

# UNDP and the UN System: Focusing on Development

**THROUGHOUT 2008**, the UN system continued to strengthen its efforts to achieve greater impact in contributing to national development plans and priorities. The impetus of this effort remains grounded in UN reform, following the call from the UN General Assembly in 1997 for a more coherent, effective and efficient UN development system. However, it has become particularly relevant as developing countries face significant challenges to their development gains and achievements, including the global financial and food crises and their impact on the poor, as well as the detrimental effects of climate change. There are indications that in many countries, with these recent setbacks, the MDGs may not be achieved by 2015. The UN development

system recognizes that now, more than ever, it needs to come together, bringing its numerous mandates and expertise to most effectively respond to national priorities and challenges.

As the manager of the Resident Coordinator (RC) system, UNDP, with its UN partners, remains fully committed to ensuring that the UN development system works together more coherently, enabling the UN to be a more effective development partner in contributing to a marked improvement in the lives of the people in the countries it serves. UNDP also recognizes, with its UN development partners, that coherency and effectiveness must be underpinned by national ownership and alignment with national agendas and systems; a process of joint



**Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visits a  
“Delivering as One” exhibition in Tanzania.**

## UPDATE ON MULTI-DONOR TRUST FUNDS

As part of its effort to support UN system-wide coherence, UNDP continued in 2008 to administer resources on behalf of the UN. Through the Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office, UNDP administers – directly or through UNDP Country Offices – a portfolio that since it began in 2004 has grown to \$3.79 billion encompassing 23 Funds and joint programmes, covering humanitarian assistance, post-conflict, post-crisis recovery, reconstruction and development in more than 70 countries. A number of new Funds were established in 2008, such as “Delivering as One” Funds in Pakistan, Cape Verde and Malawi, the UN REDD Programme Fund and the UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict. In addition, the Peacebuilding Fund has expanded its coverage to six additional countries. The year 2008 also saw major developments to clarify the role and functions of the fund administrator and the review and finalization of standard agreements with donors and participating agencies endorsed by the UN Development Group. This effort is leading toward the streamlining of donor and government interaction, which will save money and time and increase efficiency and results.

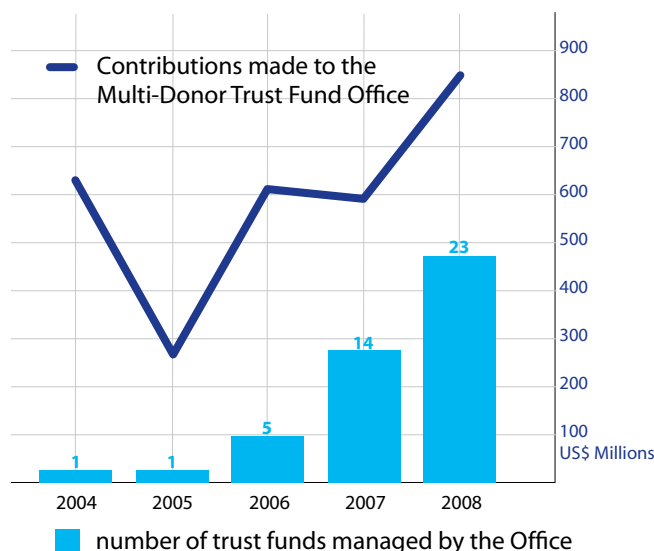
## THE MDG ACHIEVEMENT FUND

The MDG Achievement Fund, established in 2006 with a contribution from the Government of Spain, supports MDG achievement activities brought to the table by multiple partners at the country level. The Fund presents a valuable opportunity to advance UN reform through collaborative programming at the national level, emphasizing the aid effectiveness principles outlined in the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action. With a minimum requirement of two UN Agencies per joint programme, the Fund has propelled a process of joint programme formulation and

planning leading to joint programming; joint advocacy; a transparent and inclusive process of funding allocation that is in line with national priorities; and harmonized approaches to business and operations, to reduce transaction costs and to increase efficiencies. UNDP also recognizes that there must be mutual accountability for results between the RC

## THE MULTI-DONOR TRUST FUND PORTFOLIO GREW IN 2008

Both the number of Funds and contributions jumped significantly.



Source: Multi-Donor Trust Fund Office/UNDP

implementation in over 50 countries. Getting UN Country Teams to talk about their contribution to national development priorities and build common proposals is already generating knowledge on the joint programming process. A 2008 survey undertaken by the Fund queried UN partners on their satisfaction with the MDG Achievement Fund process, with 75 percent rating their experience of participating in the formulation of new proposals and joint programmes as positive and 95 percent rating the process to be fair and transparent.

and the other members of the UN Country Team, to ensure that all entities are working together toward the common goal of supporting national development plans around agreed-upon programme priorities.

