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Supporting Progress through Equality

In the Know

UNDP Nepal Newsletter

News of the Month

National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management ready for approval

The first ever draft of the **National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in Nepal** (NSDRMN) is ready and awaits government's final endorsement. A joint event with the Ministry of Home Affairs was organised to acknowledge the completion of the draft as a milestone towards achieving the goal of 'Disaster Resilient Nepal'.

Under the leadership of the Ministry of Home Affairs, this draft document was prepared with financial support of the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Department (DG ECHO), UNDP, and technical support of National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET).

During the event, Mr. Umesh Prasad Mainali, Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs, thanked UNDP for its supportive role in preparing this comprehensive document. He said that the Ministry of Home Affairs will follow-up on the finalization and approval of the document as soon as possible. "We are good in search and rescue but weak in disaster preparedness and recovery, hence this strategy will serve as an important tool," he said.

Followed by a series of thematic workshops, it took only 17 months to prepare the NSDRMN with the active



Mr. Umesh Prasad Mainali, Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs holding the draft National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management in Nepal

involvement of a large number of stakeholders, including representatives of relevant government agencies, donors, UN agencies, I/NGOs, corporate sector, academia, media and community representatives.

Nepal is ranked 11th in the world in terms of vulnerability to earthquakes and 30th with respect to floods according to a 2004 study undertaken by UNDP/Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery. In 2007, about 69 percent of the country's 75 districts were affected by floods and landslides, mostly in the Tarai (plains) and mid-hills

causing 148 reported deaths and 24,116 displacements.

The document provides guidance for improving the policy and legal environment by prioritizing strategic interventions required for disaster preparedness. The strategy addresses Nepal's long-felt need to come up with a long term policy document and build on all the disaster reduction planning and implementation works that has been carried out in the country, especially after the commencement of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990-1999).

Peace and Development

EORC rapidly advances preparation for the CA election.....

The Electoral Observation Resource Centre (EORC), established in early February 2008 to assist the Election Commission, is coordinating the observation work for domestic and international electoral observation groups. The EORC is serving as a clearing house and centralized repository of essential election-related information and resource materials. It has, so far, accredited more than 600 international electoral observers and 43,000 domestic observers.

Some of the important tasks of EORC;

- carrying out the accreditation of domestic and international observers;
- liaising with the domestic observers groups, international organisations and diplomatic missions and establishing a meeting and information-exchange point in order to facilitate a more coordinated approach in the deployment of their observers;
- facilitating the issuance of visas for international observers;
- promoting a coordinated approach in the deployment of observers by establishing a national database of both domestic and international observers who have been accredited, identifying how many domestic and international organisations are conducting observation activities, where and with how many observers;
- preparing and disseminating election observation-related information and materials: development of informative briefing packs assembling electoral laws, procedures and samples of election materials;



With the new date for the Constituent Assembly (CA) election scheduled for 10 April 2008, the Election Commission (EC) requested UNDP to re-open the 'Electoral Observation Resource Centre.' This initiative is funded by the UN Peace Trust Fund for a total amount of US\$ 195,000.

- organising ongoing informative briefings for observation groups on electoral process, the political environment and the security situation before deployment, in cooperation with other international organisations active in electoral observation assistance activities in Nepal, such as the European Union, the Carter Centre, National Democratic Institute, Asia Foundation, Asian Network for Free Elections (ANFREL) and regional organisations such as the South Asia Foundation, South Asia Forum for Fair Elections, South Asia Partnership International and others.

In addition, the EORC has been particularly assisting the diplomatic missions present in Nepal that are planning to field electoral observation teams.

Partnership for Development

The Department for International Development (DFID) has provided US\$ 7 million to UNDP for HIV/AIDS action plan.

The activities implemented with DFID support ranges from information and awareness; peer education; Voluntary Counselling and Testing (VCT); Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) services; harm reduction; rehabilitation; care and support to people living with HIV/AIDS and safe blood supply.

