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Issue 11

On the Ground



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ARMY EXCHANGE

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Market matters in Manthai West

From milk to rice to fish and crabs, all along the A32 road connecting Mannar with Jaffna there are clear signs that trade is beginning to blossom in Manthai West.

For those families that returned in late 2009 or the first half of 2010, many basic needs such as shelter, food, and schooling are now being met and attention is shifting towards market opportunities. The rehabilitation of the A32 is at the same time reducing travel times and increasing feasibility of trade with remote inland and coastal villages.

In the Moondrampiddy village home to about 150 families, UNDP has extended assistance to restart livelihoods and improve access to markets. 30 boats/vallams and 25 out board motors



Fishermen in Moondrampiddy in Manthai

have been provided through a revolving loan fund managed by the fishing cooperative and an access road is under construction, linking the previously hard to reach village in north-west Manthai West with the A32. Already, fish buyers are making the daily journey from Mannar Town to buy the best of the catch, and the women in this predominantly fishing village are engaged in net repair and the drying of fish. With the support of bank loans, solar panels have also been acquired by some households and are being used to generate additional income through charging mobile phones for example.

Looking to the future, UNDP has also introduced the community to Chicken of the Sea, a private sector company interested in purchasing their crab. To support this partnership, UNDP will construct a processing unit which will be managed by the Fishermen's Cooperative Society, employ 50 women from the village, and provide boiled crab meat for tinning.

Further south along the A32, new paddy storage facilities have been constructed by UNDP for the Multi-Purpose Cooperative Society in Illuppaikadavai and these are being used to temporarily store food rations prior to being filled with an expected bumper harvest. Every day a milk collection vehicle can also be seen making its rounds along the A32. The truck, provided by UNDP to the Nanattan Integrated Social Development Organization (NISDO) in 2010, travels over 30 km each day collecting up to 150 litres of milk from the newly resettled farmers of Manthai West and 900 litres of milk from various milk collection centers established by UNDP in Nanattan DS DS Division, with the collaboration of World vision. The two main milk buyers in Mannar are Nestle and Milco, and this particular cooperative is selling directly to Milco, and to a sister CBO in Mannar Island for local sales.

With these positive experiences to learn from, UNDP will continue to promote market development through improved accessibility and private sector linkages. A key focus will also be to extend this support to those villages that were resettled later in 2010, and still have some way to come in terms of restarting production. Support for these interventions in Manthai West is through the UNDP Transition Recovery Project, funded by the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and the European Union.

UNDP supports flood mitigation in Ampara and Batticaloa

In the past few weeks the front pages of Sri Lankan newspapers have been inundated with news of the floods. Headlines spoke of the thousands of people affected by the water, as chilling photographs of baby elephants caught on tree tops showed the extent of damage caused by the alarmingly high water levels.

Flooding is the most recurring natural hazard in Sri Lanka. The districts of Batticaloa, Ampara and Pollonnaruwa are in particular frequently affected by it. In light of the severity and extent of the damage caused by flooding, identifying measures for flood mitigation is a top priority. In August 2009, UNDP together with the Disaster Management Center initiated a study on flood mitigation for the Ampara and Batticaloa Districts. The study began with a series of stakeholder consultations and status reviews which highlighted several issues that have an impact on flood mitigation. The lack of effective institutional coordination especially in the pre-flood disaster stage, the absence of decision support systems and the lack of comprehensive training, education and funding were identified as key issues in this regard.

Following this preliminary assessment sub-sectors were selected for targeted studies. These studies were categorized as Urban/Rural, Irrigation, Coastal, Transport, Social and Institutional, Legal and Environmental sectors. Each sub-sector yielded specific results for which targeted projects are currently being developed. In this context, several development proposals and their potential impact on floods are also considered in depth.

Several recommendations were made as a result of the study. The short term recommendations include developing irrigation and urban sector sub-projects, updating and implementing storm water plans and avoiding the filling of land. A more comprehensive institutional and capacity needs assessment was also recommended.

