

# UNDP INSIDE

## REAFFIRMING OUR REVOLUTION

UNDP today is emerging as an organization of energy and intellect, of shared knowledge and strong partnerships, of far-reaching vision married to realistic plans for transformation. This has been our revolution over the last four years, and it has gone further and faster than many predicted, featuring the most extensive reorganization of a workforce in the history of the UN. Today, with results-based management, a growing culture of accountability, and a series of cutting-edge tools for doing business, our global network of experts is more fully prepared than ever before to support the countries and the people we serve.

Donors recognized the success of our efforts in 2003, with a jump in resources, and one of the first real growth budgets approved for a UN agency in several years. Countries reaffirmed it, with a record number of requests for policy support and advice within UNDP's five practice areas. The international business press, including the *Financial Times*, lauded the sweeping changes to our business model. And the vast majority of the over 5,000 UNDP staff who participated in our annual staff survey expressed confidence in the direction the organization is taking.

### DEVELOPMENT THAT DELIVERS

Since 2003 was the last year of a four-year business plan, we took up the challenge of consolidating the significant internal changes that are shaping today's high-performance UNDP. With a fundamental restructuring of our corporate foundation in place, our commitment has shifted to tapping our full organizational capability in everything we offer: advocacy, knowledge, partnerships and support for capacity development. As a trusted development partner known worldwide for being on the ground during crisis and peace, we are also finding new ways to adapt and extend our capabilities when events demand it.

A crucial first step has been a multi-year funding framework, issued by the 2003 Executive Board. For 2004–2007, it maps out ways to deepen the strategic alignment of our programmes, practice areas and business processes. The framework draws on the proven demand for UNDP services from programme countries from 2000–2003, and defines how we can most efficiently support development that delivers results, particularly within the context of the MDGs. In simplifying the mechanisms to measure these results, it also places

## A WINDOW TO THE WORLD



### KNOWLEDGE

Country offices across UNDP plug into knowledge networks circulating a wealth of information. Algeria relied on the Arab States network to help shape its judicial reform, calling upon UNDP to play a pivotal role in assisting with institutionalizing respect for human rights and improving public access. Two pilot courts have been established, along with the first Web-based Justice Portal.

### PARTNERSHIP FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

With partners including nine governments and the Microsoft Corporation, UNDP recently launched the Southern Africa Capacity Initiative. It helps countries slow the weakening of workforce capacity that comes from high HIV/AIDS rates. In Malawi, volunteers give counselling and support.



### ADVOCACY

UNDP deploys global networks and a wide-range of partnerships to inspire action on urgent development issues. To spread the word about the MDGs, particularly the first goal on halving poverty, UNDP Goodwill Ambassadors Ronaldo and Zidane invited 40 of their friends to star in the Match Against Poverty in Basel, Switzerland.

The event, widely covered in the media, also raised a million Swiss francs for UNDP's country-based poverty reduction projects.

a strong emphasis on transparency and accountability.

Subsequently, we streamlined our six practice areas to five, with 30 clear-cut service lines that structure activities under each and link directly into the MDGs. An integrated emphasis on gender runs throughout. Two practices, poverty reduction and democratic governance, now subsume the work of the previous information and communications technology for development (ICT) practice, while the remaining three practices cover energy and environment, crisis prevention and recovery, and HIV/AIDS. The Board also agreed to expand the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, reflecting the growing need for services in this area.

While UNDP's practice areas have increased our organizational focus and agility, they also stand behind two other key components of our mandate and development effectiveness in general: partnerships and capacity development. The multi-year funding framework also spells out how working together, in and outside the UN system, will be critical in the stretch to reach the MDGs, and UNDP will continue expanding its efforts to make partnerships essential to the way

we do business. Many of these alliances will help countries build the capacity to absorb and sustain change, and to take charge of their own development agenda, concepts that have been integrated across all of our practices. Country offices and the recently formed Capacity Development Group within our Bureau for Development Policy will now begin putting together knowledge resources that combine both the latest intellectual research and UNDP experiences from the field. The group is identifying existing success stories from the practices, and assessing ways that countries can learn from these to build strategic, long-term capacity development plans.

### **A HARMONIZED AGENDA FOR CHANGE**

UNDP's reform process has been essential in aligning the organization with the complex needs of a rapidly globalizing world, yet events in 2003 set the bar higher. In sharp relief, they underscored not only the urgency of the MDGs, but also the importance of pushing forward Secretary-General Kofi Annan's UN reform agenda, with its emphasis on harmonizing the efforts of different arms of the UN system.



## SIERRA LEONE: COORDINATING THE UN FOR PEACE

When UN agencies work together, they can become a powerful partner for peace building. Such has been the case in Sierra Leone, where civil war displaced half the population and left the national infrastructure in ruins. Intervention needed to be coordinated, efficient, sensitive to national and community priorities, and capable of maximizing scarce resources.

Even before peace had formally been declared in 2002, the UN put special arrangements in place to ensure close cooperation between members of the UN Country Team. Designated as the UN coordinator for humanitarian and development operations, the UNDP Resident Representative was also named as the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, and led the Country

Team in planning a coordinated programme of national recovery with the government and its partners.

Working closely at times with UN peacekeepers, each member mobilized its specialized expertise. The UN Children's Fund and the World Health Organization carried vaccines to children in areas without health care for years. UNDP helped reintegrate former combatants and hold elections. The Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Food Programme provided seeds, tools and food aid. Joint initiatives overseen by the Resident Coordinator guided national and local management of the recovery process.

