Innovation in the age of the Sustainable Development Goals

Success stories from UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States

(Photo: UNDP in Bosnia and Herzegovina)

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[1] *All references to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).*

INTRODUCTION

The global development landscape is evolving rapidly as changing climate, growing inequality, armed conflict, and poverty affect countries around the world. In the face of these challenges, new solutions are emerging from developing countries, technologies in policymaking are empowering new actors, and market-oriented shifts are increasing diversified bilateral funding in development.

Against this backdrop, the three major global conferences in 2015 - The United Nations (UN) World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, the UN Conference on Climate Change in Paris, and the Financing for Development Summit in Addis Ababa - are a testament to the world's expectations. The outcomes of these conferences will reinforce the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda with its 17 goals that aim to foster economic growth, ensure environmental protection, and end poverty by 2030.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is well-equipped to support programme countries at the local, national, and regional levels to deliver integrated sustainable development solutions required to meet the SDGs. The new development agenda is both ambitious and transformational as it aims to address the five Ps of sustainable development: people, planet, prosperity, partnership, and peace.

Achieving these global goals will be the defining challenge of development work in the next 15 years and this is where an innovative approach can play a key role. Social innovators are highly networked citizens and small groups, empowered by new technologies and connected to one another. With minimal financial resources, limited or non-existent management, and by circumventing traditional processes, they are doing things that only large organizations could previously accomplish.

The nature of social innovation goes hand in hand with the way the 17 SDGs were conceived of and decided upon. Countries around the world facilitated post-2015 discussions among diverse citizen groups, venturing outside the capitals into the rural areas to filter out the most pressing concerns of citizens, and help turn those into the new set of goals. This has led to both more specificity and universality of the SDGs. They apply to all countries and balance social development with economic and environmental sustainability and social inclusion. At the same time, the post-2015 consultations, where UNDP played a major role worldwide, have raised expectations that the process of implementing the SDG agenda must be equally inclusive when it comes to engaging all these "networked citizens."

These goals will necessitate not only figuring out new ways to work alongside citizens, but also figuring out how to go beyond traditional funding modalities. Equally important will be the capitalizing on the gains of the nascent data revolution to monitor in close to real time, the progress made towards achieving these goals. This implies investment in statistical institutions for more effective measuring tools, as well as using our ability to tap into various new sources of data. This will not only provide a current picture of the progress, but create a space for integration and coherence between various groups and sectors, while drawing expertise and skills from 'silos' for the benefit of the universal agenda.

Within this global context, the Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (ECIS) region is facing a unique set of challenges. Though most of its countries are now middle-income, many continue to undergo transitions from conflict to stable governance. Over the past two decades, the region as a whole has experienced an increase in income inequality

and continues to feature high poverty levels[2]. While there have been significant development gains, insecurity remains a reality for some countries – stemming in part from past and on-going conlicts, as well as vulnerability to seismic, climatic, meteorological, and natural resource related risks.

In 2012, UNDP's Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Indpendent States (RBEC) set up a knowledge and innovation unit to design a new generation of development services that would support increasingly sophisticated national governments and help tackle these complex, intertwined challenges. The innovation unit thus designed and tested different approaches and tools ranging from behavioural insights, data science and user-centred design, to alternative methods of policymaking processes, and service delivery. Using the 'learning-by-doing' principle, the unit created a lab-like, experimental space where public servants, citizens, and external resources could come together to reframe issues and test novel approaches to pressing social issues.

In 2013, UNDP RBEC organized and hosted an inaugural Global Innovation meeting in Budva, Montenegro. This brought together leading thinkers in social innovation and citizen-led public service reform and innovation champions from UNDP country offices in ECIS. The meeting resulted in the Budva Declaration, a set of 20 commitments that outlined UNDP's approach to innovation:

The Budva Declaration (November 2013)
We, the participants of the Global Innovation Meeting 2013:

1. Agreed to work within a simple innovation framework: "**Find bottlenecks**, **scan** for what has been done before, **prototype** solutions, **scale-up** the prototypes that show results, close out those that don't, and **work out loud** at all times to make sure all possible feedback is generated in time to shape action.
2. Acknowledged that UNDP's Strategic Plan aspires to **making UNDP a more innovative organization**. Innovation in the context of the rich tapestry of UNDP's intervention areas - towards a green economy, in social protection, resilient delivery systems, and citizens' role in designing public services; this positions UNDP strategically in responding effectively to ever more sophisticated demands of our stakeholders
3. Emphasized that **providing support and license directly to innovators** is the most effective way to support innovation.
4. Recognized that **supporting innovation is a long journey** that requires the organizational acceptance of small risks and failures in the quest for greater success.
5. Emphasized that UNDP's innovation agenda **needs to be funded and resourced**.
6. Recognized that the spark of **innovation can come from anywhere**, from think tanks, labs, and citizens, and that UNDP's role is to seek it out when designing projects that tackle complex development challenges.
7. Noted that **data analysis and data visualization** skills are critical to finding transformative impact in issues such as employment, inequality, energy and natural resource management, and disaster risk reduction.
8. Pledged to integrate **innovation thinking in project and programme design**, from the beginning including the iterative use of prototyping and human-centered design in the "standard way of doing business";
9. Committed to **expand the network of innovators** and communicate successes, failures, lessons-learned and ideas for next time with the wider UNDP network to promote cross – fertilization.
10. Acknowledged **UNDP's opportunity as an enabler of innovation at a local level**, providing support to national and municipal governments, can only be realized if partners see a track record of experience.
11. Emphasized UNDP policies and procedures will **need to support "doing business in a different way"** and optimize internal processes for transformation as required in collaboration with country offices; this will require flexibility and patience from everyone.
12. Resolved that BOM and BDP will look at **a design team including operations staff to work on bottlenecks** that hinder applying innovation or doing business a different way in practice;
13. Reaffirmed that Global Policy Centers (Rio, Singapore, Nairobi and others) will play a role as **innovation hubs** to foster robust partnerships across the UNDP network and beyond.
14. Reaffirmed the strong **link between 'knowledge management and innovation'**, and hoped that the UNDP Knowledge Management Strategy would reflect this link.
15. Emphasized the importance of including **a session on innovation management at the 2014 Global Management Meeting.**
16. Emphasized that the participants of this meeting would be innovation **promoters** in their respective regions and offices.
17. Recognized that a number of new models for systematically embedding innovation in UNDP programming have emerged from CO practice, including most notably **innovation labs** which can serve as design labs and project incubators with a variety of possible partners.
18. Asked that UNDP's Innovation Board **provide a list of corporate offerings** and support to Country Offices on innovation.
19. Reaffirmed that UNDP can be an enabler and a facilitator for **collaboration between "bottom-up" and "top-down" innovators**. This will ensure that innovative tools developed by grassroots innovators find resonance with governments and vice versa.
20. Committed to creating the right culture of **incentives** to encourage and reward staff who are willing to take risks, initiate new ideas and learn lessons from prototypes.

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[2] *Poverty, Inequality, and Vulnerability in the Transition and Developing Economies of Europe and Central Asia*

UNDP has developed an innovation framework in the region after four years of trial, error, and practice. It provides hands-on, practical support to public servants and citizens to:

- Reframe policy issues by **identifying key insights into the needs of service users** using methods such as ethnographic research, human-centred design, behavioural science and social innovation camps;
- Connect with leading thinkers, citizens, think tanks, and organizations on the cutting edge of progress and development in key policy issues using **horizon scanning, crowdsourcing, online collaboration and challenge prizes;**
- **De-risk investment in - and enhance deliverability of - policies** by running rapid, parallel field tests and experiments.

From this approach, UNDP RBEC has seen its innovation approaches gradually grow in both size and impact. Innovation now consists of an entirely new set of services that UNDP offers to national and other partners. This approach continues to evolve through the practical application in the field and currently includes:

1. **Delivery of new policy solutions that use novel ways to tackle old problems**

   In implementing a broad range of policy and service design projects, UNDP demonstrated the value of new techniques such as:

   - **Design of innovation teams within governments** as agile interfaces with the citizens for collaborative and open policymaking in Georgia;
   - Application of **social network analysis** for increasing small and medium-sized enterprises' (SME) competitiveness and identifying policy solutions from the margins of the society in Montenegro and Armenia;
   - **Behavioural insights** to improve drug adherence among tuberculosis (TB) patients and to address informal settlements in Moldova;
   - **Gaming** for reconciliation, youth unemployment, tourism, and pollution control in Cyprus and Kyrgyzstan;
   - **New sources of data (big/open data)** for transparency, disaster risk reduction, and the informal economy in Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia;
   - **Crowdfunding** and challenge prizes for energy and climate change in Croatia.

2. **Build-up of new skills by experimenting with new approaches and methods**

   Using hands-on courses, learning sessions, development trainings, challenge prizes, social innovation camps and hackathons, UNDP introduced over 5,000 civil servants and citizens to skills such as **open policymaking** and **data use**, **rapid prototype design**, **real-time monitoring** and **human-centred design for service delivery.**

3. **Identification of cutting-edge thinking via research and development**

   Through continuous horizon scanning, online collaboration, blogging and research and development, UNDP connects our clients to cutting edge actors in key policy sectors and provides them with hands-on support to conduct rapid experiments to test out their new approaches. This emerging network of contacts includes the

Behavioural Insights Team (BIT), Waag Society, Institute for the Future, Edgeryders, FutureGov, the Governance Lab at New York University, MindLab, Nesta, Cognitive Edge and Indiegogo, among others.

