

FAST FACTS

United Nations
Development Programme



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

Knowledge, Innovation and Capacity Development

The world is changing fast, and social and technological innovations are advancing at breathtaking speed. But while billions have escaped extreme poverty over the last decades, progress has stalled in many countries. New complex and global challenges have come to the fore, as well as opportunities for creative action to foster sustainable development with green, inclusive and equitable growth.

Old ways of doing business are no longer sufficient to address the challenges and exploit the opportunities of today. The importance of having access to quickly available knowledge and expertise, no matter where it is located, is critical. Agile and adaptive approaches are needed to build on existing development solutions and to make them available and usable in other places. Addressing new and complex problems and overcoming barriers will require local and global action to harness the energy, creativity and knowledge of citizens, researchers and entrepreneurs in mutual learning processes. Capacities required to meet today's and tomorrow's challenges will increasingly focus on collaborative practices which cut across various sectors, constituencies, institutions and geographical boundaries.



UNDP Administrator Helen Clark studies solar-powered bicycle on visit to Croatia. Photo: UNDP/Inia Herencic

UNDP's approach

UNDP is adapting the way it does business to fit the changing world. Promoting agile approaches to knowledge sharing, and enhancing collaborative capacity development are key elements of *how* UNDP seeks to help countries and citizens achieve sustainable human development, more empowered lives and resilient societies.

UNDP's integrated approach to knowledge, innovation and capacity development comprises a core set of services around three main priority areas:

- Optimizing open knowledge sharing as part of all UNDP interventions.
- Fostering the capacity of partners and UNDP to use and learn from the latest innovation expertise and methodologies.
- Supporting capacity development, with an increasing emphasis on expanding collaborative and networking functions and mechanisms.

UNDP's response: learning and doing

UNDP is building on a new approach to knowledge, innovation and capacity. The combination of learning while doing, and engaging in an open and shared reflection of what works and what does not, is a key feature of this approach. We are enhancing UNDP's ability to organically connect people, knowledge and technology by:

- Supporting local initiatives by including state-of-the-art knowledge sharing approaches as an integral part of UNDP's services, and looking well beyond technology platforms in this pursuit;
- Introducing prototyping initiatives that foster adaptation and innovation by involving new partners and using social media and other tools that help move towards real-time monitoring and more effective engagement of citizens;

- Continuing to drive UNDP's capacity development work as a key element to achieve transformational results in programme countries and explore the frontiers of capacity development, going well beyond a short-term focus.

UNDP at work

Knowledge sharing and networking: In 2012, UNDP and the Government of **Brazil** co-organized the virtual [Rio+20 Dialogues](#) in the run-up to the United Nations Conference for Sustainable Development. Through the online platform, approximately 1.4 million votes were cast, selecting a set of recommended actions presented to leaders in Rio. Tens of thousands of voices were brought to Rio+20 events. Building on the experience of the Rio+20 Dialogues, UNDP teamed up with youth groups, private sector bodies and NGO partners all over the world to launch [MY World](#), a global survey available both online and offline in paper form which allows citizens to choose their priorities for a better world. The results will be shared with world leaders in setting the post-2015 global development agenda following the Millennium Development Goals. Linked to MY World are the global thematic, regional and national consultations on Post-2015 which can be followed on [The World We Want](#) a UNDP-hosted web platform. The raw data coming from consultations in up to 100 countries will be made available online for anyone to analyze.



A scene at the Rio+20 conference, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.
Photo: UN/Rossana Fraga.

Innovation for transformative impact: In fostering innovation to address complex problems in a new way, UNDP has supported successful pilot projects in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. In **Armenia**, a social innovation camp was set-up in partnership with CSOs to minimize the time and money it takes to develop technology-enabled solutions to social problems, for example, a platform monitoring state polyclinics. In **Uzbekistan**, a simple reporting tool is used to provide real-time information from projects to donors on aid for trade. In **Kosovo**, citizens are now making

use of social media for anti-corruption mobilization. UNDP partnered with the government and civil society in creating an interactive site that provides opportunities to the citizens of Kosovo to voice their concerns and engage in enhancing corruption control. **Montenegro** embarked on a community-led design of new tourism products and services, offered via geo-locations services. With the support of UNDP, the local communities in the protected areas are using social networking tools to generate their own tourism content and offer some new experiences not featured in mainstream marketing.

Effective development cooperation for development effectiveness: Many countries in the Emerging South request UNDP's support to adapt to the changing development cooperation architecture and to the new roles as a connector (e.g. strengthening networks among developing and emerging economies), as a facilitator (e.g. global policy fora, promoting peer learning exchanges), and knowledge broker. UNDP supports developing and emerging economies' voices being heard in global policy dialogues while providing strategic capacity development support to national agencies dedicated to international development such as to TIKA in **Turkey**, AMEXCID in **Mexico**, SAPDA in **South Africa**, and ABC in **Brazil**.

Capacity development for sustainable development: Achievement of national sustainable development goals is dependent upon a variety of actors, state and non-state, being able to come together on issues of the day and pursue a common agenda. UNDP supports various national partners to strengthen their capacities to define and achieve their sustainable development goals. UNDP supported **Jamaica** to strengthen government capacities to implement cross-sector objectives related to climate change; **Suriname** to strengthen capacities of non-state actors to participate in the national sustainable development dialogue; **Kyrgyzstan** to prepare its national sustainable development strategy; and in **Indonesia** to engage the (corporate) private sector in programme action planning.

For more information visit: www.undp.org/capacity

Knowledge, Innovation and Capacity Group

Bureau for Development Policy

United Nations Development Programme

One United Nations Plaza, New York, NY 10017

March 2013