people living with AIDS, women, and vulnerable populations. Because HIV/AIDS is a world-wide problem, UNDP supports these national efforts by offering knowledge, resources and best practices from around the world.

### Democratic Governance

More countries than ever before are working to build democratic governance (also called “good governance” or just “governance”). Their challenge is to develop institutions and processes that are more responsive to the needs of ordinary citizens, including the poor. UNDP helps countries strengthen their electoral and legislative systems, improve access to justice and public administration, and develop a greater capacity to deliver basic services to those most in need. ⇒[www.undp.org/governance/](http://www.undp.org/governance/)

### Crisis Prevention and Recovery

Conflicts and disasters can erase decades of development and further entrench poverty and inequality. UNDP works around the world to restore the quality of life for men, women and children who have been devastated by natural disaster or violent conflict. UNDP helps countries prevent and recover from armed conflicts and natural disasters. ⇒[www.undp.org/bcpr/](http://www.undp.org/bcpr/)

### Environment and Sustainable Human Development

Energy and environment are essential for sustainable development. The poor are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation and lack of access to clean, affordable energy services. These issues are global as climate change, loss of biodiversity and ozone layer depletion cannot be addressed by countries acting alone. UNDP helps countries strengthen their capacity to address these challenges at global, national and community levels. ⇒[www.undp.org/energyandenvironment/](http://www.undp.org/energyandenvironment/)



#### Global Environmental Facility

UNDP is one of three Implementing Agencies of the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The GEF was established to forge international cooperation and finance actions to address critical threats to the global environment.

The GEF provides grants to support projects in the areas of biodiversity, climate change, international waters, land degradation, phase-out of ozone depleting substances, and persistent organic pollutants.

⇒[www.undp.org/gef/](http://www.undp.org/gef/)

UNDP bases its operations in these four areas on the following principles:

**National ownership** UNDP activities are based on full national ownership. This implies that governments have the primary responsibility for the development of their countries and for establishing and leading the national development agenda.

**Human rights** Because development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, UNDP includes **human rights** in all its planning and operations. To do that, UNDP follows a human rights –based approach (HRBA) with its partners in the UN Country Team. [www.undg.org/?P=221](http://www.undg.org/?P=221)

**South-South Cooperation** South-South Cooperation is about developing countries working together to find solutions to common development challenges. [www.undp.org/poverty/topics8\\_south\\_south.shtml](http://www.undp.org/poverty/topics8_south_south.shtml)

**Gender equality and women's empowerment** are human rights that lie at the heart of development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. This is why UNDP integrates gender equality and women's empowerment in its four main areas of work. [www.undp.org/women/](http://www.undp.org/women/)

# How does UNDP do it?

## Capacity Development

If human development is *what* UNDP does, **capacity development** is *how* UNDP does it.

To accelerate human development and develop capacities, UNDP fulfils two roles at the service of the international community, Member States and society at large:

- UNDP provides **policy and technical support** by working on and advocating for poverty reduction, democratic governance, crisis prevention and recovery, and environment and sustainable development.
- UNDP promotes the **coordination, efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system** at the country level.

### What is capacity development?

UNDP defines capacity development as the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives.

⇒ [www.undp.org/capacity/](http://www.undp.org/capacity/)

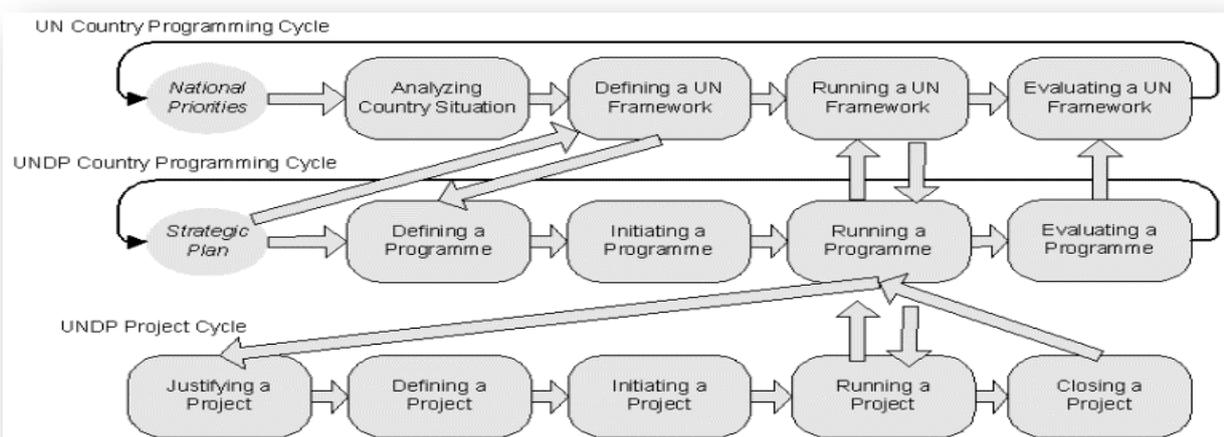
UNDP's policy and technical support, advocacy, and contributions to strengthening coherence in global development are based on seven key principles:

1. National ownership and leadership;
2. Credible link to development results aiming for real improvement in people's lives and in the choices and opportunities open to them;
3. Flexibility to respond to national (changing) priorities;
4. Development and use of national capacities, mechanisms and systems;
5. Strengthen national implementation;
6. Efficiency, accountability, results and transparency;
7. Simplified procedures aligned with national procedures.

## Providing Policy and Technical Support – Managing for Results –

UNDP plans, runs and monitors the policy and technical support on three levels: 1) **the UN Country Programme** for all UN agencies in a country, 2) the **UNDP Country Programme** in a country, and 3) specific **UNDP projects**.

Each level follows a cyclical process of planning and defining, running, and evaluating a programme or project. This is called the **programme or project cycle**.