Among the long term recommendations was the possibility of increasing upstream storage with new reservoirs, the rehabilitation of medium and minor tanks, the identification of vulnerable areas through the preparation of flood risk maps and institutional development studies related to water management. The exercise culminated in the final report which was finalized in December 2010 with detailed findings and recommendations which will be incorporated into several targeted projects.

UNDP flood assistance

UNDP supported the Disaster Management Center (DMC) led "Rapid assessment of the floods and landslide situation" in 14 affected districts with the support of district DMC staff, WFP and UNICEF. The assessment conducted on the 12th and 13th of January is expected to provide initial observations on immediate needs, damages and medium term requirements. The information was used by the DMC and other agencies to brief the authorities and donors on the needs of the flood affected communities. The rapid assessment also provided a basis for fund raising needed to meet the urgent needs in the areas of recovery, food security, agriculture, health and nutrition, capacity building, infrastructure and rehabilitation. UNDP has extended up to 3 million Rupees to support the government coordination efforts through its Emergency funds."

UNDP welcomes new Programme Manager

Mr. Massimo Diana joined the UNDP Sri Lanka team as the Senior Programme Manager, Transition Recovery Programme and Support to Mine Action Project. Massimo comes with over 18 years of international experience in post-conflict management, and rich experience in community development, public administration, policy, institution building, joint programming, capacity development, donor relations and resource mobilization. He has worked with UNDP for over 8 years in different countries and capacities, the last of which was Head of Unit/ Programme Advisor for Crisis Prevention and Recovery in Sudan. He also has extensive field experience in Bosnia Herzegovina, both with UNDP and also with UNHCR, and with several other International Organizations in various countries.

International Volunteer Day

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Dec

Every year International Volunteer Day (IVD) is celebrated internationally to recognize the significant contributions of volunteers around the world. The IVD 2010 event in Sri Lanka took place at the British School Auditorium in Colombo on 6th December, under the theme "Inspiring the Volunteer in You". This year's celebrations, which were organized by the United Nations Volunteers (UNV) team, marked the launch of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers in 2011 (IYV+10).

The variety show organized by the UNV team truly emphasized the power of volunteerism, as it brought together 8 different artists who volunteered their services and talents for the show. The evening commenced with the opening remarks by Mr. Neil Buhne, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. Mr. Buhne was followed by Prof. S.D. Hettige from the Department of Sociology of the University of Colombo and Mr. Kirby de Lanerolle, Executive Advisor - Ministry of Social Services, who inspired the audience of over 400 people, by sharing their thoughts and experiences on the value of volunteering.

The entertainment aspect of the show consisted of a multitude of performances ranging from singing and dancing to instrumentals. The lineup included professional artists as well as talented upcoming performers from partner volunteer organizations. Through their creativity and talent, and most of all through their attitudes and examples, the performers left the audience more inspired than ever to volunteer.



9
Dec

Anti Corruption Day

On the 9th of December the UNDP Support Efforts and Action Against Corruption Project (SEAAC) celebrated anti corruption day with an event jointly organized with the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption (CIABOC). The ceremony, held under the patronage of Chief Guest Hon. Minister Professor G. L. Peiris, Minister of External Affairs, aimed at raising public awareness about corruption and what people can do to fight it. Throughout the years the project has come up with new and creative ways to raise awareness on issues of bribery and corruption, and this year UNDP - SEAAC organized a cartoon competition, centered around the theme of anti corruption. Certificates were awarded to the 18 winners of the competition at the 9th event.

Taking their message outside Colombo, UNDP- SEAAC also organized other anti corruption day events at a district level. A street drama performance was organized for the government officials in the Anuradhapura and Kandy Districts, with the support of the students of the University of Fine Arts.

UNDP - SEAAC has worked with CIABOC to carry out training and awareness programmes for public officials. In addition UNDP - SEAAC works on strengthening civil society and supporting the government of Sri Lanka to have anti corruption policies and programmes.