All of these efforts helped peace put down roots in Sierra Leone, which is now widely recognized as one of the UN's most successful post-conflict

interventions. In 2003, the Country Team and the government agreed on a four-year coordinated development plan, the UN Development Assistance Framework, shaped around the MDGs. With the World Bank, UNDP has also sponsored the Development Partners' Committee. It brings together the government, Country Team, donors and civil society to agree on the best strategies for sound governance and poverty reduction, two pillars of a peaceful society.

The people of Sierra Leone have waited many years for clean water, functioning schools, and the opportunity to vote. UN coordination has helped make sure that the wait is over, and peace has a chance to thrive.

Harmonization falls naturally within the scope of the MDGs. Within the UN, the goals call upon the strengths of an array of agencies. Working together, different organizations can integrate the goals within common programming initiatives and results, and make the optimal use of expertise and resources. They can also more smoothly intersect with global, regional and national development strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers and national development plans. All of this adds up to development that is more streamlined, more cost-effective, and more responsive to national priorities. Particularly in countries that struggle to manage multiple relationships with development partners, harmonization will prove vital in reaching the MDGs.

UNDP, as head of the global UNDG and manager of the Resident Coordinator system at the country level, is one of the leaders of the harmonization process, which began several years ago with the introduction of common assessments and development planning frameworks. In 2003, we tightened our internal assessment system so that some of our most skilled people now fill the Resident Coordinator positions. At

the same time, the UNDG debuted a results-based system that makes direct links between country and UN development goals. It also agreed on revised guidelines for joint programming; common approval, implementation and monitoring tools; principles for channeling funds in a common manner; and joint strategy meetings with national partners—all activities that have traditionally been carried out agency by agency.

Several core Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) principles have guided these initiatives, including the need to focus on national priorities and capacity building, and to keep harmonization flexible enough to cross widely divergent national situations. Five countries—Benin, Ecuador, Kenya, Niger and Pakistan—began rolling out harmonization pilots in 2003. Another 16 nations will come on board in 2004. For crisis situations, UNDP has also recently partnered with the World Bank and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on the 4R Initiative. It provides a comprehensive strategy for collaboration among all UN agencies that links repatriation, rehabilitation, reintegration and reconstruction efforts.

## **PERFORMANCE: SYSTEMS AND PEOPLE**

UNDP's ability to deliver development results, on time and wherever needed, rests upon our operational efficiency and the quality of our people. Nimble, smoothly running systems fuel higher performance, with state-of-the-art technology particularly important to an organization in the business of generating and circulating knowledge. In 2003, we paved the way for the implementation of Atlas, our configuration of the PeopleSoft Enterprise Resource Programme. It went online, on schedule, in January 2004.

Over the next two years, Atlas will enable us to retire 16 existing systems, many of which had inadequate functionality, were poorly integrated and were increasingly costly to maintain. It will integrate financial, project and human resources information across UNDP. From processing payments to managing pools of staff ready for rapid deployment in crisis situations, it will provide both snapshots and strategic overviews of how we are managing our resources, and how we can continually boost our effectiveness.

The construction of the system marked an extraordinary collaboration within the UN system, involving UNDP, UNOPS and UNFPA staff, and the active partnership of UNHCR. It has also been a major step

A new Learning Strategy was finalized late in the year, with such features as universal learning and a leadership development programme conducted in partnership with Columbia University. Staff learning has already become an integral part of our results and competency assessment system, where last year, for the first time, the aggregate ratings met the recommended targets. Training courses have included the international computer driving license, adopted from a European Union model. Meant to instruct all UNDP staff in basic computer literacy and help support Atlas, it has kicked off in offices worldwide, with many already having reached 100 percent participation. For 2004, our popular Virtual Development Academy will quadruple in size, offering 400 staff learning options related to the practice areas and the MDGs.

Other 2003 highlights included the first full year of our newly created Ombudsperson Office, which handled over 350 cases and issued a framework for accountability procedures. A new policy on national staff has proposed an internal consultancy system where national staff can exchange their insights with other country offices. And a policy on gender balance in management attempts to rectify UNDP's low percentage of women leaders, committing to a goal of

*Confidence in the organization has increased dramatically. The core budget is growing and so is UNDP's contribution to world development.*

—57th UN General Assembly President Jan Kavan (Czech Republic)

towards the kind of open, connected, knowledge-driven organization we are determined to be.

Atlas will significantly improve our ability to develop and retain talented people, a core corporate priority. Throughout 2003, UNDP followed through on a series of other initiatives in this direction, starting with the reorganization of our Office of Human Resources. Staff administrative services were relocated from New York to Copenhagen, which has already achieved economies of scale and better service provision. Units remaining in New York can now maintain a strategic focus on expanding the ranks of high-performing staff.

50/50 parity for all professional positions by 2010.

Following the bombing of UN headquarters in Baghdad, a major overhaul of the UN-wide security system began. UNDP's Executive Board authorized a 60 percent increase in spending on security measures to contend with the most immediate threats. This will likely be one of the more sobering challenges that we will face in coming years. But it will not daunt UNDP's commitment. We are increasingly prepared to help untangle the complexities of crisis, and we will be ready to offer this expertise, wherever the world requires.