## Through *UN* Country Programmes

The UN Agencies in a country regularly analyze progress and assess key development needs. This can take the form of a joint UN **Common Country Assessment (CCA)**, and forms the basis of the UN's work in a country.

Based on the analysis of the country situation, the UN agencies subsequently set out the collective priorities of the UN agencies in a given country. The UN Country Programming Cycle is concerned with setting and measuring results in achieving a country's Millennium Development Goals with the government and all UN development agencies. The results expected from members of the UN country team, including UNDP and its Associated Funds and Programmes, are identified. This common UN framework is called the **United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF)**. =>[www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=226](http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=226)

### Planning steps for the UN and UNDP in a country



## Through *UNDP* Country Programmes

On the basis of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, UN agencies draw up country programmes. The **UNDP Country Programme** describes in more detail how UNDP will achieve outcomes described in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. It defines a limited number of outcome targets to be achieved over the next years. UNDP's Country Programme is reviewed and approved by UNDP's highest body, the Executive Board.

In addition, a **UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP)** refines the approach taken by the UNDP Country Programme. It is the operational master plan that guides the development and delivery of projects on an annual basis. The UNDP Country Programme Action Plan details the programme, the major results expected and the strategies for achieving these results. It also clarifies the arrangements for project implementation and the management of projects.

## Through UNDP *Projects*

Projects generate the concrete outputs identified in the UNDP Country Programme Action Plan. The project cycle for UNDP projects consists of five steps:

### ■ Justifying a project

A project idea must be in line with **UNDP's planning instruments** like the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and UNDP Country Programme. A project idea must contribute to the results expected from UNDP's operations in the current programme period. It must also be a correct response to the country's needs, be in line with UNDP's global business plan and be suitable for UNDP support.

### Special development situations

In certain special development situations, the UNDP Resident Representative can designate a **crisis situation for up to three months**.

Operations in "crisis mode" should ensure a **rapid response** to such situations.

UNDP's normal procedures are **temporarily suspended** and business processes shortened.

To **extend** the special development situation beyond three months, approval by UNDP's Regional Bureau and the Associate Administrator is required.

## ■ Defining a project

The next step is to analyze if the scope of the project is realistic for UNDP to deliver. It also defines how clear and obtainable results can be delivered in the most cost-effective way. A **project document** (sometimes called 'prodoc') is drafted containing information about the project scope, the objectives, and the management arrangements. It must be approved by a **Project Appraisal Committee (PAC)** and signed by the parties involved.

## ■ Initiating a project

UNDP further defines the **operational details** of the project. It defines the structures and approaches taken to effectively **monitor** the project. All processes and results to which UNDP is contributing must be monitored regardless of budget and duration.

## ■ Running a project

When running a project, UNDP focuses on achieving project outputs as defined in the approved Project Document through implementation and monitoring. The plan to achieve results for a given year is articulated in the **Annual Work Plan (AWP)**. Fundamental responsibility for this process lies with the **Project Manager** as a representative of the Implementing Partner.

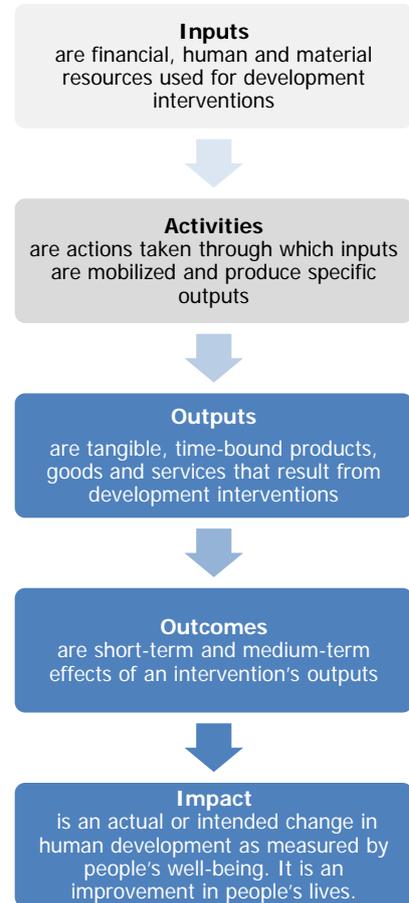
## ■ Closing a project

UNDP formally ends and closes the project operationally and financially. The focus is on assessing the overall performance of the project, evidence of completion, lessons learned, and necessary handover.

### What are Results?

A **result** is a describable and measurable development change resulting from a cause-and effect relationship.

Results are **outputs, outcomes** and the **impact** of a development intervention.



The details of UNDP's approach to projects are explained in the (publicly accessible) **Programme and Project Management** section of UNDP's Programme and Operations Policies and Procedures. The section describes the minimum requirements used within UNDP to successfully manage processes to produce development results. ⇒[content.undp.org/go/userguide/results/](https://content.undp.org/go/userguide/results/)

## What are Evaluations?

An evaluation is a **rigorous and independent assessment** of a completed or ongoing activity. An evaluation determines the extent to which UNDP's objectives are being met.

Evaluations attempt to answer the following questions:

- Did it work or not, and why? How could it be done differently for better results?
- What can we learn? How can we apply this knowledge to other contexts?
- Is UNDP doing the right things? Is UNDP doing things right? Did UNDP do what it said it would do?

Evaluations can apply to many things, including an activity, project, programme strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector or organization. ⇒[www.undp.org/evaluation/](https://www.undp.org/evaluation/)

# Promoting coordination, efficiency and effectiveness of the UN

In addition to providing specific policy and technical support, UNDP promotes the **coordination, efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system**. This coordination effort is grounded in UN reform, following the call from the UN General Assembly in 1997 for a more coherent, effective and efficient UN development system. With the recent economic setbacks, and with the challenges to achieve the MDGs by 2015, UNDP is working hard to bring together the numerous mandates and types of expertise to be found amongst the various UN agencies, so as to enable the UN to respond most effectively to national priorities and challenges.

