

Regional Bureau
for Asia and the Pacific



2009 Results Report





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Regional Overview

The Asia-Pacific region is marked by huge diversity and variations amongst its countries. The region includes the world's two largest populations – India and China. In contrast to these regional giants, the region also holds 14 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) (accounting for almost 40 per cent of the global population in LDCs), of which five are landlocked countries and several are small island developing states including the Maldives and Pacific Island countries. In addition, there are countries recovering from decades of prolonged conflict, like Afghanistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Timor Leste; some in low levels of conflict such as Pakistan, that are encountering the twin challenges of rebuilding their economies and polities. Still others are undergoing political transition from monarchies to constitutional regimes like in Bhutan and Tonga. Indonesia and the Philippines are recent entrants to middle income status and some like Thailand and Malaysia are dealing with the challenges of trying to move beyond middle income status.

Prior to the global economic crisis the region had been making strong gains. Aggregate trends in social and economic indicators are impressive. The Asia Pacific region as a whole has had remarkable success in reducing poverty. In 1990, almost half the region's people lived in extreme poverty, but the proportion is now down to one quarter. Nonetheless, the region is still home to 60 per cent of the world's poor. The Asia Pacific is the fastest growing region in the world, sustaining an annual average growth rate of 7.4 per cent from 2000 to 2009 in East Asia and 5.9 per cent in South Asia.

The Asia-Pacific region weathered the global food, fuel and financial crises better than other parts of the world, and indeed was an early achiever in the recovery stakes. Asia is one of the few regions which managed to grow despite the most serious global crisis since the Great Depression. Regional economies have been affected but less so than other developed and developing regions. The recovery in the region is also currently seen to be faster and more pronounced than elsewhere. Nonetheless, impacts are still significant. The crises appear to have affected the Asia Pacific developing countries through two main channels. The first – a financial shock with the collapse of equity markets, depreciation of local currencies, limited international credit availability and increase in the cost of credit. The second – a real economic shock stemming from declining demand for exports, tourism and migrant workers. Employment losses have been more severe than GDP losses largely because the worst affected productive sectors have been those that are export-oriented and more labour intensive. As employment declined sharply in these export-oriented sectors it created negative multiplier effects across other sectors. The effects on social sectors and on human development conditions have been marked and it is estimated in the joint ESCAP/ADB/UNDP Asia Pacific Regional MDG report 2009/10 that in 2009, the crisis trapped up to an additional 17 million people in extreme poverty. This number is expected to rise to 21 million in 2010.

The region as a whole is an early achiever for a number of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) indicators: reducing gender disparities in primary and tertiary education; stopping the spread of HIV and AIDS and TB; and halving the proportion of people with access to safe drinking water. The region is also on track to achieve three other MDG targets: halving the proportion of people living below the US\$ 1.25 per day poverty line; gender parity in secondary education and ensuring universal access of children to primary school.

However, progress remains slow in many other areas. The region is lagging in reducing hunger, ensuring that children complete a full course of primary education, reducing mortality of infants and children up to 5-years old, ensuring access to clean water in urban areas and basic sanitation everywhere. Moreover, these regional aggregates mask considerable variations between sub-regions and countries. In particular, the region's 14 LDCs have made slow or no progress on most of the indicators, and several Pacific Islands countries are regressing or making no progress on a number of indicators. With the occurrence of multiple global crises, including the financial and economic crisis and the volatility of food and energy prices, progress towards the MDGs in Asia and the Pacific remains fragile and requires special and targeted support mechanisms.

Country Groups on and off track for the MDGs

Goal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	\$ 1.25/day poverty Underweight children	Primary enrolment Reaching last grade Primary completion	Gender primary Gender secondary Gender tertiary	Under-5 mortality Infant mortality	Antenatal care, at least once Births by skilled professionals	HIV prevalence TB incidence TB prevalence	Forest cover Protected area CO2 emissions ODP substance consumption Water, total Sanitation, total
Asia-Pacific	▲ ■	▲ ■ ■	● ▲ ●	■ ■	■ ■	● ● ●	▼ ● ▼ ● ● ■
Excluding China and India	▲ ■	■ ■ ■	● ● ●	■ ■	■ ■	▼ ● ●	▼ ● ▼ ● ▲ ■
South-East Asia	● ▲	▲ ■ ●	● ● ●	▲ ■	■ ■	● ● ●	▼ ● ▼ ● ● ▲
South Asia	■ ■	▲ ■ ■	● ▲ ■	■ ■	■ ■	● ● ●	● ● ▼ ● ● ■
Excluding India	▲ ■	■ ■ ■	● ▲ ▲	■ ■	■ ■	▼ ● ●	▼ ● ▼ ● ● ■
Pacific Islands			▼ ▼ ▼	■ ■	▼ ▼	▼ ● ●	▼ ● ▼ ● ▼ ▼
Excluding Papua New Guinea		▼ ▼ ▼	● ● ●	■ ■	■	● ●	▼ ● ▼ ● ▼ ▼
North and Central Asia	▼ ▲	● ● ●	● ● ●	■ ■	▲	▼ ● ●	▼ ● ▼ ▼ ▲ ■
Excluding Russia	▼ ●	● ● ●	● ● ●	■ ■	▲ ▲	▼ ▼ ▼	▼ ● ▼ ● ■ ■
LDCs Asia-Pacific	■ ■	■ ■ ■	● ● ■	■ ■	■ ■	● ● ●	▼ ● ▼ ● ■ ■

● Early achiever ▲ On track ■ Slow ▼ Regressing/No progress

Source: Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in an Era of Uncertainty, ADB/ESCAP/UNDP 2010

Note: North and Central Asia category is not included in UNDP's Asia Pacific regional grouping.

One of the key challenges facing the region is growing inequality within countries. The region's strong growth pattern has contributed to rising affluence, but it has also resulted in widening disparities between and within countries. The ratio of per capita income of the richest 5 per cent to that of the poorest 5 per cent has doubled from about 10 in 1980 to 20 in 2005 owing primarily to differential impact of globalization. Within countries, disparities have increased, largely because of low employment intensity of growth and lack of emphasis on rural development. In this context, as Asia strives to return to a high growth path, it must find ways to get back to more inclusive growth to accelerate poverty reduction.

The current as well as previous economic crises coupled with regular natural disasters has highlighted the importance of effective social protection to cushion the impact of adverse economic developments. However, the coverage of basic social protection programs is very low in Asia and the Pacific. For the region as a whole, only 30 per cent of the elderly receive pensions, only 20 per cent of the unemployed and underemployed have access to labour market programs and only 20 per cent of the population has access to health care assistance. In many countries, the main social safety net is via product subsidies (e.g. on fuel and rice), which is often fragmented and not targeted. Asia can therefore make some headway by consolidating multiple schemes into more coherent programs. There is also significant scope to move from product subsidies to more targeted and equitable cash transfer schemes. Clearly Asian and Pacific economies need to look for home-grown solutions that build on local conditions and on traditions such as self reliance and family orientation.

The 2010 Asia Pacific Regional Human Development Report on Gender highlighted that despite the region's many economic gains, in many instances women across the region continue to be held back and disadvantaged. The Asia Pacific region has made progress in addressing gender equality in life expectancy, school enrolment and labour force participation, with the most rapid gains occurring in East Asia and the Pacific. In South Asia, by contrast, large gender gaps remain in basic areas such as education, health, nutrition and employment opportunities. Some stark numbers highlight the enormity of the challenge. South Asia has the highest prevalence of malnutrition rates in the world in 2007. More than 41 per cent of children were underweight compared to less than 27 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa. More women die in childbirth in South Asia (500 per 100,000 live births) than in any other part of the world except sub-Saharan Africa. This ratio is more than 3 times higher than in East Asia and the Pacific. Nearly half the countries in South Asia and more than 60 per cent of the countries in the Pacific do not have laws on domestic violence. East Asia has made more progress on enacting such legislation.



Photo: Jay Mandal/UNDP India

UNDP Administrator Miss Helen Clark launches the 2010 Regional Human Development Report on *Power, Voice and Rights: A Turning Point for Gender Equality in Asia and the Pacific* on March 8, 2010, International Women's Day, in New Delhi, India. Left to right: Mr. Ajay Chhibber, UNDP Regional Director for Asia-Pacific; Ms. Syeda Hameed, Member of Planning Commission, Government of India; Mr. Patrice Coeur-Bizot, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in India.

With the added challenge of the global economic crisis, key challenges for MDG achievement in the region include:

- the largest mass of income poverty in the world (over 900 million)
- hunger in the midst of high economic growth and rising food availability (524 million of the world's 820 million chronically hungry people live in Asia and the Pacific, 212 million of them in India alone)
- high unemployment and underemployment (working poor) and in the Pacific, high youth unemployment
- inequality diminishing the poverty reduction impact of economic growth
- gender discrimination causing underperformance on various health and educational indicators for women and children (maternal mortality, under-five mortality etc)
- failing basic services delivery mechanisms (e.g. for water and sanitation, basic health etc.) which are central to meeting the MDGs
- poor governance and corruption leading to distorted policy and budget decisions

UNDP is responding to this agenda and in 2009 supported progress towards the MDGs and reduction in poverty through:

- large scale, including national-level, poverty reduction programs reaching tens of millions of people across the region
- Pilot poverty reduction programs, including microfinance, that were endorsed by government for national implementation
- improved access to justice for the poorest and most marginal, including victims of gender based violence
- supporting successful elections in a number of countries, including building the capacity of those electoral management bodies
- improvements in public policy and administration, including decentralisation programs, to improve the access of the poor to services
- support for post-conflict peace processes and major regional IDP crises
- improved national and civil society capacities to tackle the HIV/AIDS epidemic
- responses to natural disasters affecting the region
- helping countries mitigate against and adapt to the effects of climate change
- making a significant contribution to stability and security in Afghanistan