MARCH

In March 2010 the UNDP Transition Recovery Programme initiated the **Vanni Recovery Project (VRP)** to provide early recovery assistance in the Vanni region. The VRP, which is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), supports the resettlement and recovery of returning communities by helping them to lay sustainable foundations for their lives and livelihoods and also by striving to reduce tensions between communities by improving their socio-economic conditions.

JUNE

In June 2010 UNDP launched the **Capacity Development for Recovery in the North Programme (CADRIN)**, with Norwegian support. The project focuses on increasing the government's capacity to lead the recovery process and supports CBOs to partner with the government as extension service providers.

The **national stakeholder consultations on the National Human Development Report (NHDR)** were held on the 23rd of June. The consultations were chaired by Mr. H.M. Gunasekara, Director General, National Planning Department. Stakeholders discussed several concept papers dealing with issues concerning human development in order to select a theme for the next NHDR. As a result of these consultations the theme of disparities and Inequalities was selected for this year's NHDR.

The UNDP Transition Recovery Programme initiated phase II of the **Communities for Peace (C4P)** project in June 2010. This second phase titled, **Communities for Progress (C4P II)** will build on the results achieved through C4P by focusing essentially on livelihood and social transformation issues. C4P II, which is also funded by AusAID, will be implemented in 10 Divisional Secretariat Divisions (DSDs) in the districts of Jaffna, Vavuniya, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa and Ampara.

JULY

On the 14th of July the **National Mine Action Center**, which was established through the support of UNDP's Mine Action Project, was officially endorsed by the Cabinet to coordinate and monitor all mine action operations in Sri Lanka.

In July 2010 UNDP initiated its **support to the national census of 2011**. UNDP's role in this endeavour will be to provide support to the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) and the staff responsible for conducting the census. This support will include the recruitment and training of Tamil speaking enumerators who will be able to work in the north and east, and the provision of computer equipment for data processing and vehicles for supervision. UNDP will also help the Government with publicity campaigns, and training on coding, editing and data tabulation.

SEPTEMBER

UNDP re-opened its **Killinochchi office** in September 2010. The 17 member team working under the leadership of Vijayakumar Navaneethan, covers both the Killinochchi and Mullaitivu Districts.

Following its first **MDG Progress Report** which was produced in 2005, Sri Lanka launched its second Progress Report in September 2010 under the patronage of Hon. Dr. Sarath Amunugama. The

report monitors the country's progress in terms of the MDG indicators while highlighting the work that still needs to be done to achieve the targets by 2015.

The UNDP Support to Mine Action Project established two new **Sub- Mine Action Offices** in the Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi Districts. The Mullaitivu office will report to the main District Mine Action Office in Vavuniya while the Kilinochchi office will report to the DMAO in Jaffna.

OCTOBER

The Second **National Symposium on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation** was held on the 13th & 14th October. The Symposium which coincided with the International Day of Natural Disaster Reduction had 4 main themes: Hazard, Vulnerability and Risk Assessment, Research and Educational Tools for Disaster Management, Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change, Preparedness, Early Warning and Response for Multi-hazards.

NOVEMBER

The **Way-forward on Reinsertion and Reintegration of Rehabilitates** the document which details the plan for the reintegration of ex-LTTE combatants who are released from rehabilitation centres (developed by the Ministry of Rehabilitation and Prison Reforms with the support of relevant UN Agencies) was approved by the Cabinet.

DECEMBER

On the 6th of December, UNDP TRP initiated the **Jaffna Rehabilitation Project 2 (JRP- 11)**, which will be implemented under Norwegian funding. The project will focus on sustainable livelihoods, community housing, community infrastructure and social transformation.

UNDP Sri Lanka launched the **2010 Human Development Report** titled "Pathways to Human Development: The Real Wealth of Nations," on the 14th of December. The 2010 HDR, which is the 20th anniversary edition of the report, lists the HDI rankings of 169 countries of which Sri Lanka has been ranked 91.