UNDP promotes coordination, efficiency and effectiveness through a variety of activities:

- Managing the **UN Resident Coordinator System** for the UN
- Chairing the **UN Development Group**
- Reporting on **Human Development**
- Tracking the **Millennium Development Goals**
- Advocating for development through **goodwill ambassadors**

## Managing the UN Resident Coordinator system

UNDP funds and manages Resident Coordinators (RCs) of the UN. They are senior UN officials who lead UN country teams and coordinate their activities. UN Resident Coordinators are appointed by the UN Secretary-General and overseen by the UN Development Group.

The UN Resident Coordinator system encompasses all organizations of the United Nations system dealing with operational activities for development, regardless of their formal presence in the country. Working closely with national governments, UN Resident Coordinators and UN country teams advocate the interests and mandates of the UN system while drawing on the support and guidance of the entire UN family.  
⇒[www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=5](http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=5)

## Chairing the UN Development Group

At the global level, the UNDP Administrator chairs the **United Nations Development Group** (UNDG) ⇒[www.undg.org](http://www.undg.org) on behalf of the UN Secretary-General.

### Reform at the UN

*"Every day we are reminded of the need for a strengthened United Nations, as we face a growing array of new challenges, including humanitarian crises, human rights violations, armed conflicts and important health and environmental concerns.*

*Seldom has the United Nations been called upon to do so much for so many.*

*I am determined to breathe new life and inject renewed confidence into a strengthened United Nations firmly anchored in the twenty-first century, and which is effective, efficient, coherent and accountable."*

*Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon*

⇒[www.un.org/reform/](http://www.un.org/reform/)

### Delivering as One

The United Nations launched the **"Delivering as One" pilot initiative** in 2007, to respond to the challenges of a changing world and test how the UN family can provide development assistance in a more coordinated way.

The governments of eight countries — **Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay, and Viet Nam** — volunteered to become "Delivering as One" pilots.

The eight pilots are making reforms based on four principles:

- One Leader
- One Budget
- One Programme
- One Office

⇒[www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=7](http://www.undg.org/index.cfm?P=7)

Established by the Secretary-General in 1997, the UNDG **designs system-wide guidance to coordinate, harmonize and align UN development activities**. The group strengthens the UN development system at the country level, prepares it to meet future challenges and ensures that operations are conducted in accordance with mandates from UN governing bodies such as the General Assembly.

The United Nations Development Group unites **32 UN funds, programmes, agencies, departments, and offices that play a role in development**.

In addition, the **United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO)** supports and strengthens the UN Resident Coordinator system with funding, policy guidance and training. The office advises UN Resident Coordinators on how to make country programmes more efficient, effective and better aligned with national priorities, and work to streamline coordination mechanisms. At UN Headquarters, DOCO provides technical support for the UNDG's work. The office is administered and funded by UNDP.

## Reporting on Human Development

UNDP's flagship publication for advocacy is the **Human Development Report (HDR)** ⇒ [hdr.undp.org](http://hdr.undp.org). The concept of *human* development puts people at the centre of the development process. It is about development *of* the people, *by* the people, and *for* the people.

The **Global Human Development Reports**, published annually since 1990, are commissioned by UNDP. The reports focus on a highly topical theme in the current development debate, providing new measurement tools, innovative analysis and often controversial policy recommendations. The reports are guided by the belief that development is ultimately a process of enlarging people's choices, not just raising national incomes. The reports are written by independent teams of experts.

The Global Human Development Reports contain substantive data on **development indicators**. The reports rank every country each year in areas such as per capita income, literacy, life expectancy and respect for women's rights. Since the first report in 1990, four composite indices for human development have been developed — the **Human Development Index**, the **Gender-related Development Index**, the **Gender Empowerment Measure**, and the **Human Poverty Index**.

The analytical framework of the global report carries over into Regional and National Human Development Reports:

- **Regional Human Development Reports** are promoting regional partnerships for influencing change, and addressing region-specific human development approaches.
- **National Human Development Reports** are a tool for national policy debate. They attempt to place human development at the forefront of the national policy agenda.



### The Human Development Index

The Human Development Index (HDI) is a summary measure of human development. It measures the average achievements in a country in three basic dimensions of human development:

- **A long and healthy life**, as measured by life expectancy at birth
- **Knowledge**, as measured by the adult literacy rate (with two-thirds weight) and the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio (with one-third weight)
- **A decent standard of living**, as measured by GDP per capita

## Tracking the Millennium Development Goals

UNDP - in collaboration with national governments - is coordinating country reporting on progress towards the UN Millennium Development Goals. The **Millennium Development Goals Reports** (MDGRs) bring the Millennium Development Goals from a global to the national and regional level. The premise is that these reports can help accelerate progress.

Millennium Development Goals Reports (MDGRs) are not lengthy reports. They are designed to be **short and easy-to-read** reviews that convey messages quickly in a non-technical way. Their main audience is the media and the general public. They show progress at a glance with the objective of helping focus the national debate on specific development priorities, which in turn will trigger action - in terms of policy reforms, institutional change and resource allocation.



⇒ <http://www.undp.org/mdg/countries.shtml>



**MDG MONITOR**  
TRACK. LEARN. SUPPORT

TRACKING THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

UNDP'S MDG Monitor **shows how countries are progressing in their efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.**

The MDG Monitor is designed as a tool for policymakers, development practitioners, journalists, students and others to *track* progress through interactive maps and country-specific profiles, to *learn* about countries' challenges and achievements and get the latest news, and to *support* organizations working on the MDGs around the world.