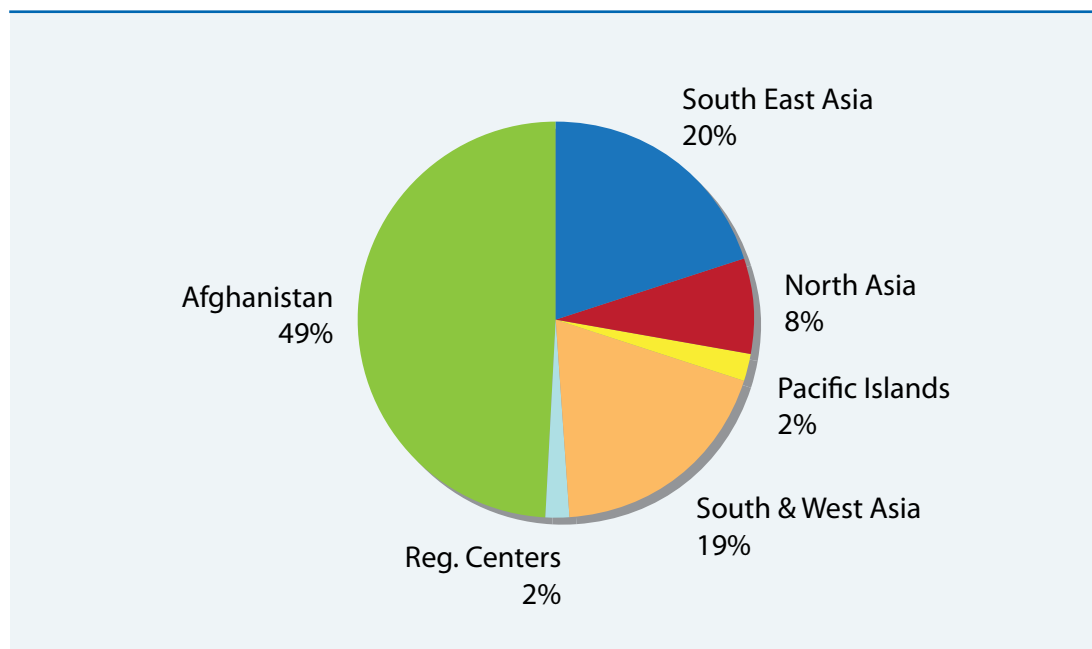
Programme Overview

In 2009, the Asia and Pacific Bureau (RBAP) delivered US\$ 1.1 billion of assistance of which US\$ 160 million was core resources and US\$ 940 million mobilized by country and regional offices. There has been a rapid growth in the size of the program with program resources increasing by over 25 per cent since 2007, driven in large part by the international community's contributions to UNDP-managed programs in Afghanistan.

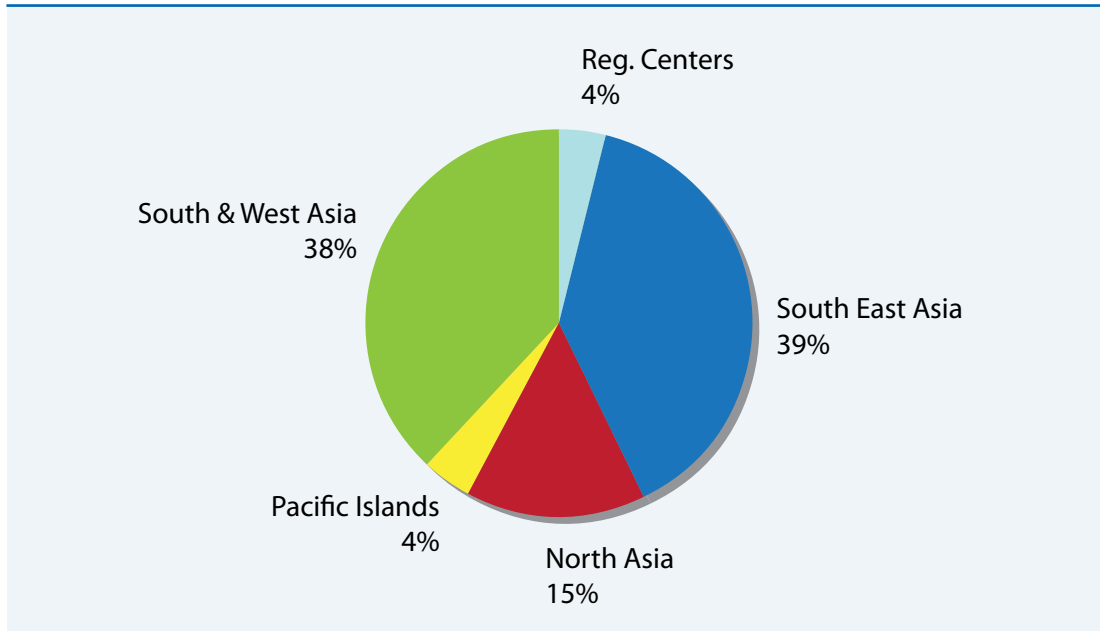
Fifty per cent of UNDP's Asia Pacific program resources (US\$ 544 million) were engaged in Afghanistan. Afghanistan is also UNDP's largest program overall. Other significant programs include China (US\$ 73 million), Bangladesh (US\$ 72 million), Indonesia (US\$ 64 million), Nepal (US\$ 37 million), Myanmar (US\$ 34 million), India (US\$ 34 million) and Pakistan (US\$ 31 million). Following the Executive Board decision in January 2009, UNDP resumed work in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). In 2009, UNDP and the Republic of Korea concluded the final UNDP country program after four decades. UNDP has over the years provided over US\$ 100 million in resources for development to the Republic of Korea and has played an important role in helping Korea to make a successful transition from net recipient of development cooperation to donor and member of OECD/DAC. In future, UNDP and the Republic of Korea will continue their partnership working together for the achievement of the MDGs through a MDG Trust Fund and a new Centre for Global Development Partnerships.

Given the disproportionately large expenditure on Afghanistan, the graphs below present a breakdown of expenditure by sub-region both including and excluding Afghanistan.

Geographical distribution of 2009 Programme Expenditure



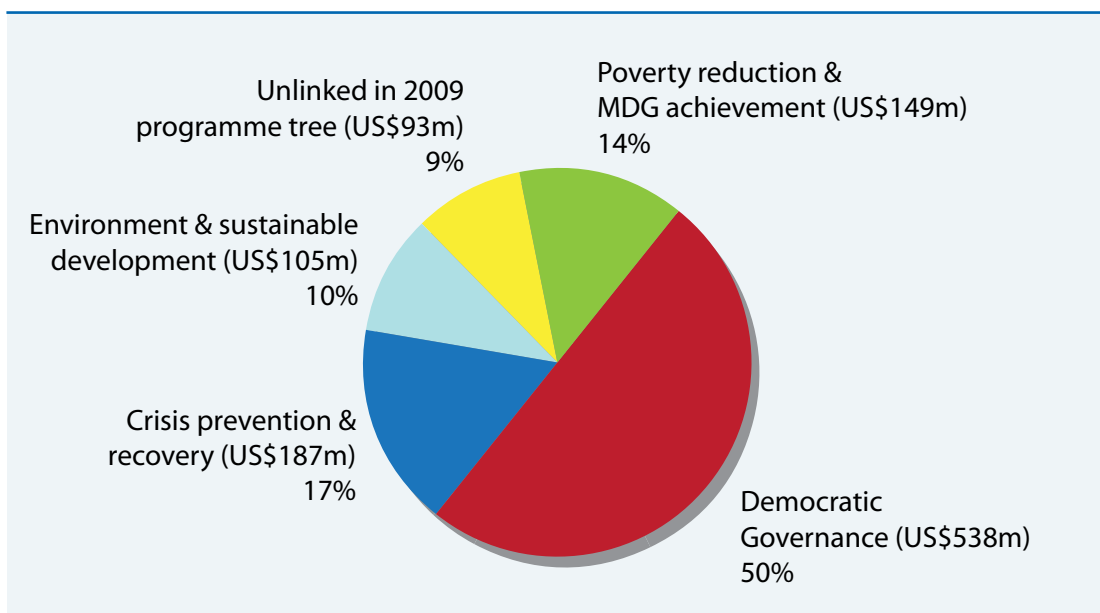
Geographical distribution of 2009 Programme Expenditure (w/o Afghanistan)



UNDP’s core focus areas are poverty reduction and MDG achievement; democratic governance; crisis prevention and recovery; and environment and sustainable development. HIV/AIDS is addressed under poverty reduction and gender is a cross cutting issue as is capacity development. In 2010 UNDP’s management information system will begin to analyse expenditure and outcomes on gender in detail which will improve UNDP’s ability to report on this issue.

For 2009, the breakdown of expenditure across the practice areas is below:

RBAP Expenditure by Practice Area



The disproportionately large expenditure on democratic governance again reflects a number of large projects in Afghanistan in this area (e.g. support to the 2009 elections).

In 2009, RBAP took a number of steps to improve the way it manages and delivers assistance in its partner countries.

Strengthened UNDAFs: An unprecedented number of new UN Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) will be developed in the Asia Pacific region between 2009 and 2013, nineteen of them between 2009 and 2011. UNDAFs provide a single coherent overarching strategy which identifies the ways in which all UN agencies will respond to the respective government's development agenda. This is a significant opportunity and UN country teams have been encouraged to make a step change in the relevance and quality of this next generation of UNDAFs. In particular, UNDAFs should sharpen the focus on supporting the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals as part of national development frameworks and on addressing the central development challenge of climate change. Six Asia Pacific UN country teams commenced work on new 5-year UNDAFs in 2009, and another seven will commence in 2010. In order to support this 'step change', in 2009, the UN Development Group Asia Pacific, chaired by the UNDP Regional Director and comprising other UN agencies working in the region, provided strategic guidance for UN country teams preparing UNDAFs, supported by a regional quality assurance mechanism, again led by UNDP, which provided technical support to country teams in the UNDAF process.

More strategic country programs: In its own country programs, UNDP is moving to improve the quality of assistance through streamlining the number of activities, scaling upwards the size of programs, and positioning assistance to support governments through the provision of appropriate and timely policy advice while recognizing the need to ensure policy assistance is also supported by program interventions. The ability to demonstrate and communicate results is key and a significant investment was made in 2009 to strengthen the capacity in this area within country offices.

Stronger policy input: A High-Level Advisory Panel to guide UNDP's strategy and priorities in the Asia Pacific region has been established and met for the first time in May 2010. A regional policy unit has been established in New York to enable greater responsiveness to addressing emerging regional issues. RBAP has identified three key regional policy priorities - gender, climate change and social protection - which will be the focus of major analytical work and be the subject of succeeding Regional Human Development Reports. *The Regional Human Development Report* on gender was launched in New Delhi in March 2010 and will be supported by operational and advocacy guidance for UNDP country teams to take forward the key findings. Analysing the impacts of the global economic crisis and working with countries to address them is an ongoing task. UNDP's keynote 2009 publication titled *Asia Rebounds but Lasting Recovery Needs a New Paradigm* provides an analytical platform for taking this forward.

Streamlined and strengthened Regional Centre: A major review of the set up and operations of the Regional Service Centres was undertaken in 2009. As a result, RBAP has embarked upon a major restructuring of the Asia Pacific Regional Centre (APRC) which will see co-location of all practice teams in Bangkok, establishment of a South Asia Poverty Unit in Colombo, and maintenance of the Pacific Centre in Fiji. It will lead to stronger practice and cross-practice engagement in support of country programs and greater integration with RBAP HQ. In 2010, the regional program will also be reviewed and aligned more closely to add value to key regional priorities.