Most notably, **four governments in the region (Armenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, and Moldova) tapped into the RBEC innovation work to jointly set up social innovation labs to engage citizens in policy and service design and delivery.** This is an entirely novel way for governments and citizens to collaborate, one where UNDP plays a major role in the full policy-making cycle.

Innovation labs have filled a niche by evolving into neutral spaces that give participants a 'license to act differently,' to work together and test out entirely new approaches to policymaking in a collaborative and experimental way. Not surprisingly, rising numbers of traditional partners (e. g. donor countries, think thanks) and less traditional ones (e. g. individual citizens, informal groups, corporations) now invest in UNDP innovation efforts that have successfully brokered new sustainable development alliances in the ECIS region.

How effective has this approach been in supporting governments in countries throughout Europe and CIS to tackle emerging and protracted development and policy issues in a user-oriented way?

In 2014, UNDP RBEC commissioned an independent evaluation conducted by MindLab, the Danish Government's innovation lab. The evaluation found that early adopter countries of UNDP's innovation agenda in the ECIS region benefited from new partnerships and access to a new generation of development services, programme and policy resources, and skills[3]. FutureGov, a design studio from London, had similar conclusions in its evaluation of UNDP's innovation work in Armenia[4].

MindLab also found that innovative approaches helped change UNDP's organizational culture. These changes included a design of the first corporate innovation curricula for UNDP staff; integration of innovation as a tool for better risk management in the new UNDP Strategic plan; amending the corporate rules of procurement to enable use of challenge prizes as a standard business procedure; and a corporate endorsement of the innovation framework that emerged from the ECIS region's experiences.

These success stories showcase the experience of countries and territories in the region and aim to demonstrate the impact of UNDP's innovation work in Europe and the CIS. The paper examines *where and how innovation played a strategic role* and concludes by *looking forward* to analyse common elements that have built programmatic success, brought about positive results, and transformed the way UNDP RBEC works.

II. Success stories

In pursuing its innovation agenda, UNDP RBEC tested the hypothesis that if leveraged strategically, both national governments and its partners would invest in innovation. In practice, this meant:

- Identifying **new ways to involve citizens to co-design public policies and generate**

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[3] Independent evaluation of UNDP RBEC's "Knowledge and Innovation in the Europe and CIS Region" 2012/2013"
[4] UNDP's Armenia's Approach to Innovation

more immediate feedback on the effectiveness of social services using user-centred and empathy-based approaches;

- Finding **better ways to mobilize finance for impact** either through crowdfunding, behavioural insights, or impact investment;
- **Raising governments' awareness and collective intelligence** by tapping into new sources of data;
- **Accessing wider sources of expertise and unlocking creativity in the public sector** using challenge prizes and crowdsourced competitions.

Young innovators in Minsk, Belarus (Photo: UNDP in Belarus)

The hypothesis that innovation could help refresh governments' operating systems has proven true in a number of cases in the ECIS region. Innovation helped each government uncover new insights to reframe old problems and mobilize new expertise to shape fresh solutions. In each, innovation played a critical role in addressing major development challenges from youth employment, sustainable farming, and disaster management to promoting peace and reconciliation, and monitoring public services to fight corruption.

UNDP RBEC was a corporate early adopter of the innovation agenda and this section illustrates how each of the countries benefited from a strategic use of innovation, and details practical, positive development results that have helped transform the way UNDP works in the region.

Country offices that invested early in novel approaches to intractable development challenges found that an innovation agenda played a strategic role in differentiating them from other development partners. This helped them build a next generation of development services and skills for 21st century policymakers. In addition, there are early signs from other ECIS countries that innovation is making a mark in UNDP's efforts to improve governance, increase equality, better manage natural resources, and improve economies of the countries it works in.

Albania: Putting end-users at the core of collaborative design

Over the past six years, UNDP in Albania has supported several youth employment programmes in some of the most disadvantaged regions of the country. While most were successfully developed using conventional project development models like articulating context, analysing stakeholders, outlining project goals, outputs and building partnerships,

UNDP recognized that employment challenges require new approaches to deliver information and services to end users.

The National Employment Service (NES) implements measures for urban youth and disadvantaged men and women. People from rural areas are outside the scope of these interventions as they are considered self-employed due to their land ownership. NES sought ways to extend its services to better support rural youth, who fare considerably worse in employment opportunities and support.

To support NES, UNDP took a different route from its usual project development process. UNDP partnered with the UK-based design studio FutureGov to gain a deeper understanding of the challenges rural youth face. A Facebook call generated a team of enthusiastic students who volunteered to support UNDP and FutureGov in developing an innovative service for rural youth. Unlike standard interventions, the implementation time was just several weeks. This allowed UNDP to assess immediately if tangible results could be achieved.

Applying user-centered design, the team found that regardless of socioeconomic status, internet access was widely available and many participants owned a smart-phone. This led UNDP, the Ministry of Social Welfare and Youth, the National Employment Service and FutureGov team to select a prototype online platform to update youth on career options, the labour market, job prospects and youth role models.

The working online prototype included a page listing of all available professions, with filters for skills, average wage and employment changes, a basic search function and a content page with information about each profession.

After user feedback to refine the prototype, product development began, with the NES employment portal becoming the most likely destination to host the rural youth jobs platform. The interest, which the process has sparked among public providers of employment and other social services is exciting. Several public providers are now willing to engage with UNDP in Albania in further collaborative design and to build capacities within the public institutions to adopt innovative approaches.

Armenia: A lab to experiment in

UNDP in Armenia pioneered the use of social innovation for sustainable development more than four years ago. The Country Office has dedicated a space to experiment and rapidly prototype based on an outside-in approach driven by citizens' perspectives and needs. In a short time, this approach helped the Office and its partners engage citizens more effectively in governance, stimulated public sector innovation, boosted the local social start-up sector, and developed a 'shortcut around the bureaucracy' capable of generating fresh ideas and new solutions to old challenges.

This innovation work has brought together citizens, government, development practitioners, and private sector partners and created a network of Armenian change-makers. Regularly held public events like TEDx and in-house Kolba Cafés generate new ideas and engage people to trial solutions for Armenia's developmental challenges.

Using 21st century expertise and tools, as well as user insights, UNDP in Armenia engages non-traditional actors in social innovation projects that shake up traditional development design.

Innovation recipe for success in Armenia (Photo: Kolba Lab)

UNDP's social innovations in Armenia have had a big impact, namely:

- **Kolba Lab**, a social start-up incubator that, since its start in 2013, has received 533 ideas and incubated 37 start-ups;
- Robust **social media** exposure and strategic communication that includes signature public events, regular **Kolba Cafés** and **customized TEDx events** that highlight UNDP's expertise and values.

UNDP in Armenia's teams crowdsource and use social innovation camp methodologies to draw on new channels of information and partner with international innovation resources, including Nesta's Do-It Yourself (DIY) Toolkit, Institute of Design at Stanford University, and customized public sector innovation consultations with FutureGov.

As part of its mainstreaming innovation efforts, UNDP's Women in Local Democracy (WILD) project has introduced an easy-to-use **Short Messaging Service (SMS) polling application** that has facilitated nine SMS polls in five communities since it kicked off in December 2013. The Government of Armenia now plans to expand this to ten more communities.

From a prototype to a successful business

A skills-based knowledge economy holds much of Armenia's economic and entrepreneurial potential. However, perceived top-down governance, low levels of civic engagement, and negative attitudes to business failure have hindered the development of an innovation culture, and the public initiatives and ventures that could transform Armenia's economy.

To overcome this, UNDP in Armenia first held a series of social innovation camps. These brought together ideas, people and digital tools to build web-based solutions to social

problems. The camps' ability to filter new ideas and citizen solutions inspired UNDP to establish Kolba Lab.

Kolba Lab is a social innovation and start-up incubator, which works with citizens to identify Armenia's most-pressing social challenges and test ideas to solve them. Its network of mentors then develops a home-grown, sustainable public service reform and development ventures.

Kolba Lab begins each venture by first precisely defining a social problem. It then **crowdsources,** issuing a public challenge for citizen solutions to tackle that problem. This ensures that services and projects are designed by those with the biggest stake in them. It also draws creative people, fights apathy, and fosters an entrepreneurial spirit.

Kolba Lab staff select the best ideas and invite anyone interested to join a kick-start camp – a training workshop that teams up participants and trains them in the technical, business, and marketing skills necessary to launch a viable, self-sustaining social enterprise.

Kolba's successful start-ups (in most cases spin-offs of US $10,000-$15,000 prototypes) include **Seeing Hands**, **Flexi-care for working mothers,** a **solar-powered fruit drying business,** a local governance e-management system introduced in Yerevan called **Smart city**, a community news platform called **hyperlocal**, and an app that crowdsources monitoring of public vehicles.

Kolba's next step? Bringing the government into crowdsourcing with a public sector innovation challenge so front-line public servants can offer public sector reform ideas with executive power to circumvent the traditional bureaucracy.

Kolba Lab is also currently running call for ideas for local governance, early warning systems for climate change, and human rights. Each of these is based on the principles of running multiple experiments and failing fast/failing cheap, with price tags for the Kolba-run competitions from $10,000 to $25,000.

Feedback democracy: Giving Armenian communities a voice via SMS polling

Participation in local decision-making has historically been low in Armenia. Following a 2013 law requiring local government to ensure citizen engagement in community decisions, UNDP in Armenia tapped into Armenia's high rates of mobile use, turning it into a direct democracy opportunity at the local level.