⇒ [www.mdgmonitor.org](http://www.mdgmonitor.org)

## Advocating through Goodwill Ambassadors

Global UNDP ambassadors are prominent individuals whose fame helps amplify the universal **message of human development and international cooperation.**

UNDP Goodwill Ambassadors articulate the development philosophy of UNDP and its programmes. They give their time to help UNDP, and travel often to developing countries for first-hand observation so that they can bring the human development message to the industrialized world.

Global ambassadors for UNDP are currently the actor Antonio Banderas, soccer stars Ronaldo, Zinedine Zidane and Didier Drogba, the Japanese actress and television personality Misako Konno, tennis player Maria Sharapova and Crown Prince Haakon Magnus of Norway.

⇒ [www.undp.org/goodwill/](http://www.undp.org/goodwill/)



UNDP Goodwill Ambassadors Zidane and Ronaldo

# Who is doing what in UNDP?

## The global structure

The **United Nations General Assembly** and the **UN Economic and Social Council** establish overall policies for UNDP.

The **Executive Board** ⇒ [www.undp.org/execbrd/](http://www.undp.org/execbrd/) provides inter-governmental support and supervises the activities of UNDP. It ensures that UNDP is responsive to the needs of programme countries. The Executive Board consists of 36 members from as many countries. The members are chosen on a rotating basis.

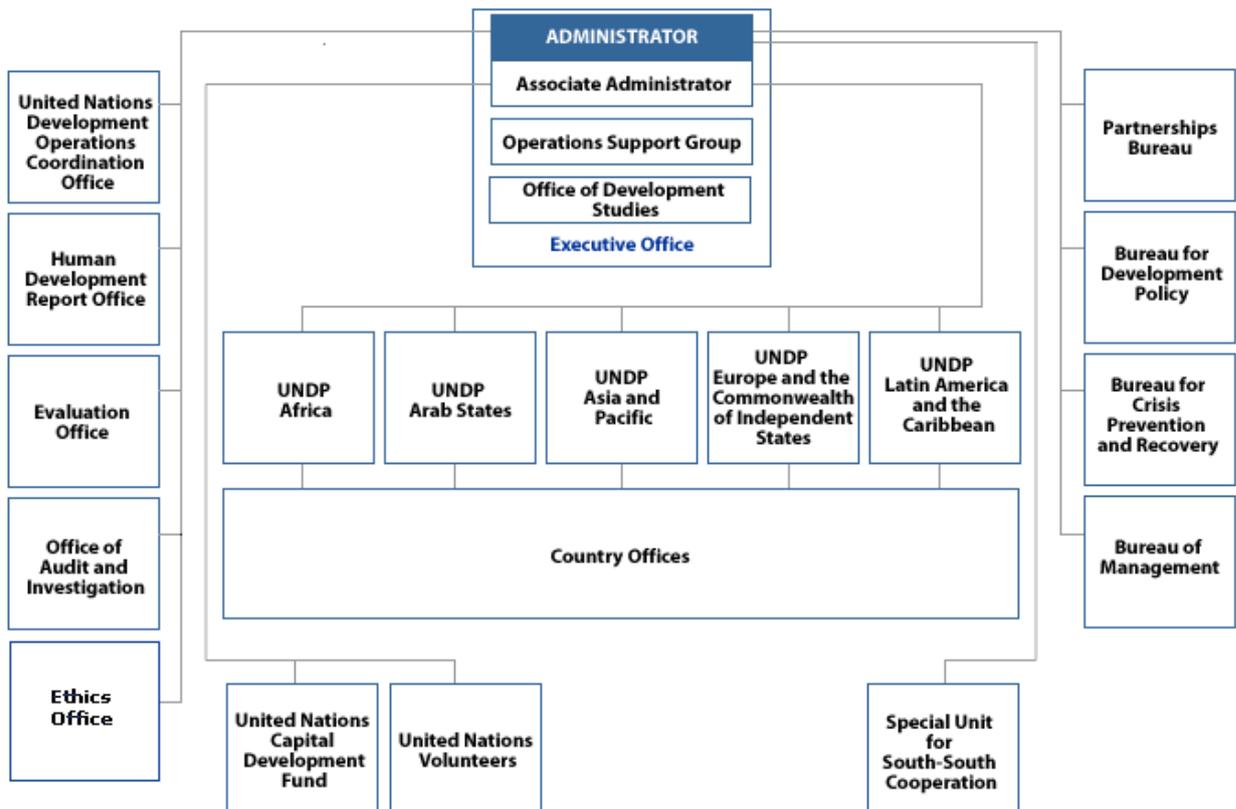
The **Administrator** manages UNDP's day-to-day work, and is directly accountable to the Executive Board for all UNDP activities. The Administrator is the third highest ranking official in the United Nations system after the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General. He/she is appointed by the Secretary-General for a term of four years, and confirmed by the General Assembly.

The current Administrator is **Helen Clark**. She became the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on 17 April 2009, and is the first woman to lead the organization. Prior to her appointment with UNDP, Helen Clark served for nine years as Prime Minister of New Zealand. The Administrator is supported by an Associate Administrator. ⇒ [www.undp.org/about/helen-clark.shtml](http://www.undp.org/about/helen-clark.shtml)

**Helen Clark,  
UNDP Administrator**



### UNDP's global structure



Five **offices** (Executive Office, United Nations Development Operations Coordination Office, Human Development Report Office, Evaluation Office and Office of Audit and Investigation) and four **bureaus** (Partnerships Bureau, Bureau for Development Policy, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and Bureau of Management) in UNDP's headquarters in New York form the backbone of the organizational structure. They focus on UN coordination, management, partnerships, development policy, and crisis prevention and recovery.

