



## AFGHANISTAN ANNUAL REPORT

**RESULTS IN FOCUS** 

COVER: In the city of Bamyan, a billboard by the Buddha statues encourages citizens to register to vote in the 2014 Presidential and Provincial Council elections. It says: "If we don't register, we can't vote".

More than 3.4 million Afghans, 34 percent of them women, entered the electoral rolls in 2013, following a nationwide registration campaign by the Independent Election Commission with support from UNDP's Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow II (ELECT II).

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#### **FOREWORD**

From conflict to recovery to development, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and its partners have worked in Afghanistan for over fifty years to promote transformational change. Today, UNDP joins the Government and people of Afghanistan, and the international community in a collaborative effort to strengthen the institutions required to build a better future for all Afghan men and women. Together we strive to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) through the 22 National Priority Programmes to ensure better lives and a more resilient nation.

Throughout 2014 key political, security and economic transitions will come into effect bringing major changes to the country and its people. Afghan-run and led Presidential and Provincial Council elections mark the first time in Afghanistan's history that power is handed from one democratically elected government to another. With the continuing withdrawal of international military forces, the Afghanistan Government has assumed full responsibility for its own security. Afghanistan's economic transition has however, showed signs of slowing with economic growth lower than

anticipated, less movement in terms of poverty reduction and the danger that an increasing fiscal gap will constrain the delivery of services and the quality of governance. In this context it will be important to ensure that there is no precipitate decline in international assistance so as to safeguard the Afghan people from dramatic economic shock.

These transitions coincide with the development of a new United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), as well as a new UNDP Country Programme for the period 2015–2019. These offer invaluable opportunities for UNDP Afghanistan to strengthen support to national institutions, empower Afghans and contribute towards a more resilient country, in line with evolving national priorities. UNDP's involvement in these planning processes will reinforce UN coherence and by bringing the UN together will help to maximise the impact of all UN assistance.

Afghanistan has seen substantial economic and social progress since 2001 when human development indicators were at particularly low levels. Despite the undoubted growth

in GDP that has taken place since then, there are immense and pervasive challenges to sustainable development and tackling the continuing high levels of poverty. These challenges were highlighted in the UN Common Country Assessment (CCA) prepared in 2013, to which UNDP contributed extensively.

The CCA analyses the situation and the areas requiring action by the United Nations in Afghanistan today. In particular, it highlights the persistent challenges related to strengthening governance, addressing corruption and the growth of the illicit economy and in identifying the challenges to reducing poverty. The CCA also highlights the new challenges that have emerged in the past decade which include urbanization, a youth bulge accompanied by high unemployment, the effects of climate change and the difficulties involved in the management of natural resources.

The analysis contained in the CCA provides the basic framework for the current UNDAF. It provides the basis for aligning the UN's work in Afghanistan with the Government of

Afghanistan's development plans and actions for the 2015–2019 period. The UNDAF focuses the UN's work around five pillars, namely: sustainable and equitable economic growth, access to effective basic services, social equity, strengthening the rule of law and support to governance at all levels. It will also seek to increase and improve ways in which the UN "works as One" to reduce the transactions cost of working with the UN system while making the work of the UN more transparent and accountable.

In the context of its new Country Programme 2015-2019, UNDP will rebalance its programmatic focus. The Country Programme document, developed through consultation with UNDP national and international partners, outlines UNDP's programmes in four out of the five UNDAF areas: sustainable economic growth, social inclusion, rule of law and accountable governance, with gender issues being mainstreamed across the new UNDP Country Programme. UNDP's country plan is also in alignment with the new UNDP global strategic plan for 2014–2017. This vision articulated in the global strategy seeks to respond to changes in the global

context. It will guide work in Afghanistan, as elsewhere, in helping to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality and exclusion, and support sustainable development.

UNDP in Afghanistan as in other countries continues to strive to retain its relevance and value through a commitment to institutional learning and self-reflection. An internal strategic review in 2013, with feedback from donors and partners highlighted the importance of strengthening the oversight and accountability of UNDP activities as well as strengthening and renewing its engagement with civil society. A strong commitment to maintain this approach will continue to underpin UNDP's work throughout the period of the programme.

UNDP believes that as Afghanistan moves through the period of transition and moves away from exceptional levels of international assistance, UNDP's role is to support and strengthen the capacity of the Afghan people and its institutions to mould and develop their country. UNDP looks forward to a time when our own presence will not be required at the current scale. Meanwhile,

as we move into Afghanistan's Decade of Transformation, we at UNDP commit ourselves to working ever more closely with the Government and people in building a secure, prosperous and just society for all Afghans.

Mark Bowden

DEPUTY SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL UNITED NATIONS RESIDENT COORDINATOR AND HUMANITARIAN COORDINATOR UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE

Mali R. Bordan

Alvaro Rodriguez

UNDP COUNTRY DIRECTOR

#### IIIIIIIIII INTRODUCTION IIIIIIIIIIII

In this time of transition, UNDP looks forward to a renewed partnership with the people and government of Afghanistan.



#### **DURING THE YEAR 2013, UNDP**

Afghanistan remained committed to maintaining an ever closer working relationship with Afghanistan's government and people, and building on what is, by far, the largest UNDP operation in the world.

To ensure its continued relevance and increase its efficiency, UNDP since 2012 embarked on a systematic process of reflection on the substantive approach of its development work. This resulted in the identification of six thematic areas, based on the Afghanistan National Development Strategy and National Priority Programmes, the MDGs, New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States and UNDP's mandate, expertise and experience. Six development strategies were developed in the areas of: inclusive and legitimate politics; subnational governance and development; rule of law; and the cross-cutting areas of gender, capacity development, and poverty and the environment.

In the context of these strategies, projects were implemented and results achieved in the areas of peacebuilding, rule of law, democratic governance, poverty reduction and livelihoods, and managing resources for sustainability and resilience.

Despite the complex environment, in a period of transition in the country's history, UNDP – working with the government and other partners – contributed to increase access to justice, support for the professionalization of the police, strengthen subnational governance in 34 provinces as well as the capacities of municipalities to deliver services, and continue support to the integration of former combatants.

Throughout all its projects, UNDP worked to help women participate fully in decision-making and take up leadership roles. Focus was given to capacity development and improving livelihoods, specially through rural infrastructure development and empowering communities to utilize natural resources sustainably and prepare for the effects of climate change.

In delivering these results, areas needing more attention also emerged. These included a more inclusive approach to partnerships; stronger accountability systems and more transparent financial resource management; enhance quality of programmes; and a need to improve proximity and engagement with our beneficiaries at provincial and local level despite insecurity in certain parts of the country.





Further limiting development in Afghanistan, corruption remains a major obstacle. In 2013 Afghanistan ranked bottom of the Transparency International Corruption Index. To alleviate this, at the end of the year, UNDP launched the Afghanistan Integrity Initiative (AFII), in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Justice, the Supreme Audit Office, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations. This anti-corruption project will strengthen administrative systems and improve the technical capacity of key government institutions, as well as work with citizens' organizations to increase engagement in the fight against corruption at national and sub-national levels.