The Mini National AIDS Spending Assessment recently conducted, revealed that DFID has spent 28% through UNDP putting DFID in the top position in terms of total expenditure on AIDS in 2007.

Peace and Development

Discussion continues on restructuring of the State

A three-day workshop on 'Restructuring of the State: with special reference to federalism' was jointly organised by UNDP's Constitutional Advisory Support Unit and GTZ (German Technical Cooperation).

The workshop was attended by a Working Group of 20 members consisting of some political party leaders, civil society and academicians who have special interest in issues of ethnicity, federalism and restructuring. Together they discussed issues that will arise in the process of designing a federal system for Nepal, and also ways in which the specific issues of diversity and inclusion could be addressed in the new constitution.

Foreign experts enriched the discussion



by sharing experiences from Canada, Germany, India and Ethiopia. The workshop was the first of a series of activities planned for this Working

Group, and the analysis and recommendations will be disseminated to political parties, civil society organisations, the media and international agencies.

Latest News Update

Capacity Development Group and HIV/AIDS Group mission

In August 2007, the Government of Nepal established the National HIV/AIDS Control Board (NHCB).

Following the request of the Government of Nepal, the UNDP Bureau for Development Policy, composed of Capacity Development Group and HIV/AIDS Group fielded a mission for technical and financial support to the National HIV/AIDS Control Board (NHCB) to;

- Prepare an Action Plan for the design and implementation of a Capacity Development Strategy for the National HIV/AIDS Control Board (NHCB) and an exit strategy for the handover of the

management role of UNDP for the **Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM)** allocation to Nepal, to the NHCB.

- Agree on roles and responsibilities to complete the Action Plan, including follow up support from Capacity Development Group and HIV/AIDS Group.

- Review progress of and make recommendations for the **GFATM** programme.

GEF mission

Ms. Sultana Bashir from UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok was in Nepal to provide guidance on Global Environment Facility (GEF) requirements on project management, planning, monitoring and evaluation of outcomes for UNDP GEF managed **Western Terai Landscape Complex Project and Conservation and Sustainable Use of Wetlands in Nepal.**

UN Global Compact meeting

In order to raise awareness and to discuss about the role of the private sector to mitigate the impacts of Climate Change, a presentation was made by UNDP for the Global Compact participants. Pollution, negatively impacting the climate as one of the biggest problems of the country was discussed at length.

Empowerment of Women

'Investing in women and Girls'— International Women's Day celebrated

Feature of the Month

Kesha Pariyar, a micro-entrepreneur and chairperson of National Micro-entrepreneurs Association takes pride in not only being able to earn her living and looking after the whole family but also being able to become a symbol of inspiration for other women in her community.

Coming from a Dalit community and a mother of six daughters, Kesha had to go through a lot of hardships to be where she is today. Kesha started her career after the UNDP Micro-enterprise Development Programme provided her tailoring training in Khanigoan village, Parbat district. The village is largely dominated by ruling castes and 'Pariyars' are considered as untouchables.

After the training, Kesha was provided some support by the Programme to buy a sewing machine. Slowly her skill and hardwork attracted more clients and she was able to repay the loan that she took for the machine. Subsequently with her earnings and expansion of clientele, Kesha was able to educate and marry-off her daughters. She is now employing four other women and earns Rs. 400-500 per day with her tailoring business.

Today, Kesha does not have to go asking for business from door to door but she gets clients at her door step. She gets paid in cash and not food-grains as she used to get earlier. Her new income allowed her husband to return from India and join the family to



Kesha Pariyar, speaking about her rough ride to success



Honourable Minister for Finance, Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat, delivering his remarks as the Chief Guest of the event

start his own tailoring business. Three years later, she was unanimously elected, first as the Chairperson of District Micro-entrepreneurs Association and after two years at the national level.

The International Women's Day celebration was jointly organised by the UN agencies on the theme of 'Investing in women and girls'. On the occasion, Honourable Minister for Finance, Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat, Chief Guest of the event, felicitated two women entrepreneurs

as inspiring models for other women entrepreneurs.