UNDP pioneered the creation of an easy-to-use micro-referendum tool: the **SMS polling application.** Designed to increase participation and civic engagement in local decision-making and make it more transparent, the polling app gives participants a safe and open forum to express their opinions on matters of interest to their community. It offers community leaders quick and affordable ways to engage a broad range of people in decision-making, making it appealing to those who don't have internet access or the ability to engage through offline channels.

Since its launch in December 2013, nine SMS polls have been held in five communities, with an average participation rate of 23 percent, giving it potential to build a broad constituency for local-level decision-making.

A social innovation lab in action in Yerevan (Photo: Kolba Lab)

Thanks to a positive response by citizens and local officials, the Government of Armenia's Open Government Partnership National Action Plan 2014-2016 envisages bringing the tool to ten more communities. This success is a testament to rapid prototyping and continued iteration, building on feedback from national partners like Armenia's Ministry of Territorial Administration, local and regional authorities, and the International Centre for Human Development. It also builds upon a solid partnership with the private sector - from tech company Mobbis, which offered training to local government representatives on how to run SMS polls, to mobile operators Orange, Biline, and VivaCell MTS, who provided mobile connectivity.

Local government representatives will now be able to use this SMS mobile polling technology to make inquiries or run constituent micro-referendums and use the feedback and data - collected and aggregated by gender and age - to make better, more informed decisions for the community. The team plans to amend the app so citizens can also directly propose questions to the community.

In 2014, the project was one of the winning ideas in public participation and engagement in the Ashoka Changemakers and Feedback Labs competition.

Azerbaijan: One-stop shops with zero bureaucracy

UNDP Administrator, Helen Clark meets with Inam Karimli Chairperson of the State Committee for Public Service and Social Innovations in Azerbaijan

Rapid economic growth in Azerbaijan required more effective and transparent governance to achieve sustainable development, enhance public-private partnership, fight corruption, and actively engage citizen participation in public policy.

Established in 2012, the State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations created the ASAN Service model, which integrates over 270 state services. Under ASAN Service, citizens receive most administrative assistance quickly and transparently for fees fixed by law. This fights public sector corruption and strengthens public trust.

Since 2012, one-stop ASAN Service Centres have expanded rapidly across Azerbaijan to serve five million people overall. An important ASAN innovation is soliciting customer feedback to constantly monitor service delivery and seek new service ideas.

Based on client feedback, the State Agency established free call centres for complaints, opinions and recommendations and an idea bank that has received more than 4,000 performance-improving ideas. One of these ideas, the ASAN Volunteer Programme, has received over 11,000 applications, with more than 4,000 young citizens now working as volunteers and another 500 going on to permanent jobs in ASAN Service or the ministries involved.

UNDP assisted the State Agency to obtain a Quality Management System Certificate for ASAN, now considered an outstanding ready-for-export Azerbaijan product. ASAN Service won a 2015 United Nations Public Service Award in the 'Improved Public Service Delivery' category.

Belarus: Hacking for social good

In Belarus, innovation complements and reinforces UNDP's work across priority development areas. It has changed how UNDP in Belarus does its work and the office's commitment to new, agile approaches has created a work environment that is a strong driver for innovation.

A search for new and better solutions has shifted UNDP in Belarus' organizational culture towards experimentation and looking for insights and solutions beyond "the usual suspects." By tapping into citizen expertise and non-traditional partners, UNDP has helped expand the participatory space and brought new voices into the Belarus development conversation. User-centred approaches have strengthened cross-sector cooperation and enhanced the role of beneficiaries in UNDP programme design.

This has helped UNDP position itself as a key hub in knowledge sharing and innovation for development in Belarus. Specifically, it has helped UNDP engage citizens to successfully shape public policy in ways previously not attempted. Hackathons and a social innovation lab (SI-Lab) have crowdsourced new ways of looking at old challenges, tested innovative solutions to remove bottlenecks and engage youth in fun, hands-on activities to transform waste and recycling behaviours.

In partnering with the UK-based BIT, UNDP and national partners are focusing on translating 'healthy' *attitudes* into 'healthy' *behaviours*, such as decreasing alcohol consumption, as well as nudging consumers to switch to more responsible waste sorting and energy efficiency behaviours.

Engaging citizen experts to successfully shape public policy

In November 2014, the Research Institute of the Ministry of Economy asked UNDP in Belarus to help it get feedback from civil society and citizens as it developed the Government's National Sustainable Socio-Economic Development Strategy 2030 (NSDS-2030).

Deciding that effective feedback mechanisms were critical to a constructive dialogue between the government and different social groups, UNDP engaged a network of social innovators to work on NSDS-2030. Working with Edgeryders, a Brussels based social enterprise, UNDP pivoted from consulting Belarusians on their needs to identifying those already addressing them.

During a series of on and offline collaborative sessions (#UNDPlistens), social innovators shared their ongoing efforts in areas ranging from sustainable transport to access to services for people with disabilities, specifically focusing on practical suggestions for policy reforms that could bring these citizen innovators into the mainstream.

The Ministry adopted seven out of eight policy recommendations from the #UNDPlistens into the national strategy, explicitly acknowledging UNDP's contribution to identifying very specific insights and perspectives from the country's social innovation scene. One of the seven accepted policy recommendations – provision of special legal status for social enterprise and social innovation – points to the innovation agenda's promising future in Belarus.

Belarus Social Innovation Lab

A hackathon for social good in Minsk, Belarus (Photo: Forwardfoto)

In its search for innovative approaches to development programming, UNDP in Belarus launched its own social innovation lab. After a call for proposals solicited creative ideas from developers, photographers, designers, and e-marketing specialists, the social innovation lab organized a 36-hour hackathon, where participants were asked how technology could drive sustainable development in Belarus with innovative ways to:

- Increase public awareness of HIV and AIDS;
- Promote a 'green' lifestyle;
- Encourage the private sector to create disability-friendly employment and customer services that meet the needs of people with disabilities.

After review, four prototypes were successfully implemented: the mobile apps "Eliminator of Myths of the HIV Topic" and "Bottle Hunter"; the campaign GreenMap.by, which uses a website and mobile app to give information about collecting recyclable and hazardous waste; and "Career-Centre" - a project providing people with disabilities opportunities to work remotely.

This hackathon generated interest from a broad range of stakeholders – public and private sector, donors, and NGOs - and helped UNDP cement new partnerships. UNDP's collaboration with Belarusian tech company EPAM began there.

Hackathons in Belarus (UNDP in Belarus)

Gamification: Engaging youth in responsible waste management

One of the hackathon's winning ideas was "Greenmap.by", an online resource and mobile app that provides user-friendly information about recycling points in several Belarusian cities. Looking for new ways to engage youth in fun, hands-on activities that change their waste sorting and recycling behaviours, UNDP in Belarus decided to launch a waste management campaign that used gamification techniques to allow for situated learning and entertainment.

On Greenmap.by, kids are asked to help *Ded* (Grandpa) Trofim, who lives an environmentally-friendly life in a small Belarusian village, collect caps from PET-bottles.

Meet Grandpa Trofim on Greenmap.by

Branded box collection points are set up around Minsk. Sites change every two weeks and details are published on Greenmap.by. The website uses infographics and videos as a tool to make information about waste management easily accessible, and engages kids in learning by seeing and interacting.

Since launching the media campaign in March 2015, traffic to Greenmap.by increased more than 35 percent and over 7,000 PET-bottle caps were collected. The winners of the competition are those who collect the most plastic caps and post their pictures on social media.

Building on the rising momentum of civic action, Greenmap.by has involved to include "green living" information about where citizens can find organic food suppliers, bike trails,

ecotourism opportunities, and other green organizations. It also offers tips on using alternative and renewable energy.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: Global renewable energy challenge

Almost 3,000 war returnee families in Bosnia and Herzegovina live without electricity, mainly because of prohibitive electrical grid hook-up costs. Veliko Ocijevo village, for example, with 20 households, needs 350,000 Euros to get commercial electricity up and running again, or roughly 17,500 euros per household.

Together with Nesta, a leading innovation consultancy NGO, UNDP in Bosnia and Herzegovina issued a global challenge seeking renewable energy solutions for war-returnee families living off the power grid in rural areas. The successful proposal had to cover the energy needs of an average family and cost only 5,000 euros. It also had to be flexible, reliable, easy to install, maintain and replicate, with good battery life and hot water capacity, and low maintenance costs.

Learning by candlelight in Bosnia and Herzegovina: A new challenge is helping change that (Photo: UNDP in Bosnia and Herzgovina)

The best of the 37 entries received by UNDP and Nesta were field tested for two months. The winning unit, designed by "elefon inzenjering" from Serbia, was a solar unit that actually provided more energy (2kw) and longer battery storage capacity (4.65 days) than specified in the challenge.

Since then, the UNDP-installed renewable energy kits have transformed 36 families' lives. They can supplement their income selling cheese and dairy products, which was impossible before the renewable energy system was installed. Their children can do homework under electric light, not candle light, and they can watch TV or listen to music as their peers do elsewhere.

UNDP is currently negotiating with international donors and the government to extend the project to cover more beneficiaries with this initiative. UNDP will install more renewable energy kits in Veliko Ocijevo, making it the first village in Bosnia and Herzegovina completely running on renewable energy - solar for electricity and domestic hot water and biomass for heating.