#### IT IS CLEAR THAT CHALLENGES

**REMAIN.** Ensuring efficiency and effectiveness requires constant evaluation and improved working practices in a challenging environment. To achieve this, UNDP's Oversight and Compliance Unit was instituted and supported most projects in developing risk assessment and management plans to develop rigorous internal controls and increase transparency and accountability.

Partnerships lie at the very heart of UNDP's work in Afghanistan. A new Strategy, implemented by a new Partnership team, helped build strategic alliances towards achieving transformational change. Acting on the belief that a robust civil society is essential to development, UNDP launched the Civil Society Advisory Committee which fosters dialogue to ensure that UNDP's work is relevant and beneficial to all.

TOP LEFT: Women elect the members of the District Development Assembly of Dawlat Yaar district of Ghor province, a process supported by UNDP's National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP). TOP RIGHT: Children get access to water through a newly installed hand pump in Ghoryan district, Herat Province, supported by UNDP's NABDP.

The challenges the people of Afghanistan face in building a peaceful, secure and just society, with opportunities for all men and women, remain considerable. But, looking back over years of partnership, it is clear that together UNDP and its partners can contribute to strengthening the capacities and institutions on which the country's future is built. Now, as a new era in Afghanistan's history dawns, UNDP is committed to working with its people and its institutions as they take full responsibility for their own future.



# Contributing to Peace

At this time of transition, it is essential to support and strengthen Afghanistan's national institutions as they move towards assuming full responsibility for peace and stability.

An important component of this is to facilitate the transformation of the Afghan National Police from a counter-insurgency operation to a civilian police force.

Developing institutional systems, such as transparent and dependable salary payments, helps improve retention and contributes to a more professional police force.

To ensure that the decades of instability and conflict lie firmly in Afghanistan's past, former insurgents must be reintegrated as productive members of their communities. Whilst multiple factors fuel conflict, Afghanistan's complex situation requires an inclusive solution for successful peacebuilding. For the reintegration process to be sustainable, it is necessary that former insurgents receive access to livelihoods.

Women are central to peacebuilding, and supporting this role is essential to ensuring that future generations enjoy lives of peace, prosperity and opportunity.



# About 7,800 former combatants have been reintegrated into their communities –

1,600 during 2013 alone – by the UNDP-supported Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP).

To ensure that economic pressures do not drive them back into violence, 1,800 former insurgents and community members in eight provinces were employed throughout 2013 in road maintenance under the Ministry of Public Works, and 1,650 received **livelihood support** through transitional financial assistance

to help sustain their families while they reintegrate into their communities.

Increased awareness, education and **public mobilization for peace** was achieved through a National Peace and Unity Week in September 2013, during which APRP supported discussions by religious scholars, tribal and local leaders, women's organizations and members of civil society in a series of events held at various sites in Kabul and the provinces.

Participation in peace initiatives by civil society, including women, at both the

centre and locally, was formalized through a memorandum of understanding signed in September 2013 between the Afghanistan High Peace Council and representatives of civil society organizations with support from APRP.

To increase transparency and retention, more than 113,000 Afghan National Police (80 percent of the total), and over 4,600 Central Prison Department guards (94 percent of the total) received their salaries through an Electronic Payment System in 2013, supported by UNDP's Law and Order Trust Fund for

Afghanistan (LOTFA).

#### SUPPORTING LIVELIHOODS FOR PEACE

"We were living in fear," says Abdul Kabir. The boy, who is nearly 12, is speaking of the time when his father, Abdul Ghafar, was a combatant in restive Panjawe district in the province of Kandahar. Today, Abdul Kabir is one of hundreds of boys studying in the local *madrassa*, religious school, which Abdul Ghafar is proud of having helped construct.

Abdul Ghafar and his family are amongst those who have benefited from the APRP livelihood assistance initiatives for former combatants, reaching over 170,000 beneficiaries since 2010. When the young man joined the peace process, the local leaders contacted the Provincial Peace Council in Kandahar, which funded the construction of the *madrassa* and

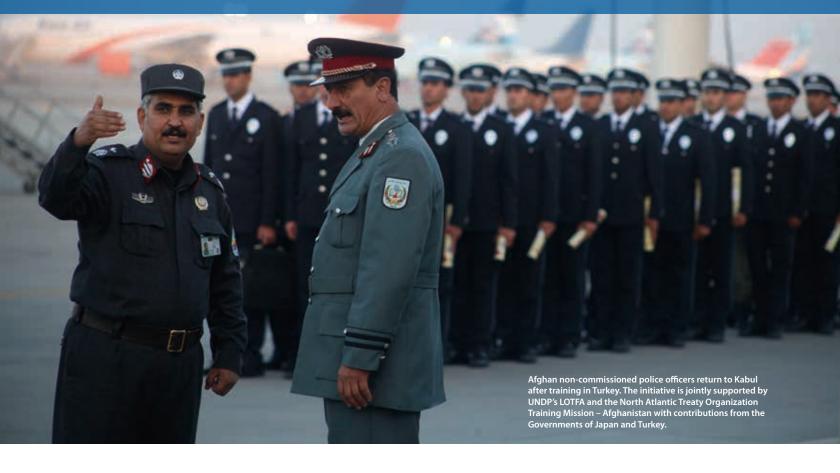
recruited him to work on this project. As a result, Abdul Kabir says, the family's expenses were covered. "Now I am very pleased to be a student at this madrassa with hundreds of boys of the same age."

The construction of the *madrassa* has pleased the village leaders. Not only have former combatants like Abdul Ghafar become productive members of the community, the *madrassa* is a local centre where children can learn, instead of leaving their village and going to faraway *madrassas* run by radical clerics where they risked becoming involved in militant violence. Abdul Ghafar himself considers his work on the *madrassa* an investment in a future he helped build



Religious and tribal elders gather on the grounds where the new Panjawe madrassa will be built.

with his own hands. "I am proud of desisting from fighting, and participating in the reconstruction of Afghanistan," he says.



## Supporting the Rule of Law

A transparent, effective and trusted formal judicial and law enforcement system is essential for a peaceful and democratic society. UNDP works with Afghan institutions to help develop laws, ensure access to justice, and uphold the rule of law for all citizens.

While the constitution of Afghanistan guarantees fair trials for all Afghans, an estimated 80 percent of disputes are settled by traditional community and tribal councils, known as *shuras* or *jirgas*. Whilst these play a vital role in society, they may be vulnerable to violations of human rights, particularly for women. To address this, UNDP and its partners provide assistance with the aim of strengthening the formal justice system and increasing the trust Afghans feel in it.

Three decades of conflict have led to the need to sensitize police officers about their duties and responsibilities. UNDP supports the Afghan National Police in its transformation into a modern institution, and thus gain the trust of the Afghan public.



Awareness of human rights and understanding of services provided by the state justice system was

increased amongst members of *jirgas* and *shuras* in Nangarhar, Herat and Balkh provinces though community workshops on dispute resolution through the UNDP-supported Justice and Human Rights in Afghanistan (JHRA) programme.