There are five **Regional Bureaus** overseeing UNDP's Country Offices: the bureaus for Africa, for Arab States, for Asia and the Pacific, for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, and for Latin America and the Caribbean. They are headed by **directors** and work out of UNDP's headquarters in New York.

## The Country Offices

Much of UNDP's work is done through permanent Country Offices in **over 140 countries**. A list of countries with a UNDP Country Office with links to the Country Office websites is available at [⇒www.undp.org/countries/](http://www.undp.org/countries/).

UNDP runs programmes in every country with a per capita income of under \$4,700. UNDP also has permanent offices in countries with higher income levels (such as Bahrain) if the country covers the base cost of UNDP's presence.

As a field-based organization, the bulk of UNDP's **staff** is based in Country Offices.

- **National staff** is recruited locally. Around 80% of UNDP's staff is national. Salaries for national staff follow a locally defined salary scale.
- **International staff** are recruited from outside the country, and paid according to the *Noblemaire* principle. The Noblemaire principle states that salaries of international civil servants should match those of the best-paid national civil servants.

To keep UNDP independent from governments, and to avoid possible conflict of interest, senior management positions are filled with international staff members. For the same reason, international staff is rotated between Country Offices and headquarters on a regular basis.

### UN funds and special units

In addition to its regular programmes, UNDP administers affiliated **UN funds and programmes** and **special units**:



The **United Nations Volunteers programme** (UNV) is the volunteer arm of the United Nations and based in Bonn, Germany. It mobilizes qualified UN Volunteers and encourages people to become active in volunteering in their countries. Currently, over 5,600 UN Volunteers are active worldwide.

[⇒www.unv.org](http://www.unv.org)



The **United Nations Capital Development Fund** (UNCDF) works to reduce poverty in Least Developed Countries through a variety of innovative approaches in both local governance and microfinance initiatives.

[⇒www.unctf.org](http://www.unctf.org)



The **Special Unit for South-South Cooperation** (SU/SSC) was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1978. Hosted in UNDP, their primary mandate is to promote, coordinate and support South-South and triangular cooperation on a Global and United Nations system-wide basis.

## People in a UNDP Country Office

These are some of the people you will meet when working in or with UNDP country offices around the globe:

- The **Resident Representative** (also called 'RR' or 'ResRep') is the Administrator's representative at the country level. He/she is ultimately accountable for the quality and sustainability of UNDP interventions in the country. The Resident Representative often serves as the UN Resident Coordinator (RC) for the entire United Nations system and sometimes as the UN Humanitarian Coordinator.
- In some countries, a **Country Director** ('CD') is responsible for the day-to-day management of UNDP. He/she has overall responsibility for, and coordination of, the operational and programmatic activities of UNDP. The Country Director has delegated financial authority, including project approval authority, as well as management and internal controls responsibilities. The Country Director represents UNDP with other UN Agencies, donors and Government officials.
- The Country Director is typically aided by at least one **Deputy Country Director**. A Country Director can be responsible for UNDP's programme in a country, UNDP's operations, or both. In countries without a Country Director, the Resident Representative will be aided by a **Deputy Resident Representative**.
- **Assistant Country Directors** (ACD) assist Deputy Country Directors and are typically responsible for a unit ('head of unit') or area of work within a UNDP country office.
- **Programme staff** in a UNDP Country Office looks after planning, implementing, monitoring and reporting on UNDP's programme.
- **Operations staff** is responsible for enabling the smooth running of the country office. This typically includes financial management, human resources, procurement, as well as day-to-day office maintenance and support.
- **Junior Professional Officers** (JPOs) are university graduates under 32 years with working experience. They are usually funded by their respective government. Junior Professional Officers typically work under the supervision of a senior staff member on the identification, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of UN programmes. ⇒[www.jposc.org](http://www.jposc.org)
- **United Nations Volunteers** (UNVs) serve the entire United Nations system. They are usually hired for donor-supported projects and programmes, or based in UN country offices. United Nations Volunteers can be international or national specialists. ⇒[www.unv.org](http://www.unv.org)
- **Consultants** provide specific advisory and training services to strengthen national skills. Consultants can be hired for short term or long term assignments, and can be national or international.
- **Interns** are graduate students who offer their unpaid services to support development activities, while acquiring work experience. Interns can be national or international.



# What are UNDP's tools?

## ATLAS

Atlas is a name for the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system used by UNDP and other UN agencies. UNDP uses Atlas to manage projects, finances, human resources, inventory and procurement. Atlas also forms the basis for UNDP's internal control and accountability framework.

To mark a departure from UNDP's bureaucratic designations, Atlas is not an abbreviation but stresses UNDP's global network approach.



## Balanced Scorecard

UNDP Balanced Scorecard consists of selected results and indicators to be planned, monitored and acted corporately to achieve the goals articulated in the Strategic Plan.

- The **Executive Balanced Scorecard** is a global scorecard to track UNDP progress with regard to its overall Strategic Plan.
- The **HQ Bureaus Scorecards** track progress of UNDP's bureaus in headquarters
- The **Country Office Balanced Scorecard** tracks progress of country offices in six areas: a) Programme Effectiveness and Alignment, b) Support to UN Reform and Coherence, c) Partnership, d) Programme and Financial Management, e) System and Culture of Accountability, f) People and Knowledge Management.

## Executive Snapshot

The Executive Snapshot aims at increasing managerial effectiveness. It provides senior and middle management with aggregate reports and key ratios for analysis and for facts-based management decisions. Further, it provides programme officers and management professionals with more detailed reports for regular monitoring of finances.

The Snapshot provides:

- Overview and summary on programme and management finances
- Detailed financial information
- Human Resources information

## Enterprise Risk Management

A risk is a future event that may impact the achievement of UNDP's objectives. The very nature of UNDP exposes it to risks that range widely, including environmental, financial, operational, organizational, political, regulatory and strategic risks.