A primary school in Ostrog, Croatia gets outfitted with solar panels (Photo: UNDP in Croatia)

Croatia: Innovative school uses crowdfunding for solar power

When the Ostrog Elementary School community in Kaštela decided to create the first energy independent school in Croatia, they turned to crowd funding to supplement $10,000 seed funding from UNDP RBEC.

Using the fundraising website Indiegogo, Ostrog School raised an additional $10,000. They combined this with the UNDP's seed funding, and an additional $12,000 from local and live concert donations. The local county provided additional funds that were used for hydro and thermal insulation of the roof, as did a private company. All told, the school raised US$ 120,000 thus showing how crowdfunding can be a good way to attract further investment.

The school lights are being changed to efficient LED lights, and a 25kW solar power plant is being built on the school's roof. Soon, Ostrog Elementary School will actually be electrical energy independent, with the school annually producing as much electricity as it is consumes.

Known for its lush botanical gardens, thriving greenhouse and efforts toward environmental protection, Ostrog wants to develop a cost- and energy-saving model to help Croatia's 2,000 elementary schools produce energy through the installation of renewable systems, retrofitted buildings and a hands-on approach to environmental literacy among their students.

The next steps for Ostrog Elementary School are to find a way how to switch from heating oil to biomass, and to help other schools to replicate what they've done.

Cyprus: Building alternative infrastructures for peace

In April 2015, Nicosia played host to [Build Peace](#), a large-scale gathering of peacebuilding practitioners and technologists from 61 countries to discuss ways to use technology to build 'alternative infrastructures' for peace.

The profound significance of the conference location was underlined by technologies that ignore physical boundaries to optimize opportunities for citizen-led peace making.

Peacebuilders and activists from around the world gather in Cyprus (Photo: Build Peace)

UNDP in Cyprus used Build Peace 2015 to showcase three initiatives that set new standards in UNDP's work on conflict transformation:

The first one was the Social Cohesion and Reconciliation (SCORE) Index, a smart tool to measure peace in societies around the world. Flexible and versatile, SCORE looks at reconciliation and social cohesion – two main components of peace – and allows peacemakers to answer complex questions which can potentially anticipate the most significant avenues for transforming conflict dynamics and leading to willingness for political compromise. UNDP in Cyprus created an online digital platform to visualize and capture the SCORE index results. The platform currently hosts data from Cyprus and Bosnia and Herzegovina (www.scoreforpeace.org), with a SCORE for Nepal near completion.

The Cyprus Dialogue Forum: UNDP in Cyprus created a political space for a structured, sustained dialogue process that allows politicians and business, as well as trade unions and NGO leaders to connect with the formal peace negotiations, and provide recommendations to political leaders. The Cyprus Dialogue Forum was launched just as the formal negotiations resumed in Spring 2015. The Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaderships embraced the Forum as a valuable feedback loop, which will allow the wider Cypriot society to engage with the political process.

Finally, UNDP in Cyprus' flagship peace innovation platform, Mahallae, responds to the on-going challenge of involving ordinary citizens in the Cyprus peace process. Mahallae is a digital neighbourhood for civic engagement which capitalizes on the opportunities that the rapidly changing technological landscape presents, and has led to several innovations in broadening the space for Cypriots to participate in peacebuilding.

The word Mahallae translates into "neighbourhood" in Greek, Turkish and several other languages. The platform is structured around three digital spaces:

1) **Collaborate** is a social innovation space that gives innovators opportunities to get funding and support for their ideas, share knowledge and create partnerships.
2) **Civil mapping** is a collection of data visualization tools that showcases Cypriot civil society's contributions to civic engagement and peace building.
3) **Interactive tools**, a digital store, offers social innovation tools, like games, maps and videos.

Georgia: Designing with citizens

The post-2015 consultations helped kick-start innovation work at UNDP in Georgia. Citizens overwhelmingly expressed a desire for better engagement with the government and greater participation in decision-making. UNDP began exploring and testing new ways for citizens and public servants to engage in the co-design of social services, collaboratively redefine the policy agenda, and help build the space for more citizen-led initiatives.

These efforts inspired an emergeing new team within the government: an innovation policy team in the Ministry of Justice's Public Service Design Agency (PSDA). This heralds a new way for government and citizens to collaborate. Consequently, the thinking behind policy-making shifted from problem identification to finding assets available that the government could draw on for better results. With refreshing its offering of policy services, the innovation lab attracted traditional donors like Sweden that saw potential in investing in novel ways of enhancing the relationship between citizens and the government.

The Government of Georgia and UNDP ran "Diplohack", a three-day marathon where citizens, organizations, and policymakers worked on priority issues raised by the citizens themselves. This led to *Rupori* (Amplifier), a crowdsourced platform that collects citizen feedback and collates it into policy suggestions for local authorities, and to the "Zebra Hunting" app which addresses road safety and promotes pedestrian rights in Tbilisi.

These efforts and results were recognized globally when the Government of Georgia was invited to present the early results of its innovation policy team at the 2015 United Arab Emirates (UAE) Government Summit, Shaping Future Governments.

Redesigning public services? Prototype, test and scale up

Tasked by the Georgian Government to make public services more accessible and better able to meet citizens' needs, Georgia set up the PSDA Innovation Lab in 2014 to drive innovation and knowledge management, and a re-design of public services from the human centred design perspective.

Assisted by UNDP, with funding from the SIDA, the PSDA Innovative Service Lab uses a bottom-up approach to build an internal culture of innovation: small teams of public sector experts brainstorm and work with citizens and businesses to launch experimental projects that can bring rapid improvement to service delivery at low cost.

Inspired by the UK's experience in government-driven service design innovations, PSDA Lab staff is trained in design thinking and behavioural science approaches to service development needs and draws on the international expertise of the Nesta, FutureGov, and BIT.

Georgia's innovation lab goes outside of the box for new solutions (Photo: UNDP in Georgia)

The PSDA team decided to first tackle the challenge of using electronic ID cards use. Despite providing fast, inexpensive online transactions and allowing easy access to government services, not many citizens adopted the use of the e-cards following its introduction in 2011.

To address citizen needs and build awareness, the team came up with several potential solutions for what an e-card-use promotional campaign based around a new website could look like. PSDA ventured outside the lab and tested several prototypes directly with citizens and potential end users, who in turn picked their favourite pages and described which features made the site eye-catching, self-explanatory and intuitive. This feedback fed into the final prototype of the site, which will become a fully developed digital version in the near future.

Building prototypes and testing their viability with end users proved that a design-thinking approach minimizes risks and increases the likelihood of success. This allowed the PSDA team to prototype, test different options without risking large amounts of time and money, and scale up to successfully roll out the final user-friendly website. While the full impact of this innovative approach on increased demand for the new ID cards is yet to be understood, new clients from inside the government are already consulting the lab on issues ranging from redesigning the use of public libraries to tackling unemployment.

Giving the hearing and speech impaired access to emergency hotlines

Georgia's national emergency hotline, 112, is one of the country's most-dialed numbers. Run by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, its website is an exhaustive database of emergency

services and numbers; but, until recently, it had only been reached through a voice call, making it entirely inaccessible for citizens with communication disabilities.

What might a truly universal 112 emergency service look like?

This was the starting point of a three-day "designathon" where citizens with communication disabilities, sign language interpreters, tech experts and web designers took the lead to prototype new solutions to improve the 112 experience. The Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia and 112 Emergency Services, as well as the Deaf Union of Georgia, were present, and PSDA provided institutional support for the new solutions; external resources like the Waag Society, Creative Commons, and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency provided investment or expertise support.

The workshop included a step-by-step simulation of an emergency starting from the initial call to service delivery. After this, 112 rolled out new video and SMS services that were designed with those who would be using the services in the first place – people with disabilities. This made Georgia only the fourth country in Europe to have both services available to all citizens.

Co-designing new services in Georgia (Photo: UNDP in Georgia)

Peace Park video game builds peace between Georgian and Abkhaz youth

In Georgia, peer-to-peer contact between Abkhaz and Georgian youth is rare. UNDP and social tech startup Elva had previously set up an online platform that allowed UNDP and national partners to track the real-time safety and security situation in South Ossetia. While the platform addressed an immediate need for real-time information, it fell short of building bridges among the communities. This is exactly what the new initiative sought to do, testing the assumption that the online gaming platform might provide an alternative venue to inspire empathy and cherish different perspectives between citizens of different backgrounds.

Gaming and peacebuilding share an imperative for all sides to work together and openly

communicate. In encouraging positive interactions, computer gaming could break the fear of the unknown and promote collaboration across cultural divides. This was the basis for Georgia's 2014 Social Good Summit which brought together youth from Georgia and Abkhazia alongside UNDP, the European Union, Elva, and videogame designers to debut Peace Park.

This online game combines fun and strategy as it challenges players to restore peace in a communal park by understanding visitors' interests and making wise decisions. By connecting peers from across the dividing lines, Peace Park aims to transform online players into peace brokers. Peace Park has since won an honourable mention at the 2014 global PeaceApp competition; in two public Play-for-Peace weekends this year, it brought together over 150 players from countries in and around the South Caucuses.

Kazakhstan: Online monitoring lets residents control the heat

In most Kazakhstan towns with a population below 50,000, people in apartments blocks connected to central heating networks must pay fixed bills for heating rather rather than pay a fee based on individual energy consumption. This gives little incentive to conserve energy use. To change this and look for a solution, UNDP Kazakhstan joined with the government to install a smart system to monitor online energy consumption in apartment blocks in a small town near Astana.