Nearly 5,000 members of the Afghan National Police in 12 provinces were educated about the force's **Code of Conduct** in 2013 by 144 peer trainers supported by UNDP's LOTFA.

The number of reports of incidents of violence against women rose by 62 percent in 2013, partly due to **increased participation by women in the police force**. In 2013, 474 women were recruited and trained, compared to 158 the previous year, with support from LOTFA.

In 2013, nearly 500 non-commissioned police officers took part in a six-month training programme in Turkey designed to **improve professionalization** with support from LOTFA. In addition, 130 female police officers and other women employed by the Ministry of the Interior were trained in self-defence, crime

investigation, mediation, gender policing and awareness of gender-based violence.

Street vendors and policy makers in Kabul worked together throughout 2013 to develop a legal framework for the **protection of street vendors** through a technical coordination committee established by JHRA, and subsequently duplicated in Herat.

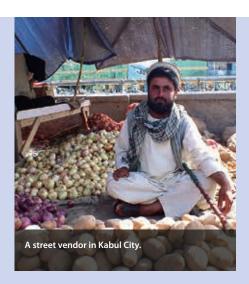
#### LEGAL PROTECTIONS FOR KABUL'S STREET VENDORS

Ali Yawer lost an arm during the fighting of the 1990s. Now aged 53, Yawer and other street vendors living with disabilities, who number about 700 in Kabul alone, face difficulties in supporting their families that go well beyond physical handicaps. They receive none of the legal protections offered to businesses in the formal sector – yet 81 percent of the country's working population is in vulnerable employment. Street vendors generally are vulnerable to harassment from the authorities and the marginalized, such as Yawer, are particularly at risk.

In May 2013, the Kabul Municipality, with JHRA support, led an important discussion attended by representatives of various ministries, the police, and the municipal government, to protect the rights and livelihoods of informal traders.

This resulted in several concrete proposals to improve the working conditions of street vendors and to prevent harassment. These included piloting a new initiative: night bazaars, where vendors were assured of protection, and which would, in turn, provide revenue options for the municipality.

UNDP's JHRA project is committed to the legal empowerment of vulnerable groups, and engages with line ministries and other actors to develop policies on the protection of street vendors in Kabul and other provinces. Following the May 2013 meeting, JHRA is providing technical support and partnership opportunities to help workers in the informal sector to contribute to the local economy without fear of harassment. With these safeguards in place, Ali Yawer and his fellow street vendors can look forward to an environment in which they can avail the



personal and financial security necessary for a peaceful transition in Afghanistan.



# Enhancing Democratic Governance

A society's stability depends on the assurance that citizens participate in democratic governance: where public institutions are transparent and responsive, where elections are inclusive, and where women, the poor and the marginalized are supported to fulfil their potential.

To help achieve this, in 2013 UNDP provided support to the Independent Election Commission to prepare for Afghan-led and -managed 2014 presidential and Provincial Council elections.

UNDP also contributed to the strengthening of local governance and making state institutions more responsive to the needs of the Afghan people. At all levels of public administration, UNDP trained officials and promoted inclusive accountability mechanisms.

Accountability was also promoted at the central level in the context of improved public finance management, where UNDP supported the Ministry of Finance to strengthen its budget capacities.



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Afghans, 34 percent
of them women,
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following a nationwide

**registration campaign** by the Independent Election

Commission with support from UNDP's Enhancing Legal and Electoral Capacity for Tomorrow II (ELECT II). Over 18 million potential voters were reached through a crossmedia public outreach campaign.

More than 50 percent of Afghanistan's 373 District Governors and nearly all 34 Deputy Provincial Governors are now **recruited through a transparent and competitive process** generalized in 2013 and supported by UNDP's Afghanistan Subnational Governance Programme (ASGP). This is a significant change from only five years ago, when local officials were appointed often on the basis of political affiliation.

A new policy was approved by the cabinet to establish District Coordinating Councils to exercise **increased oversight** on services delivered by line ministries at district level, with support from ASGP and the National Area-Based Development Programme (NABDP).

In order to increase the transparency and accountability of the government to its citizens, Provincial Councils organized during 2013, with ASGP support, 58 **public accountability** sessions with the participation of citizens, civil society organizations, Muslim scholars, and youth and women groups. Of these sessions, 37 were at the provincial level

and 21 were held, for the first time, in districts throughout the country.

Nearly 3,000 Afghan civil servants, from senior to operational level staff, were **trained on management, leadership, and technical and administrative skills** during 2013. Of these, 27 percent were women and 60 percent were from subnational institutions. This capacity building was supported by UNDP's National Institution Building Project (NIBP).

The capacity of the Ministry of Finance to manage and execute the development budget was improved, demonstrated by an increase in the **budget execution rate** from 49 percent in 2012 to 57 percent in 2013, with support from UNDP's Making Budgets and Aid Work (MBAW).

#### RECRUITING DECISION-MAKERS BASED ON MERIT

During most of her adult life, a teacher in Jawzjan province, Sayra Shakib Sadat, found herself tired of extortion, violence and the lack of basic services. "I went through a very difficult time," says Ms Sadat. "I was always wishing that people working in the posts did their job with honesty and served the community and the people. But my experience of government was shaped by fighting, and I gave up on the future."

At the time, all District Governors and Deputy Provincial Governors were appointed, often on the basis of political affiliation. Afghans like Ms Sadat – committed, educated but raised in isolation and poverty – never had a chance.

Then, in January 2013, Ms Sadat finally got a chance to make a difference, when she took oath as the sole woman amongst 61 new District Governors appointed through a merit-based recruitment system.

Through ASGP, UNDP partnered with the Civil Service Commission and the Independent Directorate of Local Governance to establish a system of merit-based appointments. Vacancies were publically advertised, candidates sat a written exam, and then an interview. Today, over half of the country's 373 District Governors and nearly all Deputy Provincial Governors are recruited through this system.

Ms Sadat passed successfully and became the only female District Governor in Afghanistan. She now coordinates and oversees the activities of line departments, such as education and security, in Khwaja do Koh district in Jawzjan province. She faces lack of resources, insecurity and the many barriers faced by Afghan women in public life. But Ms Sadat intends to persevere.



"The day I decided to serve the realm of people and government I realized there would be challenges from many sides and I decided to stake out my goals. I have many challenges, and I attempt to overcome them," she says.



# Reducing Poverty: Improving Livelihoods for Men and Women

Over 36 percent of the Afghan population is poor. This is especially acute in rural areas, where about 70 percent of the Afghan population lives; nearly 38 percent are poor, compared to 29 percent in urban areas. Those who depend on agriculture – 60 percent of the country's workforce – face a basic lack of resources, their vulnerability exacerbated by climatic shocks, limited and poor arable land and lack of infrastructure.

Poverty underlies many acute challenges faced by Afghanistan, such as insecurity and inequality, and is exacerbated by the limitations to opportunity caused by lack of skills, capital and infrastructure.

