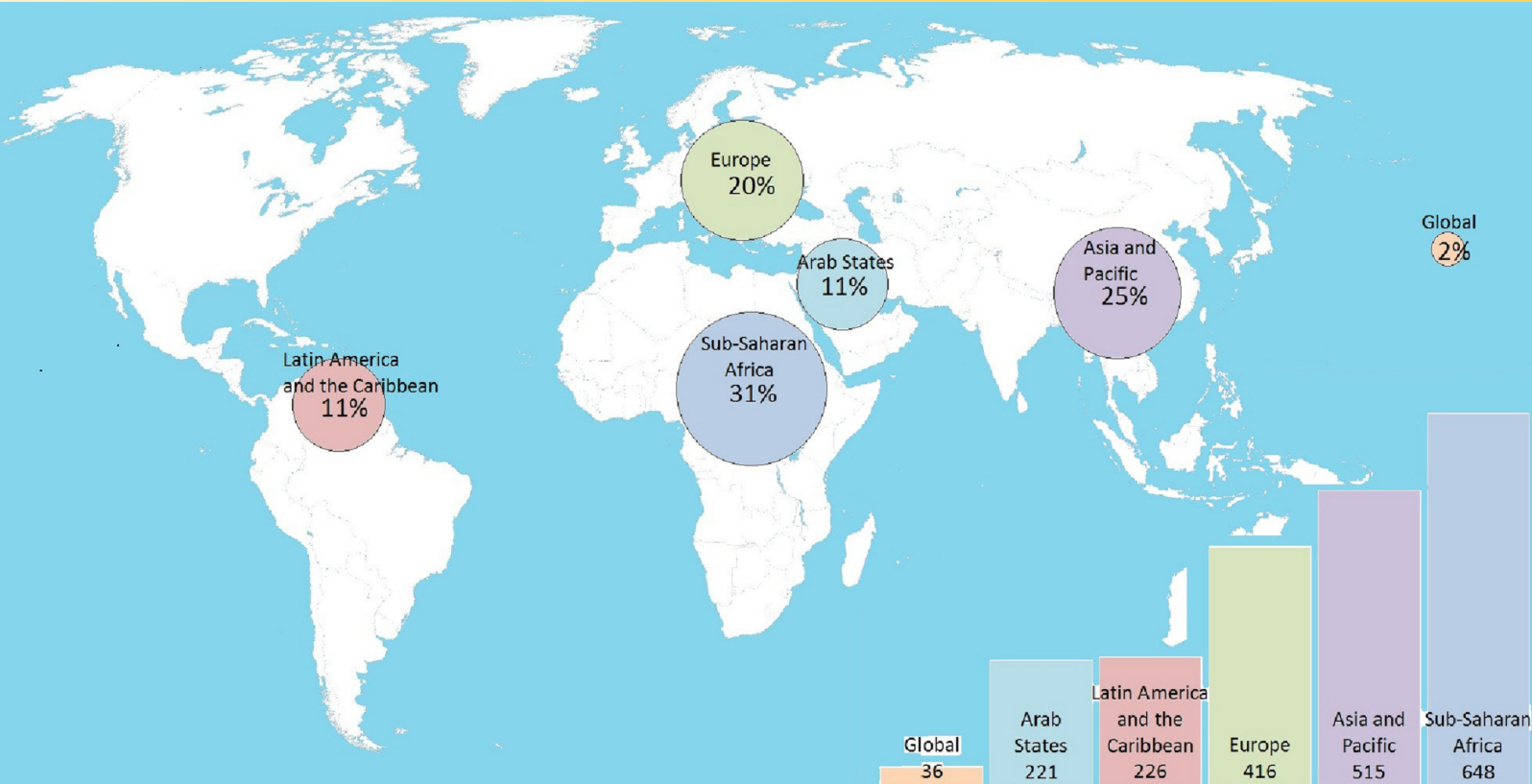


UNDEF Update – March 2014

Applicants from 133 countries vie for UNDEF grants in new funding round



UNDEF's annual project proposal window closed on New Year's Eve 2013, yielding 2062 proposals for the Fund's Eighth Round of Funding. The project proposals originated from applicants in 133 countries, the vast majority from local civil society organizations in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Americas. In the first phase of the selection process, the proposals are assessed by independent consultants, who judge each proposal on its inherent quality and scores it against 10 set criteria:

- Does the proposed project advance the objectives of UNDEF?
- Does the applicant organization have a strong track record?
- Is the proposal technically sound in conception and presentation?
- Does the proposal make use of the UN's and UNDEF's comparative advantage?
- Would the proposed project have significant impact?
- Would the proposed project represent good value for money?
- Does the proposed project have strong prospects for successful implementation?
- Does the proposed project have strong prospects of sustainability beyond the project duration?
- Does the proposed project encourage inclusiveness?
- Would the proposed project enhance gender equality?