In collaboration with local heat supplier Astanateplotransit and working with the Eleron Association of Home Owners, the team installed meters and online monitoring systems in eight apartment blocks. In addition, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme provided funds to make engineering repairs in a pilot house and install smart heating, an automated heat substation to automatically regulate heat supply depending on ambient temperatures.

Initial results showed a 15 percent heat-energy saving in the pilothouse, with significant savings anticipated for the apartment blocks. Residents can now control their heat consumption and manage their bills using the online monitoring system, giving them real incentives to save energy.

Kosovo: Fighting corruption with open data

Innovation has opened UNDP in Kosovo up to new ideas and ways of working. It has done so by focusing on using citizens' insights to redefine policy problems and design solutions, and by creating a neutral space for novel collaborations with public officials. Working with new technologies and user-centred methodologies has helped UNDP leverage youth skills and expertise in a country where 53 percent of the population is under 25 years of age.

Using web, video, infographics, mobile phone technologies, open and big data sources, social media, and other modern communication platforms, UNDP has connected Kosovo's youth to political participation and anti-corruption channels, despite low public trust in institutions. In three years since its design, Kallxo, an online platform enabling citizens to report corruption has grown into one of the most trusted institutions in Kosovo today.

UNDP applied collaborative foresight with the help of FutureScaper to source ideas directly from young people about youth unemployment, and partnered with the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts to bring together youth and policymakers to redesign public spaces to incentivize greater engagement in decision making.

Partners throughout Kosovo have welcomed UNDP's focus on innovation. The city of Gjakova, for example, opened up its last seven years of public procurement data, giving citizens unprecedented access to data on local contracts. This attitude is opening up entirely new ways of doing development in Kosovo.

Kallxo: Crowd mapping corruption in Kosovo

Citizen involvement in reporting corruption traditionally has been low in Kosovo. To help fight this, UNDP in Kosovo and Internews Kosovo launched Kallxo.com, an online platform that uses Kosovo's high internet penetration to encourage citizens to report corruption cases via an Ushahidi-based platform. Begun as an inexpensive (under $10,000) and quick prototype for people to easily report corruption, Kallxo has grown into one of the most trusted platforms in Kosovo.

After the initial overwhelming response, and with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, the full platform was launched in late 2012, on a tri-lingual platform (Albanian, Serbian and English). It has had a powerful impact: over 5,000 citizen reports, 70,000 page views per month, more than 60,000 "likes" on Facebook, and over 400 articles and TV reports produced based on citizens' claims.

Corruption in Kosovo? Contat Kallxo

Kallxo transforms data into knowledge to encourage civic action and engagement, and enables the mapping of corruption across variety of sectors. It then shares this information, along with tech solutions, investigative journalism, perception surveys and articles on reported corruption cases, to promote public administration reform and raise awareness. A recent opinion poll reveals that Kallxo.com is the fourth most trusted source to report corruption in Kosovo. It also has the highest number of reported corruption cases received.

The power of the platform comes from its strong network of partners – Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, the NGO LENS, and the media – and its ability to influence policy through regular meetings with official institutions like the Prosecutorial Council, the Judicial Council, the Anti-Corruption Agency, police, customs officials, the Bar Association, Office of Disciplinary Prosecutor, Office of General Auditor, Financial Investigation Unit, and the Agency for Sequestration and Confiscation of Seized Assets.

Building an open data coalition to fight corruption

In Kosovo, public "open" data is not easily accessible or available in a user-friendly form. This makes it difficult for citizens to track the process of public procurement.

For digital Pristina: Digital capacity development in Kosovo (Photo: UNDP in Kosovo)

In October 2014, the city of Gjakova took a major step forward by releasing its 2011-2013 procurement data in machine-readable form to enable a more transparent view into the municipality's spending practices. The data formed the basis for e-prokurimi.org, an online platform that visualizes procurement data in a way that enables citizens to easily detect trends and patterns. Using an algorithm to auto-detect corruption red flags, e-prokurimi highlights suspicious tenders on the local level, and combines information on suppliers, city size, development priorities and contract size to support municipalities better allocate public finances.

This effort was successful due to an alliance between municipalities and UNDP with the Kosovo youth tech sector – from Open Data Kosovo to Girls Coding Kosovo – and many other young people who received 'digital capacity building' in processing and analysing open data from UNDP. It also built momentum with other municipalities who wanted support in getting more value out of existing data they possessed.

This led to a number of joint meetings like the "For Digital Pristina" hackathon, the Open Data Meet up Gjakova, and the BarCamp Marathon where city authorities worked with youth to use data for more transparent and efficient decision making. While data lost on shelves in reports is of little use to authorities or citizens, e-prokurimi.org showed that only by bringing interested parties together can data be used to improve service delivery and lead to less corrupt public services.

The e-prokurimi.org site has since grown to include data from other municipalities including Pristina, Ferizaj/Urosevac, Gjilan/Gnjilane, Vitia/Vitina, Hani i Elezit/Elez Han, and hopes to expand to other municipalities soon.

Using foresight to understand Kosovo youth unemployment

Training young designers on infographic creation in Prizren (Photo: UNDP in Kosovo)

In Kosovo, the overall unemployment rate is 35.1 percent, and eight out of ten people under 25 cannot find a job. While there is no shortage of diagnoses of the problem from international experts, and institutions and think tanks in Kosovo, there is a lack of efforts to understand youth insights and perceptions. UNDP turned to the collaborative foresight methodology FutureScaper to get young people's perspective. The aim was to then use those insights to deconstruct cultural, structural and other elements that may contribute to youth unemployment.

Unlike more traditional means of inquiry such as surveys and opinion polls, Futurescaper is an approach which helps identify cause and effect relationships, enabling UNDP to explore outcomes of interactions, analyse proposed solutions, and try to answer the key question: What factors can improve youth employment?

Many results from the exercise confirmed existing hypotheses – young people want to get new skills and opportunities, and they want more social equality and decreased corruption. Young people indicated a strong connection between better employment opportunities for women and girls, and a drop in gender-based violence. Further, youth believed that increased trust in local authorities is best achieved through decreasing corruption. Specifically, they believe that encouraging more investment and boosting employment across ethnic lines is likely to lead to a decrease in the informal economy and poverty.

Surprisingly, some 200 young exercise participants helped highlight a link between corruption and unemployment that previously had not received much attention. Young people shared peer experiences of giving up hope for job offers due to discouraging perceptions of nepotism and corruption – a further demotivating factor that seemed to make young people less willing to study and acquire skills.

The exercise filtered out strong messages and insights from the youth on the topic of employment. It was done inexpensively and quickly, and in a manner that recognized the

young participants as experts on the topic of youth unemployment. Combined, these insights provided a rich basis for partners and UNDP interventions moving forward.

Kyrgyzstan: Micronarratives to fight youth unemployment

Faced with stubbornly high nationwide youth unemployment and ballooning labour migration numbers in south Kyrgyzstan, UNDP turned to micronarratives – personal stories that reflect user experiences – and asked young people how they perceived job opportunities in Kyrgyzstan. Follow-up questions then teased out details to discover the barriers that youth face and explored underlying causes before using the results to come up with solutions.

While a majority said that they would prefer to work in Kyrgyzstan, the difficult economic situation saw many men saying they would leave and become economic migrants to support their families.

Kyrgyzstan makes the shift to micronarratives (Photo: UNDP in Kyrgyzstan)

Interestingly, nearly half of the respondents chose not to provide reasons for unemployment. Of those who did respond, nearly half said that family or friends helped them secure a job. Within the narratives, there was a strong perception of corruption - that bribes would help them find work.

The stories told by women – who were 59 percent of all respondents – indicated that family reasons, including taking care of children, played a primary role in their unemployment. Difficult economic conditions and lack of skills for women were also highlighted. Respondents wrote about taking low-paid jobs as they could not afford higher or post-secondary education. Although a majority of respondents said that gender made no difference in job-hunting results, some said being young and female made it difficult to find a job. Some of these findings confirmed what was already known, while some have opened new opportunities for UNDP to jointly develop new initiatives with youth, based on the findings revealed by the micronarratives.

Moldova: Nudging towards success

UNDP began its innovation journey in Moldova with two goals in mind: to improve development results and to work with innovation champions in the government.

Mindful that major innovation breakthroughs happen outside UNDP, the Moldova UNDP Country Office invested in establishing knowledge partnerships and networks with the world's leading innovation hubs, such as Denmark's MindLab, BIT, FutureGov, Nesta, and Emerson College in the United States. This enabled UNDP to be a connector, bringing expertise and a knowledge network of people and government together, thereby enabling the scaling up of successful innovation based policy interventions.

Focusing on non-technology aspects of innovation like human-centred design, behavioural insights and randomized controlled trials, the UNDP office in Moldova developed an entirely new set of development services for the government to address. These issues ranged from community policing and maternal benefits to health, urban poverty, and education reform. Randomized control trials were used to evaluate the effectiveness of virtually observed home treatment for TB patients and support to SMEs. Both evaluations will inform amended national public policies.

Most significantly, UNDP's innovation efforts led to setting up Moldova's own innovation lab (MiLab) – an experimental space for a variety of partners to test out new approaches to policymaking. This allowed the government and UNDP to better respond to citizens' needs, co-own solutions, and unlock empathy with better government-citizen interactions.