Reducing poverty requires a multi-faceted approach – strengthening institutions and infrastructure based on local decisions, supporting economic empowerment for all, including women, and providing the resources and training to generate sustainable livelihoods.



In 2013, access
to basic services
has improved with
over 238,000 Afghans
living in rural areas receiving

water supply. At the same time, more than 66,000 had access to electricity through the construction of micro-hydro power plants with assistance from the UNDP-supported NABDP. The latest also provided a clean alternative to burning fossil fuels.

Access to markets has improved for more than 850,000 Afghans living in rural areas following the **construction of roads and bridges** funded by NABDP.

In 2013, members of 220 Village Savings and Loan Associations in Kandahar and Helmand received **loans for micro-enterprises** for a value of 12.7 million Afghanis (US\$ 211,500), with assistance from the UNDP-supported Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Programme (AREDP). Of these, 71 women's associations alone administered 4.1 million Afghanis (about US\$ 70,500). At the same time,

113 **women's groups** were provided with in-kind contributions to start micro-enterprises through AREDP, with a loan default rate of under 8 percent.

1,200 former insurgents and 2,500 community members in 15 provinces benefited from 15 **vocational training** projects during 2013 as part of support for the **reintegration of former combatants**, with the assistance of UNDP's APRP.

#### LOCAL DECISION-MAKING TO IMPROVE WOMEN'S LIVES

In the village of Jukna in Badghis province, Gulsatan recalls how in earlier days women had to walk four kilometres daily simply to collect water for their families. The 45-year-old widow, a mother of six, is relieved those days are now past. "We collected water from uncovered reservoirs which were exposed to impurities. Women were constantly at risk of bacterial and parasitic infections, and their children risked diarrhoeal disease," she says. This is a common problem across this remote, mountainous province in western Afghanistan. Potable water is scarce, and often brackish or contaminated.

Gulsatan is a member of an initiative led by the UNDP-supported NABDP, which has improved the lives of Jukna's women. She is a member of the village Community Development Council,

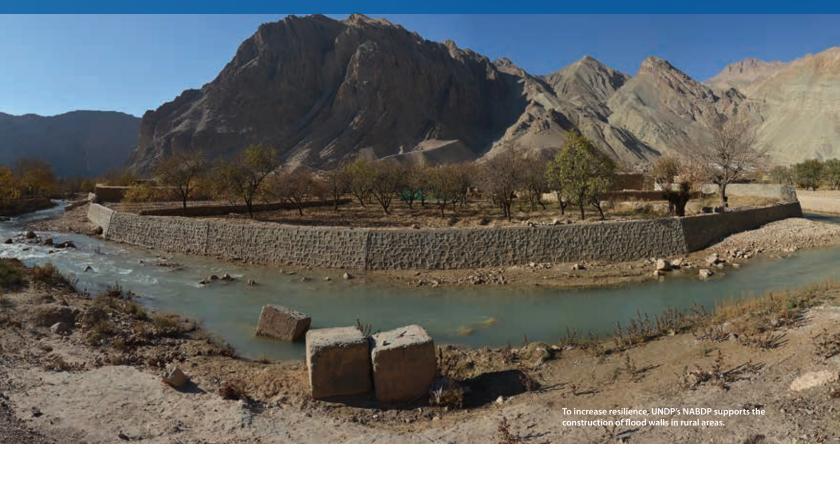
as well as the local District Development Assembly – local governance initiatives which seek to bring the voices of community members, including women, into local decision making.

In this role, Gulsatan and her fellow assembly members – nearly one third of them women – raised the issues which affect women's lives, such as the time and effort required to collect water. Their collective voices were heard: to help Afghanistan achieve its Millennium Development Goal of halving the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water, NABDP has constructed 191 water supply projects for over 328,000 beneficiaries (of whom over 161,000 are women and girls) in six districts of Badghis province.



Women in Bagdhis province access for the first time drinking water in their villages.

In Jukna, the benefits were instant and tangible. As Gulsatan says: "Nowadays I get potable drinking water from four nearby reservoirs and don't have to take two hours of my time from taking care of my kids and housework. My medical expenses have fallen, allowing me to save money."



# Managing Natural Resources for Sustainability and Resilience

Afghanistan is considered highly vulnerable to climate change. Its effects are increasingly visible, with more frequent and prolonged droughts and floods having a devastating impact in a country where 60 percent of the workforce is employed in agriculture. In a recent vulnerability survey, 36 percent of Afghans reported to have been affected by natural disasters. Support is urgently needed to improve the resilience of farmers in the face of a changing climate.

Afghanistan's environment has suffered from decades of conflict and poor management. There is a need to establish protected areas and institute sustainable land management to preserve biodiversity and threatened species.

UNDP works with the Afghan government to improve rural infrastructure, manage resources and enhance well-being and livelihoods whilst conserving and restoring the environment. Joint efforts focus on developing disaster response plans as well as on monitoring and reporting mechanisms on the environment both at the centre and in provinces and districts.



The National
Environmental
Protection Agency
established Provincial
Environmental Advisory

Councils in 22 provinces to help **shape environmental policies** with the participation from community members, including local government representatives, community elders, women and Muslim scholars, with UNDP support. Environmental Sub-Committees were established in 21 districts to fulfil a similar role at the local level.

In 2013, the **capacity and awareness** of over 100 civil society organizations in the areas

of biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, sustainable forest management and land degradation was improved through a series of workshops supported by the Global Environment Fund (GEF) - Small Grants Programme managed by UNDP in Afghanistan. The organizations also increased their capacity in proposal development and results-based management.

Thirteen **civil society organizations** have started projects in the areas of biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, sustainable forest management and land degradation after receiving funds from GEF in 2013.

Over 840,000 Afghans are **protected from natural disasters** such as floods through flood walls and other interventions built by local communities implemented in 2013 with assistance from the UNDP-supported NABDP.

Through 58 reforestation projects, 13 orchard projects and 17 irrigation projects, about 1,200 former insurgents and 13,000 community members in nine provinces were provided with labour opportunities, enabling former combatants to contribute to the **protection of the environment** whilst making a peaceful living for themselves and their families. The projects are supported by UNDP's APRP.

#### SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

Over the course of the week, Hakimullah Nawabi, a 34-year-old teacher in the Shor Bazaar area of Kabul, estimates that he manages to collect at least 50 plastic bags from various stores. "It is really too much," he says. "We need to be conscious of how plastic is turning out to be a major pollutant in our country." The solution, he reckons, is simple: "bags that we can use and re-use until they are torn and non-usable."