Since it began operations in Sri Lanka in 1967 UNDP has been contributing to the development of the country by implementing projects under the four areas of:

- Poverty reduction
- Environment, Energy and Disaster Risk Reduction
- Governance
- Peace and Recovery

Projects completed in 2010

- Capacity Development for the Implementation of the National Plan of Action for the Social Development of the Plantation Community (March 2009-September 2010)
- Financing for Second National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change UNFCCC (2008 -2010)
- Communities for Peace-C4P (2008 -2010)
- Community Rehabilitation Project-III (2008 -2010)

Ongoing Projects

G O V E R N A N C E

- ART Sri Lanka
- Equal Access to Justice Phase II
- Local Governance Project
- Support Efforts and Action against Corruption in Sri Lanka
- UN Joint Programme on Human Rights

- Strengthening Plan Implementation Capability II
- MDG Support Project Phase III
- 2nd National Human Development Report

P O V E R T Y

E N V I R O N M E N T

- Disaster Risk Management through Partnerships in Sri Lanka
- Global Environment Facility Small Grant Programme
- Preparation for the Promoting Sustainable Biomass Energy Production and Modern Bio-Energy technologies in Sri Lanka Project
- Ensuring the safety of IDPs in Menik Farm
- Strengthening capacity to manage and control Alien Invasive Species in Sri Lanka
- Strategic Support to “Operationalize the Road Map Towards Safer Sri Lanka”
- Institutional Strengthening for Phasing out Ozone Depleting Substances

- Transition Recovery Programme
 - Japan Livelihood Development Project
 - BCPR East
 - BCPR North
 - BCPR Social Transformation
 - CIDA Vanni Rehabilitation Project
 - EC Community Recovery Project
 - Communities for Peace Phase II
 - Jaffna Rehabilitation Project II
- Support to Mine-Action in Sri Lanka
- Technical Support to Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration
- Support to Early Recovery Planning, Coordination and Capacity - Building

P E A C E & R E C O V E R Y



UNDP to support the compilation of Sri Lanka's second National Human Development Report

Since 1990 UNDP has been producing an annual Global Human Development Report (HDR), depicting the level of human development achieved by respective countries. The Human Development Reports and the Human Development Index have challenged purely economic measures of national achievement and helped lay the conceptual foundation for UN's Millennium Development Goals, calling for consistent global tracking of progress in health, education and overall living standards. As such the reports have relied on the three dimensions of per capita income, literacy rate and longevity to measure development. The 2010 HDR took this process a step further by introducing the three new indices; the Inequality Adjusted HDI (IHDI), the Gender Inequality Index (GII) and the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) for the measurement of development.

Stemming from this concept many countries began the practice of compiling National Human Development Reports (NHDR), which assess varied human development conditions across the regions of a particular country. These reports generally focus on a specific theme which is seen to have affected development in that country during that particular time period.

Sri Lanka produced its first NHDR as far back as 1998. Over time, although human development in the country has had a positive growth since then, several factors including the protracted war and the Tsunami of 2004 have been obstacles to development, particularly in certain areas of the country. The resulting disparities and inequalities within the country have had a major impact on the human development situation of the country as a whole. Issues surrounding these inequalities have also been highlighted in Sri Lanka's 2nd Millennium Development Goals Progress Report produced in 2009. The report shows that major inequalities remain in several different aspects of human development, despite the satisfactory progress of MDG indicators at a national level.

Within this context UNDP Sri Lanka has embarked on a new initiative, to develop a 2nd NHDR for Sri Lanka in consultation with the Government of Sri Lanka. Considering the importance of addressing the prevailing inequalities in the country, this report will focus on the theme of disparities and Inequalities.

The second NHDR will adopt several new approaches introduced by the Global HDR 2010. The three new indices will be critical tools which will help analyze the inequalities and disparities at provincial/ district levels and will provide a better understanding of the situation for policy and advocacy purposes. The second NHDR is expected to give a better understanding of human development across the country so that policy directives can be initiated and specifically designed to enhance human development in all regions of the country.



