UNIDO’s Contribution to Human Security

Projects Funded by the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security
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UNIDO’s specific mandate within the United Nations system is to stimulate sustainable industrial development. Worldwide experience in this field, gained over four decades, makes our Organization a key partner in the United Nations’ efforts to mitigate the consequences of conflicts and natural disasters and increase the resilience of communities by alleviating vulnerability to future downside risks. UNIDO’s interventions can be characterized in three words: building back better. As we help people to overcome the immediate threats to their well-being we lay the basis for stable societies and sustainable growth. For us, human security is a key development issue.

This brochure briefly outlines UNIDO’s approach to human security and its cooperation with the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS). UNTFHS is the key funding mechanism for the interventions of United Nations agencies. The brochure is complemented by a series of brief descriptions of UNTFHS-funded projects which show how UNIDO, working with other United Nations agencies and local counterparts, addresses both acute and chronic insecurities by mitigating short-term threats and reducing the medium and long-term vulnerabilities to similar risks in the future. The areas of security UNIDO has addressed so far range from food and livelihood to energy, health and environment.

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UNIDO’S APPROACH TO HUMAN SECURITY

Human security is a concept that addresses both the protection of well-being from chronic threats and vulnerabilities that are structurally embedded in the people’s lives, such as poverty, precarious livelihoods, unemployment, diseases, handicaps, and environmental degradation, and from sudden external shocks, usually called crises, such as pandemics, financial and economic downturns, natural disasters and most wars.

Without proper intervention, abrupt risks and threats can easily become chronic and vulnerable people are more likely to suffer from exogenous shocks. Human security aims to reduce such vulnerability.

Human security is a development issue for the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO). The Organization has a unique approach, introducing the concept of ‘risk management’ into development planning, with an analytical focus on individuals and groups of people. This takes us beyond ‘human development’ and enables UNIDO to address ‘downside risks’ by identifying risk and vulnerability factors and integrating risk and vulnerability analysis in the development strategies. No human life is free from downside risks, but with higher resilience and reduced vulnerability people are better able to cope with future downside risks, and will recover faster.

UNIDO strengthens the ability of individuals and groups of people to reduce risks and vulnerabilities, ensuring that there is no interruption in livelihoods and productive activities. It also integrates energy, health and environmental security concerns that affect people’s productive capacities into its projects. UNIDO assistance ensures that the restored livelihoods and productive capacities will be as free as possible from future risks and threats, and as green as possible - building back better is the principle. Thus, the human security concept is suited for both short-term mitigation focusing on specific problems and for long-term risk management.

Interventions by different units and branches of UNIDO at headquarters and in the field are coordinated for synergies and an effective comprehensive approach. Activities in targeted sectors are linked to provide a comprehensive package tackling multiple insecurities. This approach promotes inter-sectoral collaboration within UNIDO as well as with other United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other development partners.
UNIDO AND THE UNITED NATIONS TRUST FUND FOR HUMAN SECURITY (UNTFHS)

The UNTFHS was created in 1999 with initial support from the Government of Japan. Currently it also receives contributions from the Governments of the Republic of Slovenia and of the Kingdom of Thailand. Its aim is to promote human security by financing interventions of United Nations agencies and their partners which mitigate threats to vulnerable people and communities around the world. The Fund is managed by the Human Security Unit in the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations (UN-OCHA).

Since 2003, UNIDO has implemented a series of projects worldwide under the Fund. The projects cover a wide range of human security concerns, from recovery after armed conflict to problems that constitute a structural threat that endangers people’s lives. Brief summaries of these projects can be found in the back pocket of this publication.

More projects addressing various types of human insecurity are being formulated for UNTFHS funding. UNIDO works very closely with the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security to improve the lives of vulnerable and marginalized people and communities.

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AFGHANISTAN

A RURAL REGION RECOVERS

Long years of war have destroyed communities, their means of living and rural infrastructure in most of Afghanistan. In areas where the situation has been stabilized, local people need outside help to rebuild the agricultural economy and to develop alternatives to opium-poppy cultivation.

