



CHAPTER 3

SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT

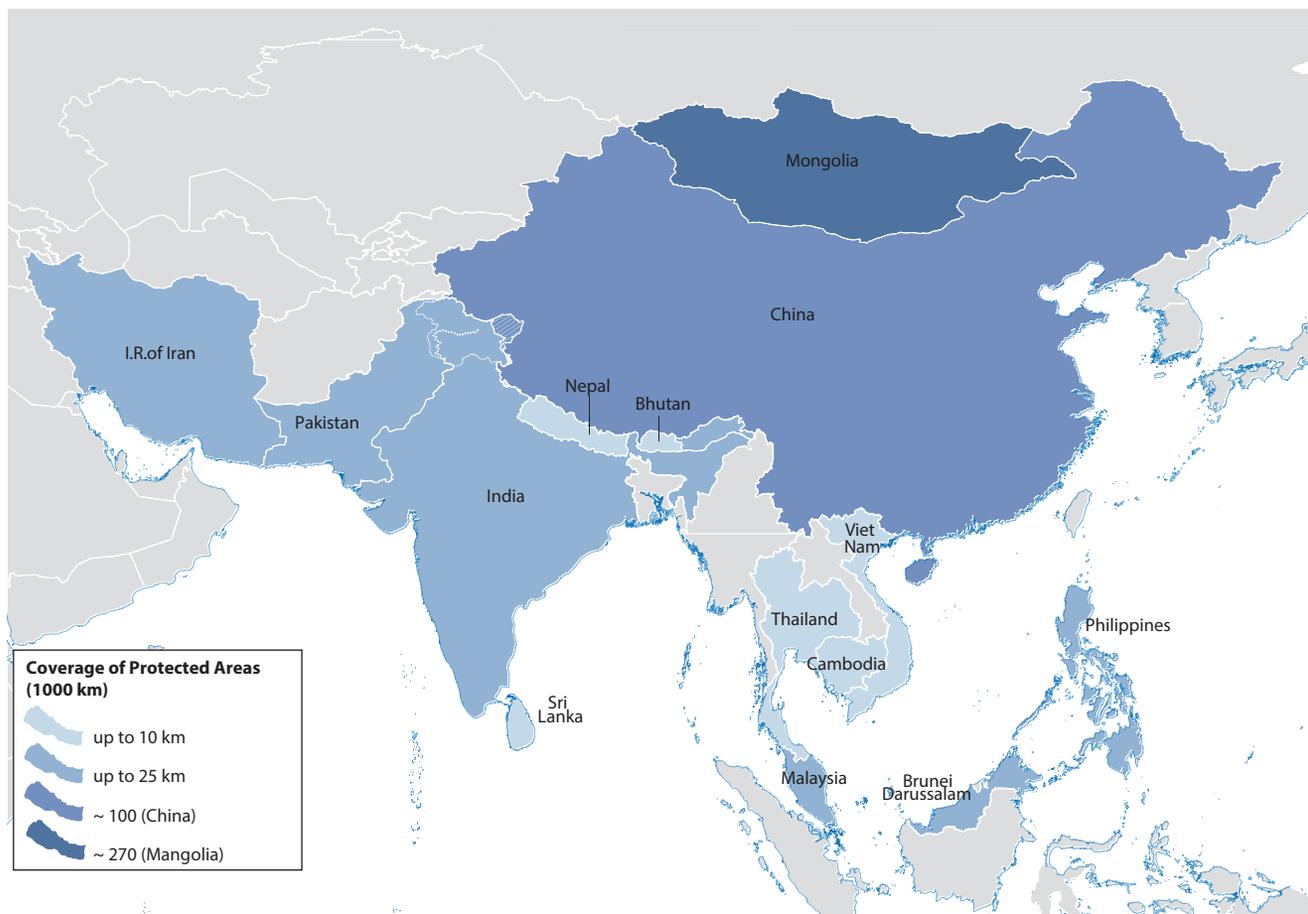
Income and social inequality remain major challenges throughout the Asia-Pacific region. Some previously highly unequal East and South Asian countries, such as Nepal, Thailand, Malaysia and Philippines, witnessed decreasing inequality, while other previously low-inequality countries, including India, Bangladesh and Indonesia, have increasing inequality. In part, this rising inequality in many emerging economies can be explained by uneven development within and across countries in the region: across sectors and locations, with uneven demand between skilled and unskilled labour, high disparities in access to education, infrastructure and services, and insufficiently inclusive public policies.