The Spotlight

As he comes to the end of his tenure, UN Resident /Humanitarian Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative Neil Buhne talks about work, life, and leisure in Sri Lanka...

What kind of work has UNDP been doing in the past year, and what were the focus areas of your work?

2010 was a very important year for UNDP. There were still so many conflict affected people, but their needs were changing. Rebuilding, recovery, and capacity building came into focus and these are the sort of things that UNDP is best at. So I think the focus of our work last year was mainly on the Transition Recovery Programme and helping communities get back their lives and basic livelihoods.

Another focus area which was quite important for UNDP was the work we did on demining. The role that UNDP played in supporting government structures, in planning and coordinating demining efforts and in doing quality control was absolutely crucial. Without that work, it would not have been possible for 90% of the displaced people to go back to their villages.

Also very important, not just in the north but also in the south and east of the country, was our work on local governance through the LoGoPro programme. The project has really helped build the capacity of local

government institutions, particularly in areas where that capacity had been affected for various reasons, to respond to the needs of people at the village level. This role is especially important in the north where there really is a capacity gap since there is so much to be done by government services to meet people's needs. At the same time, there is a relatively low capacity because of the effects of the war. UNDP's role in helping provide key staff, providing advice on structures and helping raise funds for capacity building is absolutely crucial.

The Access to Justice programme (A2J) has been very important as well. A2J has a special role to play right now in the north and east, where many areas have been outside state control for a long period, and therefore have almost no legal systems in place. These capacities need to be rebuilt. That's an important part in people regaining confidence in being part of Sri Lanka and that confidence is the key to sustainable peace.

Globally environmental issues have gained prominence because these issues are not just about the environment they are also about

the economy and society. I think UNDP is playing the leading role in keeping these issues on the table and through very well regarded work with the Disaster Management Centre building capacities to cope with some of the rapid and extreme "disasters" that Sri Lanka is now experiencing.

Last is probably the work on the Millennium Development Goals report which had been going on for a long time which, in some sense is a confidence building measure too, because that shows that despite everything Sri Lanka is making a good progress on those key social indicators and environmental indicators. But at the same time, I think it also highlights the direction for future UNDP programmes.

From a qualitative perspective, how do you view the progress of projects in general?

On the one hand there are so many people who are in very difficult situations and still need assistance and on the other hand if you don't provide that assistance effectively and qualitatively it doesn't have the desired effect. So I think more or less we found the right balance in 2010 in really doing



comprehensive programmes which have had a sustainable impact by helping communities to help themselves. I also think we somehow need to find a way of extending that quality approach so that it reaches more people. I think that will be one of the challenges in the programme during 2011.

What were UNDP's notable achievements and biggest challenges over the past year?

I think our achievements reflect the different roles that UNDP plays. I think one of the biggest achievements is that UNDP in some sense is the glue that helps the UN system stick together, whether it's to support the Resident Coordinator function, whether it's the special role it plays in supporting early recovery coordination, whether it's in the common administrative services that it often provides to agencies throughout Sri Lanka. It has been such a complex time for the country and without the UN working as a team it would have been much harder for us to have had a positive effect. I don't think we should underestimate the role of UNDP in helping support the UN agencies to work together as a team.

I think the second most important achievement quantity wise, is probably our work on demining. Firstly because it was difficult to put together the partnerships that we needed to make demining happen. I think the UNDP team played an important role in building an

understanding between the government, the mine action operators and the donors. These efforts have translated into very large areas of Sri Lanka being demined and being made lower risk so that people could return home. This would not have happened without UNDP's role. The quality control work done by UNDP also helps verify that the work has been done properly.

Another big achievement was the work of the Transition Recovery Programme in helping communities that were damaged to rebuild infrastructure, to rebuild their livelihoods, and also to rebuild their communities. That's very important.