New partnerships: A number of new partnerships are evolving which will strengthen UNDP engagement with middle income countries in the region to support greater south-south cooperation.

The following sections detail development outcomes in the Asia Pacific to which UNDP has contributed in 2009. Many of the achievements have only been possible through consistent and sustained assistance from UNDP over several years; are generally only possible if done with government leadership; and are often delivered in partnership with other stakeholders and development partners.

Poverty Reduction and MDG Achievement

The Asia-Pacific region has an enviable record in socio-economic development in the last three decades. There are, however, four significant challenges. The first is the largest mass of income poverty in the world. Over 900 million people – larger than the combined population of North America and Western Europe - live in extreme poverty. The second is the persistence of hunger in the midst of high growth. The third deprivation relates to high unemployment and underemployment. Finally, progress on MDGs is severely hampered by an alarming rise in inequality across the region. Many countries of the region have been striving to overcome this quartet of development challenges. Until recently, the global economic and trade environment was viewed by most countries as supportive of poverty reduction, with outward oriented development policies yielding impressive results.

However, the ongoing global economic crisis following the food and fuel price shocks, and growing climate change threats, has the potential to undo years of progress towards MDG attainment and poverty alleviation in many countries of Asia and the Pacific. There is as yet little empirical data to track the impact of the global economic crisis on MDG progress in the region. However, employment declined sharply in export-oriented sectors, causing negative effects across other sectors. The effects on social sectors and on human development conditions have been marked and it is estimated that in 2009, the crisis trapped up to an additional 17 million people in extreme poverty.

UNDP, as part of its ongoing and long-term partnership with the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), prepared the annual regional MDG report titled 'Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in an Era of Global Uncertainty'. The previous regional MDG report 'Future Within Reach' depicted the pre-crisis confidence that the region was on the right path to achieve the MDGs. The current regional MDG report highlights the post-crisis scenario and the sense of urgency to move forward, and how fiscal stimuli and social protection mechanisms could be put into place to accelerate MDG progress and prevent reversals.



Launch of the Regional MDG Report on *Achieving the Millennium Development Goals in an Era of Global Uncertainty* on 17 February, 2010, in Manila, the Philippines. From left to right: Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, UN ESCAP Executive Secretary; Ms. Ursula Shaefer-Preuss, Vice President of ADB for Knowledge Management and Sustainable Development; Mr. Ajay Chhibber, UNDP Regional Director for Asia-Pacific.

UNDP published a major analytical study in 2009 on the global financial crisis and the Asia Pacific Region titled, *Asia Rebounds but Lasting Recovery Needs a New Paradigm*, based on evidence from 14 country case studies, and which was a significant contribution to understanding of the ongoing and potential impacts of the crisis at the regional and country level. It identified for policy makers specific country measures that can be undertaken to address stability, protect the vulnerable and contribute to a return to sustainable and rapid pro-poor growth.

UNDP organized two regional and six national events to highlight the social impact of the global crisis with senior government officials and other stakeholders. UNDP and other partners supported the Government of Vanuatu to convene a Pacific Conference on the human development dimensions of the global economic crisis in February 2010. Policy makers, civil society organizations and the private sector from 16 Pacific countries along with regional organizations, development partners and UN agencies reviewed how the crisis was affecting Pacific countries at macro and community level and government responses across the region. The Conference raised awareness of the need to protect vulnerable groups and development gains. Additional sub-regional conferences will be supported by UNDP in South Asia and East Asia in 2010.

The various reports and conferences had a significant impact and provided a strong rationale for governments and policy makers to:

- protect social sector resources
- re-evaluate existing social protection programs or initiate new ones, better targeting the vulnerable
- improve the legal and regulatory environment for the private sector
- focus on enhancing resilience, especially in areas such as food security, agricultural production and productivity
- re-orient economies to low carbon development and build resilience for the future
- use information and communications technologies to transform the delivery of social services, improving accessibility and reducing long term costs.

In the face of the economic crisis, UNDP worked with countries to monitor and ameliorate the human development impacts of the crisis, and in particular maintained a strong focus on assisting the vulnerable and those living in extreme poverty. One of the key challenges emerging from the crisis is the relatively weak social protection systems in place in Asia and the Pacific. The economic crisis presents an opportunity to initiate or broaden social protection programs. Efforts to support national initiatives for social protection will be a key focus for UNDP in the region going forward. As an initial step in 2009, UNDP hosted the first Asian Conference on Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) - held in India sharing successes, challenges, policy lessons and practical experience from Latin American countries with Asian countries, and bringing Asian countries with CCT programs together.

The Asia-Pacific Human Development Report is a powerful tool for promoting the idea that development is about people rather than economic growth alone. In 2009 UNDP prepared

the Asia-Pacific Human Development Report 2010 titled, *Power, Voice and Rights: A Turning Point for Gender Equality in Asia and the Pacific*, which already has garnered substantial attention. The report makes clear that achieving gender equality promotes human development, not only for women but for whole societies, and is central to achieving the MDGs.

Poverty Reduction

UNDP support for poverty reduction is catalytic in nature, both piloting programs and innovative approaches that can be scaled up into larger or national programs for transformational change and collaborating on large-scale government initiatives. Several programs were able to demonstrate significant outcomes in this regard. Key poverty reduction interventions target microfinance and cash for work programs, with a strong focus on female headed households.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

In **Bangladesh**, over a two year period (2008-09) 11,640 women from ultra poor female headed households were engaged in the maintenance and post-flood repairs of almost 12,000 km of vital earthen roads. As part of the daily wage they received, nearly 30 per cent was reserved for mandatory saving, serving as a buffer against future shocks. These savings are now available to the women as they graduate from the program to invest in micro enterprises. Ongoing support will be provided to the women by project partner NGOs. An additional 12,804 women joined the program in May 2009. UNDP is the implementing partner for this significant Government social safety net program. A mid-term evaluation of the program has found that it “is one of the best examples of poverty alleviation programs in Bangladesh, with a very relevant strategy to pull deprived women out of poverty”.

India has 320 million people living under the poverty line. Introduced in 2006, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, the world’s largest cash for work program, provides a guarantee of 100 days of employment each year to every rural household which demands it. The scheme, which is still in its early stages, has been successful in some important ways.



Photo: Jay Mandal/ UNDP India 2010

UNDP India has been a key partner of the Government of India in the implementation of the job guarantee programme, which ensures 100 days employment a year to every rural household. UNDP India helps enhance the capabilities of government, locally-elected representatives, civil-society and communities for more accountable governance for all, especially the marginalised.

It now reaches all 615 rural districts, more than 44 million households have been provided with employment, and over 3.5 billion person days of employment have been generated. The enhanced wage earnings have led to a strengthening of the livelihood resource base of the rural poor in India, have reduced distress migration, and have become an extremely important buffer against both the employment shocks generated by the economic crisis (as migrant workers returned home to their villages) and against the drought that has swept across large parts of rural India in the summer of 2009. In 2009 the program had significantly high work participation of marginalised groups including Scheduled Castes (30 per cent), Scheduled Tribes (22 per cent), and women (49 per cent). Thus far, more than 3.7 million works have been undertaken (of which 2.3 million remain in progress), covering water conservation, rural connectivity and land development.

Nonetheless, there have been some constraints to the operation of the scheme and UNDP has partnered with the Government of India since 2006 to help improve the overall governance, implementation and monitoring of the program. UNDP has provided technical support for data analysis, strengthened management information systems, introduced innovations such as functional literacy classes for workers (5000 workers), financial literacy (3000 workers) and skill building and livelihood training (5000 workers), developed information kiosks and community radio programs to enhance the legal awareness of the rural poor to access the scheme; and supported improved access to wage payments.

In **Nepal**, a major UNDP microfinance program helped create over 8000 new entrepreneurs (of which 68 per cent are women) and over 8000 new jobs. In 2009, the Government adopted UNDP's pilot micro enterprise development program as a national program, allocating additional funds and expanding to 18 districts.

UNDP's Human Development Initiative (HDI) in **Myanmar** has been operating since 1994, with the current phase commencing in 2003, providing humanitarian support directly to the rural poor through community based organizations targeting food security, the environment, primary health care, HIV/AIDS, training and education. The Human Development Initiative



Photo: UNDP Myanmar

Villagers from Satt Kyun Village in Bogalay Township at a microfinance centre meeting. UNDP's microfinance activities were restarted to address the credit need of the cyclone Nargis survivors.

provided assistance to almost 8,000 villages in 2009, covering almost 20 per cent of the townships across Myanmar, reaching more than three million people - about 6 per cent of the population. A wealth-ranking exercise in December 2009 indicated that 12 per cent of the HDI's beneficiary population - made up of the poorest people in the communities - moved up to a higher wealth category. In 2009, the microfinance program expanded its coverage to over 100,000 new clients, with clients now totaling almost half a million borrowers - 97 per cent of them women. Over half a million loans amounting to around US\$ 47 million were disbursed in 2009 with a repayment rate of almost 100 per cent. A recent impact study confirmed that clients have increased their productive assets; diversified from agriculture to small and medium business which have generated more employment;

are more food secure by US\$ 100; are able to spend almost 20 per cent more on education and healthcare; have better coping capacity in illness, childbirth, and deaths; have reduced borrowing from informal sources by 84 per cent; have higher bargaining power on the purchase and sales of products; and women clients have more control over assets and were playing a greater role in household and community decisions.

Long standing UNDP pilot support to assist poor farmers in **China** has delivered real increases in farmer income and been elevated into a national program. In 2009, UNDP's support to profit-sharing arrangements that link farmers and scientists to address farm level problems, the Technology Task Force (TTF) project, was formally made a national program by the Vice Premier responsible for Poverty Reduction. By 2009, through a network of 70,000 "scientist practitioners" some 1 million farmers benefited, with a resultant increase in annual incomes ranging from 9-26 per cent. The scheme, currently in 1,800 of China's 2,872 counties, will be expanded to 80 per cent of counties within 5 years, with the aim of providing TTF practitioners to all villages within 10 to 15 years.

In **Pakistan**, UNDP's program to generate employment and increase income for garment workers particularly women has to date created over 6000 jobs for women who receive US\$ 65 per month. The program provides skills development for workers, enabling the garment industry to adapt in a challenging global economy. The evaluation of the program in 2008 found that the intervention is in the right direction towards increased employment and income generation opportunities for the poor and reducing their vulnerability to economic and other shocks.

In **Nepal**, UNDP programs ensured nearly 7000 households were linked to electricity created by 27 new mini-hydros and community infrastructure projects in conflict-affected districts benefitted 163,000 households.

UNDP delivered training in financial literacy to over 1000 people in **Vanuatu and Nauru** in 2009, 60 percent of whom were women, which resulted in an increase in savings accounts opened and in actual savings of 2.3 million vatu. Cumulatively, nearly 44,000 mainly rural people in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Kiribati have received financial literacy training with training now institutionalised in 36 national organizations.