UNDP identifies, monitors and responds to risks at all levels of the organization using **Enterprise Risk Management** (ERM). UNDP's various units track and manage risks in a 'Risk Log'. If managing a risk is beyond the capacity of a Unit, the risk can be brought to the attention of a higher level in UNDP.

### Abbreviations

Countless **abbreviations** are a frequent element of UNDP lingo. It's not uncommon to hear somebody say: "The RR wants the NPD to submit the FR to UNDP by EOB today".

It might save time to use some well-known abbreviations for internal communication, especially in writing. But in order to communicate effectively with everybody who is not UNDP staff (and that is the majority of people), it is better to avoid the use of abbreviations.

However, the reality is that you *will* come across many abbreviations in UNDP. But they are not a well-kept secret. Pick up ten or twenty as you go along, and you will be fine. For the rest, it's perfectly fine to ask what they stand for.

You can find a brief list of abbreviations and acronyms in most official UNDP documents. For the more advanced, there is a **UN multilingual terminology database**, with 70,000 acronyms in the 6 official UN languages. → [unterm.un.org](http://unterm.un.org) The JPO Service Centre website also presents a list of 2170 acronyms and abbreviations of various origins. → [jposc.org](http://jposc.org)

The creative use of abbreviations can also provide you with additional fun while still doing work. For example, UNDP's Sub-Regional Facilities were called SURFs. Accordingly, SURF's supervising board was called – well – SURF board.

# International Public Sector Accounting Standards

International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) are independently-developed financial reporting standards. UNDP is currently introducing the International Public Sector Accounting Standards in stages until 2012. ⇒[www.undp.org/about/ipsas/](http://www.undp.org/about/ipsas/)

## Surveys

UNDP uses three surveys to ensure flow of critical information to its headquarters.

- **Global Staff Surveys** ask a comprehensive range of questions about the relation between staff and management at all levels. It is an important annual tool to identify areas of concern, both by topic and by Country Office.
- **Headquarter Products and Services Surveys** allow country offices to provide feedback on the services provided by units in New York.
- **Partners Surveys** attempt to solicit feedback from UNDP's clients, host governments, other UN agencies, donors, civil society and the private sector on how UNDP is doing.

## How does UNDP manage knowledge?

**Knowledge** is what people know. It is about: What works? What does not work? What works where, and what works under what circumstances?

**Knowledge management** turns personal knowledge into corporate knowledge. It helps to connect people and information. Knowledge management makes it easier for UNDP staff members to access the best knowledge the organization has, and to access the best people to get a job done.

## Regional Centres

UNDP's eight Regional Centres provide Country Offices with **easy access to knowledge through high quality advisory services** based on global applied research and UNDP lessons learned. Regional Centres also focus on building partnerships and promoting regional capacity building initiatives.

UNDP has regional and sub-regional centres in:

- Bangkok ⇒[regionalcentrebangkok.undp.or.th](http://regionalcentrebangkok.undp.or.th)
- Bratislava ⇒[europeandcis.undp.org](http://europeandcis.undp.org)
- Cairo ⇒[arabstates.undp.org](http://arabstates.undp.org)
- Colombo ⇒[www.undprcc.lk](http://www.undprcc.lk)
- Dakar ⇒
- Johannesburg ⇒ [www.undprc-esa.org.za](http://www.undprc-esa.org.za)
- Panama ⇒[www.regionalcentrelac-undp.org](http://www.regionalcentrelac-undp.org)
- Suva ⇒[www.undppc.org.fj](http://www.undppc.org.fj)

## Knowledge networks

Drawing on its global presence, UNDP has established numerous email-based **community networks of practitioners**. These vibrant knowledge networks are used for a variety of things: discussing current problems, asking for help or advice from colleagues, sharing reports and documents, etc. The community of practitioners typically include UNDP staff, staff from other UN organizations and other development institutions.

## Thematic centres

In addition, UNDP is engaged with a number of global thematic facilities, working to research and provide policy advisory services.

- The **Oslo Governance Centre** helps UNDP Country Offices to assist in democratic reforms necessary to achieve the MDGs, with a special emphasis on access to justice, human rights, civil society, access to information, and governance and conflict prevention. ⇒[www.undp.org/oslocentre/](http://www.undp.org/oslocentre/)
- The **International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth** (IPC-IG), formerly the International Poverty Centre, is a partnership between UNDP and the Government of Brazil. Located in Brasilia, IPC-IG is a hub for South-South dialogue on applied research and training on development policy. ⇒[www.ipc-undp.org](http://www.ipc-undp.org)
- The **Drylands Development Centre** specializes in assisting countries to fight poverty and encourage development in the drier parts of the world. The Centre is located in Nairobi, Kenya. ⇒[www.undp.org/drylands/](http://www.undp.org/drylands/)



UNDP's Governance Assessment Portal is a hub of information and a valuable entry-point on democratic governance assessments.

The major attraction of this website is the ease of access to an extensive amount of current reference materials, measuring tools and initiatives on democratic governance assessments.

⇒[www.gaportal.org](http://www.gaportal.org)

## Training programmes

The **Leadership Development Programme** (LEAD) is UNDP's fast-forward, intensive training programme for promising young staff under 35 years. It was introduced to rejuvenate UNDP management staff. The selection process is open to both UNDP staff and outsiders, and is highly competitive. The Leadership Development Programme includes at least two assignments of two to three years each, typically in UNDP Country Offices or Regional Centres. ⇒[www.undp.org/lead/](http://www.undp.org/lead/)

The **Virtual Development Academy** (VDA) is a UNDP-tailored distance learning course, operated in cooperation with the Jones International University. This internal training programme builds up the skills and competencies needed to provide expert policy advice to UNDP programme countries. The Virtual Development Academy is open to all staff.