Important progress was made in 2008 in enabling the UN to achieve this greater

coherency and effectiveness, largely through the eight “Delivering as One” country pilots that were launched by governments, with the UN, in January 2007: **Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam**. While important progress was made in 2007, the significant challenge in 2008 was for the UN Country Teams, with national and international partners, to deliver on the implementation of the “One UN” Programmes and to make tangible strides in achieving the necessary elements of coherency and effectiveness. The pilot governments and the UN Country Teams have worked together to meet this challenge.

For example, in **Tanzania**, the UN has been working with its partners to help mitigate the impact of soaring food prices on poor and vulnerable households in targeted regions of the country. The UN system requested funds from the Central Emergency Response Fund to provide affected rural households with seeds to enable them to re-engage in agriculture. A rapid vulnerability assessment conducted in early 2008 led jointly by the Government and UN agencies, as well as local and international CSOs, underscored the urgency of the situation in the most affected regions. The UN system interventions focused on protecting the livelihoods and nutritional situation of vulnerable farmers, including helping them to produce enough food for themselves.

In **Viet Nam**, the UN began a policy-level engagement on climate change, recognizing that Viet Nam is one of the countries most affected by climate change effects, especially sea-level rise, as highlighted in UNDP’s 2007/2008 Human Development Report *Fighting Climate Change: Human Solidarity in a Divided World*. In 2008, the UN contributed substantively to the development of the National Target Programme on Responding to Climate Change, giving technical advice, funding national technical advisers and national consultations and facilitating consultations with the international community.



**Former Administrator Kemal Derviş visiting a joint UNDP and Microsoft initiative in Rwanda that is developing the capacity of technical support units serving the Parliament.**

These examples emerging out of the “Delivering as One” pilots demonstrate that the reform process is achieving concrete results for the benefit of the UN’s national partners. They also demonstrate that partnerships underlie the success of increased efforts at efficiency and effectiveness. While the RC/Resident Representative remains the “one leader” of the UN system, it is vital that he or she works together with the UN Country Team and national partners to identify the priority areas of the UN’s support, and draws on the relevant UN expertise and mandates that will be required to support the achievement of these results. The pilot experience in 2008 also demonstrated that the partnership between the UN development agencies and the international financial institutions is an important one in providing policy advice and technical expertise to national partners, including in areas related to the food and financial crises specifically and in supporting the countries’ efforts to overcome challenges in achieving the MDGs.

## Gender Equality and One UN in Albania

Albania's "One UN" Programme was launched in 2007 to serve as a blueprint for combining the expertise of individual UN agencies, including UNDP, in order to enhance their contributions to Albania's human development. Under it, UN agencies work together as a single, streamlined UN Country Team to advocate for socially inclusive development; support the Government in achieving priority national objectives; and offer more comprehensive public policy analysis. All of these goals support Albania's drive to become part of the European Union and the aspirations of Albanian citizens to lead better lives while at the same time saving time and financial resources for national and international partners.

Advancing gender equality is a core principle of the "One UN" in Albania and is viewed as a key cross-cutting issue throughout all of the UN programmes. The Joint Programme on Gender – which includes UNDP, UNIFEM, the UN Population Fund and UNICEF – is providing coordinated advocacy and technical support to the Government to ensure the successful implementation of a newly passed gender equality law. This law aims to end direct and indirect gender discrimination in employment, education, health and many other fields. Within this context the UN is working to

tackle gender-based violence, to improve monitoring of the status of women, to ensure women's access to social protection and to develop special measures to increase the role of women in the decision-making process.

UNDP has a key role to play in all of this. For example, UNDP is taking the lead in providing technical support for the implementation of Albania's first domestic violence law at national and local levels. This has involved the training of judges in district courts and courts of appeal on the scope and correct application of the law. In addition, over 600 police officers have been trained on the necessary procedures required when working with domestic violence cases. Through UNDP support, and in close consultation with civil society groups, the Government is establishing the first national shelter for victims of domestic violence. The Joint Programme on Gender is helping the Government to implement the country's first quota for women candidates at the national level in time for elections in 2009.

**In Albania, a "Delivering As One" project is assisting Roma and Egyptian families to obtain civil registration, enabling them to access public services and exercise their legal rights.**