In **Bangladesh**, UNDP has a strong focus on urban poverty reduction in 23 cities which saw over 900,000 poor, particularly women and children, benefit from improved physical infrastructure, security of tenure, apprenticeships and vocational training, education grants to boys and girls and health and nutrition initiatives.

A further 7 million square kilometers of land was cleared of landmines in **Cambodia**, expanding economic opportunities by increasing the availability of land for agriculture.

Supporting pro-poor policies

UNDP continued its support to countries to strengthen MDG analysis across the region and implement pro-poor policies. In the face of the economic crisis and constraints on government revenues, countries in the region did well to protect spending on social sectors critical to achieving the MDGs. A particular focus for UNDP support in a number of countries was on

building the capacity of non-state actors to engage more effectively in national approaches to poverty reduction.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

In **China**, in collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, UNDP's policy support contributed to a package of reforms that included the cancellation of agricultural taxes, strengthening budget preparation and monitoring, and the reassigning of revenue power and expenditure responsibilities among central and sub-national authorities. The reforms have respectively reduced the burden on farmers, improved budget accountability and transparency and improved capacity for the provision of services at local levels of government. Capacity building activities associated with UNDP's support have exposed local fiscal and tax administration officials to greater interaction with central government decision makers and international practices.

In 2009, the Chinese Government announced plans to allow NGOs to participate in service delivery at the community level. Civil society in China is a steadily growing force with between 200-500,000 NGOs and with local foundations able to mobilize as much as US\$ 35 billion internally. UNDP was able to assist the Ministry of Civil Affairs to subsequently revise the requirements for NGO registration: NGOs can now register directly with central government without first affiliating with a supervising state organization. Preferential policies and support mechanisms for CSOs have also been introduced, including tax relief for contributions to CSOs and increased government contracting of CSOs. In 2009, these reforms led to 10,000 new NGOs being established and registered. 1600 NGOs registered on the NGO website established by the Ministry of Civil Affairs, facilitating greater communication and dialogue.

In **Pakistan**, poverty monitoring systems were established and strengthened at federal and provincial levels and assisted the government to prioritise pro-poor spending in a fiscally tight environment

In **Samoa, Tuvalu, Fiji and Kiribati**, UNDP supported governments to assess the real time impact of the global economic crisis, identify those bearing the brunt and provided these governments with a range of options to mitigate impact and build resilience, with a focus on protecting the most vulnerable.

In Aceh **Indonesia**, UNDP's governance transformation program supported a major reform of the provincial budget management system which saw budget execution, which only reached 40 per cent of expected total expenditure in 2008, reached almost 100 per cent in 2009, resulting in improved delivery of services to the population.

The approval of the Decree on Associations in **Lao PDR** established the first legal framework for civil society organizations in the country and paved the way for promoting their active participation in the delivery of services crucial for achieving the MDGs. UNDP supported the drafting process and the subsequent implementation of the registration process. UNDP also supported the formulation of the 7th National Social and Economic Development Plan with

policy research and studies such as a detailed assessment of the investment and recurrent expenditures required to reach the MDGs by 2015 covering seven key sectors.

The capacity of the **Iranian** Customs Administration has been improved with the installation of ASYCUDA, an efficient, modern, and transparent customs data processing system supported by UNDP. Iran's subsequent ability to provide reliable data will assist with its bid to join the World Trade Organisation and will support policy makers and trade negotiators.

The UNDP developed national goal-based costing, planning and financing strategies for the MDGs has now been rolled out in 10 countries

In **Mongolia**, UNDP-supported work on MDG based budgeting and poverty mapping has strengthened the government's capacity for evidence based planning, decision making and strengthened pro-poor policies to address social vulnerabilities.

In **Bangladesh**, UNDP provided policy support for the first major MDG needs and costing assessment which provided a detailed account of what is required to achieve the MDGs and is consequently feeding through into budget allocations.

UNDP supported the Government of **Maldives** in the preparation of its National Framework for Development 2009-2013.

In April 2009, the Prime Minister of **Timor Leste** launched the national MDG report, analyzing the status of the MDGs and providing an important policy tool for national policy makers. An MDG Secretariat was established in the Ministry of Finance. UNDP has provided support for this MDG focus.



Photo: Isabelle Lesser / UNDP Lao PDR

A man waters his vegetable grown on land which had been cleared of landmines in Battambang province, Lao PDR.

HIV/AIDS

The Asia Pacific region has the second largest number of people living with HIV/AIDS in the world with steadily rising infections among women, particularly monogamous and married, and men having sex with men. While the region is an early achiever for stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS, there is no cause for complacency given high vulnerabilities and new emerging epidemics. About 50 million women in the region are at risk of infection from their partners and spouses and the infection rates among men who have sex with men has reached as high as 30 per cent in urban areas (Bangkok). Other challenges related to the epidemic include severe socio-economic impact on people living with HIV and their households; food insecurity; punitive laws and human rights violations; stigma and discrimination; and large scale mobility of people within and across national borders. UNDP has worked with countries to strengthen capacity at national and sub-national levels, as well as at the regional level, to strengthen multisectoral responses to HIV/AIDS (consistent with the division of labour with UNAIDS). UNDP plays an important role in supporting Global Fund programs in a number of countries. It has also supported the development of national frameworks for HIV/AIDS response which address discrimination and gender equality. The region is home to a large number of women migrants who often move under unsafe conditions which increase their risk of HIV prevention and is a focus for UNDP's regional engagement.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

UNDP has created a Joint UN Initiative on Mobility and HIV/AIDS in **South East Asia** (JUNIMA) that brings together Governments, leading CSOs and the UN family to promote universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support for mobile and migrant populations in Southeast Asia and Southern China. This initiative has been acknowledged as good practice in a number of forums including the WHO-IOM meeting on migration and health and the UNAIDS Program Coordination Board.

In the **Philippines**, the HIV/AIDS epidemic is moving from 'low and slow' to 'hidden and growing' due to rapidly increasing infections amongst migrants and men who have sex with men. UNDP provided capacity building assistance to strengthen the leadership and institutional capacities of national, regional, and local partners through increased knowledge, skills, and understanding of HIV and its emerging situation. Policy support was provided for developing effective strategies for a sustained response to HIV/AIDS and strategic information to inform the formulation of the 5th AIDS Medium Term Plan.

In **Indonesia**, UNDP supported the National AIDS Commission (NAC) to provide training to 33 provincial and 150 district/city AIDS commissions in order to strengthen their role as response coordinators at sub-national levels. UNDP also supported the institutional strengthening of NAC, evidenced in a successful Global Fund Round 8 proposal which will provide US\$ 120 million over 5 years to support an effective and sustainable HIV/AIDS response. UNDP also supported the NAC at the national, provincial and district levels to strengthen the decentralized responses to HIV in three provinces.

A multi country study on the time use pattern of women in the context of HIV was completed in the **Pacific region**. It resulted in a set of substantial policy recommendations that were adopted for implementation of gender responsive HIV programs by Ministers of Health for Pacific Island Countries. A joint UNDP and UNAIDS publication on *Enabling Effective Responses to HIV in Pacific Island Countries* provided drafting instructions for human rights-based legislative reform.

In the **Maldives**, UNDP contributed to enhanced HIV prevention knowledge and services to the target groups through the launch of the first mass media campaign on HIV. Drawing on lessons learned in other countries, facilitated by UNDP, the Ministry of Islamic Affairs addressed HIV issues for the first time during Friday prayers.

In **India**, UNDP supported the first study on levels of HIV related stigma to inform policies and programs. UNDP also supported the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) to develop a gender and HIV policy. UNDP is supporting NACO to address gender equality in the roll out of the policy on Greater Involvement of People Living with HIV.

UNDP in partnership with UNAIDS and ADB developed a model regional tool to help countries estimate short, medium and long-term resources needed for comprehensive HIV responses has significantly broadened the approach of costing beyond the health sector only. It has been used in **Bangladesh, Bhutan, Mongolia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, and Sri Lanka**.

UNDP supported large-scale studies to assess the socio-economic impact of HIV on people living with HIV and their households in China (in five provinces), **Indonesia** (seven provinces) and **Cambodia** (nationwide). Aimed at strengthening the evidence base for impact migration, the results from the studies in China and Indonesia have been accepted by the International AIDS Congress 2010 for its official program.



Photo: UNDP India 2008

UNDP India works towards halting the spread of HIV/ AIDS and putting it at the centre of national development strategies, and protecting the rights of those affected. Various workshops and seminars were conducted across the country generating awareness.

Democratic Governance

Democratic governance is an important end in itself as well as contributing to poverty reduction and supporting the achievement of other MDGs. Consequently, support to strengthening democratic governance was the largest area of program assistance in the Asia Pacific (50 percent).

UNDP organised a major regional conference, held in Bhutan in October, on *Deepening and Sustaining Democracy in Asia*, bringing together 150 participants from 12 countries. The Conference considered issues such as political freedom, participation beyond elections, social inclusion, women's political empowerment and access to justice.

The first ever Asia regional stakeholder consultations on cross border governance issues (trade, human trafficking, migration, infectious diseases surveillance, and water management) was convened by UNDP in May 2009. This brought together UN agencies, government, academe and civil society representatives who collectively identified key challenges, trends and recommendations. Solutions to transborder governance challenges underlined the critical need for quality data, accurate information and systematic codification and sharing of knowledge - whether it be in the timely response and rescue of trafficked victims, provision of social safety nets to returning migrants, or schedule for releasing water from dams and early warning to downstream communities.

Electoral support and parliamentary strengthening

A key issue across the region is elections and in 2009 UNDP helped consolidate democratic processes in a number of countries, building on longstanding programs of electoral capacity development in the countries concerned. UNDP also continued its work assisting parliaments

As part of Afghanistan Sub-national Governance Programme Civil Servants preparing their annual quarter and monthly plans in Herat.



around the region, focusing on both supporting the induction of new parliamentarians and training and strengthening parliamentary staff and systems. Women are playing a growing role in building democracy, especially at the grass roots, but their influence over decision making at the sub-national and national levels remains severely limited. The number of women in parliaments in the Asia Pacific averages 18 per cent in East Asia and 20 per cent in South Asia in 2008. A number of elections in the region in 2009 saw women make important gains in representation.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

Indonesia conducted successful elections in 2009, with a voter turn-out of 72.56 per cent for the Presidential elections and 70.96 per cent for legislative elections. The elections resulted in an increase in women's representation in the national parliament from 12 to 18 per cent. UNDP support focused on the voter education campaign which reached 34 million TV viewers, 6 million radio listeners and 3.6 million people accessing the print media. Civil society organizations delivered voter education messages to 2 million women, first time voters and marginal groups and communities in remote areas.