A joint initiative by the e-Government Centre of Moldova and UNDP in Moldova with the private sector and other partners, MiLab reflects the government's interest in using UNDP support to facilitate civic engagement and mainstream public sector innovation. The government and UNDP now have a pipeline of joint projects to facilitate re-design of public services, with MiLab assisting.

These approaches, never before tried in Moldova, put UNDP ahead of the local development curve. Their strong and visible impact created demand for similar new approaches from the government and donors, including the UK, Norway and the SDC, and led to the institutionalisation of UNDP's applied public policy and service innovation support to the government.

Fighting multi drug-resistant TB with behavioural insights and tech

TB remains a huge public health challenge in Moldova. Despite recent indications of fewer TB-related deaths, almost one-third of newly diagnosed Moldova TB patients, and two-thirds of those returning for treatment, have multi drug-resistant TB (MDR-TB) - which is trickier and more expensive to treat. One of the main reasons is low adherence to medication after patients leave the hospital. UNDP in Moldova and the Ministry of Health sought to understand this counter-intuitive behaviour with the support of BIT.

Initial research showed two options that might improve compliance:

1) Video observed treatment, where patients simply take their pill in front of their computer and send a video message;

2) Drug home delivery.

Experimenting with behavioural science in Moldova (Photo: UNDP in Moldova)

Video observed treatment seemed a more effective and lower cost option; however, little reliable existing data existed to support this view. Furthermore, the reporting system was skewed with both doctors and patients incentivized to report high compliance. Getting accurate data to determine the best out-patient treatment option became the critical issue.

The solution was a randomized control trial, run in 2015 by UNDP and local partner Act for Involvement (AFI). Thanks to additional resources provided by the Center for Health Policies and Studies, an implementer of Global Fund projects in Moldova, and free Internet services from mobile network operator Moldcell, the trial uses tablet devices at participating polyclinics in Chisinau to properly measure treatment compliance at the directly observed treatment locations for the control group.

Walking in users' shoes

For many in Moldova, public services remain bureaucratic, alien, and inaccessible. Material aid, for example, is meant to be a helping hand for people who've suffered losses from fire, floods and health issues. Monthly childcare benefits are a high-impact public service to ensure minimum coverage of child-rearing expenses.

How does it look on paper? Prototyping a new platform (Photos: Cristina Lisii)

Field research indicated that users have found both services complicated, non-transparent, unfriendly and so time-consuming that it often takes two months to receive disbursement and 26 separate steps to access the service. Many give up.

After building service journey maps that outlined the many steps necessary to get monthly childcare or material aid services, MiLab invited MindLab, the Danish Government's innovation lab to facilitate sessions in December 2014 where public officials could work together to find ways to improve public service delivery.

The mayor of Ciuciuleni, a small village, participated in a session to simplify delivery of emergency material aid service. Local authorities were asked to identify user profiles using results of ethnographic interviews, put themselves in users' shoes and identify concrete solutions directly for these beneficiaries. By the end of the session, with the mayor's buy-in, a prototype for a new, simpler service journey for material aid delivery began to take shape.

The National House for Social Insurance (NHSI) officials responded by developing a new electronic service to simplify childcare benefit delivery. In the new system, citizens are no longer expected to be the conduit between different bureaucracies. Instead an online application system requiring minimal personal information kick starts a coordinated and substantially simplified public service delivery process, with any other data exchanged between stakeholders in the back-office. The prototype of this new public service was launched in the spring of 2015.

Making the police stations in Moldova more user friendly

In September 2014, UNDP in Moldova invited FutureGov and a design and architecture specialists Studio TILT to join a weeklong session at a local police station in Chișinău.

The aim was to turn a community police station into a more effective, user-friendly workspace that would serve the community's needs effectively and in a collaborative manner.

How do we make a police station more open? Codesigning in Moldova (Photo: UNDP in Moldova)

Studying the police officers' user-experience revealed issues ranging from inadequate hardware, long working hours, cases of false allegations, and low awareness of the public about community policing. The perspective of the community was very different – it called for an inviting police station, designed conducive to new ways of interaction between the community and police. People wanted privacy to discuss delicate matters, suggested having an officer-on-duty at reception, and asked for a better-lit and more visible police station. Using this data, the team then built and tested a prototype of a more accessible, user-friendly community police station with free wireless internet, information boards and clear, user-friendly signage.

These suggestions will guide the refurbishment of the police station in 2015, and hopefully overhaul the way Moldova police communicate with their local community.

Montenegro: Being responsible with innovation

UNDP in Montenegro was an early adopter of the innovation agenda in UNDP, seeking to leverage it strategically in four specific ways:

- **New ways of community engagement** – Test the extent to which social media could increase citizens' influence on policy development and lead to more collaborative formulation of policies;

- **Improved service delivery through uncovering user insights** – Use technology, science and research to improve public service delivery through more targeted information and incorporation of user-perspective in delivery;

- **Leverage the best international development knowledge** – How might we use networks and online media to connect to and use the best international expertise for solving Montenegro's development problems;

- **Skills development** – What is the skill set of the 21st century development worker and public servant? How does UNDP build staff and national partner skills so they make the best use of new technologies, citizen engagement, and new media?

This approach enabled UNDP to provide a very unique set of services to the government and other partners nationally, differentiating it from other development partners. Following early successes both the government and traditional donors became invested partners in the innovation agenda in Montenegro.

In 2012, the country joined the Open Government Partnership, a multilateral initiative to harness the powers of new technologies to empower citizens, increase transparency and fight corruption. This gave technology-enabled civic engagement projects an institutional home. Since then, UNDP in Montenegro's partner network has grown, its service portfolio has matured, and it has greater impact on the local policy agenda. The following examples tell part of that story.

Be Responsible mobile app lets citizens report illegal activities

Citizens in Montenegro are now equipped with a new mobile app, **Be Responsible**, that transforms them into vigilant reporters and helps the government recover lost tax funds for

public works projects to benefit the country. Avoided taxation from retail, tourism, and construction amounts to an estimated 20 percent of Montenegro's GDP.

The app and hotlines are key elements of the Ministry of Finance's, *Be Responsible. It's up to you. Zero Percent Grey Economy* campaign. This gives citizens a quick and easy way to report grey economy irregularities: fiscal receipt abuse, black market labour or consumers' rights violations.

Since late 2013, over 4,000 civic reporters have disclosed 7,000 cases of fake fiscal receipts, illegal labour and violation of consumers' rights. Acting upon these reports, authorities have imposed close to 1,500,000 euros in fines.

The government commits half of any fines collected to community projects that are voted on publicly. So far, 11 community projects have each received 50,000 euros in donations.

The original app was developed by a team of teachers and students of the University of Montenegro's Faculty of Electrical Engineering as part of UNDP's 2013 Open Ideas for Montenegro, a social innovation competition for citizens and government.

For the campaign, the team modified the app to make reporting easy and allow tracing, showing the status and response from authorities. Inspection results are published daily on www.budiodgovoran.me , which recorded over 822,500 page visits by June 2015. This has led to a continuous transparency loop and puts more pressure on businesses to comply with tax regulations. Media also use the platform to report on tax violations and imposed fines.

In September 2014, the campaign won a major award from the Open Government Partnership's for promoting citizen involvement in implementing public policy.

The Be Responsible project was implemented by UNDP in Montenegro in close partnership with the Montenegro's Ministry of Finance, Tax and Directorate for Inspection Affairs and academia, with financial support from the Government of Montenegro and British Embassy Podgorica.

Montenegro's biggest-ever social innovation challenge

Begun in 2012, UNDP's Open Ideas for Montenegro is a social innovation project, centred on the principles of open innovation and collaborative design. Each year, citizens of Montenegro participate in an innovation competition. Entirely focused on citizens, Open Ideas crowdsources the community to identify problems and lets citizens and Government explore ways to solve them with the aid of technology.

The latest social innovation challenge from UNDP in Montenegro, "Open Ideas for Beautiful Montenegro" (Otvorene ideje za lijepu Crnu Goru) is the biggest yet. Inspired by the success of the Be Responsible app, five mayors have invited citizens to come up with new ways to use 55,000 square metres of dilapidated state properties.

Located in Montenegro's less developed northern region, the five properties, which include abandoned military barracks, a dilapidated sports hall and two national museums were allocated by mayors looking for innovative ways to re-develop rundown or abandoned state properties. The aim is to create new jobs, boost social inclusion, reduce poverty and create new cultural and tourism opportunities.

Moving away from technology and looking for greater participation, the 2015 UNDP Open Ideas challenge has received a record number of proposals: 279 applications, over 10,000

online votes and 40,000 website page views that selected five winning solutions, through a mix of expert and public vote.

Past Open Ideas partners include NGO DigitalizujMe (2013), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Integration (2014-2015), the Directorate for Youth and Sports (2014), the Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism (2015), and the municipalities of Berane, Mojkovac, Rozaje, Savnik and Zabljak (2015).

UNDP Innovation specialist Milica Begovic discusses engaging new partners for development

Listening and saying YES to Youth Employment Solutions

Faced with a national unemployment rate of over 40 percent for Montenegrins aged 15-24 at the end of 2013, UNDP launched the Youth Employment Solutions (YES) initiative in the frameworks of the Joint UN Youth Programme, where young people could meet online and off to discuss youth unemployment, their biggest concerns, and devise and implement solutions for them.