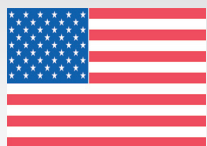
This assessment yields a long list which is in turn reviewed by UN Resident Coordinators in the field and by the UNDEF Programme Consultative Group -- comprising the UN Department of Political Affairs, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the UN Peacebuilding Support Office, the UN Rule of Law Unit, the UN Development Programme, UN Women, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime. This review process narrows down the list further, resulting in a short list of some 50 proposals to be discussed and endorsed by the **UNDEF Advisory Board** and ultimately submitted to the Secretary-General for approval.

Given the large volume of proposals, only applicants who advance to the short list will be contacted by UNDEF. This is expected to be in mid-2014, when short-listed applicants will be asked to compose a draft project document to be negotiated with UNDEF -- the final stage of the selection process.

In its first seven Rounds of Funding, UNDEF has supported more than 500 projects in over 150 countries. They all reflect a focus on strengthening the voice of civil society, ranging from access to justice to empowering indigenous communities, from developing constitutional watchdogs to strengthening the rights of migrants. The next window for project proposals is expected to open in November 2014.

INSIDE UNDEF

New UNDEF Board appointed for a two-year term



The Secretary-General has finalized the composition of the new UNDEF Advisory Board -- the body which gives him policy guidance and recommends funding proposals for his approval. The Board is appointed for a period of two years and includes the Governments of the seven largest UNDEF donors as measured by cumulative contributions received for the past three years -- the United States, India, Sweden, Germany, Australia, Chile, Poland; and six Member States reflecting geographical diversity and commitment to democratic principles: Bhutan, El Salvador, Latvia, Libya, Sierra Leone, Suriname.

The Board welcomes as new individual Board members Ms. Aracelly Santana of Ecuador and Ms. Marjorie Tiven of the United States. Ms. Santana has served as Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Nepal, Officer-in-Charge of the UN Electoral Assistance Division and Deputy Director for the Americas in the UN Department of Political Affairs. Ms. Tiven recently completed a 12-year appointment as Commissioner of the New York City Mayor's Office for International Affairs, and will soon lead Global Cities, Inc., a programme of Bloomberg Philanthropies. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

UNDEF is privileged that its celebrity Board member appointed in 2012, award-winning activist and advocate **Jeffrey Wright**, has accepted to remain on the Board. Mr. Wright's recent screen roles include Betee in *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* and Valentin Narcisse in *Boardwalk Empire*. He recently presented and narrated a **documentary film** about an UNDEF Sierra Leone project.

The new Board also includes two global civil society organizations -- **Action Aid International**, which works in more than 40 countries across Africa, Asia and Latin America to provide relief from conflict, empower women, hold governments accountable, and make education accessible; and **Avaaz**, a global civic campaign organization that promotes activism on human rights, climate change, corruption, poverty, and conflict in and conflict prevention 194 countries, described by *The Guardian* as "the globe's largest and most powerful online activist network".

UNDEF is deeply grateful to Professor Michael Doyle for his dedicated and dynamic leadership as Chair of the Board for the past six years. A new Chair will be nominated by the Board at its April meeting.


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Building confidence among women in Jordan, Egypt and Tunisia

An UNDEF-funded project works in Jordan, Tunisia and Egypt to strengthen the role of women in society, particularly in remote and underprivileged areas. Implemented by the Jordanian Centre for Civic Education, the project works with local civil society groups to improve their capacity and networking to advance women's participation; establish a network to promote women's issues; educate men and women on human rights conventions and women's rights in constitutions; train women in skills and practical knowledge to form networks for advocacy campaigns on women's rights and democratic reform; conduct civic education, community project implementation, confidence-building and political activism among women's groups. At a project session in January 2014 al-Mafraq, on Jordan's border with Syria, locals concentrated on violence against women. They chose to focus the discussions on men and recruited leading figures from the mosque, the education sector and the local newspaper to lead the discussions. Participants spontaneously signed the project poster as a project commitment. UNDEF Executive Head Roland Rich visited the al-Mafraq session and met with Mona Al-Alami, Executive Director Jordan Center for Civic Education, as well as the men who served as session's discussion leaders.



UNDEF builds partners for integrity in Egypt

After a series of disruptions caused by political upheavals and government restrictions, an UNDEF Egypt project has started work in earnest to form a coalition of partners for integrity. Implemented by the Arab Program for Human Rights Activists, the initiative held its first conference in December 2013, gathering anti-corruption experts, civil society groups, human rights activists and government representatives. The project works to raise awareness among governmental employees, journalists and lawyers of the UN Convention Against Corruption and other international treaties; detect and monitor cases of corruption; assess the status of integrity in selected ministries through two annual reports and eight journals: print and distribute anti-corruption materials for citizens; receive citizens' complaints through a hotline; and refer complaints to the relevant legal entity.

