

“If I were to sum up my view of the United Nations and its work today, it would be a spirit of principled pragmatism. By virtue of its charter and its calling, the UN must be a voice of moral conscience in the world. Part of that moral duty is to make good on the hopes and expectations vested in us – to deliver results.”

– Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General, *The Economist: The World in 2008*.

UNDP’s role in the UN development system

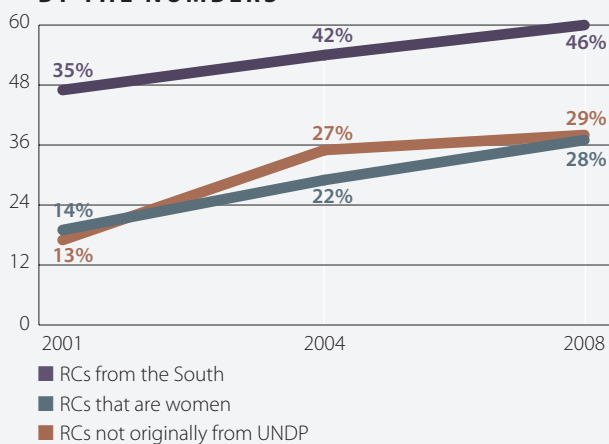
When the new Secretary-General assumed office on 1 January 2007, he identified certain priorities for action during his tenure. Among these were to continue the process of reform to bring the UN family into closer harmony, and to mobilize political will and hold leaders to their commitment to the MDGs by ensuring that adequate resources are allocated for development.

Progress has been achieved on both of these pledges. Building on efforts already underway to strengthen the UN development system’s coherence and effectiveness as a development partner at the national level, UNDP is working with its UN system partners to make a contribution through its dual role as both manager of the Resident Coordinator (RC) system and as a development actor working to provide programme support and technical and policy advice to national partners. In 2007, the UN General Assembly adopted the most recent Triennial Comprehensive Policy Review, which guides the activities of the UN development system. The review recognized the central role of RCs in making possible the coordination of operational activities for development so as to improve the UN system’s response to national priorities. It also acknowledged that the RC system plays a key role as an instrument for the effective and efficient coordination of UN development activities at the country level. UNDP has been working to strengthen its management of the RC system so that the RC function is owned by the UN development system in a way that is collegial, participatory and transparent. In many countries, UNDP has introduced Country Directors to focus exclusively on managing the UNDP programme to enable the RC to focus more on strengthening the coherence of the UN Country Team to respond to national development priorities. As part of the UN Development Group (UNDG), UNDP is also doing

its part to ensure that UN activities are well integrated and aligned around national objectives.

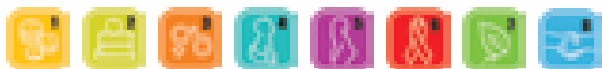
In early 2007, the UN with eight national governments that volunteered to support the UN’s efforts towards greater coherence and efficiency launched *Delivering as One* pilots in **Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam**. Through the work of national partners with the UN Country Teams, these pilots aim to make the UN’s development operations more coherent and effective, to harness expertise and experience from across the UN development system, to reduce transaction costs, and to create synergies to support countries in achieving their national development plans. Initial feedback from the eight pilot governments and the UN Country Teams, based on progress achieved in 2007, is signaling that through the four “Ones” – One Programme, One Budgetary Framework, One Leader and One Office – the UN Country Teams are more effectively aligning the UN’s development assistance, with national development plans and priorities to ensure national ownership, and to offer a good platform for

UN RESIDENT COORDINATORS (RCs): BY THE NUMBERS *

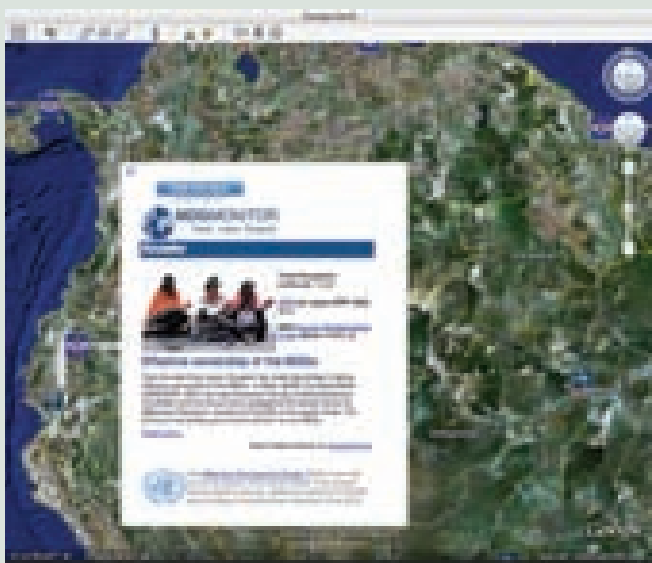


*as of 11 April 2008
Source: PB/UNDP

MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS



1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development



Launched at the UN on 1 November 2007, the MDG Monitor – a partnership among the UN, Cisco and Google – is a pioneering website that tracks global progress towards achieving the MDGs. Users can access MDG-related information about 130 countries worldwide. The Monitor provides essential information for policy makers and development practitioners about reducing extreme poverty by 2015. A special feature of the site is Google Earth, which allows users to view country profiles in three dimensions.

