

UNDP IS LAUNCHING NEW INITIATIVES TO CATALYZE BROADER ACTION AT COUNTRY LEVEL

In the areas of:

Capacity Development: With a ten-year record of working with developing countries to build their capacities to implement sustainable development through the Capacity 21 Programme, UNDP has now presented an expanded programme — Capacity 2015 — focused squarely on action to implement the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) predominantly at the local level.

Water: Water can be both a source of conflict and an opportunity to build trust among countries in water scarce regions. UNDP is launching a new dialogue on effective water governance and along with UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) is establishing a Trust Fund on Water which will focus on safe water and sanitation.

Energy: UNDP is building on its longstanding expertise as the UN's operational arm working on energy issues through the Global Village Energy Partnerships. Working with the World Bank, regional development banks and other partners, it aims to help provide access to modern energy services to 300 million people over the next decade through support for capacity building, consumer financing and enterprise development.

Agriculture: For more than 250 million people, desertification has a dire impact on their ability to produce food, preserve water and build sustainable livelihoods. UNDP's Drylands Development Centre in Nairobi is launching a capacity development initiative to reduce poverty in dryland areas through better management of land, water, agriculture and livestock.

Biodiversity: Through the Equator Initiative, UNDP and its partners are identifying and rewarding innovative community partnership initiatives that reduce poverty and conserve biodiversity. It will assist in disseminating lessons from these successful programmes and highlight emerging policy issues with an emphasis on fostering South-South capacity development through community-to-community learning exchanges.

Greening WSSD: UNDP, with the Government of South Africa (Gauteng Province), the Global Environment Facility and IUCN -South Africa, is co-sponsoring the Greening Initiative: WSSD 2002 to reduce the environmental impacts of the actual Summit event, while raising awareness in South Africa on environmental concerns pertinent to the Summit's deliberations. Environmental best practices are being showcased at the Summit, founded on the five "R's":

reduce, re-use, replace, recover and recycle.



ORGANIC FARMING IN THAILAND

Chang Chan checks the growing progress of traditional herbal medicines at a Holistic Health Care Center that uses sustainable technologies to produce traditional medicines for five districts in the area north of Chiang Mai. Photograph: UNDP

ECOTOURISM IN BOLIVIA
Guide from La Florida pointing to a fruit during a visit to the Bolivia's Noel Kempff Mercado National Park, where the population has been trained in ecotourism to generate income resources while preserving the rich biodiversity. Photograph: UNDP

MANUEL FOLLOWS A DIFFERENT PATH IN BOLIVIA'S RAINFOREST

Hiking down what used to be a logging road and is now a nature trail in Bolivia's Noel Kempff Mercado National Park, local guide Manuel Arias pauses to point out noteworthy plants: the reputed panacea "cat's claw," the edible fruits of the mermelada and achacarú trees and even the trunk of a massive rubber tree that bears the faint scars of tapping decades ago.

Stretching across some 1.5 million hectares to Bolivia's northeastern border with Brazil, Noel Kempff has an unparalleled variety of ecosystems: Amazonian rainforest, gallery forest, tropical forest, flooded savannah, thorn scrub, cerrado and wetlands. Over 600 bird species live in Noel Kempff — more than in all of North America — and the forests and savannas support an estimated 4,000 plant species.

Like his father and grandfather before him, 19-year-old Manuel earns his living from the forest. But how he does it vividly illustrates how times have changed. Whereas his forebears exploited the forest, Manuel's livelihood depends on protecting its resources.

Manuel's grandfather harvested rubber trees in the 1940s and 1950s until the market collapsed and the local economy switched to logging and hunting. During the 1970s and 1980s, tons of mahogany and many thousands of jaguar, caiman and ocelot hides were exported from the area. His father worked for a lumber company and then a cattle ranch. Manuel briefly followed in his footsteps with a short stint at a sawmill. But he didn't like the work.

So Manuel has now found his calling as a nature guide, and earns better money. He has taken two guide-training courses and also worked as a field assistant for biological researchers. To improve his guiding abilities he studies botany and English at home.

Manuel is one of many locals from the neighbouring town of La Florida, a small agricultural community of mostly Chiquitano Indians just across the Paragua River from the park, who have taken part in an eco-tourism project to supplement the local subsistence economy. With help from a small loan programme, he bought camping equipment and now spends most of his days hiking and camping with groups of backpackers, introducing them to the extraordinary local ecology. "It's a good alternative," he says. "Selling nature without destroying nature." Other locals have borrowed from the fund to construct rustic accommodations, equip tiny restaurants, or buy bicycles and dugout canoes to rent to tourists.

The Global Environmental Facility, part of UNDP, started the project in 2000. The Bolivian NGO Fundación Amigos de la Naturaleza administers the park through an agreement with the Government.

THE BANKER AND THE SEAMSTRESS FROM JAMAAT KARASU, TAJIKISTAN

The community of Jamaat Karasu is a short, bumpy drive from Tajikistan's capital city of Dushanbe. But the potholed road to it has only been open since 2000, because of anti-government resistance dating back to the country's 1992-1993 civil war.

At dusk, a two-story brick building starts to hum with activity as ten seamstresses dressed in bright aprons and boots begin their shift. Starting their work at nightfall, when the community's electrical plant kicks into gear, they bustle between sewing machines and a cutting area of the factory in which they make everything from wedding dresses to uniforms, undergarments to bedding for Tajikistan railways.

Rano Tabarova walks among the women in a full-length Tajikistan coat. She does not own the business; she is here to monitor its financial progress. She is its banker. The factory's owner, Safargul Nazarova, first approached Mrs. Tabarova two years ago to ask for a US \$6,000 loan for the Bonuvon Women's Centre, a local NGO directed by Mrs. Tabarova.

After careful consideration, the approval committee — each of its six members is a beneficiary of a microloan herself — said yes. And so Mrs. Nazarova, with her 31 years experience working at home on her own sewing machine, began her life as an entrepreneur with a staff of ten. Mrs. Tabarova says her committee, which had approved loan requests before, for everything from bee-keeping to carpet making to seed purchases for small farms, said the decision was a tough one. "We always consider an applicant's experience, history and standing in the community. This is one of the largest loans we have ever given. Six thousand US dollars is a lot of money here. Our schoolteacher earns \$20 per month."

Mrs. Tabarova's centre has issued more than 2,700 microloans since it received a grant from UNDP in 1996. (It became self-financing in 1999.) It has also established a business school, with courses on entrepreneurship, accounting, business planning, and laws concerning small and medium enterprises.

The lending scheme followed the Government of Tajikistan's establishment of the *Women in Development Bureau* to introduce small enterprise development in the war-scarred Kofarnihon region, wracked by an estimated 90% unemployment rate among women.

UNDP—Global Development Network

UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.

In 1992, at the Earth Summit in Rio, the international community adopted Agenda 21, a global blueprint for sustainable development that embraced economic growth, democratic governance, social development and environmental protection. UNDP has taken up the mandate to help countries develop their capacity to implement Agenda 21 through the Capacity 21 programme.

In 2000, at the Millennium Summit, world leaders agreed on measurable, time-bound targets for sustainable development, in the form of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). With Secretary-General Kofi Annan's leadership, the MDGs are shaping the development work of UNDP and the entire UN system and will help frame five key areas for action in Johannesburg: Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity.

Working with a range of partners across the UN system and outside it, UNDP has launched a Millennium Project research initiative to help identify the policies, analysis and resources needed to achieve the MDGs; a Millennium Campaign to help spread awareness and information about them, and Millennium Country Reports to monitor progress at country level.

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