In a project that covered 43 villages in the Ghazni and Herat provinces, UNIDO’s primary focus was on people directly involved in food production: small farmers and women. The project improved their technical and business skills and facilitated their access to modern technologies for agricultural production. Rural providers of essential services - blacksmiths, carpenters, tailors, masons and extension workers – benefitted in a similar way from the project. Special attention was given to the inclusion of former combatants.

For the project’s success, intensive involvement of the local population was essential. This was achieved through the existing village and community organizations and women’s groups established by the Danish Committee for Aid to Afghan Refugees, the main partner in the field. The interventions were closely linked to the Committee’s micro-finance project, stimulating existing local business and creating new business ventures. Afghan partners included the Ministry of Agriculture and local authorities. Some 10,000 people benefited directly from the project. Food security was increased and youth were able to gain income by providing rural services such as blacksmithing, carpentry and masonry. Hundreds of women participated in tailoring and food processing micro projects.

Project title: Assistance in reducing the humanitarian deficits of war-affected rural communities through increased agricultural productivity and the promotion of auxiliary income-generating activities.


Implementing Branch: Agri-Business Development Branch.
ARMENIA

THE TRANSITION TO A BETTER LIFE FOR ALL

Armenia has overcome the turbulent times of the 1990s and has enjoyed many years of sustained economic growth. However, the disruptions caused by transition to the market economy, armed conflict and natural disasters were such that more than one-fourth of the population still lives below the poverty line. Life is particularly hard for refugees, internally displaced persons, women and other vulnerable groups.

Supporting the Government’s efforts to eradicate poverty by 2015, the United Nations organizations— the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as coordinator, UNIDO, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population fund (UNFPA) and UNICEF—cooperating with local government and private and civil society partners, developed a joint intervention in the Katayk and Gegarkunik regions. The aim is to create a basis for sustainable development in local communities, focusing on poor and other vulnerable people and using an integrated approach which covers poverty reduction, education, health, and local environmental challenges.

UNIDO will train youths and women heading single-parent families in the managerial and entrepreneurial skills needed to start up viable enterprises, and establish a fund for loans to local business. Assessments of small business potential indicate that both agro-processing and off-farm activities hold promise. Access to modern and clean energy services will be improved through the construction of pilot biogas plants in rural areas; the local population will be trained in the operation and maintenance of energy systems.

**Project title:** Sustainable livelihood for socially vulnerable refugees, internally displaced and local families.

**Duration:** 2009-2011.

**Implementing Branches:** Industrial Policy and Private Sector Development Branch/Energy and Climate Change Branch/ Europe and NIS Programme.
Arsenic is poisonous. It can cause skin diseases, anaemia, liver enlargement, various types of cancer and other health problems. Under certain conditions, arsenic occurring naturally in the soil finds its way into ground water. Most districts in Bangladesh use ground water containing arsenic as it is the only available source of drinking water. In such cases, drinking water taken directly from wells poses a serious threat to public health.

With the support of the UNTFHS and cooperating with Ministry of Industry, other relevant institutions such as the Department of Public Health and NGOs, UNIDO has addressed the problem on a pilot basis in two districts with the highest levels of arsenic poisoning: Hajiganj and Shahrasti.

The project used a broad approach to the problem. Simple arsenic removal units, many of them produced locally, were distributed to 1,500 households, and 20 community-level arsenic removal units were transferred to local ownership. Posters, discussions, folk song shows, film and TV helped to make local population aware of the issues. Medical and laboratory support were improved. Health improved rapidly in the communities and income-generating activities were stimulated. Based on the lessons learned, UNIDO, in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Government of Bangladesh, is preparing a proposal for the creation of national capacities to remove arsenic from drinking water and improve medical treatment.

**Project title:** Improving human security by mitigating arsenic poisoning.

**Duration:** 2006-2008.

**Implementing Branch:** Environmental Management Branch.
GHANA

A JOINT FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY

Ghana hosts many refugees from armed conflicts which took place in other African countries. In the refugee camps, people have few opportunities to earn money and living conditions are bad. When refugees become involved in the economic life of local communities, this can lead to conflicts: local people are usually poor as well and resources are limited.