Ebtihal Rashad, Mamdouh Nakhla.

Conference themes included "The Fight Against Corruption in Egypt: Ministries, Supervisory Institutions, and Civil Society", focusing on legislation for access to information, and "25/30 Revolutions: Between Political Will and the Roots of the Deep State", addressing the fight against corruption as one of the key demands of the revolution, as well as the economic, political and legislative forms of corruption.



Participants from 18 governorates at the conference at the Safir Hotel in Cairo included Khaled Ali, legendary anti-corruption crusader and former presidential candidate; Gallal Nadim, anti-corruption experts and former head of the Transparency and Integrity Committee of the Ministry of Administrative Development; Haggag Nayel, Executive Director, Arab Programme for Human Rights Activists; human rights activists Mervat Abou Teeg, Ebtihal Rashad, Elhami El Merghani, Yasser Abdel Gawad, Atef El Negmy, Maged Sorrow,



UNDEF project puts governance under scrutiny in Iraq



An UNDEF-funded project in Iraq has completed its work with six Governorate Councils to strengthen civil society participation in democratic processes and advance accountability in Government institutions. The project, implemented by the Um-Alyateem Foundation, worked in Baghdad, Babil, Karkuk, Najaf, Wasit and Diyala to establish civil society monitoring groups; train them to monitor the performance of Governorate Councils and carry out ongoing monitoring activities; provide training for Governorate Council members in integrity, accountability and good governance, enabling the Councils to accept civil society participation in the Council's ongoing work. The project presented its monitoring report at a final conference in Baghdad's Al Mansour Hotel, with the participation of all six Governorate Councils, academics, as well as rule of law and human rights experts.



Kosovo* mayors urged to beef up participatory budgeting and legislative consultations

An UNDEF Kosovo* project works to engage civil society in monitoring local governance to advance transparency and accountability in local governance. After one year of monitoring local government institutions, 12 civil society organizations published their first Annual Performance Report of Municipalities with recommendations on participatory budgeting, transparency, accountability to communities, and consultations with civil society. Coordinated by the Kosovo Democratic Institute, the performance report was presented to newly elected mayors and municipal assembly members. Speakers included Mimoza Kusari-Lila, new Mayor of Municipality of Gjakova and the first woman elected Mayor of Kosovo; Avni Sahiti, Director of Municipal Transparency at the Ministry of Local Government Administration; and newly elected members of municipal assemblies in Mitrovica, Skenderaj and Viti.

The recommendations urged elected officials to form Legislative Consultative Committees on education, health and local economic development, with civil society experts and representatives; change the format of budgetary public hearings to enable more citizens to attend; improve public information on upcoming capital projects and important decisions that affect their communities. Leaders of Gjakova, Kamenica, Mitrovica Kacanik, Viti, Klina and Obiliq committed to taking the recommendations on board while working more closely and regularly with the UNDEF project civil society network.



**References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999)*

Protecting the rights of internally displaced Kosovo* women in Serbia

Serbia is host to some 300,000 people displaced through the conflicts in former Yugoslavia, most of whom are from Kosovo. Despite a range of efforts in the past decade, these internally displaced people remain one of the most vulnerable groups in Serbia. The situation of internally displaced women is even more complicated. Their participation in decision making at all levels is minimal; they lack awareness of their rights; they are economically dependent; they are often exposed to gender-based violence. UNDEF funds a project implemented by Fractal, to support their rights in integration processes in Belgrade, Kragujevac and Kraljevo. The overall objective is to increase the capacity of IDP women, local civil society organizations, and local authorities to protect IDP women's rights and advance social and economic integration at the community level, develop advocacy tools to influence key stakeholders, and implement the agreed Local Action Plan in the three target areas of Belgrade, Kragujevac and Kraljevo.



Women bridge political party divide in Georgia

An UNDEF project brought together women from Georgia's seven largest political parties - including Georgian Dream and the United National Movement -- for a workshop in civic activism. The event, held in Telavi, eastern Georgia, was part of a project for Women Leadership Schools in Bangladesh, Cameroon, Georgia and Guatemala. Implemented by the Women's Democracy Network, the initiative uses innovative approaches to empower women in politics, build effective leadership skills, and identify areas of public activism.



NEWS FROM THE FIELD: Central America



Leadership skills for young people in Dominican Republic

An UNDEF Dominican Republic project fights exclusion, poverty and inequality among young people in marginalized urban areas, including through vocational and IT training. It works in Boca Chica, Los Alcarrizos and marginal urban areas of the National District to strengthen sociopolitical and transformational leadership skills of young social movements, and foster a new political culture based on democratic values. Implemented by Centro Bonò, it develops skills and innovative tools at community level and, on the other hand, and fosters dialogue with local authorities.