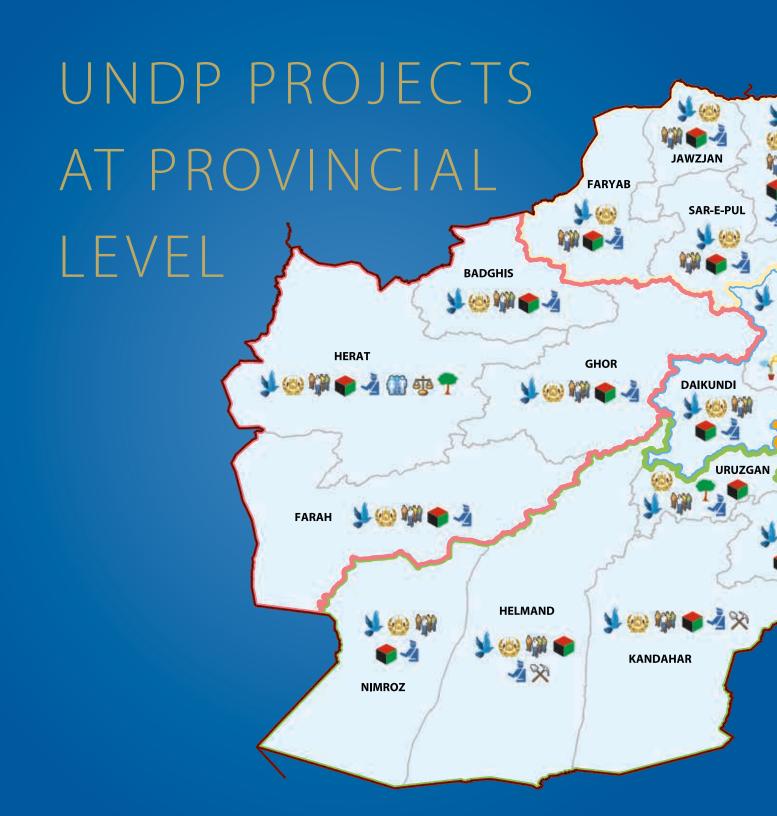
Indeed, there are increasing calls world wide to use sturdy reusable bags instead of lightweight plastic bags which choke rivers and streams, harming wildlife and degrading natural resources.

With funds from the GEF Small Grants Programme, Abdul Khaliq Zazai of the Accessibility Organization for Afghan Disabled offers an alternative to the ubiquitous plastic bag. He is pioneering reusable cloth bags produced by a small self-help group enterprise comprising 30 disadvantaged women from inner-city areas of Kabul which experienced severe destitution during the long years of conflict.

Since the enterprise began in August 2013, the master tailor, Farzana, says that trainees have shown great promise. "These women are being taught not just tailoring bags but also to mentor others in their acquaintance. Once a market is created for reusable cloth bags, these artisans can make decent living supplying bags for the market," she says.

Not only does the GEF grant to Zazai's NGO help reduce the menace of plastic bags to Afghanistan's natural environment, it provides a route to a sustainable income for some of the most vulnerable women in Kabul.







# UNDP AFGHANISTAN BY THE Numbers IN 2013

1600

former combatants were **RE-INTEGRATED** into their communities

80 percent

Afghans entered the **ELECTORAL ROLLS** registered as new voters in a nation-wide registration campaign

840 thousand

WOMEN RECRUITED AND TRAINED AS POLICE OFFICERS,

contributing to a 62 percent rise in reports of violence against women

of Afghan National Police received salaries through a TRANSPARENT ELECTRONIC PAYMENT SYSTEM

805 thousand

Afghans in rural communities benefited from IMPROVED TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

NATURAL DISASTERS through infrastructure built by local communities

**Afghans PROTECTED FROM** 

3000

civil servants, a third of them women,
TRAINED ON MANAGEMENT,
LEADERSHIP AND TECHNICAL
SKILLS

22

provinces have PROVINCIAL
ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY
COUNCILS helping address
environmental challenges

# Working in the Provinces



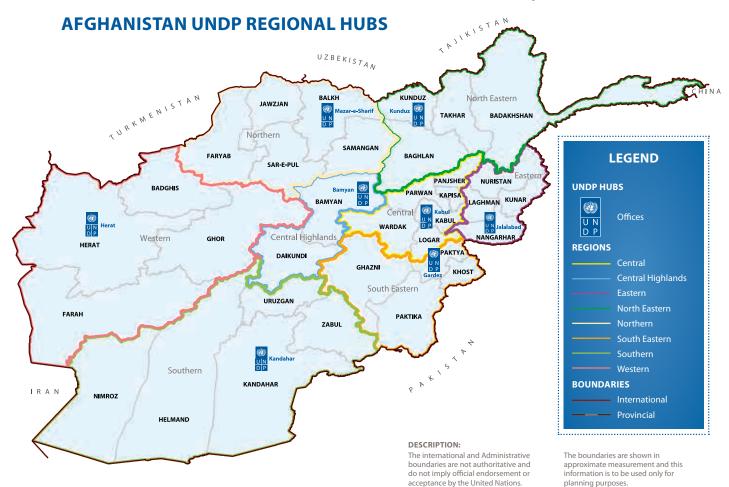
To better support the development needs of the Afghan population, UNDP supports projects in every one of the country's 34 provinces

## A MAJORITY OF UNDP PROJECTS HAVE ACTIVITIES IN ALL 34 PROVINCES OF AFGHANISTAN,

supported by eight project hubs located in Bamyan, Gardez, Herat, Jalalabad, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz and Mazar-e-Sharif. In an environment of decreasing resources and raising inequality in Afghanistan, UNDP has engaged in a process of redefining its physical presence across the country to increase efficiency and impact for the benefit of the most vulnerable.

A regionalization strategy has been formulated looking into the possibility of

transforming the project hubs into UNDP sub-offices. This would allow improved programmatic synergies, increased operational efficiency, and stronger accountability of UNDP activities. It would however have to take into consideration challenges related to security and access, thereby identifying mitigating and risk management measures.



## **UN Volunteers**



UNDP draws on a global pool of talent and experience, and facilitates an international exchange of expertise.

## VOLUNTEERISM IS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL TOOLS FOR GLOBAL SOCIAL AND POLITICAL

**CHANGE.** Through the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), UNDP brings essential skills where they are most needed and promotes trust, solidarity and reciprocity between the citizens of the world.

Afghanistan lies at the heart of this global community of volunteers. During 2013, 22 Afghan experts, including one woman, supported the work of the United Nations in all corners of the world, joining over a hundred previously deployed between 2004 and 2012. They took their valuable skills and expertise in the areas of peace, sustainable development and human rights to countries such as Sudan, South Sudan and Congo, as well as Algeria, Kosovo and Liberia.

Afghanistan has also hosted many international volunteers supporting the work of a wide range of UN agencies over the years. In 2013, 116 volunteers from around the world worked in Afghanistan's capital and provinces with the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), UNDP, the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the World Food Programme. Of these, 42, or over a third, were women.

Globally, UNV brought together over 7,000 volunteers from 159 countries – 81 percent from the developing world – to provide

peace and development support to UNDP and other UN agencies in 2013. Another 11,000 provided remote assistance through the ground-breaking Online Volunteering Service (www.onlinevolunteering.org), which expands opportunities to those who are unable to travel but can support development activities globally.