The last big accomplishment has been in helping restore government structures through the work of ART Gold, for example, in the south of the country and in the Uva Province. We also played a very special role in rebuilding government structures in the North. UNDP has a very unique role among the agencies where we're not part of the government but we do work closely with local governments because we're locally based and we can get into the local system and understand it. Because of our international base we can acquire international experience and apply it locally. This has helped us have a big impact by supporting the strengthening of district administration structures and divisional structures. This has been a crucial element in helping people have a chance for a better life.

What are UNDP's priorities for 2011?

I think the plan is certainly to improve the reach of our work by helping the most vulnerable people in the country to recover from the effects of the conflict and natural disasters to rebuild the government structures and rebuild access to justice for those people. We have to maintain the quality but try to reach more people. That's a very, very important priority.

It's also important that we broaden the geographical impact of our programmes. As the situation of the highly vulnerable war affected communities gradually improves we have to recognize that there are large numbers of people in other areas of the country who are facing very different and difficult challenges. So we need to divide our programmes and apply our community-based approaches to other parts of the country. It is going to be a challenge identifying where and how to do that and obtaining the funding that we need for it.

We also need to try to extend the work we have done in the environment sector to other parts of the country. We have already attempted to take the strategic environmental assessment done in the north to Anuradhapura and some other districts. We'll try to broaden these approaches even more so that environmental factors are more integrated in planning process.



Looking back on the past three years, what has been the most rewarding moment for you?

I get the most satisfaction in two ways. One is when I go on field trips and actually visit the villages and see the results of our work. For example, I know that maybe three, four months ago many displaced people were living in camps, but now I see that they are back in their villages, starting a farm or building a house. I see people working together as a community to help each other. I also see that UNDP is actually playing a key role in bringing about this change. I think that's probably the most rewarding thing.

The second thing is just engaging with our staff. We have people from all over the world and all over Sri Lanka, different ages, different cultures and different religions and we all work very well together as a team. To me, that's positive, that as a family we are committed to work together and to do what we can, in a modest way, to help the country rebuild and to help people rebuild their lives.

You've been to several countries in transition or in post-disaster situations during your tenure, how does Sri Lanka compare with others?

This has been a real time of transformation for Sri Lanka. What perhaps impresses me more about here than any other places is really the resilience of the people. People here have been able to cope with huge changes. People have been able

to cope with war, whether they were in Colombo where bombs were going off, whether they had been displaced, or whether they had lost family members. Because ordinary people here have proven that they can go through many hardships and still have tremendous faith in basic values like education. There is among many now an openness to change which should help Sri Lanka take off. The country also has such wonderful natural resources, assets and beauty and such richness in culture. If Sri Lanka managed to keep things going so well during the war then it should be able to do very, very well with peace.

What drives you to keep going in your work?

I really believe in the values that the UN is based on. I believe that there is a responsibility for the international community to work together to help translate those values into more opportunities. I know there is a lot of paper work, and a lot of bureaucracy, in our structure, but I believe that the fundamental values that the UN stands for are the right ones. In our role as an international partner we are working to help the people in the country, we don't have any self interest at heart. That's motivating enough. It's sometimes easy to lose track of this fundamental idea when dealing with all the practical things. So my motto is to find ways to practically make a difference with these values so that they can benefit people.

What would you say is your favorite place in Sri Lanka?

I like Adams peak. I've been there three times. The idea of walking through the forest with lots of people from all parts of society, university students, old people, all enjoying the environment, and at the same time being motivated by something a little bit higher. It is really an amazing experience. Just being on a mountain top and seeing the sunrise, if you are lucky, and seeing the shadow is very special. This combined with the natural and spiritual beauty of the place, makes it a really special place.

Outside of work, what are some of your favorite memories of Sri Lanka?

One of my favorite memories was driving all the way up to Jaffna for the first time. This is really more work related, but going across 'Elephant pass', and discovering to my surprise the beautiful green wetlands full of life was very special to me. Another is the house we lived in which was close to the water's edge, golf course. Being able to go out in the morning and see all the birds and occasionally porcupines and giant lizards was something I really enjoyed. I also like very much being down on the south coast especially the Unawatuna area. Early morning and the sunsets were really beautiful.