The YES team created a web portal that drew 10,400 unique visits. After extensive discussions using new technologies and face-to-face activities that included a three-day workshop with 40 young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, the YES portal generated 14 unemployment-fighting ideas.

In June 2014, the online community and an expert jury of representatives from UN System in Montenegro, Montenegro's Directorate for Youth and Sports, and partner NGOs Forum MNE and Expeditio selected four of these ideas to receive micro-grants for implementation.

The winning proposals, which kicked off in early 2015 and generated work for 200 young people were:

- *From idea to employment,* which helps youth start their own businesses by providing information on opportunities, and assists with business plan development and connections to mentors;
- *Skills for rural tourism,* which promotes self-employment in rural tourism;
- *Greenhouse production,* provides greenhouse skills and knowledge to youth, and awarded a greenhouse to grow fruit and vegetables to the two best business plans;
- A website developed and run by young people from Rozaje to promote and book private accommodations in Montenegro and give information on seasonal tourism jobs.

Serbia: Reporting health sector corruption through SMS

The Serbian NGO Srbija u Pokretu (Serbia on the move), with the support of UNDP and the Ministry of Health, set out to tackle corruption in the health sector with an SMS corruption reporting service.

The health sector is one of the most relied upon public services, yet is widely recognized as highly corrupt, and citizens are routinely over-charged for services. Interactions with healthcare systems are often extremely stressful, with patients forced to make important and sensitive decisions in a rush, leaving many vulnerable and at risk.

The timely need for a corruption-reporting service was recognized in the high number of reports, with 200 text messages received the first week alone. Each SMS is followed up with a call back and relevant cases are then forwarded to the Ministry of Health and other relevant offices. Not only will this service help hold the health services to account, but the reports will also provide data that can be analysed to discern which practices are most vulnerable to corruption, and which can consequently be used in future policy formation.

Tajikistan: The story of Savri Badalova

Power shortages during the winter are common in Tajikistan which has a vast potential for solar energy. Yet there remains little solar energy experience on the ground. Today in Tajikistan, water is heated with firewood, which both takes time and contributes to deforestation. In addition, the use of wood in lower efficiency stoves has contributed to air pollution, causing additional health risks. With high numbers of men working in seasonal employment in Russia, UNDP designed a pilot project to focus on the women who remain behind.

Savri Badalova lives in Jilikul district in Tajikistan, 50km from the Afghan border. A housewife raising her children and relying on remittances her husband sends to her from Russia, Savri had few marketable skills that could help her earn more to improve her challenging life.

Today, thanks to new skills learned at a DIY solar project in Jilikul district organized by UNDP, Savri is one of the most successful women in her district. Her life has changed dramatically and for the better: she now drives a tractor, fixes stoves and TVs, and many seek her repair services. As a result, her income increased and her life has also improved.

Empowering women in Tajikistan to become promoters of green energy (Photo: UNDP)

"There is no need for me to constantly stay at home to care for my children," says Savri. "We now have a solar water heater system that I made myself. I can now invest my time earning money for my family. My new skills also mean I can help my community by installing solar water heater systems for others. The solar system has cut my electricity bills and firewood costs, and improved my family's hygiene and sanitation conditions."

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Building apps and creating jobs

In 2014, UNDP in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering of Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje launched the country's first social innovation hub. Its mission was to make the most of the latest technology to tackle the country's social and economic challenges and advance human development.

Guided by its slogan, *Think big. Start small*, the Hub has since tested and prototyped nearly a dozen exciting ideas, some of them game-changers. These include **Disaster app**, the first public safety mobile app in the Balkans region, which has been replicated in Kosovo, and gives users information on dangerous events like earthquakes and floods and potential weather hazards such as heavy snow.

Other social innovation hub achievements include the **My Municipality** development planning initiative; **Skopje Green Routes** travel planner, an SMS and Facebook application that is helping farmers reduce pollution, and **PRV.mk**, a website and mobile app informing young people about the latest available jobs.

Thinking big, starting small in Skopje (Photo: UNDP)

The hub works by bringing together a powerful network of social entrepreneurs, community activists, non- and for-profit organizations. They share ideas, insights and experiences, and collaborate to devise creative solutions to long-standing social and development challenges. The hub's resources are impressive: Over three thousand students and professors, as well as direct contact with over one hundred companies from the private sector.

Finding work just got easier with prv.mk

Despite a highly educated young population, with almost 70 percent of high school graduates going on to university, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia suffers from a high youth unemployment rate of nearly 50 percent. Over half of the country's youth own smartphones and 90 percent have access to the internet.

To reach them, prv.mk, the country's first one-stop app for job seekers, was launched in 2014 with a brand new website. Within a year, it had nearly two million visitors and over 10,000 active users. The prv.mk mobile app and its website www.prv.mk bring employers and potential employees closer by providing a one-stop site for job vacancies, internship offers, entry-level job placements, volunteer positions and more.

The app, available for free at Google Play, was developed as an innovative solution to tackle the country's unemployment by UNDP, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the National Employment agency, and the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering at Ss. Cyril and Methodius University.

Young people were involved in every step of PRV.MK's development – even coming up with its name – to make sure it matched their job-hunting needs.

My Municipality: A super tool for greater public inclusion

Over 6,500 citizens in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia now use My Municipality, an app that provides a new way for citizens to communicate their top priorities for local development to decision-makers.

Through the installation of user-friendly touch-screens and an interactive website, the project has enabled citizens in four pilot municipalities to identify — with just a few clicks — the development issues and policies that matter most to them and their families.

The tool helps the municipalities and UNDP to gather valuable data about citizens' priorities, and changing trends in needs by different population groups. These data provide an excellent basis for policy-makers to make more informed decisions at the local level.

The initial priorities identified in the pilot municipalities allowed UNDP to fund and help implement small-scale projects:

- In Kumanovo, citizens prioritized the need to improve opportunities for entrepreneurship and business. A new project has enabled 20 Roma men and women to complete a training programme to build their professional skills;
- In Prilep, citizens wanted to increase internship opportunities for unemployed youth. As a result, a local civil society organization, working in partnership with the municipality, has already succeeded in gathering more than 250 representatives from universities, high schools, and private companies to participate in events aimed at raising awareness about internship opportunities;

- Tetovo residents saw improved education for pupils from socially disadvantaged families as a priority. A local civil society organization, in partnership with the multi-ethnic primary school, developed a special programme for educational activities for children from disadvantaged families. The programme engaged tutors to help these pupils improve their knowledge in mathematics and languages;
- In Suto Orizari, citizens made improved channels to share information on employment opportunities a priority. New channels to do so were quickly set up, including better access to employment coaches and mentors at the municipality's Roma information centre.

Inaugurating the My Municipality tool (Photo: UNDP in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

Early warning for disasters: It's just a swipe away

Global warming has increased climate variability with associated meteorological emergencies throughout Europe and the CIS. Governments and citizens must prepare for emergencies and work to plan to reduce risks to life and communities in a disaster. This need is particularly acute in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, which is exposed to natural hazards and floods in increasing frequency.

Fortunately, new sources of data provide real-time insights into needs and assets of the population as well as a possibility of a real-time risk assessment.

The new Disaster App, developed by UNDP and supported by the Crisis Management Centre, enables emergency services to use smart phones and tablets to keep people informed with up-to-date and on-demand easy-to-navigate disaster news and information. Citizens can report problems as well as inform authorities of assets and skills they can 'donate' in managing disasters.

The region's first public safety mobile app, [Disaster app](), can reduce the potential impact of a disaster, especially when information is needed in a hurry. Developed by students and staff at the Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering of Skopje University, Disaster App is user-friendly. It draws on data from the National Crisis Management Centre to quickly and efficiently share disaster awareness and prevention and preparation information. As a next step, the team is collaborating with telecom providers to use data from mobile phones as a proxy for how citizens move about the city, which should enable close to real-time risk assessment.

Turkey: For a more productive southeast Anatolia

While blessed with agricultural and renewable energy resources, Turkey's southeast Anatolia region still lags behind the rest of the country economically and socially. Home to ten percent of Turkey's population; it produces barely five percent of national gross value added. Conventional regional development planning and policies have been so far unable to help Turkey's southeast Anatolia region meet national development standards and catch up with other regions.

To find solutions that would help southeast Anatolia grow faster, UNDP in Turkey tested three scenarios to see what impact they would have by 2023, the centenial anniversary of the founding of the Turkish Republic.

The first was a business-as-usual scenario, with southeast Anatolia not catching up to national economic and social standards. The second scenario was based on a future vision where southeast Anatolia's current economic and social problems were solved. Both were forecast models that used conventional macroeconomic analysis and growth modelling dynamics based on current national and international trends to project the region's future.

The third scenario, however, used the foresight planning tool Futurescaper to backcast – defining a desirable future then crowdsourcing expert opinion and work backwards to identify the actions, policies and programmes that would connect that future to now. It will examine alternative solutions that would position southeast Anatolia by 2023 as Turkey's greenest and most inclusive regional economy.

Not surprisingly, the first scenario showed that business as usual would not help southeast Anatolia reach its 2023 targets and catch up with the rest of Turkey. The second scenario - where southeast Anatolia's problems were solved - was only possible with vast capital, massive talent creation and outstanding long-term performance; yes this would not occur before 2030.

The third scenario, backcasting with Futurescaper, specifically targeted experts with field experience in regional development. It assessed their expert perceptions to produce policy options that promote fast, stable, green and inclusive growth that would meet the target of a green and economically strong southeast Anatolia. Going forward, UNDP in Turkey will work with government policymakers and regional development experts to develop policies and laws that will support this scenario.