"I really believe in helping others," says Asif Soroush, an Afghan UN Volunteer, working in UNDP Tanzania as a Tourism Development Advisor. "I was born to dedicate my time as a volunteer serving people who are in need."

# Collaborating for Development



UNDP facilitates cooperation between government, UN and development agencies, civil society and experts from Afghanistan and overseas. It creates ways to pool knowledge and expertise to achieve shared goals for development.

||||||||||||| PARTNERSHIPS ||||||||||

#### TRANSFORMATIONAL CHANGE REQUIRES UNDP TO WORK CLOSELY WITH ALL ITS PARTNERS.

Key partners include the Government of Afghanistan, donors and development agencies, the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations, civil society, local communities, women and youth groups, traditional and religious leaders, academia, think tanks, the media and the private sector in the country and beyond.

Aware of the need to ensure a more inclusive approach to partnership management, UNDP established in 2013 a dedicated **Partnership team**. During this year, UNDP worked with its partners to identify the elements required to strengthen strategic partnerships and achieve sustainable change: mutually beneficial stakeholder engagement, results-based management and accountability, high-impact communications and in-depth policy analysis and advocacy.

It developed a new **Partnership Strategy** as well as a Resource Mobilization Strategy which became operational at the start of 2014. These two strategies will guide UNDP in mobilising resources and using them effectively with its partners for maximum impact.

UNDP reshaped the former Donors
Advisory Group into the **Development Partners Advisory Group**, engaging
representatives from embassies and
development agencies. The body aims at
sharing programme updates with UNDP's
existing and potential development
partners, promoting partnership
engagement. In addition, a smaller group
of partners is being established for more
high level and strategic discussions to
foster and monitor the relevance of UNDP
programme and its alignment with national
priorities and coordination with other
donor engagements.

To strengthen its interaction with civil society partners and provide them with more voice and role in its work, UNDP established in 2013 a **Civil Society Advisory Committee (CSAC)**. This dialogue mechanism will ensure that the UNDP country programme is more relevant and beneficial to all sectors of Afghan society.

Eventually, the CSAC will be established as an integral part of the UN system in Afghanistan, so all UN agencies can benefit from this unique participatory process.



People in the village of Tajikan in Jabul Saraj district, Parwan Province, will get for the first time access to electricity with support from UNDP's NABDP.

#### IIIIII SHARING EXPERIENCES IIIII

**AFGHANISTAN,** UNDP established three web-based Communities of Practice which bring together development professionals

bring together development profession from government, donors, NGOs, the academic and private sectors to learn, share and collaborate online and over email.

THROUGH SOLUTION EXCHANGE

This is achieved through regular meetings, as well as a query-reply system which eases communication across the country. Through this, participants send queries to the community, which responds with recommendations from their own experience in Afghanistan and around the world. From these responses, the Solution Exchange facilitators synthesize and circulate a Consolidated Reply, which becomes part of the community's record of shared knowledge.

By the end of 2013, 1,473 professionals had joined these communities of practice. Of these the vast majority, 1,297, are Afghans, who are also the authors of all the queries discussed by members thus far.

The Municipal Governance and Development Community was established in December 2012. This community seeks to share knowledge to find ways for municipal administrations to increase their revenue and be costeffective, improve service delivery, and build well-designed municipalities. By the end of 2013, the community had 652 members and had launched 14 queries.

In the year since its establishment in December 2012, the **Sustainable Resource Management Community** has grown from 115 members to 613. This community of knowledge consists of professionals concerned with the responsible and effective management of Afghanistan's land, water, forest, mineral, energy and biodiversity resources. It has posted eight queries by the end of 2013, with a ninth in the pipeline.

In partnership with UN Women, UNDP launched the **Afghanistan Gender Equality Community** in October 2013. This young community of practice has 208 members. It focuses on women's empowerment and gender equality, and seeks to share knowledge on how to increase the role of Afghan women in peacebuilding, governance and development. Despite the fact that the community has been in existence for just three months, by the end of 2013 it has already handled four pertinent queries and provided consolidated replies.

For more information on **Solution Exchange Afghanistan**,
please go to the website:
http://www.solutionexchange-un.
net/afghanistan/index.html

# UNDP Afghanistan and the UN System



UNDP collaborates with its sister agencies to provide appropriate, targeted and effective support in Afghanistan.

#### THE WORK OF UNDP IN AFGHANISTAN COMES UNDER THE UN ASSISTANCE MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN (UNAMA).

The aim of the mission is to aid reconstruction, fight corruption, monitor and coordinate the protection of human rights, provide humanitarian and development assistance, and advise the Afghan government on security, governance and regional cooperation.

In the Afghan context, co-operation with UN agencies is of critical importance. UNDP together with 22 other UN agencies, form the UN Country Team (UNCT). Collaboration between UNDP and UNAMA is especially strong in the areas of rule of

law and governance. It is guided by the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, which aims to accelerate Afghan ownership and leadership by using country systems and introducing a new alignment with national priorities.

UNDP programming is also aligned with the principles of the New Deal for Fragile States, an agreement between 19 fragile countries and their development partners, which recognizes the critical importance of a country-led transition to stability, combined with effective and transparent aid and resource management.

#### IIIIIIIII PREPARING FOR TRANSITION AND TRANSFORMATION IIIIIIIIII

#### TO ENSURE THE COHERENCE OF THE UN WORK IN THE COUNTRY,

the UN aligns its programmes under the UNDAF, which is approved by the Afghan government.

Under the 2009–2013 UNDAF, which was extended to 2014, the UNCT designed and implemented joint programmes in support of national development priorities. The assistance focuses on the needs and rights of the most vulnerable, and supports effective governance and stability, livelihoods and basic services.

With the end of the programming cycle, UNDP contributed in 2013 to the formulation of the CCA, which analyses development challenges from a UN perspective. Based on the CCA and on national priorities, a new UNDAF to guide UN activities for 2015–2019 was under preparation in 2013, with UNDP contributions.

As the custodian of the Resident Coordinator (RC) system, UNDP provides financial and management support to the office of the UN RC and is an active member of the UNCT and the Security Management Team.



UNDP is actively engaging in joint UN efforts to foster Delivering as One in Afghanistan. UNDP contributes to the Joint UN team on AIDS and co-chairs, with UNAMA, the UN working group on subnational governance and development.

To promote Delivering as One, in 2013 UNDP led the establishment of a UN Harmonization Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT) working group. Its main objective is to streamline management of project finances and increase accountability and transparency though common audit approaches across UN agencies.

As the chair of the UN Operations Management Team, UNDP leads UN efforts at improving efficiency and effectiveness, from financial services to shared premises.

There are approximately 10,000 externally funded national personnel working in Afghan ministries. In 2013, an important initiative supported by UNDP helped address the challenge of this 'parallel civil service'. It supported efforts to harmonize the remuneration of staff working with the government under the national technical assistance (NTA) scheme with the compensation system in the Afghanistan civil service.