Top photo, from left to right: Technologist for Google Earth and Maps Michael T. Jones, UNDP Administrator Kemal Derviş, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, and Cisco Senior Vice President Carlos Domínguez at the launch event. The MDG Monitor logo was designed pro bono by Bontron and Co.

For more information: www.mdgmonitor.org

the UN to better maximize its development impact through joint programming and planning. The pilots are also making progress in defining the mutual accountabilities within the UN Country Team towards achieving concrete development results, ensuring that all members of the UN system are supporting a coherent programme and that resources are aligned with national priorities. The pilots are also demonstrating that one size does not fit all: the ways in which the UN development system delivers as one differs from country to country, depending on the national context and priorities.

In Rwanda, One Programme has meant that priorities agreed under the existing development assistance framework – governance, health, HIV and AIDS, nutrition and population, education, environment, sustainable growth and social protection – now fall under a common operational document. Programme portfolios have been distributed among UN agencies based on the comparative expertise of each organization. A steering committee comprised of representatives of line ministries, UN organizations, bilateral development agencies, donors and others oversee progress throughout the programme cycle in each of the focus areas. Based on government feedback, the common planning has led to a more coherent strategy, with organizations collaborating for maximum impact on the ground, and the complete alignment of the UN's development operations with the government's national development plans.

In Tanzania, implementation of all three components of the One Programme (the joint programmes, common services and communication) is ongoing. Joint programme activities have been implemented since the end of 2007 and as of March 2008, 75 percent of the resources required to close the funding gaps of the respective joint programmes was made available from the One Fund. The UN offices in Dar es Salaam and two major sub-offices in Zanzibar and Kigoma are managed by UN agencies independently. This means that each agency administers its own programme activities using administrative structures – typically human resources, communications technology, procurement and finance – that tend to deliver similar services. The One Office plan for 2008-2009, which has been endorsed by the UN Country Team, focuses on reducing parallel structures and practices.

In Viet Nam, 16 resident members of the UN Country Team participate in one or more of the "Ones." In August 2007, the Vietnamese government and six UN agencies signed the first One Plan, which will guide their program-

ming activities through 2010. A One Plan incorporating all other UN Country Team members is in progress. One Budget is in place, with a dedicated One Plan Fund to support coherent resource mobilization and allocation efforts. The RC's role has been enhanced to increase policy and programmatic coherence. An operations management team is trimming costs by pooling arrangements for operational activities such as travel, security and procurement under an Action Plan for Common Services. And an eco-friendly UN House for all UN organizations is in the works to establish the UN in Viet Nam as a model of best "green" business practices.

In the context of growing efforts of the UN system towards enhanced coherence and efficiency at the country level and increasing joint UN activities, UNDP is often called upon to play the role of administrative agent for multi-donor trust funds. A multi-donor trust fund is a funding instrument through which donors pool resources to support national priorities and facilitate UN agencies to work and deliver in close coordination and collaboration. Since 2004, the role of UNDP as administrative agent has grown to include the management of more than \$3 billion on behalf of the UN system and donors. The largest of these funds is the Iraq Trust Fund, currently with over \$1 billion under management.

Recognizing the need to expedite progress toward the MDGs, governments and donors are rising to the challenge with a renewed focus of attention and resources. A new initiative launched by the Secretary-General in 2007, the MDG Africa Steering Group, is designed to accelerate progress on achieving the MDGs in Africa. The Group is chaired by the Secretary-General and comprises an unprecedented set of leaders from the major development partners working in Africa: the African Development Bank, the African Union Commission, the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund, the Islamic Development Bank, The World Bank and the UNDG, represented by the UNDP Administrator as Chair of the UNDG.

Three key objectives guide the work of the Steering Group. The first is improved in-country support for achieving the MDGs. Priorities here include launching an African Green Revolution with increased official development assistance (ODA) to double food yields. The Steering Group also aims to expand investments in education, in health systems and human resources for health, in public infrastructure, and to support the completion of a census by 2010.



In Malawi, an abundant maize crop is one result of a special fund established by the Government three years ago to help farmers get fertilizer and high-yield seeds. Malawi's harvest doubled after just one year. Programmes like this can help combat hunger in the poorest countries.

The second objective concerns ODA funding commitments. Seventy percent of the total increase in ODA promised to Africa by 2010 remains to be programmed. In response, the Steering Group has recommended that development partners should publish country-by-country schedules for the realization of their global ODA commitments, and provide African countries with yearly schedules for the ODA that will be allocated to them. The third objective is to enhance collaboration in-country for scaling up to reach the MDGs. The Steering Group is working with **Benin, Central African Republic, Ghana, Liberia, Niger, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Togo, and Zambia** to prepare case studies that identify unfinanced projects and programmes that could be immediately scaled up with international support. These case studies will be presented to the G8 at Hokkaido, **Japan** and the Accra High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Ghana to support advocacy for more predictable and larger ODA flows.

In all of these endeavours, UNDP continues to be guided by the view that true coherence and effectiveness in the UN development system ultimately leads to greater impact in improving the lives of the people in the countries it serves.