Theatre to empower women against violence Nicaragua

An UNDEF Nicaragua project uses interactive youth theatre to campaign against gender inequality, access to resources and violence against women. The plays focus on three themes – gender-based violence, water through women's eyes, and corruption and women's rights. Each presentation is followed by a debate with the audience, who, after having participated in the play and in the discussion, will be better empowered to stand up for action. The project is implemented by Movimiento de Teatro Popular Sin Fronteras.



For rule of law and inclusiveness in Guatemala



An UNDEF Guatemala project convened an international forum with indigenous authorities and legal experts on diversity and rule of law in Latin America, held in Cobán, Alta Verapaz. Implemented by La Asociación Saaq Aachool Nimla Kaleb'al, the project works to build a more inclusive democracy for Guatemala's women and indigenous people. It focuses on the recognition of Mayan indigenous women and traditional authorities of northern Alta Verapaz, their participation in public policy decision-making processes led by local government, and the administration of justice.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

An UNDEF Cambodia project to strengthen ethics in journalism organized the country's first awards in this area in December 2013. Awards were distributed to 13 Cambodian media organizations -- TV stations Bayon, Apsara, Hang Meas, SEATV, TV 5, TV 3, TV 9 and CTN and newspapers Koh Santepheap Daily, Kampuchea Thmey, Rasmei Kampuchea, Moneakseka Khmer and Nokor Wat. Cambodia's Minister of Information Khieu Kanharith (pictured) spoke at the event, promising to support the project and work for additional funding on similar initiatives. The project works to improve the ethical standards of mainstream newspapers and TV stations through a watchdog mechanism, monitoring the adherence of newspapers and TV stations to the Journalism Code of Ethics, and turning the investigative power of the media on itself by producing a media watch TV Show, website and awards that draw attention to the best and worst media practices. The project is implemented by the Cambodia Health Education Media Service.



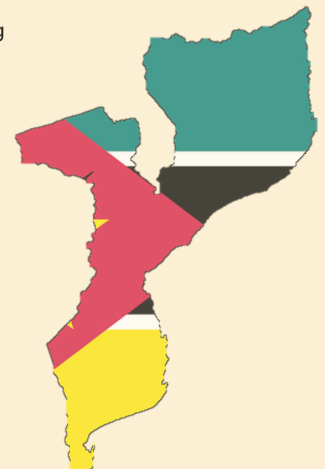
Ethical journalism rewarded in Cambodia



Women trained to take the helm in Mozambique



An UNDEF Mozambique project works to empower women to participate in local governance in Gaza Province, after the mass migration of men to the capital and to South Africa. The project takes a holistic approach through awareness-raising, capacity-building and organization, forming women's groups in each administrative post. Each group is trained on monitoring and participation skills, and given opportunities to exercise them at their district level. The project is implemented by Kulima.



WORTH READING: UNDEF in the media

Middle East youth regroup in Morocco

Youth activists from throughout the Middle East gathered in Rabat for an UNDEF-funded three-day exercise in governance. **Magharebia** covered the event. The project is implemented by Le Médiateur pour la Démocratie et les Droits de l'Homme.



West Bank urban planning for women's rights

An UNDEF-funded project for women's rights in the West Bank periphery uses urban planning as a tool for economic and social advancement. It was covered by **Al Watan**. The project is implemented by the International Peace and Cooperation Center.



For investigative journalism in Palestine

An UNDEF Palestine initiative concluded training in investigative journalism at the Institute of Modern Media, Al Quds University. The project was featured in **Al Watan**. The project is implemented by Al Quds University Institute of Modern Media.



West African activists join forces for clean water

An UNDEF West Africa project works to strengthen the voice of civil society for water and sanitation in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo. The initiative was featured in **La Dépêche Diplomatique**. The project is implemented by the Permanent Secretariat of Non-Governmental Organizations of Burkina Faso.

WORTH WATCHING! UNDEF ON FILM

Girl power on the go in Tunisia

An UNDEF-funded project in Tunisia produced an irresistibly motivational **video** for the empowerment of girls, as part of an extensive programme of civic outreach and electoral education. The project is implemented by La Ligue des Electrices Tunisiennes.



Women shepherds speak up for their rights in Somaliland

An UNDEF Somaliland project to empower women shepherds is featured in a new **film** and **blog** by UNTV film-maker Francis Mead. The project is implemented by the Women's Integrated Network.

UNDEF Head interviewed on Global Connections

Roland Rich, Executive Head of UNDEF, was interviewed by Bill Miller for his programme Global Connections, discussing UNDEF projects and global themes related to democracy worldwide. The **interview** was broadcast on UNTV.