The NTA is the government's response to deliver more national technical assistance through a unified pay framework. It will encourage public administration reform

A registration worker cuts a photo for a newly issued voter's card in Kabul. The top-up registration campaign by the Independent Election Commission was supported by UNDP's ELECT II.

as a whole and improve regulation and transparency of aid-funded national technical assistance.

In the framework of the UN Secretary General initiative on Durable Solutions, UNDP signed in 2013 a letter of intent with UNHCR and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to work together to analyse and identify the specific needs of Afghan refugees and promote their return.

Recognising the critical challenge of employment generation linked to the demographic pressure of the country's youth population, UNDP is working with and providing funding to ILO to support the elaboration of a National Employment Strategy and to increase the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in the development of integrated and coherent strategies for generating decent and sustainable jobs at national and sub national levels in Afghanistan.

As a full member of the Humanitarian Country Team, UNDP leads early recovery efforts and plays a critical role in building the resilience of Afghanistan.

To ensure coherence and consistency in communications, UN agencies and UNAMA come together under the UN Communications Group, which was co-chaired by UNDP and the World Bank in the second half of 2013. This group also enables UN agencies in Afghanistan to engage in joint communication and advocacy on issues of common concern such as the elimination of violence against women and early childhood marriage as well as media freedom.

Collaboration between UN agencies is essential to UNDP's work, and key to its role as a pillar of the UN Country Team in Afghanistan.

# Inside UNDP Afghanistan:

#### ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRUST



UNDP prioritizes transparency and accountability in its operations. In Afghanistan, as elsewhere, building trust is integral to its work.

> **IN 2013, A DEDICATED OVERSIGHT** AND COMPLIANCE UNIT **BEGAN ITS WORK WITH THE MANDATE TO SYSTEMATICALLY** STRENGTHEN OVERSIGHT IN UNDP **AFGHANISTAN.** This seeks to ensure organizational, financial, operational and ethical accountability in all UNDP work, with effective internal controls to prevent fraud and malpractice.

#### ||||||||| RISK MANAGEMENT |||||||

Afghanistan is a complex environment in which to operate. During 2013, UNDP staff received training on the principles and practicalities of risk management in the unique context of Afghanistan. Through this process, a common understanding and language for risk management was developed. By the end of 2013, the Oversight and Compliance Unit had supported most UNDP projects to prepare risk assessments and management plans. It also reviewed the project design process to ensure that significant project strategy and operational risks are identified and addressed at the planning level.

Through such measures, UNDP Afghanistan aims to not only improve its risk management, but to be more transparent about risks to results, trade-offs, measures taken and responsibilities vis-à-vis its development partners, and to share the risk in joint undertakings.

UNDP Afghanistan auditing procedures follow the agency's global policy, with two major channels, one for large projects implemented by government partners and another for projects directly implemented by UNDP Afghanistan.

All projects and project components which are implemented by government partners and exceed a certain annual threshold in Afghanistan, above US\$ 300,000 - are audited annually by external accredited firms. In 2013, these audit results were overall positive and three projects (LOTFA, NABDP with AREDP, and MBAW) received unqualified audit opinions.

The second audit process, for projects implemented directly by UNDP, is managed by UNDP's Office of Audit and Investigations (OAI). In 2012–2013, increased allocations to OAI for their work in Afghanistan substantially strengthened audit efforts. As a result, 14 audit reports and management letters, with 71 recommendations, were issued in 2013, compared to 4 reports with 26 recommendations in 2012. By the end of the year, 58 of these recommendations had been successfully implemented.

Thanks to these efforts, UNDP has been able to make improvements in internal controls, better project management and operations, and improved interactions with

An electronic board shows the municipality expenditure in Herat city, a project supported by UNDP's Afghanistan Subnational Governance Programme.



#### A COMMITMENT TO TRANSPARENCY

All OAI reports issued since 1 December 2012 are available online, where the implementation rate of recommendations can also be tracked.

http://audit-public-disclosure.undp.org/index.cfm

partners. Nevertheless, challenges remain in Afghanistan's complex environment, for example in areas that are difficult to access. UNDP is now working with other UN agencies to combine efforts for capacity assessment and monitoring.

#### INTEGRITY AND ANTICORRUPTION

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UNDP staff are at the forefront of the fight against corruption. It is thus an ongoing priority to raise staff awareness on ethical standards, UNDP values and policies, and to ensure that they have the skills to identify and prevent violations.

Working with the UNDP Ethics Office, a series of trainings were arranged, including workshops for 177 participants and webinars for 90 participants. All UNDP employees are required to complete mandatory online courses on ethics, harassment and UNDP's legal framework.

Since procurement is a particularly highrisk area, UNDP Afghanistan cooperated with the Procurement Support Office at headquarters to build staff capacity and awareness. In 2013, 26 staff members completed level 2 certification for public procurement from the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, compared with only one the previous year.

Investigations into allegations of corruption, fraud, harassment and misconduct fall under the purview of the OAI. A dedicated investigations hotline ensures that reports may be made discreetly. The OAI investigates formally complaints assessed as significant and submits its findings to the Legal Support Office for action. If suitable, it also submits a management letter recommending how to strengthen internal controls and prevent similar events in the future.

#### SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY

Globally, UNDP proactively works towards achieving complete gender parity – 50 percent female UNDP staff and consultants. In 2013, UNDP Afghanistan developed a gender parity dashboard to monitor the ratio of men and women at all levels, and instituted special measures to attract and retain female staff, including gender equality objectives in performance evaluations. By the end of 2013, the target of 34 percent parity in management posts was achieved, from a 2012 baseline of 24 percent.

Cultural restrictions are often a barrier to employment for Afghan women; UNDP has instituted special measures to create a more secure work environment for female national staff. In 2013, 19 percent of National Officers and 30 percent of General Service were women.

UNDP places a similarly high importance on gender in the Afghanistan Country Programme, implemented through a Gender Equality Strategy (GES), adopted in June 2013, which guides interventions till 2019. This is the framework for coordinating amongst projects and programmes to promote gender equality, in line with the government of Afghanistan's approach, to ensure that both women's and men's concerns are integral to policy and programme design.

UNDP works with its partners to ensure that women and men enjoy equal access and opportunity in all spheres of life. The GES provides guidance to ensure that Afghan women benefit from stronger protection from violence and improved access to justice, better delivery of public services and representation in government institutions, a stronger voice in communities and in national political processes, and expanded economic rights and opportunities.

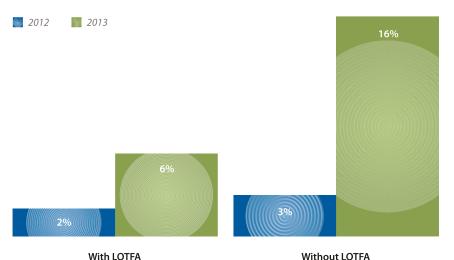
# Investing in Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment



UNDP Afghanistan works towards increasing the share of project expenditures on activities which promote gender equality and women's empowerment. To monitor and hold projects accountable, UNDP has introduced in 2013 the use of a **gender marker** that measures budget allocations for gender-responsive programme activities.