The problems are complex and therefore required joint action by different agents. Building on earlier work by the UNHCR, UNIDO was the lead agency in a project aiming to improve overall conditions in the Buduburam and Krisam refugee camps and enable refugees to create viable small enterprises back home or locally. Nearby communities were actively involved, and their standards of living improved as well. The other United Nations agencies involved were UNHCR and the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). This team cooperated with Government institutions, NGOs and organizations representing inhabitants of the camps and village communities. Tens of thousands of refugees, as well as people from the nearby communities benefited from the project.

While the other United Nations agencies focused on improving the health and sanitation infrastructure and increasing agricultural productivity, UNIDO trained people for commercially viable economic activities and provided the basic equipment. It also supported the development of locally-run business support centres and local credit systems.

**Project title:** Assistance to the refugees of the UNHCR settlements in Buduburam and Krisan for their repatriation, local integration and resettlement through micro- and small-scale enterprise development.

**Duration:** 2006 – 2010.

**Implementing Branch:** Industrial Policy and Private Sector Development Branch.
UNIDO Projects Funded by the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security

GUINEA

SOLVING PROBLEMS THROUGH SELF HELP

Armed conflict in Liberia and Sierra Leone has in the past driven many people from these countries across the border into Guinea. The influx of refugees has put heavy pressure on local communities, which also had to cope with internal migration following domestic unrest. Cross-border trade was disrupted for years. Making a living became very difficult in the border region and social tensions increased.

In 2005, the project started to create conditions for the development of non-farming activities in three prefectures of the border region (N’Zérékoré, Lola and Yomou). Through training in a range of technical and business skills, supplemented by literacy courses, the project has reached almost 6,000 people and promoted the establishment over 100 self-help groups.

Refugees, internally displaced persons and host community members attend workshops together, the first two groups accounting for about 16 per cent of the total number of people trained. Internally displaced persons and refugees are returning to their communities equipped with new skills. Many trainees have been able to buy land, build houses and open bank accounts.

Community-based production centres are being constructed and youth centres and schools were rehabilitated by the project together with the local communities.

**Project title:** Quick impact programme for refugee zones: community based production centres and community rehabilitation projects with skills upgrading in Forest Guinea.

**Duration:** 2005-2010.

**Implementing Branch:** Industrial Policy and Private Sector Development Branch.
INDONESIA

WORKING FOR RECONCILIATION

Between 1999 and 2004, Indonesia’s Maluku Islands were devastated by waves of ethnic and religious violence which destroyed schools and medical facilities and led to the collapse of the local economy. Thousands of people lost their lives, 40,000 homes were destroyed and the number of displaced persons reached hundreds of thousands.

Since July 2005, UNIDO has been implementing a pioneering strategy to support the islands’ reconstruction and reconciliation process. In a joint initiative with the local government, it set up the Maluku Technology Centre to harness the great potential of local commodities such as sago palm starch, bamboo, and eucalyptus and coconut oils. Training is mainly community-based and is bearing fruit as island artisans become adept at using new technologies, expand the range of their products and increase their value. Project staff and their trainees organized the Maluku Cultural and Small-Industry Product Festival, an event which, besides being a showcase for the project’s achievements, gave hundreds of participants from various communities a deeper awareness of their common heritage.

Building on the positive results of these efforts, a project expansion further stimulates village development in Ambon City, Kabupaten (regency) West and South Seram. UNIDO, as the lead agent, cooperates with the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration. The Maluku Provincial Government and civil society organizations is intensively involved in project execution.

**Project title:** Overcoming ethnic and religious conflicts through economic development in the Maluku Islands, Indonesia.

**Duration:** 2009-2012 (building on earlier projects undertaken since 2005).

**Implementing Branch:** Agri-Business Development Branch.
Lao People’s Democratic Republic is among the world’s poorest countries, with nearly one quarter of its population earning less than one US dollar a day. In rural areas, the scourge of poverty is compounded by a widespread dependence on opium-poppy cultivation and addiction to illicit drugs.

