

# UNDP

United Nations Development Programme

## 1. Facts and figures

**Type of organisation:** Fund financed through voluntary contributions

**Established in:** 1965

**Headquarters:** New York

**Number of country offices:** 135

**Head of organisation:** Administrator  
Helen Clark (New Zealand)

**Dates of Executive Board meetings in 2014:** 27–31 Jan, 23 June – 4 July  
(Annual Meeting), 2–5 Sept

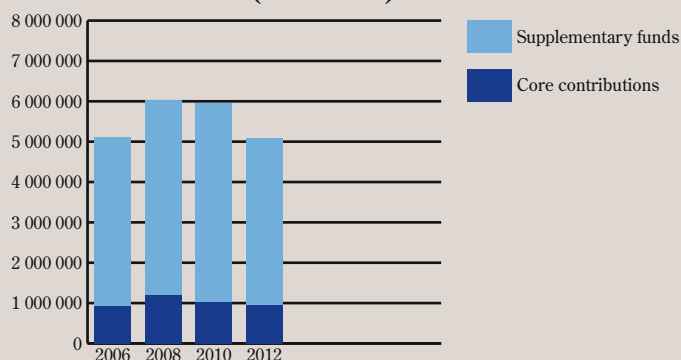
**Norway's representation on Executive Board:** Board member from 2013–2017

**Number of Norwegian staff:** 34

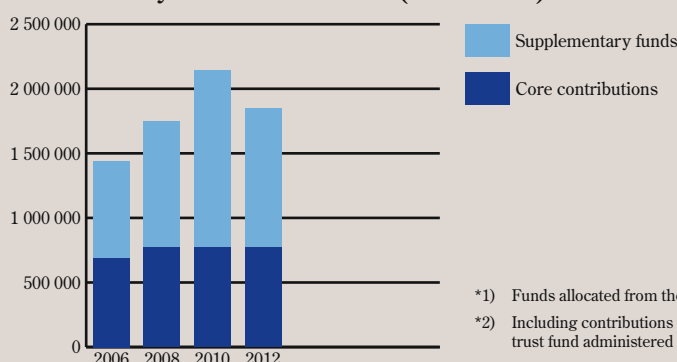
**Competent ministry:**  
Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**Website:** [www.undp.org](http://www.undp.org)

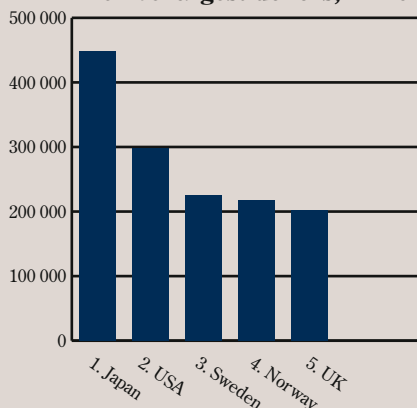
**Total revenues (1000 USD)**



**Norway's contributions\*1)\*2) (1000 NOK)**



**The five largest donors, in 2012 (USD 1000)**



NORWEGIAN MINISTRY  
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

## **Mandate and areas of activity**

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is the largest of the UN funds and programmes with a development mandate, and has operations in 166 countries. In accordance with its Strategic Plan 2014–2017, UNDP's vision is to help countries eradicate poverty and significantly reduce inequality and exclusion by focusing on seven main outcomes:

- Growth and development are inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor and excluded
- Citizen expectations for voice, development, the rule of law and accountability are met by stronger systems of democratic governance
- Countries have strengthened institutions to progressively deliver universal access to basic services
- Faster progress is achieved in reducing gender inequality and promoting women's empowerment
- Countries are able to reduce the likelihood of conflict and lower the risk of natural disasters, including from climate change
- Early recovery and rapid return to sustainable development pathways are achieved in post-conflict and post-disaster settings
- Development debates and actions at all levels prioritise poverty, inequality and exclusion, consistent with our engagement principles development.

