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ENERGY AND BIOMASS

CONTENT

Other 150 families and microenterprises will receive subsidies from EU funds to buy biomass boilers

Octavian Calmic: Energy and Biomass Project is one of the most efficient projects in Moldova

A new Biomass heating system funded by the EU under the Energy and Biomass Project was installed in a kindergarten in Taraclia district

The first energy willow trees were planted at a vocational school in Orhei

Young people from the left bank of the Nistru River learned to produce green energy

Biomass in the hand is better than the gas in the bush!

INTERVIEW







Other 150 families and microenterprises will receive subsidies from EU funds to buy biomass boilers



The EU – UNDP Energy and Biomass Project announces the relaunch of the subsidy program for the purchase of biomass boilers intended for households, microand small enterprises. This time the size of the subsidies provided to about 150 beneficiaries will be 1300 Euro and 500 Euro. The applications for subsidies can be submitted to the Energy Efficiency Agency – the program partner, starting May 17.

The decision to relaunch the subsidy program was made at the latest meeting of the Energy and Biomass Project Board chaired by Octavian Calmic, deputy prime minister and minister of economy. It should be reminded that after the first round of the program started on August 10, 2015 it immediately received over 300 applications from households and microenterprises.

"The strong interest in this program demonstrates that people are willing to use energy produced in Moldova, rather than imported. They are looking for a reliable energy source and biomass is the solution", believes Victor Cotruta, Energy and Biomass Project manager.

The subsidy size will be 1 300 Euro and 500 Euro and will depend on the technical parameters of the selected boiler:

1.300 Euro

- for biomass boilers with 85% efficiency or higher
- at least 36 hours of battery life
- automated control panel
- biofuel: pellets or mixed (briquettes and pellets)

500 Euro

- for biomass boilers with 75% efficiency or higher
- at least 6 hours of battery life
- automated control panel
- biofuel: briquettes

"The new round of the program comes with a lower subsidy for briquette-fired boilers that has been reduced from 700 to 500 Euro, while maintaining the subsidy amount for the pellet-fired boilers. This way we encourage the use of higher efficiency boilers with a greater battery life", claims Mihail Stratan, the director of the Energy Efficiency Agency. Other amendments to the subsidy regulation include the requirement that the beneficiaries install the boilers in premises that are placed in service and used properly, as well as the requirement to sign the agreement with the Energy Efficiency Agency within 30 days from the application acceptance date. The regulation is **available here.**

The subsidy program is intended for individuals residing in Moldova and small and micro enterprises operating in Moldova. The beneficiaries must be owners or coowners of the real estate/company where the biomass boiler will be installed and the real estate must not be connected to the central heating system.

To benefit from subsidies: 1. Choose a boiler made or assembled in Moldova and the company that will deliver and install it; 2. Submit the application package to the Energy Efficiency Agency; 3. Install the boiler in your home or company premises and receive the subsidy.

The applications may be submitted starting May 17 to the Energy Efficiency Agency: 1 Alecu Ruso str., Chisinau, 10th floor, tel: (22) 499 444 (ext.8); mob.: +373 67430436; email: programe@aee.md. To be eligible for the subsidy program the boilers must be made or partially assembled in Moldova. They can be purchased from the program accredited companies. The accreditation process is ongoing and open to any company that makes or assembles biomass boilers in Moldova.

The subsidy program for the purchase of biomass boilers intended for households is one of the Energy and Biomass Project activities implemented jointly with the Energy Efficiency Agency. In the period of April 2012 – August 2015 more than 1000 families and microenterprises received subsidies in amount of up to 1300 Euro from EU funds to buy and install biomass boilers. For more information about the program visit www.biomasa.md.

The 2015–2017 Energy and Biomass Project II is a EUR 9.41 mil. project granted by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme.

For more updates about the Energy and Biomass Project please visit <u>www.biomasa.md</u> and our Facebook page

 The video story about the beneficiaries of subsidy programme is available <u>here.</u>



Octavian Calmic: Energy and Biomass Project is one of the most efficient projects in Moldova



"Energy and Biomass Project Moldova (EBPM) is one of the most visible and efficient projects in Moldova and there are many ways to expand it all over the country, including through new forms of partnership with local governments, businesses and individuals", announced Octavian Calmic, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Economy, during the project Board meeting on April 21.