Building on successful 2008 national elections, the **Bangladesh** Electoral Commission (BEC) managed successful Upazila elections, the first held for 18 years, with a voter turn out of 70 per cent. With UNDP support, the electoral roll was updated with 4.6 million additional persons, and practical efforts were made to ensure women and other marginalized groups became registered voters. Through voter ID cards, many people were provided for the first time with a formal identity document. Eight national electoral acts were revised in the lead-up to the elections, continuing the reform program initiated in 2007, enabling more effective electoral management. Public confidence in the BEC is high with a reputation for independence and transparency. UNDP facilitated visits to the BEC by officials from Republic of Korea, Nepal and Bhutan to learn from Bangladesh's experiences.



The continuous updating of Bangladesh's state-of-the-art voter list is bringing democratic reform closer to the people, and securing past wins for the future.

Village elections were also held in **Timor Leste**, supported by civic and voter education programs resulting in a voter turn-out of 68 per cent of the population and with women winning 27 per cent of 24,000 village level elected positions. Reflecting successful capacity building efforts, UNDP provided scaled down assistance in 2009, focused on policy and strategic advice compared to 2007 when its support also encompassed major logistical assistance.

The **Timor Leste** Parliament passed a resolution on Gender Responsive Budgeting and the Government drafted a Gender Equality Law and issued a Gender and Culture Statement that accompanied the 2010 National Budget Statement. These high level policy successes were led by the Women's Parliamentary caucus which is supported by UNDP and UNIFEM.

Bangladesh's Parliament was supported by UNDP with an induction and training program for newly elected Parliamentarians.

In **Bhutan**, the transition to democracy was supported by UNDP through training for MPs and secretariat staff on streamlining legislative processes, strengthening the work of parliamentary committees and engaging with the media.

In **Pakistan**, UNDP assisted with the formation of the Women's Parliamentary Caucus, launched under the leadership of the Speaker of the National Assembly, and providing a forum for inter-party and bicameral policy development for gender equality and advocacy. Some 10,000 potential women leaders at the village level were trained in public policy discourse to participate in and potentially contest the 2010 local government elections.

In **Fiji** UNDP finalized the national civic education curriculum in consultation with civil society partners, followed by a training of trainers. This work has enabled the delivery of civic education to 13 per cent of the adult population in Fiji. In addition, national authorities were able to integrate civic education into the school curriculum.

Access to Justice

Particularly for countries emerging from conflict and Least Developed Countries, UNDP has helped improve access to justice in the region, including extending the reach of justice services in rural areas, addressing access to services for victims of gender based violence and supporting government initiatives to recognize traditional justice mechanisms. Promoting a human rights based approach to access to justice in country programs is UNDP's value-added contribution, which balances demands for capacity development of justice institutions with empowerment of the poor. More than a dozen rights-based access to justice country initiatives are in place in the region, including in Indonesia, Cambodia, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Lao PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Timor Leste and Vietnam.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

Timor Leste marked the first entry of national court officers into its legal system in 2009, a significant step in improving access to justice. The first 37 Timorese judges, prosecutors

and defenders graduated from the UNDP supported Legal Training Center, completing a rigorous two and a half year training program. One quarter of officers trained were women. Moreover, the Legal Training Centre has developed into a professional training centre that can cater to the capacity development needs of all the actors in the justice system. Access to justice outside the capital was improved through the establishment of support services for 3 regional courts. UNDP supported the Ministry of Justice to complete drafting a customary law that will give state recognition to traditional justice mechanisms accessible to rural communities that make up 80 per cent of the population.

The first group of judges, prosecutors and public defenders graduated from the UNDP-supported Legal Training Center in June 2009. In 2010, the LTC will be the most comprehensive legal training institution in Timor-Leste. It will enhance capacities and facilitate certifications for a wide array of legal service practitioners including judges, prosecutors, public defenders, private lawyers, clerks, notaries, legal translators, and drafters.



Photo: Thaiza Castilho



Photo: Shaila Noronha

The fusion of the old and the new judicial systems has enabled access to justice for thousands in the country. In this picture, a magistrate who graduated from the Legal Training Centre consults with a traditional lianai (judge).

UNDP has been a long-standing partner in **Bangladesh's** Police Reform Program. The 2009 police perception survey found that community levels of trust in the police had improved and there was a widespread perception by the people of Bangladesh that police performance has improved over the last two years. In addition to reforms on community policing, investments in evidence-based investigations and legal services, in 2009, the program piloted the first Victim Support centre, a partnership between the police and national NGOs that provides medical and legal support, psychological counseling and referrals to shelters for women. This model will be replicated in other parts of the country. Other achievements to date include:

- Over 20,000 community police organizations dedicated to building a closer relationship with local people;
- Bangladesh Police Women's network established;
- Adoption of gender guidelines by the police;
- 3,000 police officers trained in investigative techniques, leadership and management skills.
- Special national unit dedicated to combating human trafficking established.

Police reform in Bangladesh is supported by the increased presence and power of female police officers, making Bangladesh Police more representative of the community they serve.



In **China**, UNDP supports the Beijing Zhizheng Migrant Workers Legal Aid Centre, and 17 offices across the nation, with 30 full-time lawyers and 8000 volunteer lawyers. It is estimated that over 100,000 migrant workers received legal assistance during 2009, and there are plans to extend the program to help farmers in rural areas protect their rights and entitlements to land.



A migrant worker discussing his claim with an On Duty attorney from the Migrant Workers Legal Aid Centre.

In **Indonesia**, protection of people's rights was strengthened through the National Strategy on Access to Justice, which makes particular mention of vulnerable groups. Its development was supported by UNDP. In four post-crisis provinces, UNDP supported civil society organizations to carry out large scale legal awareness raising campaigns which were supported by the establishment of 100 legal service posts with 1900 trained paralegals who served disadvantaged groups, particularly women. This approach saw a 20 per cent increase in people who could demonstrate knowledge of their rights and a 50 per cent increase in people accessing legal services. Revitalisation of integrated government service centres for women and children in nine regions contributed to a 20 per cent increase in women's access to the formal justice system.

In **Mongolia**, UNDP supported the establishment of Legal Aid Centres in all Aimags and districts in Ulan Bataar which has improved access to justice. It also supported the establishment of one stop service centres for victims of gender based violence at 3 hospitals in the capital.

In **Laos**, the development of a revised Legal Sector Master Plan was supported by UNDP and was an important step towards enhancing access to justice. It will be supported by a national implementation mechanism for which UNDP is providing capacity building assistance. An access to justice survey was launched as well as a customary law survey in order to collect data and empirical evidence to inform further reform in the legal system.

Outreach to victims of gender based violence was a significant focus of UNDP in **Nepal** through the creation of 70 paralegal committees, 20 community mediation centres and 4 legal desks, which provided advice for the first time to over 360 survivors of gender based violence. Some 20 women lawyers were also trained on gender based violence, along with 310 judges.

Strengthening the Public sector

The role of governments in delivering services to their people is fundamental to stability and poverty reduction. UNDP has a significant focus supporting governments across the region with their public sector reform programs. This area, with its focus on capacity development and systems strengthening is a challenging area in which to demonstrate results in the short term. Digital governance is emerging as a key reform in many countries and offers the potential to transform the way governments interact with citizens. UNDP is also supporting efforts to tackle corruption in several countries.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

In **Bangladesh** a new draft civil service act and reform roadmap were developed, assisted through UNDP's support for public administration reform. With UNDP support, the Government introduced a "Digital Bangladesh" strategy to reduce poverty, increase access to information and foster a greater service orientation. Some 51 e-governance 'quick win' pilots focused on service delivery across the country were launched, particularly targeting underserved communities. Bangladesh passed legislation for a National Human Rights Institution after many years of preparation and support from UNDP.

In **Bhutan**, UNDP supported the 2009 Local Governments Act and the Annual capital grants guidelines which clarified the roles and responsibilities between the central agencies and local governments, better enabling the implementation of decentralization and supporting institutional capacity building for improved service delivery. In a milestone development, all 205 local administrative units across the country received annual grants in 2009. UNDP helped establish a new national e-services platform which was piloted in the provision of forestry services. The platform greatly reduced the time needed to process logging permits and benefitted remote communities. The e-governance platform is expected to be expanded to 33 other government services. UNDP supported the development and launch of Bhutan's first National Anti Corruption Strategy in 2009 which provides a comprehensive framework for defining, preventing and enforcing anti-corruption.

Implementation of the **Maldives** new Civil Service Act was supported by UNDP through a comprehensive civil service job evaluation and the development of a Personnel Management Information System. The reform of the civil service was also supported by a wide ranging media campaign to create awareness amongst civil servants and the public and enhance transparency.

Lao PDR's comprehensive Governance and Public Administration Reform program (GPAR), which is supported by UNDP, made considerable progress in 2009. The nationwide district restructuring exercise was implemented. Fiscal decentralization to accelerate investments that expand availability of services was successfully piloted through implementation of the District Development Fund (DDF) modality. It had a significant impact on 20 district authorities' in 5 provinces addressing decentralized planning, budgeting, prioritizing, fund management, procuring, tendering, and reporting capabilities, thereby improving the effectiveness, accountability and efficiency of public administration. Expansion of One-Door-Service Centers (ODSCs) continued and seven ODSCs are now operational. The Government Financial Information System was rolled out at provincial and district level in Luang Prabang province. At the national level, the first Citizen Report Card Survey on public service delivery was completed and released in 2009 and provided a platform to develop a nationwide system for users of services to provide direct feedback on the quality of basic services. A gender in governance study has been completed providing a set of actionable recommendations to improve gender equity in the civil service. The Government's Personnel Information Management System (PIMS) to provide a unified human resource management platform process has progressed to an advanced stage. The national ICT Policy was approved and over a 100 key offices are now linked on the government's intranet. Laos ratified the UN Convention on Corruption (UNCAC) re-affirming its commitment to fight corruption. UNDP is providing assistance to now formulate a national anti-corruption strategy and action plan.

With UNDP's technical support to the Ministry of Planning (Bappenas) in **Indonesia**, the Government launched its aid policy framework the *Jakarta Commitments – Aid for Development Effectiveness* in January 2009 aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of international aid and increasing transparency and accountability in the use of ODA to the Indonesia people. Over twenty donors signed up to the Jakarta Commitments and an increase of over US\$ 200 million dollars has already been pledged as budget support from the international community.



Indonesian high officials with donor community during the launch of the Jakarta Commitments – Aid for Development Effectiveness, Indonesia's Roadmap to 2014.

With UNDP's technical support to **Thailand's** International Development Cooperation Agency (TICA), a thorough review of Thai Official Development Assistance (ODA) helped produce Thailand's first comprehensive ODA Report (2007-2008), established a database of Thai ODA to track the provision of ODA and provided training to Thai officials on tracking and updating relevant data. The database enabled Thailand to better plan and coordinate the assistance it provides to other countries and improve its capacity to report on its ODA to the Thai people and the international community.