Gender equality, environmental sustainability and human rights are promoted both through the definition of explicit goals and as cross-cutting approaches in the Strategic Plan.

UNDP's role is primarily to assist countries to develop knowledge, capacity and policies. UNDP is an important participant in the discussions that define the global development policy agenda, particularly in the process of developing new global development goals to replace the UN Millennium Development Goals from 2015. The UNDP's Administrator, who is the third-highest-ranking UN official, also chairs the United Nations Development Group (UNDG), which comprises the heads of all the UN agencies. UNDP has a special responsibility for coordinating the UN system's development activities at country level, and performs an important function in supporting other UN agencies, not least through the administration of multi-donor trust funds for joint UN initiatives.

The annual Human Development Report is an independent publication commissioned by UNDP. Recommendations and findings from the global, regional and national reports are used in policy formulation and development strategies all over the world.

## **Results achieved in 2012**

In accordance with an Executive Board decision, UNDP has presented a cumulative results report for the period 2008–2012. The results report is largely based on country offices' own reporting on progress in relation to expected outcomes in the country programmes. The country programmes show a favourable trend in all target areas. The report shows that around 50 per cent of UNDP's efforts are focused on national planning and policy development, around 25 per cent on awareness-raising and knowledge-sharing and around 25 per cent on project implementation.

However, the external evaluation of UNDP's results in the same period is more nuanced. There is still a weakness in the results report in that it is not based on a results framework with expected outcomes, baseline data and targets for the entire organisation. This makes it difficult to undertake a general assessment of the organisation's progress. However, it does provide a broad picture of UNDP's wide-ranging activities in many countries and good examples of important contributions to development.

In the poverty reduction focus area, UNDP reports on activities in 146 countries. Results on which special attention is focused include the creation of an improved statistical and fact base for poverty-reduction policy development and the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG) through the preparation of 109 national reports on human development and 147 reports on progress made towards achieving the MDGs. UNDP reports on more effective achievement of the MDGs in 44 countries through the development of MDG Acceleration Frameworks. A total of 35 countries in Africa received assistance to integrate poverty orientation and MDGs into their national development strategies. UNDP transferred administrative responsibility for support from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to national authorities in 14 out of 41 countries, an example of UNDP's efforts to promote national ownership, capacity-building and enhanced sustainability.

In the democratic governance focus area, UNDP reports on activities in 149 countries. Among other things, UNDP contributed to promoting access to the judicial system and other public services for excluded groups in 76 countries. With the help of UNDP, 53 countries improved their statistical and information systems to monitor the quality of and increase access to public services, and in 21 countries budgets for public service delivery were strengthened. UNDP contributed to strengthening the capacity of 60 national assemblies and 70 human-rights institutions. In 50 countries, UNDP helped to enhance mechanisms to ensure better inclusion in legal processes, for instance through mobile courts. UNDP contributed to improving women's access to justice in 14 African countries. UNDP also supported 50 referenda and elections in Africa alone, 85 per cent of which were deemed to be fair and credible.

In the crisis prevention and early recovery focus area, UNDP reports on activities in 106 countries. The organisation supported policy development in 42 countries in order to strengthen their capacity to assess and handle disaster risk. UNDP provided support for 20 countries to develop national control mechanisms for small arms and light weapons and helped 23 countries to develop national mine-clearance plans. UNDP contributed to the reintegration into society of 87,000 demobilised soldiers, and to improve the livelihoods of 2 million people in 15 conflict-affected countries and regions. In 25 crisis-affected countries, UNDP contributed to the rehabilitation of infrastructure for 3.1 million people. UNDP promoted a dialogue on peace and reconciliation in 15 countries, with special focus on strengthening national institutional capacity for peace-building and reconciliation in South Sudan, Sudan and Lebanon.

In the environment and sustainable development focus area, UNDP reports on activities in 153 countries. UNDP assisted 116 countries to integrate the management of ecosystem services into national planning and the productive sector.