The Board members approved the project's 2016 work plan and were introduced into the amendment to the Project Document approved by the Delegation of the European Union to Moldova, which provides new opportunities in the implementation of the project. According to the project manager, Victor Cotruta, greater attention will be given to monitoring how the biomass systems work and refining the procedures to ensure logistics to increase their efficiency. Moreover, the Energy and Biomass Project Board decided to implement 9 public–private partnerships to supply heating at district level.

It should be reminded that the second phase of the Energy and Biomass Project replicates the first phase and aims to provide 80 public institutions with heating systems fired with Moldovan biofuel and 21 solar collectors that will provide kindergartens and healthcare facilities with warm water. The main focus of the project is the rural areas and small towns across the country.

A new Biomass heating system funded by the EU under the Energy and Biomass Project was installed in a kindergarten in Taraclia district



The first biomass heating system under the Energy and Biomass Project II was launched on 20 of April in a kindergarten in Ciumai village, Taraclia district. The kindergarten is the second institution in the community to use green energy, after the vocational school had been connected to a biomass-fired system in 2014, during the first phase of the project. The project is financially supported by the European Union and implemented by UNDP.

"We are happy that both the school and kindergarten are heated with green energy and we are not going to stop here. We will move steadily towards local energy autonomy, by attracting private investments or donor support and this will bring to our community energy security and development opportunities", tells Tatiana Turcan, mayor of Ciumai village.

Hence, 152 children and teachers will benefit from reliable heating generated by green energy produced in Moldova. The newly installed boiler has a 150kw capacity and will cover an area of about 1,200 m².

The kindergarten in Ciumai joins more than 160 public institutions all over the country where biomass-fired systems have been installed thanks to the European investments made under the Energy and Biomass Project. "I am particularly happy that the Taraclia rayon is participating so actively in our project. This new biomass heating system in the Kindergarten in Ciumai will directly benefit children and teachers by making their environment more comfortable. There is also a great opportunity to make financial savings and use locally produced green energy", says Aneil Singh, Head of Operations Section, European Union Delegation.

The total investments of the Energy and Biomass Project for the kindergarten and vocational school in Ciumai village amount to 138,377 EUR, and apr. 15,000 EUR were invested by the community.

The vocational school no.13 from Ciumai was connected to a biomass heating system during the first phase of the Energy and Biomass Project. These investments benefits 120 students and 38 teachers and its success mad the community to continue in the same manner.

Project News



"Together, we have achieved important milestones, towards sustainable development. You are part to the development of a new green sector which, along with the reduction in the use of imported energy, underpin the launch of new businesses, creation of new jobs and supports Moldova's journey towards a cleaner energy future", said Dafina Gercheva, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Moldova.

The second phase of the Energy and Biomass Project replicates the first phase and aims to connect 80 public institutions to heating systems using Moldovan biofuel and to install 21 solar collectors for hot water production mostly in kindergartens and health centers. The project that was re-launched in 2015 will also provide support to the development of biofuel production and energy service delivery in this sector. From 2011 to 2016 the consumption of the energy produced from renewable sources in Moldova reached 13% of the total consumption, 12% of it being biomass energy. "In 2011 the production of renewables was only 4%, and the dependence on imports was quasi-total. The 144 heating systems installed in public institutions with the support of the Energy and Biomass Project and the biofuel offer of pellet and briquette producers played a significant role in the increase of solid biomass energy in consumption", reports Mihail Stratan, director of the Energy Efficiency Agency.

Biomass heating systems launched in April 2016				
Locality	Institution	Project support, USD	Community contribution, USD	
Taraclia city	Art school	41.725,13	13.540,00	
Budai village, Taraclia	Kindergarten	50.699,55	11.558,00	
Ciumai village, Taraclia	Kindergarten	45.112,95	8.532,00	
Cimislia city	Kindergarten	66.806,68	16.675,00	
Leova city	Sport school for children	43.989,66	7.796,00	