In 2006, UNIDO and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) started a joint project aimed at creating alternative income generation opportunities in three districts of the Oudomxay Province. A major initial challenge was the treatment and rehabilitation of hundreds of villagers affected by the use of opium and other illicit drugs. This social task is intertwined with the economic aspect of the project, whose main objectives are crop diversification and adding value to agricultural commodities. Twenty-two villages with a total population of 36,000 are receiving assistance. Within the framework of UNIDO’s assistance, more than 30 Village Productivity Groups were created and around 1,000 people have meanwhile been trained in basic agro-processing and community development. Products such as sesame oil, handmade paper, brooms, and bags knitted from natural fibres are produced and sold.

A key role in the transformation of the local economy is now played by the Productivity and Marketing Centre in Oudomxay City, a much-needed link between remote villages and the markets for products. The beneficiaries are now able to sell products to tourist markets even in the capital city, and have gained direct market exposure during the Lao Handicraft Festival.

**Project title:** Social and economic rehabilitation of former opium poppy-growing communities – alternative livelihood development.

**Duration:** 2007-2010.

**Implementing Branch:** Agri-Business Development Branch.
MALAWI

GRASS ROOTS ACTION FOR SELF RELIANCE AND HEALTH

The main feature of agriculture in Malawi is the predominance of subsistence farming practiced on small plots with antiquated tools and methods. A disastrously high proportion of households affected by infectious diseases, most notably malaria and HIV/AIDS, further reduces productivity and imperils food security.

UNIDO’s project helped thousands of households in poor rural areas of the Salima District to overcome the threats to their livelihoods. The recipients of assistance included women, who head almost one-third of the households, and over 1,000 orphans. The main aim of the support package was to improve productivity by upgrading traditional means of production, such as ox-drawn ploughs and carts, horticultural implements, treadle pumps, post-harvest equipment and various hand tools.

An extensive training programme, tuned to the immediate needs of the most disadvantaged groups, emphasized vocational training for orphans in such fields as wood working, tailoring, metal fabrication and automotive mechanics. Around 11,000 people participated in the training, and many groups in which people pool their skills and tools for local development have been created. Local craftsmen can now supply the upgraded production equipment. Between 2006 and 2008, the village and productivity groups generated earnings of more than $ 50,000. The rudimentary rural health infrastructure was improved by the provision of water boreholes and bicycle ambulances. This, together with a diversification of the diet resulting from the horticultural activities, has lead to a reduction of various diseases in the villages.

**Project title:** Empowering poor rural communities with labour-saving technologies for increased labour productivity, food production and income generation.

**Duration:** 2005-2008.

**Implementing Branches:** Agri-Business Development Branch/ Industrial Policy and Private Sector Development Branch.
SRI LANKA

OVERCOMING MAN-MADE AND NATURAL DISASTERS

The long years of war between the Government and the Tamil Tigers have destroyed society, economy and infrastructure in the north and east of Sri Lanka. Hundreds of thousands of people fled the fighting. The regions - once food exporters with thriving business communities - experienced food shortages and economic decline; household incomes have dropped far below the national average. Thousands of households are headed by widows. The 2004 tsunami was another devastating blow.

The return of stability to the regions has made it possible to address the many complex problems. UNIDO contributes to rebuilding local communities in the Trincomalee and Batticaloa areas by promoting community-based initiatives for social integration and economic activities (including the establishment of self-help producers’ groups) and reviving agriculture through the introduction of mechanization. To support this, UNIDO also encourages the establishment local business development services.

The primary focus of project activities is on those who have suffered most: refugees, women and small farmers. The project also helps ex-combatants to make a new start in life and stimulates local food processing, tool making repair and maintenance. To take advantage of the many other initiatives to rebuild these regions and create synergies where possible, UNIDO works together with the District Chamber of Commerce and Industry and coordinates its activities with NGOs, other United Nations and bilateral bodies as well as Government agencies. By the end of the project, about 3,000 households will have benefited from it; another 3,000 could benefit from equipment sharing, which is encouraged by the project.

**Project title:** Support for sustainable livelihood recovery among the conflict affected population in the north and east regions through improved agricultural productivity and community-based entrepreneurship.