### **Evaluation of UNDP's work in countries affected by conflict**

An independent evaluation of UNDP's work in conflict-affected countries, carried out in 2012, confirms UNDP's comparative advantages in this field, with particular reference to UNDP's strong presence and close partnership with the governments of the countries concerned, its role as bridge-builder between humanitarian work, peacebuilding and long-term development work, and the organisation's role in the fields of governance and institutional change with respect to conflict management. The main impression is that UNDP's efforts in fragile states are successful and that it plays an important role which would be difficult for other actors to fill.

Among other things, the report points out that UNDP has made progress in strengthening women's opportunity to participate in building up political and judicial systems after conflicts, particularly with regard to women's access to justice. In countries such as Sierra Leone and Somalia, UNDP has helped to rebuild public prosecution services, family protection units at police stations and special tribunals for gender-based violence. In Hargeisa in Somalia, UNDP's efforts resulted in a 44 per cent increase in the number of cases concerning gender-based violence that reached the formal courts in 2011.

Management of 1,800 protected areas covering 252 million hectares was improved, and 170 million tons of carbon-dioxide-equivalent emissions were eliminated. A total of 42 countries received support to prepare national strategies to reduce deforestation (REDD+), and 61 countries were assisted to improve their management of hazardous waste and chemicals. Through the Global Environment Facility (GEF),

UNDP supported 74 countries in implementing climate mitigation interventions, and in 40 countries UNDP helped to increase access to clean, renewable energy for poor and excluded groups. UNDP also made important contributions to global processes such as Rio+20 and Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's initiative Sustainable Energy for All.

## **2. Assessments: Results, effectiveness and monitoring**

### **The organisation's results-related work**

In 2012, the Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network (MOPAN) carried out an assessment of UNDP. The strongest criticism in the assessment concerned the fact that UNDP has special challenges related to the quality of its results reporting systems, which makes it difficult to document results achieved in relation to the goals in its long-term strategic plan.

UNDP's Executive Board has directed the organisation to define a clear focus and prepare a robust results framework for the next programme period, as well as to strengthen efforts to make the organisation more effective. The new Strategic Plan 2014–2017 shows that UNDP is striving to follow these instructions and to remedy weaknesses revealed in evaluations. UNDP has proposed a limited number of general goal and focus areas, with a view to strengthening efforts across the organisation. The new strategic plan focuses particular attention on the need to further concentrate UNDP's activities at country level, strengthen the country offices' strategic planning and ensure more effective, results-oriented project implementation and monitoring. The fact that the number of projects at country level has been halved in the current period is an indication that UNDP is taking these objectives seriously. A new and improved results framework is currently being developed, which will enhance UNDP's ability to demonstrate results and progress in line with the goals of its strategic plan.

### **Planning and budgeting systems**

UNDP's budgeting is partly results-based. UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN Women are jointly implementing a budget reform aimed at strengthening the budget as a management tool and improving transparency with regard to the planned and actual use of funds in accordance with the Strategic Plan

and its results framework. UNDP's draft budget for 2014–2017 provided less transparency than expected, and was not approved by the Executive Board until UNDP had specified how much funding it planned to allocate to important functions such as internal audits and evaluation.

### **Oversight and anti-corruption**

UNDP's control systems are considered to be good. The independence of the internal audit unit is ensured by the fact that it reports directly to the Executive Board and that its budget is adopted by Board decision. However, the unit's resources are relatively limited in relation to its tasks. UNDP has guidelines for preventing corruption and following up on suspected corruption. External audits are carried out by the UN system's common Board of Auditors. Most of the shortcomings that are uncovered are related to country offices and to some extent concern the slow implementation of internal audit and audit recommendations. Since 2012, UNDP has facilitated public access to internal audit reports.

UNDP has a strong independent Evaluation Office, which strengthens transparency as regards the organisation's performance. UNDP's evaluation policy emphasises the systematic implementation of evaluation recommendations.