The first focus of UNDP's work in the region has therefore been the quality of development, ensuring that it is inclusive, that inequalities are curbed, and that it is sustainable. UNDP thus delivered US\$183 million in projects and programmes in 2013 across 22 Country Offices.

In particular, UNDP contributed to the successful achievement of national outcomes within numerous countries. These included increased employment rates

- ▶ With the support of the GEF-funded Coastal Afforestation project of UNDP, over 900 of the poorest families gained food and income security by making barren coastal land productive. The photo is of a farmer, Rob Mollah, holding lobsters produced in his farm. Photo: UNDP Bangladesh / Kawser Ahmed

Figure 7: Protected Areas Supported by UNDP through GEF-Financed Projects



Map data source(s):

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2012), World Urbanization Prospects: The 2011 Revision. UN Cartographic Section. UNDP-GEF 2014.

Map Source: United Nations Cartographic Section

Disclaimers:

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

UNDP helped provide **5**
MILLION PEOPLE,
 more than half of whom were women,
social protection in the region in 2013.

UNDP SUPPORTED
 MANAGEMENT AND
 SUSTAINABLE
 FINANCING OF **46.6**
MILLION HECTARES,
 comprising 352 **protected areas** within the Asia-
 Pacific region, with GEF support in 2013.

2013 Cumulative Results in Protected Areas

Country	Total Number of PAs impacted	Total Area of PAs impacted (ha)
Bhutan	3	625,000
Cambodia	7	299,532
China	68	10,097,574
India	5	1,133,632
Iran	20	1,265,846
Malaysia	45	1,173,601
Maldives	18	5,539
Mongolia	74	27,207,871
Nepal	4	229,695
Pakistan	61	2,416,471
Philippines	22	1,086,056
Sri Lanka	4	79,496
Thailand	15	820,599
Viet Nam	6	190,102
Grand Total	352	46,631,014

in the private sector, as well as a rise in the numbers of poor people benefiting from social protection schemes and vulnerable groups with access to microfinance and other social services. UNDP especially helped strengthen the resource endowments of the poor and boost their prospects for decent, sustainable employment and livelihoods, including through widening access to financial services and production technologies. Further improvements in the region include the approval of government policies, strategies and plans in support of the sustainable management of natural resources; an increase in the communities that acquired land use rights for managing resources; and better water management plans. As a result, the number of protected areas under sustainable and participatory management programmes also increased, as did the number of critically threatened ecosystems and natural resources sustainably managed by communities (Figure 7).

Three-fourths of Asia-Pacific's poor live in rural areas, while development has been concentrated in urban and coastal areas. For this reason, UNDP has focused on facilitating access to economic opportunities and financial services in rural areas. For example, in China jobs and livelihoods were created primarily among women and ethnic minorities through expanding rural access to finance; delivering new economic opportunities, including

◀ A farmer collects his harvest of oranges, free of persistent organic pollutants in China (POPs). Photo by UNDP China.

UNDP assisted countries in Asia-Pacific to develop solutions at national and sub-national levels for the rapidly emerging issue of inadequate disposal of hazardous chemicals and waste. Primarily in Viet Nam and China, UNDP helped to dispose of 1,631 metric tonnes of chemicals such as persistent organic pollutants, and to safeguard another 3,356 metric tonnes. Building on this, UNDP partnered with Baidu, China's largest Internet service provider, to develop a mobile application to aid responsible recycling of the growing volume of electronic devices.



new markets for ethnic wares; and enhancing livelihoods, including the introduction of new farming techniques.

At the same time, UNDP also recognizes the rapid urbanization in all countries, which is leading to particularly high inequalities in assets, educational attainment and gender and in turn impeding access to economic opportunities as well (Figure 8). In Bangladesh, for example, UNDP, in partnership with DFID, supported improvements in the livelihoods of more than 3 million urban poor women and men; in so doing, it assisted the mobilization of the urban poor into community structures and the formation of community-based savings and credit groups for 400,000 poor households (98%

of beneficiaries being women), providing apprenticeships and developing microenterprises, largely targeting women. UNDP support also led to the creation of the first model of land tenure security for poor urban communities in Bangladesh, which is being scaled up in other urban areas.