## Publications

- **UNDP** and its administered funds produce a wide variety of publications that are available free of charge in electronic form. ⇒[www.undp.org/publications/](http://www.undp.org/publications/)
- The **Office of Development Studies** (ODS) undertakes research and policy analysis on issues that are directly relevant to strategy and leadership of UNDP. ⇒[www.undp.org/developmentstudies/](http://www.undp.org/developmentstudies/)
- UNDP's Evaluation Office publishes a number of evaluations and other reports on development effectiveness. ⇒[www.undp.org/evaluation/](http://www.undp.org/evaluation/)

## On-line courses

Currently, six on-line courses are mandatory for all UNDP staff and available through the UNDP intranet:

- Basic Security in the Field: Staff Safety, Health and Welfare
- Advanced Security in the Field
- Ethics Training
- The Gender Journey: Thinking Outside the Box
- UNDP Legal Framework: What Every Staff Should Know
- UN Programme On The Prevention Of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse Of Authority

# How does UNDP manage its staff?

Currently, UNDP has a total of **9,000 staff** members; approximately **20,000** including service contract holders. 51% of UNDP staff are women (72% men and 28% women in the case of service contract holders), but only 36% of senior management staff are female.

## How is staff categorized in the United Nations common system?

- **Professional and higher:** This includes staff concerned with the substantive and managerial activities of the organizations, general administration and language services. Professional staff requires a university or professional background, or equivalent experience. Professional staff is recruited internationally or nationally, with consideration given to appropriate geographical distribution.

The international professional and higher categories comprise five Professional grades (**P-1 to P-5**) and two Director levels (**D-1 and D-2**).

The national professional category comprises four Professional grades (**NO-A to NO-D**).

- The **General Service staff** are nationally recruited and paid on a local basis.

## What types of contracts are there in UNDP?

Possibility of three different types of staff contracts:

- **Continuing Appointments (CAs)** are open-ended appointments (without expiration date). But currently, no CA is granted, since the General Assembly is still considering the issues related to the conditions under which CAs may be granted.
- **Fixed Term Appointments (FTAs)** are contracts for a period of one year or more, up to five years at a time. FTA contracts can be renewed multiple times. The FTA does not carry any expectancy of renewal and shall not be converted to any other type of appointment.
- **Temporary Appointments (TAs)** are contracts for a period of less than one year to meet seasonal or peak workloads and specific short-term requirements. A TA may be renewed on an exceptional basis for up to one additional year, but cannot, at any circumstances, exceed two years. A TA does not carry any expectancy, legal or otherwise, of renewal and shall not be converted to any other type of appointment either.

Consultants on **Individual Contract**<sup>1</sup> (IC) have non-staff contracts for short duration activities, for non-staff functions of temporary assistance and/or consultancies that are time and deliverable bound.

⇒ [practices.undp.org/management/hr/](https://practices.undp.org/management/hr/)

<sup>1</sup> Known as Special Service Agreement (SSA) in the past.



### International Civil Service Commission

The International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) regulates and coordinates the conditions of service for the United Nations common system staff.

⇒ [icsc.un.org](https://icsc.un.org)

### Staff associations

Staff associations promote and safeguard the rights, interests and welfare of staff. They also act as the channel of communication with UNDP's administration on matters concerning staff.

UNDP staff are organized into **staff associations** at the country level.

At the global level, UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS staff form the **staff council**.

⇒ [www.staffcouncil.org](https://www.staffcouncil.org)

## How does UNDP assess staff performance?

The performance of UNDP staff is assessed on an annual basis through a **Results and Competency Assessment (RCA)**.

There are two formal stages during the annual RCA cycle. This enables both staff and managers to engage in structured, inclusive and interactive dialogue and discussion to plan, establish objectives, take stock of developments, and to assess the results, learning and competency development and finally evaluate overall performance.

The Result and Competency Assessment serves as the basis for promotions and salary raises. Termination of contracts is based on this assessment as well.

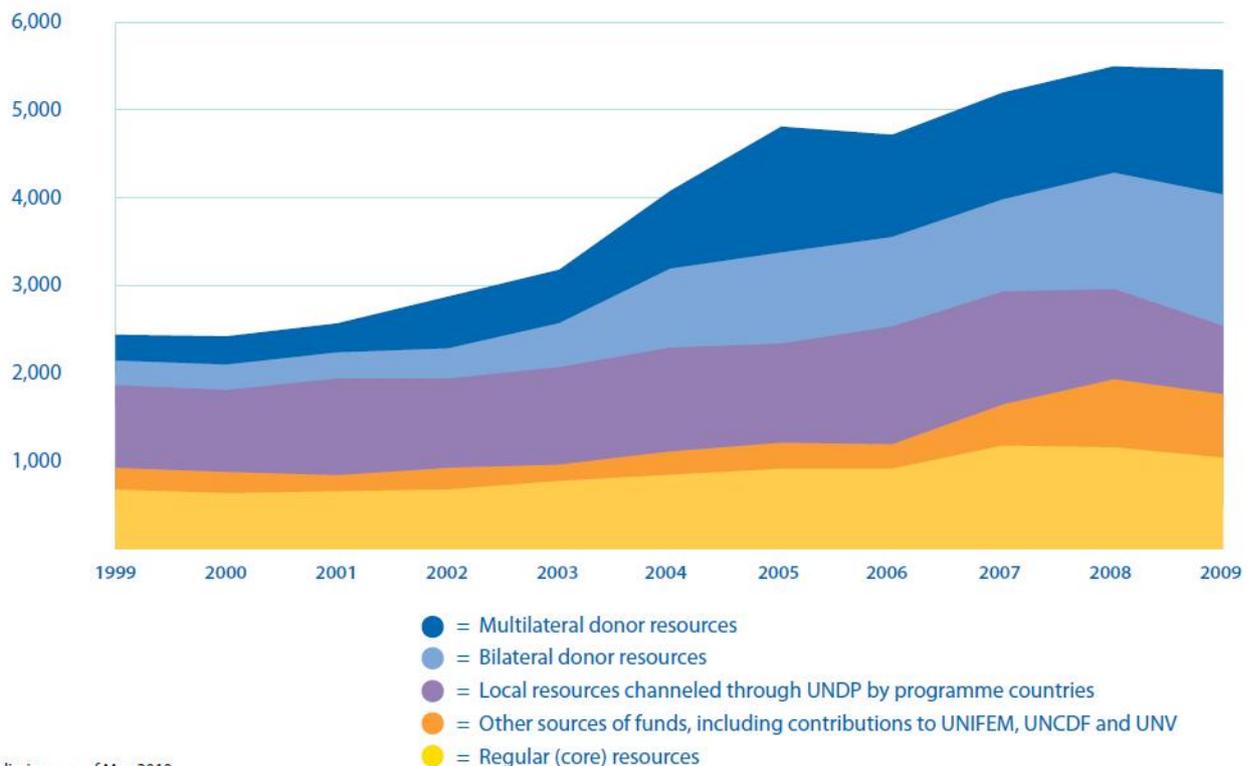
# How does UNDP fund its activities?

