



## Secretary-General approves short list of 48 new projects

The UN Secretary-General has approved a short list of 48 project proposals for UNDEF's Seventh Round of Funding, following recommendations by the United Nations Democracy Fund Advisory Board. Some half of the short-listed projects are

This Seventh Round of Funding comes as momentous efforts for democratization coincide with troubling developments in some parts of the world. As UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has noted, there have been alarming threats to hard-won gains in democratic governance in several countries. Civil society groups face growing pressures and restrictions.

At the same time, the rule of law has become more clearly articulated as a priority of the UN system. The Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on the Rule of Law at the National and International Levels in September 2012 reaffirmed that "human rights, the rule of law and democracy are interlinked and mutually reinforcing and that they belong to the universal and indivisible core values and principles of the United Nations" and invited "donors, intergovernmental organizations and relevant civil society actors to provide technical assistance and capacity-building, including education and training on rule of law-related issues, as well as to share practices and lessons learned on the rule of law". UNDEF's emphasis on rule of law gives new practical meaning to the Declaration.

in the rule of law, reflecting this as a priority area both for UNDEF and for the UN as a whole -- including support for civil society efforts in this area.

Competition for this year's short list was stiff, with more than 3,000 project proposals received. Short-listed applicants are now required to complete the final stage of the selection process -- negotiating a Project Document with UNDEF, which is in effect a contract between the grantor and the grantee. Only on the satisfactory conclusion of this process will the proposed project be approved for funds disbursement.

If applicants have not yet received an email from UNDEF, they can assume that their proposals are not on the final short list. The next window for project proposals is expected to open in mid-November.

## UNDEF nominated for Polish Sergio Vieira de Mello Prize



UNDEF has been nominated for the Polish Prize of Sergio Vieira de Mello, named in honour of the UN official assassinated in the bombing of the UN in Baghdad on 19 August 10 years ago. The Prize is awarded by the Villa Decius Association, with a jury that includes the Presidency of Poland; the UN High Commissioner for Refugees; the Ambassadors Brazil and Sweden to Poland; the Institute of National Remembrance; and the Polish Commissioner for Civil Rights Protection. UNDEF was nominated by Poland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The final selection will take place in September.

## UNDEF marks International Day of Democracy in New York and Athens



UNDEF is co-organizing events around UN Headquarters in New York and at the Ancient Agora of Athens on 16 September to mark the International Day of Democracy.

The New York invitation-only event, "Democratization at the Sharp End" will bring together top-level UN officials who lead the UN's work in the field, including Bert Koenders, Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Mali, and Margaret Vogt, the outgoing Special Representative of Secretary-General in the Central African Republic. They will discuss the challenges and opportunities of integrating support for democratization processes in the day-to-day work of peacekeepers, special political missions, UN resident coordinators and their colleagues -- all of whom must find ways to deliver on the UN's normative foundations of democratization by contributing to it in practice in the field. Held at the International Peace Institute, the event will be introduced by UNDEF Board Chairman Michael Doyle and hosted by the UN Working Group of Democracy and IPI.

The Athens Forum 2013: Democracy under Pressure, also by invitation only, will be co-convened by the *International Herald Tribune* and *Kathimerini* in cooperation with UNDEF in the Ancient Agora of Athens -- the birthplace of democracy. The discussion, part of the Herald Tribune's "The Global Conversation" series of high-level debates and panel discussions on key global issues, will examine the state of democracy in the world and the pressure resulting from economic, social and religious factors. Participants will include Antonis Samaras, Prime Minister of Greece; Carl Bildt, Sweden's Minister for Foreign Affairs and "the best connected world leader", according to a new study of Twitter; Shashi Tharoor, Minister of State for Human Resource Development of India, the world's largest democracy; New York Times columnist Roger Cohen; and Sultan Al-Qassemi, leading blogger and voice on the Arab Spring. As UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in his message to the Forum, the meeting place in the Agora reminds us that the practice of democracy is not a spectator sport -- and that it is more like a marathon than a sprint.

International Herald Tribune

KATHIMERINI



## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

## A national conference on the right to know in Cambodia

An UNDEF project in Cambodia held a national conference on citizen's access to information in May 2013 with participation of government, human rights experts, legal practitioners and civil society leaders. It was part of an UNDEF-funded initiative in Cambodia to improve social accountability and transparency, strengthen administrative and management procedures and to improve local authorities' response to the needs of local communities. The project provides training and capacity building for local councils on access to information, awareness raising activities through public community forums, citizen feedback mechanisms, media campaigns and advocacy for a national legal framework on access to information. The initiative is implemented by the Advocacy and Policy Institute, a leading advocacy institution in Cambodia in the field of access to information at local and national levels.



## Building access to information in the Chittagong Hill Tracts



An UNDEF project in Bangladesh empowers indigenous people in the Chittagong Hill Tracts to access information on public services offered by local government institutions and departments. In this way, the initiative contributes both to indigenous communities' participation in the democratic governance process, and to their access to public services for their survival, livelihood and development. The project increases awareness of the legislated right to information, generating public demand, strengthening community-based institutions as an information source, sensitizing local government and NGOs about their roles and responsibilities for information delivery, and strengthening and organizing local media to cover and advocate right to information issues. The project is implemented by Trinamul Unnayan Sangstha.



## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

## A Youth Parliament in Tajikistan



An UNDEF-financed project works to build confidence in democracy among Tajik youth near the Afghan border by creating a Youth Parliament. The project produces plans and implements practical activities through a small grants mechanism to meet the needs of disenfranchised youth from ethnic minorities in the Kuhistoni Badakhshon province. Youth Parliament members share plans with government, advocate changes in government policy and monitor implementation. A recent youth parliament meeting in the city of Khorog was dedicated to building photography and video skills as a tool to empower youth, addressing topics such as youth issues, healthy lifestyle and environmental protection. The project is implemented by the Eurasia Foundation of Central Asia.



