

FAST FACTS

United Nations
Development Programme



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Resilient nations.

Poverty Reduction and UNDP

Despite progress achieved since the endorsement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by world leaders at the UN in September 2000, human poverty still remains widespread in certain parts of the world. Globally, the number of extreme poor has dropped by 650 million in the last three decades, a level of progress humankind had never seen. But still there are more than a billion people living in extreme poverty. In the midst of globalized progress and development, human deprivations are still wide spread.

In this context, poverty reduction is the overarching goal and at the core of UNDP's work to support transformational change which brings about real improvements in people's lives. As a trusted multilateral partner serving 177 developing countries and territories around the world, UNDP is uniquely positioned to help advocate for change, connect countries to the knowledge and resources they need, and coordinate the efforts of the UN at the country level. UNDP invests nearly US\$1 billion every year in fighting poverty and advancing progress towards the MDGs.



Photo: Sherwin B. Manual, UNDP Philippines.
A woman in the Philippines collecting her rice harvest.

UNDP's comprehensive approach

Poverty is a multifaceted reality. It is not simply a lack of adequate income; it is a cruel mix of human deprivation in knowledge, health, dignity and rights, obstacles to participation and lack of voice. Therefore, comprehensive transformational change is needed to address the root causes of poverty. UNDP's work on poverty reduction focuses on such change through public policy interventions that help to modify the social, cultural and economic conditions that created poverty in the first place. Gender equality and women's empowerment, democratic governance and

support to transitions, prevention of crises and building back better, engagement in climate talks, adaptation and mitigation, and the elimination of stigma in HIV and AIDS are ways of fighting against poverty by another name. UNDP's work in poverty reduction is guided by this broad, comprehensive approach to achieve sustainable human development (SHD).

UNDP in action

Economic growth will not produce jobs and cut poverty unless it is inclusive and equitable, and unless the needs of the poor and marginalized are at the centre of development priorities. When men and women have equal opportunities and freedoms, economic growth accelerates and poverty declines more rapidly. UNDP thus works with developing countries to integrate the standards and principles of human rights such as non-discrimination, participation and accountability in design and implementation of development policies and programmes.

Accelerating and sustaining MDG progress

In the run-up to the MDG deadline of 2015, MDG progress acceleration remains at the centre of UNDP's work in poverty reduction. Through the MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF), rolled out through a UN-wide initiative, UNDP is supporting countries in systematically identifying and analyzing the bottlenecks that are slowing progress towards the MDGs, rolling-out proven interventions, and developing MDG action plans. In **Moldova**, UNDP supported the Government in uncovering the challenges of addressing HIV and tuberculosis and developed high-impact action plans with feasible solutions to address these challenges. In **Cambodia**, UNDP supported the first country MAF to focus on women's economic empowerment at a national level through training programmes, entrepreneurship initiatives and gender mainstreaming.

Developing capacity to plan, budget and implement pro-poor policies

In **Lao PDR**, UNDP has helped the Government identify and develop plans for the poorest districts, which has enabled the Government to align its provincial governance and rural development efforts towards these priority districts. In **Montenegro**, UNDP was instrumental in supporting the Government to elaborate the *Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy* as its first comprehensive poverty profile, defining the multidimensional nature of poverty and its causes, and leading to formal recognition by the Government of a 'poverty' problem.



Photo: UNDP Liberia. Women counting their harvest earnings after receiving training from UNDP's Community Based Recovery and Development Programme.

Building resilience and reducing vulnerabilities

UNDP supports the innovative design of social protection schemes in 18 countries including **Timor-Leste**, where UNDP supported the implementation of a scheme for women. UNDP also provides policy options on topics related to resilience and vulnerability, such as through a 2012 report that focused the attention of policy makers in developing countries on macroeconomic vulnerability and resilience to economic and financial shocks, and the organization of policy dialogues on microeconomic vulnerabilities and poor households' coping strategies.

Promoting employment through business and agricultural development

In **Bolivia**, UNDP provided more than 4,000 indigenous women with training and microloans to open up new, community-based businesses. In the **occupied Palestinian Territory**, UNDP's *Deprived Families Economic Empowerment Programme* created 12,000 permanent jobs through grants for microenterprises and has helped over 66,000 families to graduate from poverty. Through a collaborative project with the IKEA foundation, UNDP delivered training on financial literacy and business management in **India**, creating a strong cadre of over 12,000 financially literate women and 4,000 entrepreneurs.

Scaling up local development innovations

To enhance development impact through strengthening micro-macro linkages and building on successful pilots, UNDP has developed guidance on scaling up local development innovations and case studies from such countries as **Bangladesh, China, Costa Rica, Mexico, Mongolia** and **Nepal**. It supports the scaling-up of proven local innovations and successes in programme countries. In **Colombia**, UNDP supports the scaling-up of proven approaches to increasing employment and income generation opportunities for lowest-income and vulnerable populations including women, indigenous populations and persons with disabilities.

Promoting the rights of persons with disabilities

UNDP supported the establishment of the UN Partnership to Promote the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, mobilizing over US\$2.9 million to facilitate full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. UNDP also hosts the technical secretariat for the partnership. In **Costa Rica**, the Fund is supporting the removal of barriers that prevent persons with disabilities from obtaining an adequate income through employment or entrepreneurship.

Promoting inclusive globalization

UNDP supports Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to benefit from the Enhanced Integrated Framework for trade-related technical assistance (EIF) programme, including review and diagnostics in **Bhutan** and **South Sudan**, capacity development in **Chad, Lesotho** and **Sao Tome and Principe**, and activities to integrate trade in national policies in **Burkina Faso, Cambodia** and **Zambia**.

Strengthening resource management for sustainable human development

UNDP organized a policy dialogue with the government of **Guyana** to provide policy options to policy makers on sustainable management of the extractive industries. UNDP conducted case studies on water provision and governance systems in informal urban settlements in **Kenya, Tanzania** and **Uganda** to help improve governance of this precious resource in these and other Sub-Saharan African countries.

Mobilizing new sources of financing for development

UNDP provided support to the Government of **Jamaica** to establish a new climate change department with the capacity to access climate financing and implement policies effectively. It has developed knowledge products and built its organizational capacity on recognizing and addressing illicit outflows of financial resources.

Supporting global post-2015 agenda-setting

UNDP, with other agencies in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), supports the organization of wide-ranging public consultations with the global community to help inform the post-2015 agenda. For example, it recently partnered with ILO and the Government of Japan to coordinate global consultations on growth and employment to support UN member states when they engage in negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.

For more information visit:

www.undp.org/poverty

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