In **Solomon Islands**, UNDP supported provincial governments to improve their financial management systems, with the result that for the first time in many years they have been able to provide adequate data for an effective audit process.

In **Vietnam**, participatory and pro-poor planning and budgeting processes have been piloted and institutionalised in six provinces with UNDP support. UNDP also supported a series of policy research papers on public administration which helped generate policy debates and discussions amongst stakeholders.

India institutionalised gender budgeting, informed by a small pilot on gender budgeting implemented by UNDP.

Cambodia has developed a 10 year national program for sub-national democratic development. Following the adoption of this Organic Law, UNDP is providing broad capacity development support, which in 2009 saw all newly elected district and provincial councilors and their staff at provincial and district level trained in their new roles and responsibilities. UNDP supported national systems and structures to deliver US\$ 82 million in investments to reduce poverty, improve health and education and deliver extension services.

Papua New Guinea launched its national Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) in December 2009, which UNDP supported through the provision of technical assistance.

UNDP's partnership with the **Sri Lankan** Commission to investigate allegations of bribery and corruption (CIABOC) supported a major corruption awareness campaign which saw the number of complaints received increase by 17 per cent compared to 2008. The Commission received a 24 per cent increase in its budget compared to 2008.

Strengthening civic participation and public dialogue

Parallel to work on strengthening the public sector UNDP is working to strengthen civic engagement, access to information and ensuring the voices of marginalized groups are heard. In 2009, UNDP embarked on a range of initiatives that aim to strengthen participation and voices of civil society groups, including those of indigenous people, through assessments, policy dialogues and improved communication mechanisms.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

In **Lao PDR**, UNDP piloted a community radio initiative which resulted in significant health and education improvements and provided lessons for community radio replication in the 47 poorest districts.

In **Nepal**, UNDP has trained indigenous people's organizations to assess information and communication needs and engage with policy makers, resulting in an action plan for an improved media sector with more inclusion of marginalized voices.

In **Cambodia**, through 'Equity Weekly' – a current affairs TV program implemented jointly with the Ministry of Information – UNDP has brought citizens voices to the public domain to raise issues important to civil society with public officials, members of parliament and the senate, experts and other citizens.

In **Timor Leste**, UNDP is supporting the establishment of Government Information Houses at district level to provide a bridge between the supply and demand for government services.



Khoun Radio opening,
Lao PDR.

Afghanistan:

Contributing to Human Security and Development

Afghanistan is UNDP's largest program, managing expenditure of over half a billion in 2009. UNDP has been centrally involved in the international community's response to Afghanistan over last 8 years and is a strong partner of the Afghan Government. The 2009 Assessment of Development Results undertaken for the Afghanistan program (2002-2008) found that UNDP has contributed to most of the major achievements of the peace process supported by the international community since 2002 including:

- preparing and passing a new constitution;
- the holding of presidential, parliamentary and provincial elections and the establishment of an Independent Electoral Commission;
- establishing key institutions with the newly formed upper and lower houses of parliament;
- demobilizing and disarming militias and illegally armed groups;
- strengthening capacity at the centre of government and creating capacity in state institutions at central, provincial and district levels;
- reforming the civil service, including the introduction of merit-based appointment and promotions and a salary structure with performance incentives and pay increases for civil servants with the head of the Independent Administrative Reform and Civil Service Commission (IARCSC) noting that UNDP interventions were 'by far more effective than any other program for capacity building to

date'. A key aspect of this success was UNDP's partnership with the Government of India to provide practitioner public servants as coaches and advisers to develop the capacity of Afghani civil servants;

- the functioning of the Afghan police force by managing the payment of salaries and developing national capacity to make payments over time;
- developing the capacity of the Ministry of Finance to prepare the national budget and track most foreign funding and manage expenditures under the national budget;
- fostering transparency and accountability through support to the justice sector;
- strengthening the role of women in a wide range of areas.

UNDP's engagement in Afghanistan in 2009 focused on areas essential for stability and security in a highly complex and insecure environment. Fundamental support to the rule of law continued as a high priority. Police across the country were paid in a regular and timely manner, with 99.7 percent of personnel now covered under the UNDP-developed electronic payroll system. An additional 212 women were recruited into the police force, bringing the total number of female police officers to 699. To date, 700 illegal armed groups have been disbanded and close to 50,000 illegal weapons collected. A key event in 2009 was the holding of Presidential and Provincial Council elections, for the first time managed by the Independent Election Com-

mission of Afghanistan, the result of assistance by UNDP over several years to build its capacity. While there were some issues with the electoral process, including allegations of fraud which were investigated, UNDP's support for the elections was an important and necessary contribution.

The need to ensure better delivery of services is fundamental for stability and to demonstrate a peace dividend to the people of Afghanistan. As part of this effort, Afghanistan's first sub-national governance policy has been formulated with UNDP support. This policy, based on the collaborative work of 23 government institutions, will be the engine of Afghanistan's sub-national Public Administrative Reform process. UNDP also continued major efforts to build the capacity of the civil service, delivering leadership training for 800 senior officials and financial, office, procurement and project management skills to 650 mid-to senior level officials. Ongoing mentoring support continued to be provided by Indian civil servants. Work also continued to implement over 1,100 small infrastructure projects prioritized by the local communities. These helped fill immediate gaps in physical infrastructure to promote agricultural productivity and rural livelihoods. Between 2006 and 2009, 185 work days were generated for each of the 184,226 laborers who benefited under this initiative.

As UNDP moves forward in Afghanistan there is a need to maintain a tight strategic focus to the program (in line with the new Board approved Country Programme Document 2010-2013), look comprehensively at peace-building and conflict analysis to inform programs, focus on secure provinces with a view to demonstrating a development dividend, and coordinate closely with other key development partners. The overall security environment may impact on UNDP's ability to undertake development programs and contribute to outcomes and will need to be monitored closely.



As part of Afghanistan New Beginning Programme weapons collection ceremony being held in Bamyán in presence of Provincial Governor Habiba Sorabi



As part of National Area Based Development Programme Arghandab Bridge under construction in Kandahar



Training for Afghan Policewomen

Crisis Prevention and Recovery

The Asia Pacific's vulnerability to natural disasters and armed conflicts is on a rapid up-swing, with more than 50 major disasters affecting millions of people since the Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004, with consequent impacts on vulnerability, stability and development. 2009 proved no exception and UNDP provided coordination leadership and effective responses to a significant number of crises, while also working with countries to prevent both conflict and disasters. At the same time important lessons and the results of longer term efforts were captured.

Countries in and recovering from conflict

Fifteen countries in the region are experiencing or recovering from internal or external conflicts. UNDP provided effective assistance to several major Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) crises that confronted the region in 2009 and continued to support progress in relation to longer term peace and stability processes in a number of other countries.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

In May 2009, the cessation of a three decades long civil war in **Sri Lanka** also brought with it the internal displacement of 300,000 people, the need for re-integration of ex-combatants and the need to address recovery in the conflict-affected north. By the end of 2009, just over half of the internally displaced people (IDPs) had been able to return to their district of origin. UNDP worked with the government to provide legal identification documentation to over 29,000 people who had lost their documents to facilitate freedom of movement and access to basic services. UNDP scaled up mine action activities – including human resources support to the Government on the

UNDP-supported project improves high-land crops cultivation aimed at maximizing productivity of the alternative livelihoods sector in resettlements in Ampara District in Sri Lanka. Cement mortar is used for building the walls of an agro well.



Photo: Wuriya Karadaghy/UNDP Sri Lanka

certification of cleared land – as large tracts of land were released for resettlement, facilitating the return of nearly 62,000 families. Some 2000 crisis affected people from 56 villages received assistance for livelihood activities and start up grants. A national plan for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants has been developed and was with the Sri Lankan Cabinet by the end of the year. UNDP also led the development of an early Recovery Plan for Eastern Province, a site of major conflict in earlier years, particularly supporting local government capacity, a critical stepping stone to a lasting resolution to the conflict.

In **Nepal**, a key benchmark that has been worked on over two years, was the signing in December 2009 of an Action Plan by the relevant parties, enabling the discharge and rehabilitation of 4008 disqualified Maoist army personnel. UNDP also assisted the Constituent Assembly in the drafting of a new Constitution including through supporting a wide ranging consultation process involving civil society outreach to 125,000 people through democratic dialogues across the country, garnering 2000 submissions. A Centre for Constitutional Dialogue has provided an additional venue for over 25,000 people to be informed of the process. UNDP supported the formation of a Constitutional Assembly Women Caucus which has become a cross-party platform to promote women's rights in the constitution building process.



Photo: Chandra Shekhar Karki / UNMIN

UNDP supported the discharge of the minors in the Maoist army in Sindhuli cantonment: verification taking place.

In **Timor Leste**, more than 70,000 people were successfully returned and reintegrated into their communities and all 65 camps were closed. UNDP contributed to this national effort in promoting the reintegration of IDPs by supporting the Government to organize 688 mediations and 38 community dialogues to ensure sustainable reintegration. As part of this process, UNDP supported 10 NGOs to facilitate the return of IDPs in 9 districts.

Pakistan's crisis in the North West Frontier Province and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (NWFP/FATA), triggered by the intensification of an extremist insurgency in the north-west and an extensive military operation in response to it, saw the internal displacement of over 2 million Pakistanis and significant damage to private and public property and people's livelihoods. UNDP focused strongly on early recovery measures by supporting the Provincial Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Authority (PaRRSA) at the provincial and district level to strengthen its coordination and assessment functions and to assist the departments in preparing the foundations for recovery. UNDP also worked closely with the government and other UN agencies on the Conflict Early Recovery Initial Needs Assessment and provided cash grants and toolkits to 71,000 IDPs and training and cash for work for another 20,000. A longer term program focused on peace and development has commenced.

In Mae Hong Son, the poorest province in **Thailand**, UNDP worked with the provincial government to open up livelihood opportunities for local communities and to promote social harmony between displaced populations from neighboring countries and host communities. UNDP brought together communities and government agencies from the land and forestry sectors to clarify land and forest boundaries; discuss land use and land management issues and identify future options and impact on the community's natural resources. These dialogues and community level negotiations have led to improved understanding of natural resource boundaries, land use and awareness and have helped reduce conflicts.



Health services like this one in the Chittagong Hill Tracts are helping people to meet their immediate development needs, and are helping them to build better foundations for peaceful future.

In **Bangladesh**, UNDP has a special focus on the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) following the signing of the 1997 Peace Accord after 25 years of protracted conflict. UNDP is working with local institutions and communities to improve peace building and development outcomes. In 2009, 35 satellite health clinics were established, boosting immunization to around 360,000 women and children, which contributed to a decrease in diseases including malaria. Some 60 community schools were created, enabling an additional 2000 children to access schooling. In recognition of the positive impacts of the program to date, UNDP and the Government of Bangladesh agreed to extend it until 2013.