## Freedom Messengers take the stage in Jordan



UNDEF funds a project to empower Jordanian artists and journalists to act as “Freedom Messengers” -- catalysts and networkers for free speech and media. The project, focused on people under 35 and implemented by the Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists in Jordan, held a public event at Amman’s Royal Cultural Center in June featuring street theatre, rap music, short films and more, performed by artists in the Freedom Messengers Network. Please go to [FMN](#) for more photos and stories in Arabic.





## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

## Renforcer la participation des communautés des anciens esclaves en Mauritanie



Un projet financé par le FNUD en Mauritanie a pour objectif de renforcer la participation démocratique et la représentation politique des communautés des anciens esclaves. L'initiative est active dans le Wilaya u Hodh El Gharbi, où les communautés des anciens esclaves sont actuellement exclues socio-économiquement et politiquement en dépit de la volonté du gouvernement d'en finir avec les séquelles de l'esclavage. Le projet s'appuie sur le dialogue démocratique dans la modification des rapports anciens maîtres-esclaves, afin de favoriser l'appropriation des pratiques et valeurs démocratiques des

communautés. Cette dynamique promeut la mobilisation sociale et la participation citoyenne, via le renforcement des capacités des leaders et de la société civile de ces communautés, l'alphabétisation et la mise en place de structure d'éveil politique au sein des adwabas – les villages des anciens esclaves. Ces changements de mentalité sont accompagnés également par des campagnes de sensibilisation au niveau régional et national. Le projet est mis en oeuvre par l'Agence de Coopération et de Recherche pour le Développement.



## Developing democracy through community radio in Cameroon

An UNDEF-funded project in Cameroon works to promote a culture of democratic practices among young people, and to transform community radio into an effective tool towards this end. It gives rural, marginalized people an opportunity to make their voices heard and to participate in discussions, decisions and actions that affect their collective well-being. Implemented by Change Communications, a local civil society group, the project held training seminars for journalists in July 2013 on how to use radio specifically to advance democratic and civic awareness in rural communities. Establishing consistent programming of this type as a matter of best practice, and ensuring increasingly wide participation, is expected to build a sustainable model for democratic participation.





## NEWS FROM THE FIELD

## Building indigenous and women's participation in Guatemala



UNDEF funds a project to create a more inclusive democracy in Guatemala by advancing the participation and recognition of indigenous women and traditional Maya community authorities. The project, active in Chisec and Raxruha, northern Alta Verapaz, focuses on more effective participation of indigenous women and indigenous community representatives in Municipal Development Councils and other public planning and decision-making processes. It works to build capacity of organized women's groups and traditional indigenous authorities to express their opinions, present proposals and participate in the decision-making process in their communities and at the municipal level and beyond. The project is implemented by Asociación Probienestar en Acción: Saaq Ach'ool Nimla Kaleb'aal.



## Women take a public stand in Paraguay



UNDEF funds a project in Paraguay to strengthen women's grassroots organizations, train women in leadership and political processes, and enable them to interact with government. Implemented by Sociedad de Estudios Rurales y Cultura Popular, the project also broadcasts radio programmes to give women experience in public speaking; holds forums to bring women together with political candidates and elected officials; engages local governments to hold participatory budget meetings and public hearings about plans and performance; and holds workshops with local officials on gender in local development.

## UNDEF IN THE NEWS

## Scoring government performance in flood-impacted Pakistan

An UNDEF project in Pakistan conducted a performance evaluation survey of citizens' experiences in their interaction with government departments, parliamentarians, police and services in the aftermath of flooding. The survey covered eight flood-affected districts between September 2012 and May 2013, recording more than 25,000 experiences, particularly among women. Of 26 entities covered, only the Ministry of Education, Election Commission, courts and banks obtained good scores. The survey was part of an UNDEF-funded project to address the acute gender inequality prevalent in flood-hit areas, implemented by the Pattan Development Organization. It was covered in the Pakistan **Daily Times**.

### Daily Times

Your right to know A new voice for a new Pakistan



## Young people for good governance in Lebanon



An UNDEF initiative in Lebanon has created democratically elected Youth Shadow Councils trained good governance, advocacy strategy, needs assessments, access to public services and budget analysis, to create and implement small development projects. The Councils met with mayors and representatives to push for action against corruption. The initiative is implemented by the Lebanese Transparency Association and was featured in **Lebanon Files**.



## 16000 young people mobilized in Gabon



An UNDEF-funded project in Gabon works to engage thousands of young people in electoral processes, public policy and leadership. The initiative, implemented by the Réseau des Organisations Libres de la Société Civile pour la Bonne Gouvernance au Gabon, aims to ensure at least half of young people become registered voters. It was covered prominently in **Gabonactu.com** and **Afrik.com**.



## A new voice for Libyan women



UNDEF's first project grantee in Libya, the Libyan Women Forum, has issued its first **newsletter**. It outlines its vision to "empower Libyan women to play an effective role and participate in the future development of the country, influence the decision making process and to reach executive positions in the social, economic and political sectors".

## The Arab Spring in the Gulf

UNDEF grantee FRIDE, La Fundación para las Relaciones Internacionales y el Diálogo Exterior) published **The Gulf States and the Arab Uprisings**, by Ana Echagüe. It addresses the implications for Gulf States' domestic stability, geopolitical strategies, and relationships within the region and beyond. Echagüe concludes that "the European Union will have to equip itself to deal with a more diverse geopolitical scenario, more assertive governments, and an increasingly demanding and audacious population."