Turkmenistan: New tech promote energy conservation

Following the President's call to save on Turkmenistan's abundant energy resources, the construction of energy-efficient buildings became a priority. This wakeup call for the energy-

rich nation, where gas is almost free, has seen it search for innovative ways to manage energy in key sectors like its booming construction industry.

UNDP's solution is to work on improving energy efficiency in residential construction. Its GEF-funded project will pay particular attention to making building codes promote energy-efficiency and to using efficient new methods for residential building design.

The first step is working with UNDP's partner, the Ministry of Construction and Architecture of Turkmenistan, to update legal and regulatory mechanisms so they can implement energy conservation measures in residential building design and construction. Preliminary calculations estimated that revised energy conservation building codes would yield 32-38 percent in heat savings and 5-20 percent for electricity usage in typical buildings.

The ultimate aim is to introduce a "Building Energy Passport," an official document that confirms an energy audit was carried out during design, construction, and operation. Energy audits will then gain momentum, and become a main mechanism to encourage builders and homeowners to use energy-efficient technologies.

Secondly, UNDP continues to work with its key partners, Turkmengas, the Ministry of Communal Services, and the State Institute of Architecture and Construction, to produce Turkmen energy audit specialists. More than 100 energy audit specialists have been already trained and energy audits of 22 demonstration residential buildings in nine cities have been carried out so that recommendations can be made for the entire country.

Third, UNDP runs demonstration projects to test innovative approaches, technologies and equipment for energy-efficient design and construction in six demonstration residential buildings in Ashgabat. Early results indicate up to 25 percent reduction in energy consumption. Construction is funded by the state, while UNDP brings in new technology. Early results indicate that the energy-saving measures in the revised residential buildings in four pilot districts of Ashgabat could save nearly 10.0 million cubic meters of natural gas per year.

UNDP aims to promote the scale up of this innovation in partnership with Turkmenistan throughout its next programme.

Ukraine: Interactive map lets citizens map armed conflict damages

The conflict in eastern Ukraine, which started in April 2014 significantly damaged or destroyed critical infrastructure and limited access to areas caught up in fighting. UNDP in Ukraine engages citizens and volunteers in the conflict-torn regions of Donetsk and Lugansk in mapping the damages and planning recovery.

Photos and geolocations of around 3,000 damaged buildings, including homes, hospitals, schools, kindergartens and libraries, have already been uploaded to a web-based map through mobile devices.

The interactive map, found at redonbass.org, helps state and local authorities and international aid providers to assess, prioritize and support recovery needs for the region.
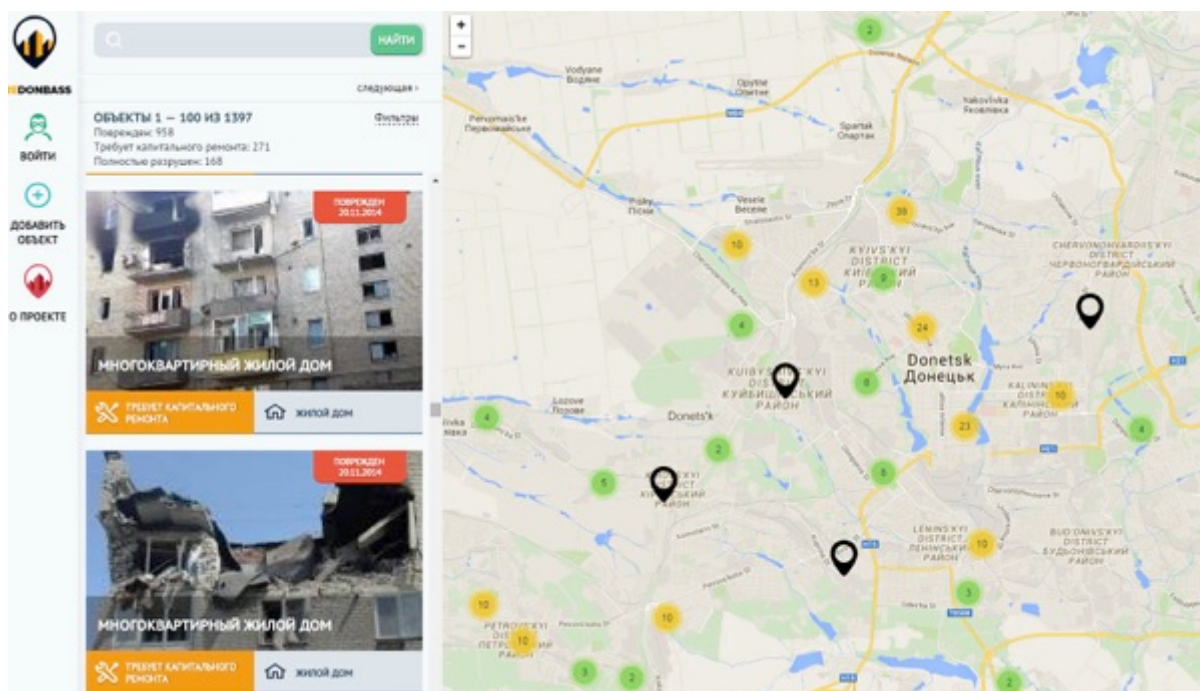
Real-time reporting on redonbass.org

"We are supporting people of Ukraine who are now facing great challenges caused by the armed conflict"- said Inita Pauloviča, UNDP's Deputy Country Director in Ukraine. "Together with national partners, UNDP is helping to restore critically important social infrastructure and effective work of local governments in eastern Ukraine; to create jobs and spur entrepreneurship among IDPs and host communities; and to promote reconciliation. Twenty social facilities for IDPs have already been renovated and re-equipped. Around forty are in the process of renovation. The Redonbass e-tool will help us to expand our work so that more people in need would be served."

The map and mobile application were created through a partnership between UNDP and the Ukrainian NGO Social Boost. Information from the map contributed to the Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment for Eastern Ukraine. UNDP was part of the assessment that brought the UN, the European Union, and the World Bank Group together to analyze the impact of the conflict and offer recommendations for short-term recovery and peacebuilding. The map also helps UNDP project engineers to analyze and identify critical infrastructure for social care and services that need to be restored.

Uzbekistan: DIY labs creating socially responsible young citizens

Young people in Uzbekistan are becoming socially responsible citizens and a driving force for community engagement and civic action. The DIY Lab first began as part of the UNDP's regional Scaling Up Fund, which aims to develop projects with a more adaptive approach. The Uzbekistan DIY lab now includes over 400 people from different ages and backgrounds.

Using inexpensive DIY activity tools like used tires and garbage, volunteers in open space labs in Samarkand, Bukhara, Ferghana, Nukus and Tashkent work on a range of activities including creating playgrounds and restoring public buildings. The DIY approach also involves public-private-community partnerships. Companies can directly order hand-made crafts from DIY volunteers. Future plans include remaking unused public places into DIY parks where anyone can create and enjoy co-creation.

Uzbekistan gets into the "DIY" spirit (Photo: Temur Ziadinov)

After highly publicized restorations of playgrounds to accommodate both children and the elderly, the most active socially responsible citizens have become TV stars and community celebrities. They continue to receive requests from public kindergartens and schools, children's hospitals and public recreation areas for similar DIY work.

For sustainability and ownership, a key condition for this citizen-driven initiative is that the community takes active part in restoration work or co-creation. Community engagement has always been an important part of local culture, and may explain the DIY labs' growing popularity.

III. Looking forward

In a rapidly evolving development landscape, applying new approaches and tools to policymaking has allowed UNDP RBEC and its partners to:

1) Continually re-examine traditional assumptions underlying policymaking and service delivery;

2) Bring in fresh perspectives and expertise;

3) Open up new possibilities and solutions to address key development issues facing countries in the region.

Innovative and collaborative approaches that actively engage citizens in finding solutions to their own challenges have demonstrated great effectiveness in UNDP's work throughout the

ECIS region over the past three years. This has led to the design of new solutions, a build-up of new skills and expertise, and new thinking that has reinforced UNDP's mandate and policy advice to governments in the region.

UNDP innovation experience throughout Europe and the CIS shows that by co-designing services with networked citizens, deploying real-time and open data for enhancing deliverability, and tapping into alternative funding sources, UNDP has the tools and knowhow to effectively tackle complex development issues.

Successful local implementation of the new goals and targets in the post-2015 agenda will require embracing innovation and its faster, more agile, participatory, and experimental approaches. Working together with citizens and partners, UNDP can deploy innovation to address some of the most ambitious and interlinked challenges in the new SDG agenda.

Testing solar lighting for a project in Tajikistan (Photo: UNDP in Croatia)

Abbreviations

AFI	Act for Involvement
ASAN	Azerbaijan Service and Assessment Network
BIT	Behavioural Insights Team
DIY	Do-It-Yourself
ECIS	Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
LED	Light-Emitting Diode
MDR-TB	Multi drug-resistant Tuberculosis
NES	National Employment Service
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHSI	National House for Social Insurance
NSDS	National Sustainable Socio-Economic Development Strategy
PSDA	Public Service Design Agency
RBEC	Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
SCORE	Social Cohesion and Reconciliation
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SME	Small and Medium-Sized Enterprise
SMS	Short Messaging Service
TB	Tuberculosis
UK	United Kingdom
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
WILD	Women in Local Democracy
YES	Youth Employment Solutions