Despite economic gains in the region, most countries — particularly those that have graduated to middle-income status—have not strengthened their systems of social protection.⁵ Improving access to social protection schemes is crucial, however, to support poverty reduction amid a large informal economy and the growing dependency ratios associated with

youth and ageing populations. Overall, in 2013 UNDP facilitated options for inclusive social protection and delivered projects that directly assisted 5 million beneficiaries of social protection schemes, more than half of which were women, in seven countries,⁶ including through providing advice on policy and institutional reforms to help reach the poor and other at-risk groups (Case Study 3). For example, in Timor-Leste it contributed to enhancing the institutional capacity of the Ministry of Social Solidarity, helping to enable better outreach to poor women and their children through such initiatives as conditional cash transfers tied to a child's school attendance and completion; in turn, the number of beneficiaries of the Bolsa da Mae programme in Timor-Leste doubled in 2013, to 30,000.⁷

UNDP helped dispose and safeguard of chemicals,

4,990
METRIC TONNES

such as persistent organic pollutants in the region in 2013, with GEF support.

288,000
PEOPLE

were trained in **management of chemicals**, including persistent organic pollutants, with UNDP and GEF support within the region.

IN 13 COUNTRIES

within the Asia-Pacific region, UNDP assisted Governments in improving **service delivery in urban areas** and making settlements more sustainable.

IN 23 COUNTRIES

within the Asia-Pacific region, UNDP helped integrate **natural resource management** into development plans in 2013.

80 COMMUNITIES

were assisted in 2013 by UNDP in the Pacific – affecting nearly 40,000 people – to **adapt to shifts in climate**.

IN 21 COUNTRIES

within the Asia-Pacific region, UNDP helped increase **sustainability of growth**, addressing consumption patterns, environment policies, new technology and expansion of the productive base.

Meanwhile, UNDP's environment work has for many years addressed poverty and environment in an integrated way, and in 2013 addressed biodiversity conservation in 14 countries alongside economic activities such as fisheries, agriculture and tourism. UNDP's strategy, with financing from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), is to unlock the potential of 352 protected areas in the region (46.6 million hectares) so they are effectively managed and sustainably financed. In Iran, joint collaboration between UNDP and the Department of Environment is helping to prevent the disappearance of important wetlands areas: Lake Uromiyeh, the largest saltwater lake in the Middle East, is drying up at an alarming rate. In response, UNDP has helped strengthen institutional arrangements for improvement of the Uromiyeh basin, an approach that the Government is scaling up with its own resources to eight further locations.

Increasingly, ensuring that development is sustainable and inclusive also requires addressing climate change and environmental

stresses brought about by development. Asia-Pacific is one of the most vulnerable regions to climate change, with impacts likely to become more intense.⁸ Often it is the poorest and most vulnerable populations who depend on the environment for their livelihoods and who are most affected by environmental change. Countries in the region have been supported to change the way they manufacture goods, raise crops and livestock, and generate energy, including through moving to more resilient and lower-emission systems and technologies. UNDP has widely promoted the integration of climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable policies and budgets into development plans, in such countries as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Indonesia and eight Pacific Island states. It further assisted 80 communities in the Pacific – affecting nearly 40,000 people – to adapt to shifts in climate by better securing their water supplies, establishing nurseries for resilient plants, and increasing renewable energy prospects.

CASE STUDY 3

New Social Protection Approach Benefits Vulnerable Groups in China

Supported by UNDP, an alternative approach to social protection has recently been adopted by the Government of China, focusing on the protection of vulnerable groups and guaranteeing a minimum living allowance to those who meet the eligibility criteria. The new social assistance regulation, which came into effect in May 2014, benefits about 250 million people nationwide, according to the National People's Congress, China's top legislature. About 75 million receive a minimum living allowance; 5.5 million elderly, under-16 children and people with disabilities in rural areas benefit from "five guarantees" support for food, clothing, health care, housing and funeral expenses; 78 million receive temporary relief for disasters, and 91 million receive medical relief and rural welfare support. UNDP partnered with the Legislative Affairs Commission of the National People's Congress, and provided technical assistance to organize expert consultations on a variety of issues during the drafting of the new regulation. UNDP also organized international dialogues between China and New Zealand and Australia on social assistance legislation and pre-legislative review mechanisms.