UNDP receives over **\$5 billion** in a year. This money comes from five different sources:

- **voluntary contributions** from member states
- earmarked contributions from **bilateral** donors
- earmarked contributions from **multilateral** partners
- **local resources** from UNDP's programme countries
- **other** sources, including contributions to UNCDF and UNV<sup>2</sup>

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNDP: 1999-2009

In millions of US dollars



Preliminary as of May 2010  
Source: Partnerships Bureau/UNDP

## Voluntary contributions

The voluntary contributions from member states form UNDP's **regular resources** (also called '**core resources**' and '**Target for Resource Assignment from the Core**' / 'TRAC').

Regular resources are **not earmarked** (not reserved for any specific purpose by the donor) and are used to run UNDP. They constitute the bedrock of UNDP, and guarantee its universality, neutrality and independence.

### Can we still afford the United Nations?

The United Nations and all its agencies and funds spend **about \$30 billion each year** or about **\$4 for each of the world's inhabitants**.

This is a very small sum compared to most government budgets and it is **less than three percent of the world's military spending**.

Yet for nearly two decades, the UN has faced financial difficulties and it has been forced to cut back on important programs in all areas, even as new mandates have arisen.

⇒ [www.globalpolicy.org/un-finance.html](http://www.globalpolicy.org/un-finance.html)

<sup>2</sup> Until 2010, UNIFEM was included in UNDP's affiliated Funds and Programmes. UNIFEM is now part of UN Women, the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

From 1994 to 2001, there was a decline in regular resources, leading to a funding crisis of UNDP. Since then, global regular resources have steadily increased and stand at annually **\$1.1 billions** in 2008.

Over the past years, long-term funding commitments made by several donor governments have helped increase the predictability of UNDP's regular funding base. Mobilizing an adequate level of core resources remains a top priority for UNDP.

The **largest voluntary contributors** to UNDP's regular resources are Norway (\$138 million), the Netherlands (\$117 million), Sweden (\$110 million), the United States (\$97 million) and the United Kingdom (\$96 million).

## Bilateral donors

Additional contributions from states are typically **reserved for a specific purpose** ('earmarked'). Earmarked contributions from bilateral donors come mostly from member states of rich countries organized in the **Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)**.

Bilateral donors provide UNDP annually with around **\$1.4 billion** earmarked for specific purposes.

The **largest bilateral contributors** to UNDP's earmarked resources are the United States (\$202 million annually), Japan (\$193 million) and the United Kingdom (\$189 million).

## Multilateral donors

Earmarked contributions also come from **multilateral partners** and the **European Commission**. Multilateral donors provide UNDP annually with around **\$1.3 billion** earmarked for a specific purpose.

## Local resources

Some programme countries **channel resources through UNDP** in support of their own development priorities. These funds are fully integrated into UNDP's budget process, and UNDP recovers the costs incurred for handling these funds. Channelling local resources through UNDP occurs particularly in Central and Latin America. Currently, local resources amount to around **\$1 billion**.

### Who pays for UNDP Country Offices?

**Country offices** are provided with at least \$350,000 yearly from regular resources to fund **programme activities**.

These are **fundamental functions** that UNDP is mandated to fulfill, in particular as custodian of the resident coordinator system for the entire UN. These functions do not change with the volume of resources managed and are considered fixed costs.

**Base structure** for country offices is defined as the minimum level of staffing and general operating expenses, funded from the regular resources biennial support budget, needed to deliver on the core mandate of UNDP. The funding of the country office base structure is dependent on the country office typologies.

All country office costs above the base structure are **split** proportionally between regular and other resources.

A part of the regular resources are held back by UNDP to address **special development needs** of countries in crisis, or to prevent a crisis from happening.

### Multi-Donor Trust Funds

A Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) is a funding instrument through which donors can **pool resources** that are then disbursed by a fund administrator.

MDTFs can be important instruments for resource mobilization, donor coordination, policy dialogue and the provision of coordinated support for humanitarian, recovery, reconstruction and development assistance that are based on national priorities.

⇒ [www.undp.org/mdtf/](http://www.undp.org/mdtf/)

### MULTI-DONOR TRUST FUND OFFICE

Efficiency | Transparency | Accountability

When donor funds are intended for multi-agency operations, UNDP's **Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office** may be appointed as the fund administrator for the UN system. It currently has a portfolio of more than 30 Multi-Donor Trust Funds and Joint Programmes, including numerous country-level and global MDTFs and Delivering as One UN Funds. ⇒ [mdtf.undp.org/](http://mdtf.undp.org/)