6

Biomass heating systems to be launched in May 2016				
Locality	Institution	Project support, USD	Community contribution, USD	
Taraclia city	Art house	30.290,82	14.140,00	
Albota de Jos village, Taraclia	School	47.730,76	13.042,00	
Corten village, Taraclia	School	64.083,65	22.033,00	
Cazaclia village, ATU Gagauz Yeri	Kindergarten	61.811,73	11.781,00	
Congaz village, ATU Gagauz Yeri	Kindergarten	70.797,52	12.312,00	
Copceac village, ATU Gagauz Yeri	Kindergarten	68.054,50	9.300,00	
Cimişlia city	Kindergarten	66.806,68	16.675,00	

The first energy willow trees were planted at a vocational school in Orhei



One hectare of energy willow was planted in Cucuruzenii de Sus village, Orhei district, on the farmland owned by a vocational school from Orhei town. The event gathered almost 100 school students and teachers, government officials, development partners and journalists. The energy plants are an alternative energy solution promoted by the Energy and Biomass Project in Moldova, with financial support of the European Union. Another hectare of energy willows were planted in Cuhurestii de Sus village, Floresti district. Both pilot vocational schools from Orhei and Floresti will have one hectare plantation of energy acacia.

"We are happy that new initiatives like the one we have launched will show innovative methods of developing and using biomass fuels. Through this, we will increase competences of biomass professionals and help to further strengthen the overall competitiveness of this sector in the Republic of Moldova.", said Wicher Slagter, Head of Political and Economic Section of the EU Delegation to the Republic of Moldova.

The plantations of energy willows and acacia will be looked after by the students of the vocational schools. So, they will get practical knowledge, as they are enrolled in a new educational module "Energy Plants – a Source of Renewable Energy" within the occupation of forester, introduced in the school curricula for the first time this year.

"For both our students and teachers this is the first experience of growing energy willow, representing green fuel that will heat the school cafeteria. We are glad to be one of the first institutions that train specialists in energy plants and so we will contribute to the development of this new sector in Moldova", said Sergiu Munteanu, director of the vocation school in Orhei.

When mature, the energy willow will be used to heat the school cafeteria. To be able to do that, the school in Orhei will receive a chipper and a biofuel production line which will turn the willow stems into fuel. The biofuel will be used for the new heating system expected to be installed at the vocational school, the total investments exceeding 100,000 Euro granted by the European Union under the Energy and Biomass Project. "The pattern that will be piloted at the school in Orhei secures the energy autonomy for the institution. They have biomass on their own land and they will turn it into biofuel and use it to heat their premises. It is going to be an integral process, a closed cycle that will secure both appropriate skills for students, and savings for the school", declared Valeriu Triboi, Deputy Minister of Economy.

The Energy and Biomass Project with the support of the Ministry of Education encouraged three Moldovan vocational schools to introduce new courses related to the biomass energy sector ("Energy Plants – a Source of Renewable Energy" in Orhei and Floresti and "Operators of Biomass Boilers" in Chisinau) in the 2015–2016 academic year and thereby to respond to the demand of new kind of professionals in the energy sector.

"There are many businessmen who would like to start this kind of business with energy plantations in Moldova, but they face lack of qualified professionals. The new course responds to the new market demand and supports the development of a new branch in the biomass energy sector", told Vladimir Bragaru, owner of the first energy plantation in Moldova.





The energy willow is the most widespread kind of energy plant. It is also known as fast growing willow, because it grows about 3 cm per day and in 2 or 3 years it grows 6–7 meters high. Its stems are used to produce biofuel (briquettes, pellets) almost equal to coal in terms of calorific value. The energy willow is resistant to various weather conditions, grows on wetlands, sandy soil and soil with poor productivity. It is successfully used in the renewable energy industry, and also in the pharmaceutical industry as it contains salicin used to make aspirin.

- For more updates about the Energy and Biomass Project please visit <u>www.biomasa.md</u> and our <u>Facebook page</u>
- The video stories about our projects in the vocational education sector are available at: <u>Story 1,</u> <u>Story 2, Story 3</u>

Project News

Things to know about energy willow

• Fast grow ce pellets and briquettes.

Energy willow can be a solution in the following cases:

- · High cost of fossil energy resources;
- · Dependence on imported energy resources;
- Shortage of resources of renewable raw materials to produce energy;
- High levels of environment pollution;
- · Inappropriate forest management.