In Bougainville, **Papua New Guinea**, the Government, with UNDP's support, convened several reconciliation events, some of which included key ex-combatant leaders. A weapons disposal policy was passed through the Bougainville Executive Council mid-2009 and will enable progress to be made in the area of small and light weapons.

Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) clearance is an ongoing issue in **Laos**. With UNDP and other development partner support, in 2009, UXO Lao clearance operations exceeded 2009 targets due to the use of improved technology and planning, resulting in improved access to land for schools, clinics and farming across 300,000 hectares. The Lao



Peace and reconciliation process in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea.

Government provided leadership, supported by UNDP, in the international movement to ban cluster munitions. Lao PDR was one of the first countries to sign and ratify the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions and is set to host the First Meeting of the State parties of the Convention in November 2010.

In **Solomon Islands**, UNDP continued support to the government in the area of peace-building, a key result of which was the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Natural Disasters

The Asia Pacific region confronts over 70 percent of the world's natural disasters in any given year (in terms of people affected). The human development impact of such disasters in terms of dislocations, loss of lives and property damage is very severe. Disasters threaten aspirations and hamper the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Bangladesh and Bhutan were hit by Cyclone Aila in May. In September and October, eight countries across the region (from Samoa to India) were struck by a series of disasters – tsunami, earthquake, typhoons, flooding – with a resulting loss of life of over 3000 people and destruction of livelihoods and increased vulnerability. Damage to infrastructure was estimated at over US\$ 17 billion. UNDP was instrumental in each of these countries in assessment of damages and loss, early recovery planning, coordination and delivery of recovery assistance.



Thirty water facilities were turned over to typhoon-hit communities in Tiwi, Albay Province, about 400 kilometers southeast of Manila, Philippines.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

UNDP's leadership in ensuring that early recovery approaches are addressed as rapidly as possible following a disaster has yielded positive impact in **Myanmar** in the ongoing response to Cyclone Nargis, which affected the livelihoods of 2.4 million people in 2008 and left an estimated 138,370 dead or missing. A recent Impact Study of UNDP's early recovery program one year on found that: 71 per cent of households considered their lives had been 'noticeably improved'; for more than 50 per cent of recipients the agricultural inputs provided had 'made a difference'; more than 60 per cent of those engaged in the fishing industry (which was completely destroyed) have fully recovered their livelihoods; and more than 75,000 households were able to restart agriculture, fishing or trading activities by accessing microfinance loans. In recognition of the need highlighted by the cyclone for long-term and sustained engagement on disaster risk reduction, village

disaster management committees have been established in more than 500 villages which have developed disaster management plans that focus on reducing risks, mitigating impacts and enhancing disaster responses. An important finding from the study was that UNDP's long experience with community based development enabled it to swiftly operationalise a community driven early recovery initiative within weeks of the cyclone, which by the end of 2009 had reached 650,000 people.



In **Samoa**, in response to the October tsunami in which 100 people died and which caused over US\$ 100 million in damage, UNDP led early recovery and humanitarian support, coordinating over 60 humanitarian partners who responded. As a result, assistance provided was targeted and timely. An Early Recovery Framework (ERF) was finalized within 10 days of the tsunami, received the Prime Minister's endorsement and attracted full mobilization of resources to cover the costs of US\$ 100m. This enabled the transition to early recovery to kick in quickly. The government was able to approve a supplementary budget in December and priority works commenced.

In **Laos**, Typhoon Ketsana affected 170,000 people in five southern provinces in September. Financial and substantive support was provided by UNDP to a joint assessment and to the formulation of a Flash Appeal. Important early recovery activities have been implemented to restore critical infrastructure and livelihoods, as well as to address the threat of cluster munitions.

In Aceh **Indonesia**, the UNDP-supported post-tsunami rubble clearance and waste management continues. Over the past year, over 1.1 million cubic metres of tsunami and 160,000 cubic metres of household waste have been cleared. In 2009, Aceh was one of the recipients of the President's awards for the cleanest cities.

Disaster management frameworks

The need to build government and community capacity to respond to disasters is a core focus and UNDP contributed to strengthening a significant number of national and regional frameworks to manage more effective disaster responses, including supporting the shift from disaster response to disaster risk reduction. Such a move helps reduce losses from disasters and better manage recurring emergencies in risk prone countries.



Photo: UNDP Myanmar

The Disaster Risk Reduction volunteers demonstrate first aid assistance during a mock drill at Satt Kyun Village in Bogalay Township, Myanmar.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

As a result of UNDP's support in institutionalizing end to end Tsunami Early Warning Systems in **Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Thailand and India** countries were better equipped to issue alerts than they were four years ago. Indonesia was able to issue a warning within 5 minutes of detection of a major earthquake in September. The Program has helped develop Indian Ocean wide standard operating procedure for early warning systems and supported the participation of 18 countries and coastal communities in the drill in 2009. A major publication on the titled *Tsunami: Innovations, Breakthroughs and Change*, was launched at an event at the UN in New York and brought together key lessons learned from the response operation for application in future disasters.

UNDP's ongoing collaboration with **Sri Lanka's** Disaster Management Centre (DMC) resulted in the revision of the Disaster Management Act and the development of a corporate plan for the DMC (2009-2013), bringing disaster management to the forefront of the national development agenda.

A National Disaster Management Authority in **Indonesia** was established with a state-of-the-art information system to monitor disaster occurrence and impact with UNDP support.

UNDP also supported the preceding development of Indonesia's new National Disaster Management Bill which has been assessed as international best practice for effective disaster risk reduction.

Nepal's new National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management, developed with UNDP support over 2 years, was launched and addresses disaster risk management and preparedness.

The 30-year old **Afghanistan** National Disaster Management Law was amended in accordance with modern-day needs and Provincial Disaster Management Plans were formulated in six provinces with 28 more in 2010.

In **Bangladesh**, the conclusion of the UNDP supported Comprehensive Disaster Management Program marked an institutional shift from a disaster response and relief paradigm to one of risk reduction. This included the development of earthquake contingency plans and awareness raising for the 4 major cities in Bangladesh.

Viet Nam developed further its legal and policy frameworks for disaster management with UNDP support which led to formulation of the National Strategy for Disasters and a national program to mainstream disaster risk management into local development planning (which will be fully implemented in 2010).

Mongolia's Framework Action plan on disaster management was updated and an implementation plan developed. The capacity of the National Emergency Management Authority (NEMA) was strengthened which improved its ability to respond to emergencies and new hazards. UNDP has partnered with NEMA since it was established in 2002 providing equipment, training and technical expertise



Photo: UNDP Bhutan

Artificial lowering of the potentially dangerous Thorthormi lake in progress in Lunana, Northern Bhutan.

The roll out of **Bhutan's** National Disaster Management Framework continued with the provision of UNDP-supported training for disaster management committees at national, district and sub-district levels supported by UNDP. In Bhutan, as part of a major adaptation initiative to reduce vulnerabilities to disasters, particularly earthquakes and glacial lake outburst floods, the level of the potentially dangerous Thorthormi Lake was artificially lowered by three feet in 2009.

The institutional capacity of the **Pakistan** National Disaster Management Authority and the Earthquake Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Authority continued to be strengthened with UNDP assistance and UNDP supported the government to formulate provincial and district risk management plans.

Environment and Sustainable Development

Climate Change mitigation and adaptation

Many countries in Asia and especially the Pacific are extremely vulnerable to the threat of global warming and its impact on their social and economic development. Meeting rising energy needs while at the same time reducing greenhouse gas emissions is a major challenge for the region. Climate change is a growing area of UNDP engagement in the Asia Pacific. UNDP assists countries in directly reducing carbon emissions through the promotion of renewable energy, energy efficiency and sustainable transport programs, including piloting technologies that can be scaled up for wider application and thus transform energy policies and markets. UNDP plays a key role in supporting many countries develop further their national frameworks and programs for an effective response to climate change.

The UNDP-GEF partnership in the Asia Pacific covers 21 climate change mitigation projects at the implementation stage in 11 countries worth US\$ 493 million (20 per cent GEF and 80 per cent other co-financing). Collectively, the portfolio brought about a total of 16.26 million tonnes of CO₂ emissions avoidance in 2009, bringing the cumulative total over the last five years to a reduction of 51.2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

In **Malaysia**, the Building Integrated Photovoltaic (BIPV) Technology Application Project has been making strong progress since 2005 in mitigating climate change, reducing carbon emissions by 1703 tonnes, including 937 tonnes (55 per cent) reduced in 2009 alone. Photovoltaic technology converts solar radiation into direct current electricity. The project has helped reduce green house gas emissions from the power sector but more importantly has helped reduce the long term cost of photovoltaic technology. The project has transformed the local photovoltaic market, contributing to energy security and offsetting a significant percentage of conventional peak energy requirements. Moreover, since its inception, it has reduced by 19 per cent the cost of building integrated photovoltaic systems, with further reductions expected. The project has also contributed to the formulation of a national green technology policy which consists of national renewable energy action plan and the application of the feed-in tariffs (FIT) mechanisms for on-grid BIPV systems, an offshoot scheme which provides financial incentives for homeowners to install photovoltaic technology in their homes.

In **India**, a successful pilot to generate power from coal bed methane is now being replicated in 200 additional sites. Methane, a greenhouse gas, is considered to be 21 times more harmful than carbon dioxide. Methane is absorbed in coal seams and the surrounding strata and

released during coal mining. However, when recovered from the coal beds, methane can be used as a source of energy as it is a remarkably clean fuel. Through the UNDP/GEF/Government of India project, methane was extracted from two well known coal mines in Dhanbad and power generated at a competitive price. Taking into account both the recovered gas and the utilisation of the captured methane, the annual carbon dioxide reduction from just two mines, was an estimated 180,000 tonnes. The electricity generated supplied 400 households, providing them with power for the first time. Coal based methane can potentially account for seven per cent of the installed capacity for electricity generation in India.

A UNDP India-supported innovation that demonstrates the commercial feasibility of recovering and utilizing methane gas released during the process of coal-mining has been scaled up by the Government of India.