### **Institution-building and national ownership**

UNDP is largely regarded as an important partner for government authorities and helps to promote national ownership by supporting the priorities of recipient countries. UNDP works extensively with authorities and other national partners on implementing programmes and projects. Similarly, UNDP participates actively in joint programmes and the implementation of the UN Delivering as One initiative at country level, which UNDP has a main responsibility for facilitating.

However, assessments of UNDP point out that limited use of national systems and time-consuming procedures are weaknesses in the way the organisation's operations are run. UNDP's capacity-building efforts were evaluated in 2010, and the report affirms that this work is relevant and effective. At the same time, the report points to UNDP's poor long-term planning, which undermines the possibility of ensuring that the work produces durable results. UNDP has introduced a marker for capacity-building in its results reporting, which shows that capacity-building was a significant goal in 92 per cent of projects in 2011.

### Willingness to learn and change

The formulation of a new, more focused strategic plan for 2014–2017, an improved results framework and an integrated budget represent a major change process for UNDP. The strategic plan contains specific goals for making UNDP a more results-oriented organisation, not least at country level. A current external review of the organisation will culminate in a reorganisation plan aimed at increasing effectiveness in line with the new strategic plan. In the light of these processes, UNDP appears to be an organisation that is open to change and that is developing positively.

## 3. Norway's policy towards UNDP

UNDP is a very important partner in the implementation of Norway's UN and development policy, since UNDP's goals largely coincide with Norway's goals and on account of the organisation's broad-based presence and coordinating role at country level. UNDP is centrally positioned to contribute to achieving the objectives defined in the white paper *Sharing for Prosperity. Promoting Democracy, Fair Distribution and Growth in Development Policy* (Meld. St. 25 (2012-2013)) and the white paper *Norway and the United Nations: Common Future, Common Solutions* (Meld. St. 14 (2010–2011)). UNDP is a cornerstone of the UN's development work and is the organisation that ensures coherence in the UN's development efforts at country level. The organisation plays a key role in coordinating the UN reform process at country level (the UN Delivering as One initiative). UNDP has a unique role in promoting sustainable, inclusive human development, democratic governance, and conflict prevention and reconstruction in fragile states. UNDP also partners with Norway in the field of environment and sustainable development, especially in connection with the Government of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative, and with the efforts to promote humanitarian disarmament and combat armed violence. Through its leading role in the UN's development system, UNDP can also contribute to ensuring that the different UN organisations pursue coordinated, uniform policies in their efforts to promote equitable distribution.

Norway seeks to ensure:

- that UNDP strengthens its efforts in areas in which the organisation has comparative advantages: promoting

knowledge, dialogue and efforts to achieve sustainable human development, promoting democratic governance, crisis prevention and early recovery, and coordinating the UN system's development activities.

- that UNDP attaches more importance to advisory services and capacity development which enable government authorities to frame a coherent policy and development plans that focus on equitable distribution, sustainable development and democratic governance.
- that UNDP improves its results reporting; a better results framework is a prerequisite for good reporting.
- that UNDP delivers measurable results. This requires results-based management as well as a results-oriented organisational culture.
- that UNDP communicates more clearly what it delivers, why the organisation is important and what the results of its efforts are.
- that UNDP further concentrates its efforts in individual countries. UNDP must withdraw from activities in which other UN organisations or actors outside the UN system are better qualified to deliver results.
- that UNDP does its utmost to ensure that the UN delivers as one at country level.
- that UNDP becomes more effective, flexible and adaptable, among other things by reassessing its current organisational model and improving its administrative procedures and programme planning and implementation systems, including human resource and knowledge management.

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Visiting address: 7. juni plass 1 / Victoria terrasse 5, Oslo,  
P.O.Box 8114 Dep, NO-0032 Oslo, Norway.

For more information, contact the Section for Budget and Administration by e-mail at: [sbf-fn@mfa.no](mailto:sbf-fn@mfa.no). This document can be found on our website: <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/ud/selected-topics/un>.