Benefits of energy willow:

- Allows for the use of agricultural products to generate heat and power;
- Creates the opportunity for agricultural producers to get additional income;
- Can make the uncultivated and sandy fields and wetlands useful;
- · Creation of new jobs;
- Plantations can serve as protection strips for dams or forest belts;
- Adequate environment for animals (hare, partridge, etc.);
- Prevents deforestation;
- · Absorbs carbon dioxide and produces oxygen;
- · Capacity for timber production 30 tons/year;
- Capacity to take over about 20–30 tons/sewage sludge;
- · Contains salicin used to produce aspirin;
- Estimates show that the heat generated by a 100 ha plantation can be enough to heat about 35 thousand square meters of living space or more than 7 thousand flats.

Things to know before planting energy willow

Energy willow is an agricultural plant that does well in most soil conditions. However, the ideal soil is that with high moisture content and a 5.5 to 7.5 PH. The major benefit of growing energy willow is that it can be done on soil with higher humidity that is not appropriate for growing other crops, explains Alexandru Benko, director of Kontrastwege – KWG from Miercurea-Ciuc, Harghita district, who bought the license for growing energy willow for Romania and Moldova from Sweden.

Project News



According to Vladimir Bragaru, a Moldovan businessman who planted energy willow on a few tens of hectares and also established a nursery, he will recover his investments after three years after the first harvest. The estimations show that a 1000 ha plantation would require investments in the amount of 3.6 million EUR, including equipment, which generate a return of 4.2 million EUR till the fifth year of growth, and about 1.2 million EUR yearly over the next 20 years.

Overall, to be profitable, energy willow should be grown on more than 5–10 hectares up to hundreds of hectares, which is the case of such countries like Germany, Austria, Poland, Ukraine or Lithuania.

Mr. Bragaru suggests, however, a couple of things that a businessman who decides to grow energy willow should always keep in mind.

The field should be well prepared. The fields where no crops have been grown over the past several years require treating with herbicides, scarification up to 60 cm deep and autumn plowing 30–35 cm deep. For the fields that have been tilled, autumn plowing will do.

Planting starts in March. Energy willow should be planted as early as possible, preferably in March.

Maintenance of the plantation is very easy. A great deal of the farming works are carried out before and when the energy willow just starts growing: full treatment with herbicides, deep plowing and soil disinfection, planting and mechanical and chemical weed control. After the first year's growth the willow should be cut to 10 cm above the ground to make sure that the next spring a bush with 10–15 sprouts will grow there. After the second year half of them will be up to 7 m high and 3–4 cm in diameter.

Size of plantation.

The relatively small fields, up to 10 ha, should be planted by hand, while for the largest ones special equipment may be used. In case of larger fields the most cost-effective way of harvesting is to use combines equipped with special adaptors. This work is done in the cold season (from November to March, after the leaves fall), thereby ensuring more efficient use of the machine fleet and a lower wood moisture content.

Project News



Annual production is about 35 tons per hectare, with 35–40% humidity or about 20 tons per hectare with 0% humidity. In a few months after harvesting, the moisture content of the wood reduces to 15–16%. The energy willow is used as woodchips (in special chip-fired boilers or in power plants) or as feedstock to produce briquettes or pellets.

Selling can be a problem if there is overproduction of willow wood. This is why, to not depend on circumstances or terms of processors, Vladimir Bragaru recommends the farmers that intend to grow energy

willow to invest in feedstock processing capacities. This will allow them to increase the income from selling pellets or briquettes instead of just woodchips to biofuel producers.

Forest or snow fences. The energy willow has all the attributes – fast growing, thick shrubs, and minimum requirements to soil quality, to serve as a forest or snow fence. In this case the willow will not be harvest–ed, but rather cut to the desired height to protect the crops in the fields or to prevent dangerous situations on roads.



Young people from the left bank of the Nistru River learned to produce green energy



Twenty five young people and five local coordinators from the left bank of the Nistru River learned how to produce clean energy from natural sources and to make their communities environment-friendly at a eco festival conducted during 25-27 March 2016. This was the first eco festival for the left bank of the Nistru. The event was initiated by the Energy and Biomass Project funded by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme.