**Duration:** 2006 - 2009.

**Implementing Branch:** Agri-Business Development Branch/UNIDO Regional Office in Thailand.
SUDAN

UNITED IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Armed conflict and recurrent drought have severely affected the mostly rural settlements in the Nuba Mountains region in southern Sudan. Large numbers of people have been displaced and the breakdown of socio-economic structures is widespread.

In early 2004, an improvement in security conditions prompted UNIDO to launch a Community Livelihoods and Rural Industry Support (CLARIS) project covering some 40 villages in the vicinity of Dilling and Kadugli. Village development committees were established to promote participation and community building. Agricultural production was revitalized by improving local capabilities to manufacture and repair tools and machinery. Appropriate post-harvest and food processing technologies were introduced with the additional benefit of creating more profitable and less time-consuming occupations for women. Improved revenue streams in the region have also revived commercial activities. By the end of 2006, over 6,000 households had seen a marked improvement in their living standards. Finally and most significantly, training and other CLARIS activities brought together former rivals in the civil war, and thereby served the project’s larger purpose of building confidence and fostering peace in the region.

With support from the Multi-Donor Trust Fund and the Government of Sudan, a follow-up phase of the project is currently expanding activities to other areas in the same region.

**Project:** Revitalisation of agricultural productive capacities in post-conflict zones by promoting participation and community building for food security and poverty alleviation, Nuba Mountains Region.

**Duration:** 2004-2007.

**Implementing Branch:** Agri-Business Development Branch.
For over two decades, the West Nile Region of Uganda was devastated by fierce fighting between Government forces and various rebel groups. The truce reached in April 2002 allowed the Government of Uganda to expand its efforts to reintegrate tens of thousands of army veterans and former rebels into civilian life.

Started in April 2006, UNIDO’s Skills for Peace and Income (SKIPI) project soon became a central component of the national reconciliation and recovery campaign. The project was carried out in the villages of Yumbe District, where hundreds of ex-combatants, their dependants and deserving members of the communities at large were trained in masonry, metal working, carpentry, garment making, food processing and other marketable skills. Upon graduation, they have received tool kits as a start-up support for their business. A vocational infrastructure consisting of four Community Productivity and Training Centres and a central facility in Yumbe Town has been established in close cooperation with the project’s local partner, the Participatory Rural Action for Development.

Over 1,200 SKIPI beneficiaries have acquired skills for economic self-reliance and successful reintegration in this war-torn rural society. The great majority of them are now financially independent; one-third are women. They have also spread their knowledge and skills among family members and friends – a rough estimate shows that this has almost doubled the number of beneficiaries from training. To celebrate the fifth anniversary of the 2002 peace agreement, a number of Peace Festivals were held, which helped to reinforce Yumbe’s progress on the path to reconciliation and recovery.

Project: Multi-skills training and community service facilities for sustainable livelihoods and poverty alleviation - reintegration of ex-combatants and former rebels.
Duration: 2006-2010.
Implementing Branch: Agri-Business Development Branch.
Bordering on countries which have suffered from long years of civil war, the northwest of the United Republic of Tanzania is host to hundreds of thousands of refugees. Inevitably, the region has become unsettled. Local communities have been badly affected by the proliferation of arms, crime and violence against women. There was a real danger that the situation in these poor, vulnerable communities would worsen.

With the Government’s National Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction as a framework for action, the United Nations responded with a multi-agency initiative to enable communities in the region to build a better future. It increased the ability of local government to cope with human security threats; improved education, health and environmental protection; and increased food security.

UNIDO, working closely with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Programme (WFP) and local stakeholders, helped local farmers and women to set up or strengthen processing associations. Through nutritional education, value chain analysis, technology transfer and the establishment of demonstration centres for food processing technologies, the project also helped to reduce post-harvest losses and to improve the availability and quality of processed food. Potential markets for locally made higher value added products were identified and the use of sustainable energy for agro-processing was promoted.

**Project title:** Strengthening human security through sustainable human development in Northwestern Tanzania.

**Duration:** 2005-2007.

**Implementing Branch:** Agri-Business Development Branch / UNIDO Field Office in the United Republic of Tanzania.