

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE FOR PARTNERSHIPS (UNOP)

Support to AU/NEPAD (Period of July 2009 to June 2010)

Introduction

The United Nations system has been partnering with the private sector and civil society in a variety of ways for over 60 years. Using business skills, smart philanthropy, and the rigor of the marketplace, partnerships can develop and deliver system-changing solutions. Private-public partnerships are important now more than ever, and many organizations in the private sphere are coming forward to join efforts with the UN and other public entities. From competitions and prizes to investments in human capital and local populations, organizations are stepping up to the challenge and engaging other corporations, foundations and civil society to contribute to achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), especially in the African region.

The UN Office for Partnerships (UNOP), working under the leadership of the UN Deputy Secretary-General, serves as a gateway for partnership opportunities with the United Nations family. It promotes collaboration and alliances in furtherance of the MDGs and provides support to new initiatives of the Secretary-General. The office manages three innovative mechanisms: Partnership Advisory Services and Outreach for a variety of entities, including academic institutions, companies, foundations, government agencies, and civil society organizations; the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP), established by the Secretary-General in March 1998 to serve as the interface in the partnership between the UN system and the UN Foundation - the public charity responsible for administering Ted Turner's \$1 billion contribution in support of UN causes; and the United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) established by the Secretary-General in July 2005 to support democratization throughout the world which is focused on supporting democratic institutions, promoting human rights, and ensuring the participation of all groups in democratic processes.

Partnership advisory services and outreach

In 2009 UNOP has worked, together with the private sector, foundations, and civil society, on a number of initiatives focused on Africa's development needs. These projects include the following:

UNOP, Africa Investor, NYSE Euronext, the Office of the Special Advisor on Africa, NEPAD and the NEPAD Business Group co-hosted a high-level lunch forum entitled "The Africa Investor MDGs Working Lunch". This special event was held at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) on 21st September 2009. Africa Investor is a specialist investment communications firm advising governments, international organizations and businesses on communication strategies for capital market and foreign direct investments in Africa. The objective of the forum was to provide a discussion platform regarding the impact of the current financial crisis on investments in Africa. The event engaged business leaders, investors and philanthropists on practical investment strategies and partnerships that support the pursuit of the MDGs in Africa. This forum was part of a whole day event entitled the "Africa Investor Index Series Summit", which combined the AI Summit, the AI Initial Public Offering Summit, and the Investor-Issuer

Roundtable, focused on capital market developments in Africa.

UNOP has continued to work closely with the African Union (AU) and remains strongly committed to building especially through public-private partnerships. One of the objectives that UNOP continues to work on is a Partnership Forum at the AU Summit that would engage private sector leaders, and facilitate the participation of AU representatives in relevant high-level meetings and conferences hosted by the private sector. Another objective is to establish a Regional Centre for Partnerships in Africa, a joint initiative of the AU, UNOP and other entities to promote multi-stakeholder partnerships and which would serve as a Centre of Excellence for training within the region. The Centre would play a leadership role in facilitating strategic public-private partnerships at the national, regional and global levels across all sectors in support of the Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document. It would further act as a Knowledge Network to link prospective partners with communities of practice regionally and internationally and to facilitate the development and dynamic expansion of networks, alliances and coalitions that further support the achievement of the MDGs. A core activity, though not the primary purpose, would be advocacy to raise visibility of the region's work in support of UN causes. Key activities could also include an Annual African Forum on Partnerships, regular training programmes on partnership building covering technical assistance on procedures and best practices, as well as programme and project design, the establishment of multi-stakeholder partnerships and an annual report prepared by the Centre. The AU and UNOP also plan to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the future to provide a framework for their cooperation.

On August 10, 2009 in New York, the UNOP and the Information and Technology Corps (ITCO) signed a MoU. This memorandum was instituted in order to establish a structure in which both partners will cooperate in support of the Millennium Development Goal 2 – achieve universal primary education – through bridging the digital divide. ITCO is working closely with UN DESA-GAID with the aim of building capacity in developing countries around the world, particularly in Africa. The main goal of the initiative is to provide hundreds of thousands of new and refurbished computers for underprivileged children. This partnership strives to improve access to information communications technology in order to advance the educational opportunities for students in Africa.

UNOP regularly receives numerous inquiries from the private sector and foundations regarding how to assist the UN agenda. In many instances, UNOP encourages that they focus their philanthropy and investments on Africa. Examples of these partners include companies such as Coca-Cola, Nestle, Wal-Mart, Microsoft, and Ericsson.

UNFIP projects in support of African countries

Since July 2009, UNFIP, in partnership with the UN Foundation and several UN agencies, has committed over 62.8 million USD in funds to a number of development projects in the African region. One such project includes supplying measles vaccinations to a total of 27 countries across the globe, many of which are in Africa. The aim of this project is to vaccinate over 200 million children in order to reduce annual global measles deaths by 90 percent by 2010. Other ventures in support of African countries by UNFIP include malaria prevention activities in

refugee camps in 15 African nations through the distribution of insecticide-treated bed nets, and support for resource mobilization activities for polio eradication in Nigeria.

UNFIP has been providing support for the promotion of African Union leadership and accountability for women's rights and gender equality by facilitating the building of organizations' technical and institutional capacities to engage with the AU and Regional Economic Commissions, and to monitor national implementation of commitments towards gender equality.

UNDEF projects in support of African countries

The United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF) was established by the Secretary-General in July 2005 as a United Nations General Trust Fund, with the primary purpose of supporting democratization around the world. It supports projects that strengthen the voice of civil society, promote human rights, and encourage the participation of all groups in democratic processes. The large majority of UNDEF funds go to local civil society organizations — both in the transition and consolidation phases of democratization. In this way, UNDEF plays a new and distinct role in complementing the UN's work with governments to strengthen democratic governance around the world.

UNDEF has held three rounds of project funding and is currently assessing applications for the Fourth Round. Of the 78,345,596 USD expended to date, 24,707,367 USD was devoted to Sub-Saharan Africa (31.5 percent). This reflects not only UN priorities but also responds to the application process, as in each of the three rounds the greatest number of applications has come from Sub-Saharan Africa.

To date UNDEF has funded 86 projects in Sub-Saharan Africa including 15 regional projects.