Young people, aged between 14-16, came from different localities and explored smart solutions to consume less energy and to replace the polluting fuel with environment-friendly one. "In our own house we can reduce the energy losses by replacing windows and doors and by saving water and electrical power. I think that production of biomass energy will soon become popular in our country. There are already operating briquettes production lines here", says Veaceslav Zidra, 16 years old, from Caragas village.

During three days, the young participated were engaged in debates on global warming, and in workshops to develop social spots and banners to advocate for the use of green energy. Visits to bio-fuel companies operating on the left bank of the Nistru River were conducted. "Children are the change agents who are able to convince and encourage their peers, friends, relatives, parents to become more responsible to environment. Today each of us feels the impact of climate change. This is a reality that we need to change today and now for the people to breathe clean air, drink clean water, eat healthy food and live in an environment safe from natural disasters", believes Natalia Halaim, teacher at Vasile Lupu high school, Chisinau, and eco-festival's facilitator.

The eco festival's participants concluded that each of us can help the community become cleaner by taking actions that not necessarily require financial resources, but rather involvement and joint efforts for a shared goal. The most active eco-festival participants will take part in the summer camp "Energel 2016", fifth edition. Every year this summer camp gathers together the most dynamic promoters of clean energy from the communities where the Energy and Biomass Project, with the EU financial support, installs heating devices that produce energy from local energy resources. "Think global, act local - this is what we are trying to inspire young people to believe in the impact of their actions. Raising children's' awareness on the need to increase the share of renewable energy at local level consumption is important in order to limit the global warming connected risks worldwide", Victor Cotruta, Energy and Biomass Project manager concluded.

Biomass in the hand is better than the gas in the bush!

Proverbs and sayings rewritten in the spirit of bioenergy

Energy and Biomass Project has recently held a unique contest on its Facebook page. The contestants had to rephrase proverbs and sayings in the spirit of bioenergy and the opportunity to win a personalized cell phone case. And here are the results: 60 comments and 60 shares, more than 100 likes and almost 4000 views.

The winners were selected with the help of www.random.org from the most liked sayings. The talented and lucky winners are:

- 1. Violeta Petre (Biomass in the hand is better than the gas in the bush)
- 2. Angela Crețu (Good biomass can warm three winter months!)
- 3. Angela Burcă (Gas gets the attention, biomass gets the heart).

Below are some of the other sayings that have been nicely rewritten:

- · Better safe with biomass than sorry in winter
- · Gas gets the attention, biomass gets the heart!
- Biomass in the hand is better than the gas in the bush!
- · If you look for gas, you will run into trouble.
- · Gas burns, biomass heats.
- When biomass knocks, open the door!
- A wise man buys biomass in summer, instead of gas in winter.
- · Biomass is biomass.
- When the going gets tough, biomass gets going!
- A little pellet in the way overturns the great Gazprom.
- $\cdot \;$ Gas flows away, biomass remains.
- Make biomass while the sun shines.
- · Like tree like pellet!
- · One pellet drives out another!



UN NOU CONCURS DE LA ENERGIE ȘI BIOMASĂ!

Rescrie proverbele și zicătorile populare în spiritul bioenergiei și câstigă o husă pentru telefonul tău!

"Gazul trece, biomasa rămâne!"





The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) has started a new survey on energy consumption by households. This was possible due to the cooperation between NBS and the Energy and Biomass Project Moldova, funded by the European Union and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme.

The new survey aligned to the European standards will enable collecting data about the potential of the Moldovan agricultural and wood biomass, as well as about the actual volume of biomass energy production and consumption, and will integrate the data collected from households in the general energy statistics.

We asked Svetlana Bulgac, the head of the Industry, Energy and Construction Statistics Department of the National Bureau of Statistics, to say why this survey is important.

- Mrs Bulgac, where did the idea of a survey of energy consumption by households come from and why do we need this data?
- The implementation of international energy methods and standards helps the decisionmakers from both public and private sectors

Interview

Moldova will have statistics on the use of biomass energy in households and its potential

Svetlana Bulgac Head of Industry, energy and construction Statistics Division

make informed and reasoned decisions on sector development policies, investments needs, business opportunities and other, and, at international level, allows to compare the energy indicators in various countries and to monitor the energy consumption and needs.