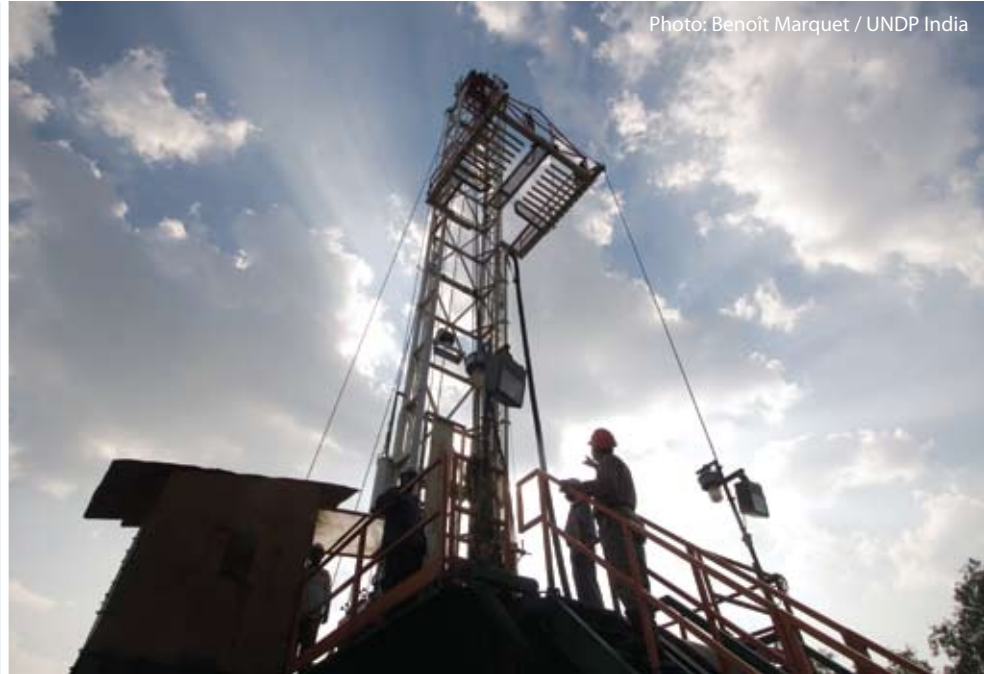


Photo: Benoit Marquet / UNDP India

Given the vulnerability of the **Pacific Island region** to climate change (half of the 8 million population of the Pacific live within 1.5 km of the shoreline which is at risk of coastal depletion from sea-level rise), this is a special area of focus.

- In the lead-up to the December 2009 Copenhagen COP 15 meeting, UNDP and South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) provided joint support to the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) resulting in the development of a Pacific position paper which facilitated the effective participation of PIC negotiators, and substantive support as well as logistical and media support throughout the conference resulting in high publicity to the PICs.
- Over the last 5 years, funding of more than US\$ 90 million has been leveraged by UNDP for the Pacific to support the design and implementation of adaptation initiatives at the national level. This is complemented by community level adaptation initiatives.

- In line with Paris principles, UNDP and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) were instrumental in the establishment of the Pacific Development Partners in Climate Change involving the Pacific regional organizations, donors and civil society organization to work together as a knowledge sharing and partnership mobilization forum.

Indonesia undertook a greenhouse gas inventory as well as an assessment of vulnerability and climate change adaptation and developed an action plan to address climate change, including setting up the National Council for Climate Change (NCCC). UNDP provided support for data collection and facilitation of national dialogues for this process and for the development of the NCCC work plan on mitigation and adaptation.

UNDP has assisted 32 of **China's** provinces and regions respond to climate change. By the end of 2009, a total of 17 provincial/regional governments in China had endorsed and promulgated provincial climate change programs, 13 had established climate change divisions within their focus on supporting low carbon growth strategies and the requisite capacities to plan and manage them.

In **Cambodia** climate change has been systematically integrated into the revised national strategic development plan and baseline analytical work, supported by UNDP, has been completed to inform the development of a national climate change strategy in 2010.

In **Niue**, with UNDP support, fossil fuel energy consumption has reduced by 40 per cent through the use of energy efficient light bulbs and increased use of solar household units. UNDP also provided policy and advisory support for the design and implementation of renewable energy projects in Palau, Republic of Marshall Islands and Fiji.

Biodiversity Conservation

Biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation is accelerated by climate change. In 2009, UNDP-GEF supported 29 biodiversity conservation projects in 16 countries, with total financing of US\$ 280 million (33 per cent GEF and 66 per cent co-financing). In 2009, the projects supported the establishment of 15 new protected areas totaling 2,347,889 hectares, adding to the ongoing program work in an existing 22 protected areas covering a total area of 4,114,127 hectares. The projects helped mainstream biodiversity in production landscapes/seascape, develop the sustainability of protected areas and safeguard biodiversity.

Key results to which UNDP contributed

In **Cambodia**, the Landscape Conservation project (CALM) in the Northern Plains influenced a wide range of sectoral policies relating to forestry, agriculture, tourism and infrastructure development. In 2009, the project focused its work on improving national and provincial capacity to demarcate the permanent forest estate to serve as a model for similar initiatives. With demarcation, the project was able to reduce land grabbing and speculation within demarcated sites. Changes in institutional arrangements reduced ad hoc clearance of land for agriculture and for other purposes. The adoption of an innovative and highly replicable approach to improve household incomes through the cultivation of conservation-friendly “Ibis rice” enabled families to increase incomes through the sale of such rice at a premium thus reducing the pressure to convert wetlands into rice fields. The project is now developing a Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) project to provide long-term financial support for the Northern Plains landscape.

In **China**, the Coastal Biodiversity project in the South China Sea was, by working with local fishery regulations, able to halt illegal fishing and implement rescue operations to save and release of endangered species caught in fishermen’s nets in the waters between the provinces of Fujian and Guangdong. The project supported the development of policies and regulations, such as zonation and joint fishery administration, to ensure biodiversity conservation. The project has instituted user fees and part of the collections is allocated for marine biodiversity conservation.

UNDP supported **Mongolia** to undertake a review of its environmental legislation, institutions and commitments as a prelude to a 4 year environmental law reform plan.

In **Pakistan**, with UNDP support environmental education has been formally included as part of the National Education Policy 2009 and a national curriculum for environmental education at school and college level has been adopted.

UNDP’s partnership with the **Sri Lankan** Ministry of the Environment resulted in the development of an environment sector road map which fed into the development of the Government’s “Green Sri Lanka” policy launched in mid 2009 which identifies 10 key priority areas.

Partnerships and South-South Cooperation

In 2009, two landmark partnerships were agreed: a strategic partnership with **China** for tri-lateral cooperation to support developing countries, particularly in Africa; and the establishment with the **Republic of Korea** of the UNDP Seoul Policy Centre for Global Development Partnerships. The Centre will undertake policy analysis and research on global partnerships in international development, with particular emphasis on the role of new and emerging donors in a changing international aid environment. These partnerships build on existing strong south-south cooperation in the region.

Since 2005, the UNDP-supported International Poverty Reduction Center in **China** (IPRCC) has held 20 training workshops, bringing together close to 500 participants from Asia, Africa, South America, Oceania and Central Asian countries. High-level training programs organized by IPRCC have deepened the South-South exchanges between China and other



Photo: UNDP China

Workshop on Poverty Reduction Policies and Practices in China, with participation of 37 African officials from 19 African countries, July 2009.

developing countries, engaging active discussions across countries on topics such as natural resource management and poverty reduction, agricultural and rural policies, management and monitoring of poverty reduction funds and rural financing. In 2009, the focus was on sharing China's experience on poverty reduction and social development with 152 government officials from 52 developing countries.

In January 2009, UNDP and **India** jointly organized an international seminar to share the Indian experience of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and cross learning with countries in Africa and Latin America. UNDP and India jointly hosted the first ever Asian Conference on Conditional Cash Transfers (CCT) in November sharing practical experience from Latin American countries and bringing Asian countries with CCT programs together.

The **Asia Pacific Aid Effectiveness Community of Practice and Capacity Development for Development Effectiveness (CDDE) Facility** jointly supported by UNDP, ADB, the World Bank and Japan works with Asia Pacific partner countries to provide sustained support for their efforts to promote accountability and transparency in the management of aid. It has a strong focus on peer to peer exchanges. In August, a delegation from Timor-Leste, Nepal and Laos visited Cambodia to learn from its experience in designing and implementing Aid Information Management Systems (AIMS). The Government of Sri Lanka, together with Cambodia and Nepal, partnered with eleven other countries in the region to build capacity to influence the international aid policy process and provide a systematic articulation of evidence and concerns from Asia-Pacific to the OECD DAC's Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-EFF).

Future Directions

UNDP is making a strong contribution to the development progress of its partner countries in the Asia Pacific. In order to ensure assistance remains focused and relevant, the following are priority areas for UNDP in the Asia Pacific in 2010 and beyond:

Increasing focus and momentum toward achieving the MDGs: the special MDG review summit to be held in New York in September 2010 presents a major opportunity to generate renewed commitment to reach the goals, and identify remaining gaps in MDG achievement and how best to fill them. With the new generation of UNDAFs and Country Program Documents (CPDs) currently being developed, UNDP support within countries will be positioned strategically and coherently in support of national priorities, the MDGs and sustainable development. Linked to a stronger strategic focus for UNDP programs in country is the related ability to contribute to transformational development outcomes at the national level and to report on UNDP's contribution to those outcomes.

Strong focus on gender: Achieving gender equality promotes human development and is central to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Progress towards the MDGs is lacking the most where the needs of women and girls are not prioritized. RBAP's 2010 regional *Human Development Report* on gender identifies 3 key areas for action:

- expanding women's economic opportunities
- strengthening the legal status and rights of women and
- ensuring women's voice, inclusion, and participation in decision making

These priorities will inform UNDP's regional advocacy and programs.

Supporting low carbon development paradigms: Climate change is a huge challenge to development. Finding ways of adapting to it and mitigating against it which are supportive of development is a growing focus for UNDP's work in the region. There is also a need to support developing countries to embark on low carbon paths to development and energy access. UNDP will work with countries to develop low carbon growth, energy access and adaptation strategies which are pro-poor, and support their integration into national development plans and execution.

Ongoing support for the impacts of the global economic, food and fuel crises: While the region was early into the recovery phase from the global economic crisis, the impacts are ongoing. UNDP will work with countries to emerge from the financial crisis stronger and better positioned to achieve progress on the MDG goals. UNDP support in particular will

focus on strengthening and better targeting social protection measures and programs to target the most vulnerable and those living in extreme poverty.

Targeting inequality: With inequality within the region on the rise, UNDP will give priority to supporting countries implement policies that generate growth with equity and have an explicit pro-poor focus. Within countries, UNDP support will focus on disadvantaged regions lagging behind in development and subject to other vulnerabilities such as disasters and conflict.

New partnerships for south-south cooperation: Increasingly the expertise, knowledge and funding which developing countries need is likely to come from within the global South. UNDP is well placed to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and expertise within the South. As more countries in the region reach Middle Income Status, UNDP will continue to develop new partnerships with regional countries such as China, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia and others to support the knowledge transfer of successful approaches to poverty reduction and work jointly in support of the MDGs in other developing countries.



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