On the occasion of the International Women's Day, 8 March, speaking in front of a large audience inside the UN House, Kesha said, "it is necessary for women and girls to be educated. Money invested in women and girls will generate more resources". She further emphasized that encouragement from family is necessary for any woman to progress further.

Staff Association Election

The new UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative

Robert Piper joins in as the newly appointed Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator of the United Nations System's Operational Activities for Development in Nepal and the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

Immediately prior to coming to Nepal he was the UNDP Director of the US\$ 700 million Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund and Senior Advisor on UN Reform in New York.

Beginning his career at AusAID, over the last 20 years, Robert Piper has assumed positions of increasing importance in a number of countries and UNDP headquarters including Thailand, Cambodia, and Fiji.

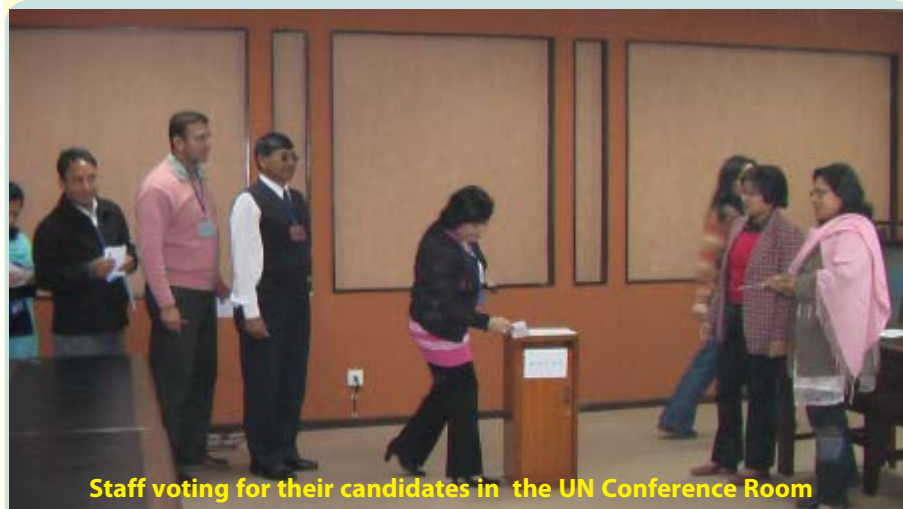
From 2005 to 2006, he worked on the Tsunami Recovery process serving as Chief of Staff to the UN Special Envoy for



Tsunami Recovery, former US President Bill Clinton.

He was the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Kosovo from March 2002 to July 2004.

An Australian national, he is a political science graduate and a Yale University World Fellow 2004.



Staff voting for their candidates in the UN Conference Room

The election for the new Staff Association (UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS) Executive Board took place on 7 March 2008. Congratulations to the new team and the polling officers! Three cheers to the outgoing Staff Association!

New Faces

Chandani Nepali joins UNDP as Transport Clerk. She comes with excellent skills and background in the field of office administration and logistics management. Prior to joining UNDP, she was working with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) Nepal.



Diby Gurung joins UNDP as Bio-diversity Analyst with rich experience of 17 years in the field of rural development, participatory conservation and social inclusion. Prior to joining UNDP, she worked with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) for over six years.



Sanjeeb Bhattarai joins UNDP as Operations Manager. An MBA graduate, with over 10 years of experience in the banking sector, he was working as the General Manager at United Finance Limited prior to joining UNDP.



Farewell and thank-you !

Amanuel Gebremedhin, Reintegration and Recovery Advisor returns upon completion of his assignment. He had joined UNDP in December 2006, to assist the peace process in Nepal.



We wish the very best to **Keith Douglas Leslie** for his future endeavours. Keith served as the Senior Human Rights Advisor in the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). He joined the NHRC in September 2006 amidst a challenging situation.



Their contribution to UNDP is invaluable.

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We welcome any comments, suggestions and feedback at sangita.khadka@undp.org