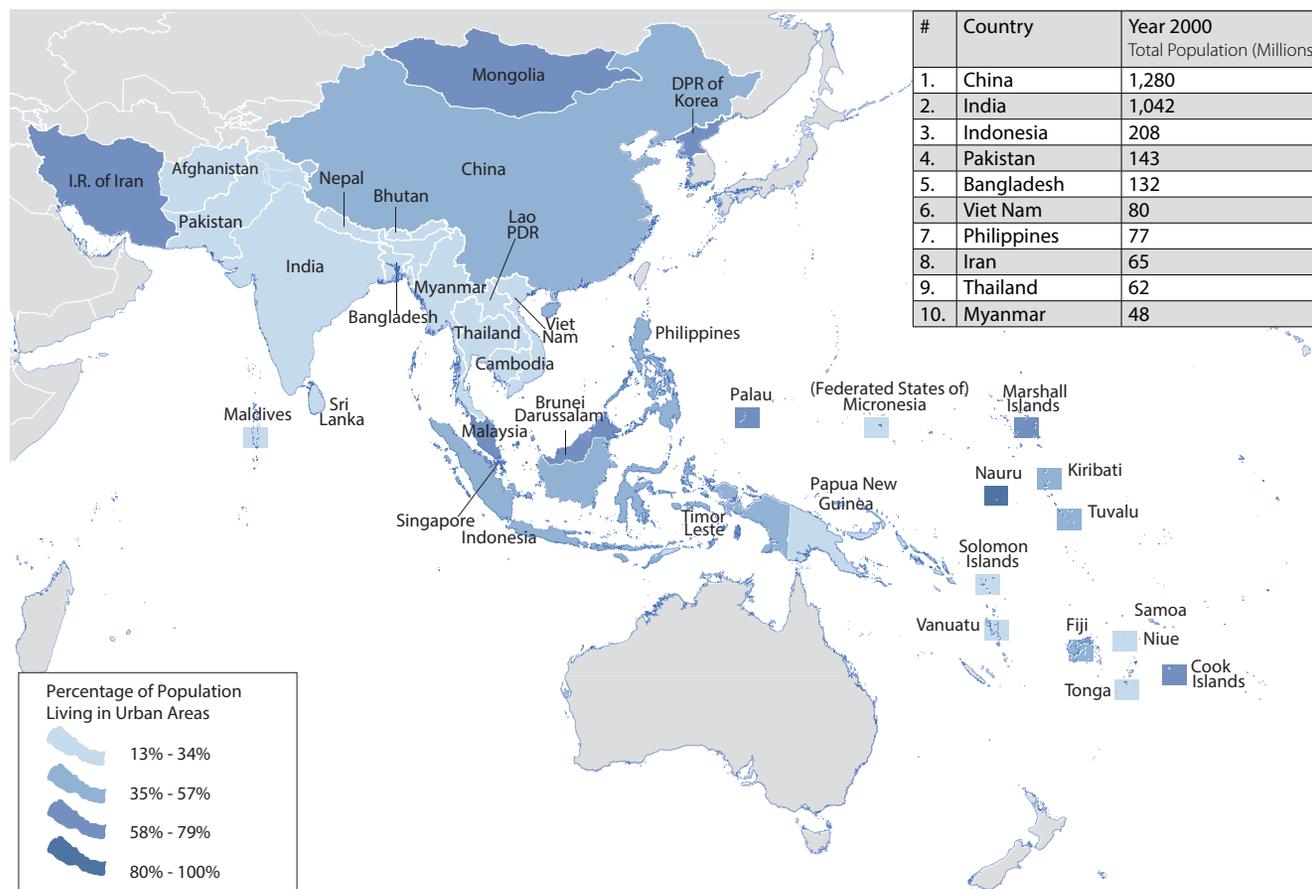
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In Viet Nam, migrants form a dynamic labour force but have limited access to social protection and services. UNDP and its partners are advocating for the Government to reform its mobility policy and improve access to basic services and social protection for the new urban poor, including migrants. UNDP-supported policy research on multidimensional poverty in Ho Chi Minh City, especially among the migrants, has helped raise awareness of the municipal authorities to the contribution of migrants towards the City's economic development and their equal rights as those of the registered residents. As a result, Ho Chi Minh City has revised its policy so migrants with a six-month temporary registration can access bank loans and their children can go to public schools.