SHARE OF EXPENDITURE ON ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY INCLUDING LOTFA

SHARE OF EXPENDITURE ON ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY WITHOUT LOTFA



FOR PROJECTS other than the Law and Order Trust Fund for Afghanistan (LOTFA), the share of expenditure spent on activities supporting gender equality and women's empowerment was 16 percent<sup>6</sup> in 2013, compared with estimated expenditures of 3 percent in 2012.

Including LOTFA, expenditures for activities providing both direct and indirect support have risen to 6 percent of the programme, compared to 2 percent in 2012.

For LOTFA, whose largest budgetary item is the payment of police salaries, the share of gender related expenditures was constrained by the fact that women account for less than 2 percent of the police force.

At the same time in 2013, LOTFA has expanded the scope of work on gender interventions, which was reflected in the total expenses of about US\$ 13.8 million (including salary payments) focusing on ensuring gender responsiveness of development interventions to support ministerial reform, police professionalization and community policing.

# UNDP Afghanistan Resources



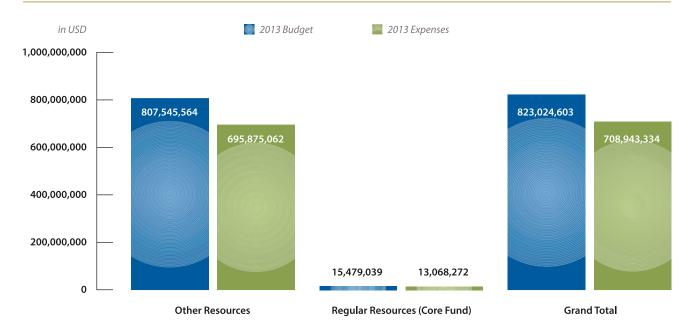
UNDP is working towards diversification and consolidation of its resource base.

VNDP IS FUNDED entirely from voluntary contributions by a range of partners, including UN Member States, and multilateral and other organizations. These contributions are provided as either regular budget resources or as other resources earmarked by contributors. In Afghanistan, twenty-eight donors including countries, multilateral organizations, funds and UN Agencies contributed US\$ 807 million in 2013 to UNDP projects. Other resources including UNDP core funds amounted to US\$ 15.4 million.

Development is a long-term challenge that requires both strategic focus, and the ability to actively respond to crises and opportunities. In a changing development environment, UNDP Afghanistan is working towards diversification and consolidation of its resource base.

In 2013, Afghanistan was UNDP's largest country operation by far, accounting for 17 percent of the UNDP global budget.

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# UNDP Afghanistan Resources

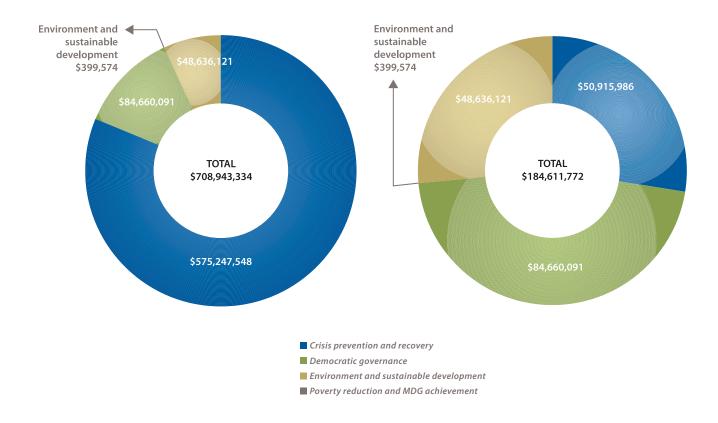


UNDP is working towards diversification and consolidation of its resource base.

||||||||||||| UNDP AFGHANISTAN FOCUS AREA PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE DISTRIBUTIONS\* ||||||||||||||

WITH THE LAW AND ORDER TRUST FUND FOR AFGHANISTAN (LOTFA)

WITHOUT THE LAW AND ORDER TRUST FUND FOR AFGHANISTAN (LOTFA)



#### IIIIIIIIIIIIIIII EXPENDITURE IN 2013 BY DONORS

Preliminary as of 31st March 2014.

DONORS	TOTAL in USD
United States of America	297,772,288
Japan	189,876,161
Germany	67,256,340
Republic of Korea	24,667,525
European Union	22,319,195
United Kingdom	21,489,702
UNDP Regular Resources (Core Fund)	13,068,272
Australia	10,779,888
Sweden	10,760,416
Denmark	10,588,831
Italy	7,424,574
Canada	7,203,745
Spain	6,603,920
The Netherlands	4,141,579
UNDP Other Resources (CCF)	2,695,224
India	2,194,535
Switzerland	2,185,962
Finland	1,911,512
Norway	1,884,341
Afghanistan	1,260,966
UNAMA	1,083,408
Turkey	1,032,319
GEF	182,780
Poland	157,905
France	148,941
Multi Partner Trust Funds	113,406
UNHCR	75,480
Czech Republic	64,119
GRAND TOTAL	708,943,334



Women learning embroidery in a vocational training centre supported by UNDP's NABDP in Gorhian District, Herat Province.

# NOP AEGHANISTAN ANNIIAI REPORT 2013

# **UNDP** Contributing Partners



Australia



Canada



**Czech Republic** 



Denmark



Estonia



**European Union** 



**Finland** 



France



Germany



India



Italy



Japan



The Netherlands



Norway



Poland



Republic of Korea



Spain



Sweden



Switzerland



Turkey



**United Kingdom** 



United States of America

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- 5 Central Statistics Organization 2014.
- 6 Provisional project figures as of 31st March 2014.

#### PHOTO CREDITS

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#### **ACRONYMS**

AFII	Afghanistan Integrity Initiative	GEF	Global Environment Fund	NIBP	<b>National Institution Building Project</b>
APRP	Afghan Peace and Reintegration	GES	Gender Equality Strategy	NTA	National Technical Assistance
	Programme	HACT	Harmonization Approach to	OAI	Office of Audit and Investigations
AREDP	Afghanistan Rural Enterprise		Cash Transfer	RC	Resident Coordinator
	Development Programme	ILO	International Labour Organization	UN	United Nations
ASGP	Afghanistan Subnational	JHRA	Justice and Human Rights in	UNAMA	UN Assistance Mission in
	Governance Programme		Afghanistan		Afghanistan
CCA	Common Country Assessment	LOTFA	Law and Order Trust Fund for	UNCT	UN Country Team
CCF	Country Co-Financing		Afghanistan	UNDAF	UN Development Assistance
CSAC	Civil Society Advisory Committee	MBAW	Making Budgets and Aid Work		Framework
DAG	Development partners Advisory	MDGs	Millennium Development Goals	UNDP	UN Development Programme
	Group	NABDP	National Area-Based Development	UNHCR	<b>UN High Commission for Refugees</b>
ELECT II	Enhancing Legal and Electoral		Programme	UNV	UN Volunteers
	Capacity for Tomorrow II	NGO	Non-Governmental Organization		

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