To make it easier for you to understand what this survey is about, I should first explain how this data will be used. The National Bureau of Statistics every year prepares an "Energy Balance Sheet", which until 2014 contained indicators related to the primary and general energy resources, energy distribution and consumption by the main economy sectors, and the balance for every energy product. The questionnaires we used included information about the energy production units and the local energy sources, such as firewood and agricultural waste, but data were collected from businesses, i.e. from about 11200 companies producers, importers, distributors and consumers. The data related to the imported energy resources were provided by the Customs Service and taken from the import invoices, while the consumption data were provided by 9 electricity distribution companies and 28 holders of natural gas supply licenses that submitted reports by consumer categories - household consumers, industrial

consumers and others. To estimate the household consumption we reviewed the information about firewood consumption received from Moldsilva or farming businesses that work land plots exceeding 10 hectares.

In 2010 Moldova joined the European Energy Community undertaking a number of commitments, including the implementation of the EC Regulation no.1009/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 October 2008 on energy statistics and the Directive 2008/92/CE on the monthly community statistics in the energy sector. The provisions of these two regulations have been fully implemented in Moldova starting January 1, 2015. Since that date, NBS has been collecting and sharing monthly energy statistics and quarterly statistics on energy prices.

Later in 2014 the EC Regulation no. 1009/2008 was amended to include the survey of households.

Given that Moldova imports about 90% of the energy resources, both the National Bureau of Statistics and the Energy and Biomass Project Moldova are interested in getting accurate and detailed data about the country's energy consumption and renewable energy potential with a stronger focus on biomass, aware that households account for a great share both in production and consumption of biomass that can be used for energy purposes.

- Why was new software needed and how does it help to process statistical data about the biomass fuel consumption and potential?
- O Previously, the National Bureau of Statistics used outdated software developed in the 90s, which did not allow changing the statistical reports. Back in 2014 NBS estimated energy consumption based on the Household Budget Survey, more specifically on the data related to the procurement of firewood, in conjunction with its market price. The new software, developed with the support of the Energy and Biomass Project, allows us to expand the research areas and include new data categories in the statistical reports.

Finally, a questionnaire was developed for households to collect, for the first time in Moldova, statistical data about the biomass potential and the actual consumption of biomass energy.

The questionnaire for businesses and the one for households are in line with the UN Recommendations for energy statistics and the UN International Energy Product Classification.

The survey of energy consumption in households will be conducted only once and will contain data for year 2015. In the following years data of other researches will be used to make estimates.

Due to the new software and the assistance provided to improve the data collection methods, the 2015 energy balance will include data related to the agricultural biomass stocks and biofuel produced in Moldova that will be collected from the private sector, public institutions and households. In the past, the biomass section contained only the biomass data provided by Moldsilva.

- When will the survey be conducted and the new data available?
- We are now collecting actual data from a representative sample of 3 500 households. In the period of April 4–8, 2015 150 interviewers of the National Bureau of Statistics received training that included practical exercises to explain how to fill in the questionnaire. The field data collection started on April 4 and will last till May 10.

Hopefully the software will have been populated with these data by June 10–15 when they will have to be validated and reviewed. Afterwards, the team of statisticians will develop the expansion coefficients for the entire country and by August, after everything is checked by the Energy Community experts, we will write the briefing memos that will be published on the websites of the National Bureau of Statistics and the Energy and Biomass Project and, possibly, in a brochure.

- Why are the data collected from households important?
- O The detailed and updated biomass energy data will allow the relevant authorities, I mean the National Bureau of Statistics, and the Ministry of Economy as the authority in charge of developing policies in the energy sector, the Ministry of Environment, Energy Efficiency Agency and others, to track the progress in exploitation of renewable energy sources and the progress towards the national objectives in this sector, and to design new sector development projects. On the other hand, the foreign investors and the private sector will have the opportunity to develop and start new energy projects.

I would like to stress once again that the survey of households that is underway focuses on the entire energy consumption in a household. Extrapolated at national level, these data will give us the full picture of energy consumption, including the energy resources procured from various suppliers and the energy produced by a household using wood and agricultural waste, animal waste and others.

The Newsletter is produced by the Energy and Biomass Project II. The project has a total budget of 9.41 million euros, granted by the European Union and it is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme during 2015–2017.

The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union and UNDP.

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