Photo credit: © United Nations Viet Nam\2010\Aidan Dockery

2000

Figure 8a: Share of Population Living in Urban Areas in Asia-Pacific Region 2000



Map data source(s):

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2012), World Urbanization Prospects: The 2011 Revision.

Map Source: United Nations Cartographic Section

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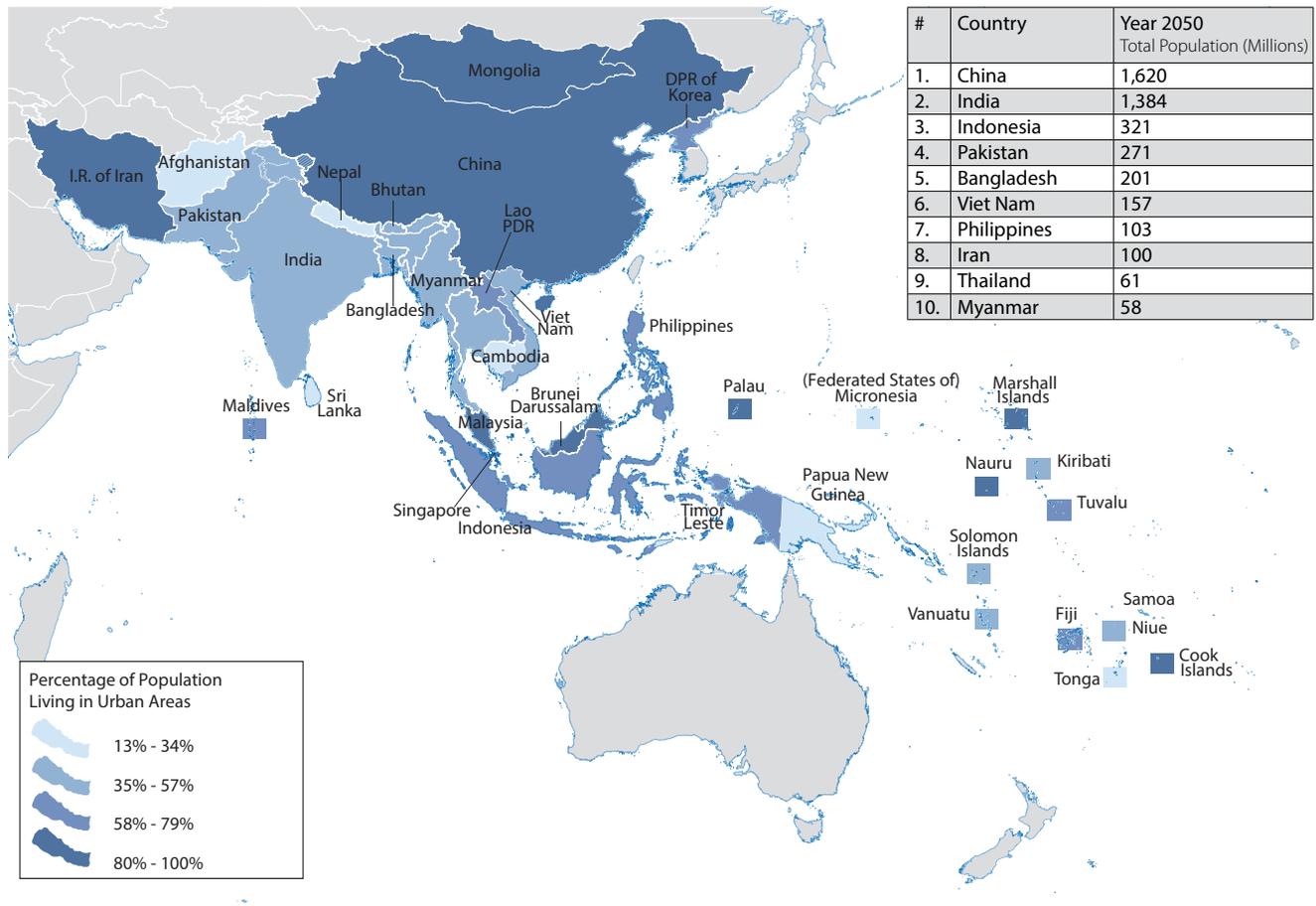
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2050

Figure 8b: Share of Population Living in Urban Areas in Asia-Pacific Region 2050



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