

Foreword

Last year put the issue of development firmly at the top of the global agenda. The world leaders who gathered in New York for the historic *United Nations Millennium Summit* not only committed themselves to crafting a more inclusive globalization, but endorsed a clear set of targets to measure and benchmark progress in addressing poverty, disease, hunger, and other key development challenges. And the *Millennium Declaration* that contained those goals also set out a broad vision of how to achieve them: through a new focus on human rights, good governance and democracy that can help give poor people the voice, protections and opportunities to build a better life for themselves and their families.

For the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), this sea change in global attitudes has been doubly welcome. Both because it gives new impetus to our mandate to help lead the UN system's efforts to achieve the development targets, and because it coincides with an unprecedented period



of reform and renewal in our own organization that has left us better placed than ever to respond.

In practice, that means the UNDP of the 21st Century is now focusing much less on traditional project work like building infrastructure that others with deeper pockets can do better and more efficiently. Instead, we are leveraging our greatest assets—

our long-standing presence in more than 130 country offices across the world and the strong relationship of trust we have built up over many years with governments—to provide cutting edge advisory services for developing countries while helping drive a new global effort to monitor and benchmark progress towards meeting the Millennium development targets.

To underpin this process we have sharply narrowed our primary policy focuses to six thematic practice areas, selected because of developing country demand: poverty reduction, democratic governance, sustainable energy and the environment, crisis prevention and recovery and—to respond to new challenges and opportunities—the war against HIV/AIDS and

the drive to harness the power of the information and communications technology revolution for development.

In each practice area, we are building the equivalent of a management consultancy: a team located across our global operations, networked together under a practice leader in New York; responsible as a team for building our service lines, evaluating best practices, developing relationships with partner organizations and raising resources through our new thematic trust funds, using UNDP country offices and applying cutting-edge technology to establish a knowledge networking strategy to support our advisory and capacity building work in the practice areas.

Putting this vision into practice has inevitably required some tough and painful measures, including heavy cuts to our previously overweight headquarters and a significant redeployment of staff to the field, an overhaul of redundant business processes and reporting requirements, renewal of people through an expansion of training and new recruitment, the re-profiling of country offices, and above all a new focus on partnership—both within the UN system and with the wider world, not just governments and other agencies, but private sector and civil society.

The results are already visible. UNDP is also proving better able to combine our advisory role with higher profile advocacy—particularly using the power of our global and national *Human Development Reports*—to help ensure that the needs of the poor, particularly women, are always at the heart of broader development efforts. Our challenge now is to consolidate these gains, build on the momentum of the Millennium Summit, and ensure that the new UNDP plays a pivotal role in helping the world meet those ambitious targets.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Malloch Brown". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mark Malloch Brown
Administrator