

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

# PREVENTING CRISIS ENABLING RECOVERY

A Review of UNDP's Work in Conflict and Disaster-Affected Countries: 2012





A Sudanese member of a local civil society organization celebrates the expansion of UNDP assistance to the government that will improve the delivery of public services.

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Cover Photo: Young people in Somaliland work to rehabilitate roads as part of UNDP's Youth for Change Programme. Photo: Alistair Lyne, UNDP Somalia  
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Helen Clark, UNDP Administrator, and Jessica Faieta, UNDP Senior Country Director, in Haiti during a visit to a debris management project in Port au Prince, Haiti, on March 22, 2012.

# Foreword

**Empowering people in the face of disasters and conflicts is no easy task for any nation. Through its crisis prevention and recovery activities, UNDP helps build resilience, reduce the impact of disasters, and accelerate recovery from shocks.**

During 2012, UNDP was active in 97 countries in assisting households, communities, and governments to prevent, confront, and respond to conflicts and disasters.

Many of the stories from affected communities of survival, resilience, and determination to rebuild are inspirational. As a development agency, our work in crisis prevention and preparedness is about building fences at the top of a cliff, rather than placing ambulances at the bottom. Our work in recovery creates a bridge from emergency relief to sustainable development, so that communities can build back better and have greater resilience to future shocks.

The circumstances in which we work have varied widely for the year under review: from Latin America and Caribbean nations, where high levels of crime and violence often exacerbate poverty; to Syria, where a deadly conflict and ensuing humanitarian crisis continues to extract a deadly toll; and to the Philippines, where Typhoon Bopha killed more than a thousand people and displaced hundreds of thousands more. All of these crises impede development, reinforce inequality and blunt efforts to lift people out of poverty.

There was much tragedy in the course of the year – from the Arab States region to the Horn of Africa, the Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the Sahel, and to the Caribbean and the Americas, where Hurricane Sandy caused much damage and destruction.

There was also recovery, including in Haiti, where rebuilding from the 2010 earthquake continues; in Pakistan, which had



devastating floods in 2010; and in Colombia where a concerted attempt is being made to negotiate an end to a long-running and debilitating conflict.

The global financial crisis and its aftermath have affected funding for development – both in volume and in the outcomes sought from expenditure. Donors are rightly anxious to see value for money, including in the continued success of UNDP's crisis prevention and recovery work. Our efforts confirm that helping to make communities more resilient to disasters and addressing ethnic and other tensions before they degenerate into outright conflict often result in high payoffs. Every dollar spent on disaster preparedness is estimated to save up to seven dollars in recovery costs.

Over recent decades, prevention strategies have significantly reduced death and displacement from natural disasters. Momentum on disaster risk reduction, early warning, and enhanced community resilience needs to be maintained. Climate change is leading to more extreme weather, and increased and often poorly-planned urbanization is resulting in greater vulnerability. The human and financial costs of disasters can be substantially reduced – but only if good prevention and mitigation measures are put in place.

Looking forward, as world leaders prepare to discuss the global development agenda beyond 2015, there is an urgent need to tackle the drivers of conflict and armed violence and factor in ways to reduce disaster risk. UNDP's new Strategic Plan for 2014 to 2017 will aim to do just that by giving these issues unprecedented prominence in our work.

**Helen Clark**  
*UNDP Administrator*

# Introduction

**In many places around the world where conflicts and disasters escalated in 2012, we saw how crises can undermine development investment and cause terrible human suffering, especially in communities that are fragile and lack resilience.**

Even when crises do occur, major opportunities for transformation often co-exist alongside all the terrible disruptions that conflicts and disasters bring.

UNDP's crisis prevention and recovery work bridges the gap between emergency relief, peacebuilding, and long-term development, helping to build resilience in countries and communities affected by conflicts and disasters.

And, as this report shows, this support is helping many crisis-affected countries grow out of fragility and pursue long-term development goals.

This report highlights UNDP's key areas of support in crisis prevention and recovery. It is organized into four main chapters to show how UNDP:

1. Prevents disasters and conflicts;
2. Responds to emerging crises and emergencies;
3. Promotes recovery and long-term development in post-crisis countries by reinforcing governance, disaster management, rule of law, livelihoods; and
4. Strengthens the coherence of the United Nations and the international community through a range of partnerships that allow us to better respond to crises and build peace.



The report details the results achieved from UNDP's crisis prevention and recovery work across all five regions where we worked in 2012. I am delighted to note, with thanks, that this year each of the directors of UNDP's regional bureaus have authored a special contribution which highlights key regional achievements for 2012. Collectively these underscore the unity of purpose of all of us in UNDP on the issues presented by crisis prevention and recovery.

2012 saw many of the political upheavals that began in 2011 continue and, in several cases, worsen – hindering UNDP's ability to engage. In other cases, however, UNDP was able to consolidate the work begun in recent years and ensure that any gains made will endure and help reduce future risks.

Crisis prevention and recovery accounted for 23.5 percent of all UNDP expenditure in 2012, roughly the same as the figure in 2011, which stood at 24 percent.

## **Major highlights for 2012 included:**

- Peaceful election campaigning, polling, and the resolution of political deadlocks and political transitions following UNDP support for conflict prevention, mediation and early warning activities in such countries as **Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Togo and Uganda**;
- Intensification of efforts to provide urgent assistance to people in **Syria** displaced by the ongoing conflict, as well as to assist communities in **Jordan and Lebanon**, which are hosting many of the millions of refugees coming over the border;



- Addressing the culture of impunity in **Guatemala**, where, with UNDP assistance, the Attorney General has prosecuted those who committed war crimes and crimes against humanity under a previous administration;
- A day without a single murder in **El Salvador** – the first recorded since 2009. UNDP efforts to improve security, address gang violence and easy access to guns, as well as address organized crime, are working;
- Increased protection for women through, for example, new family protection units established in **Iraq**, which by the end of the year had heard thousands of cases related to sexual and gender-based violence. Better access to justice for abused women in **the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone and Somalia**, through new initiatives that strengthen the courts, police and other legal systems;
- Studies which improve our understanding of how climate change may impact disasters and how it could affect key industries in **Armenia, Honduras, India, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Nepal, Niger, Timor-Leste and Uganda**; and
- Innovative new technology to better predict and warn about disasters lessens the threat to life and property, and aid with the recovery process in such countries as **Albania, Bangladesh, Kosovo<sup>1</sup>, Haiti and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia**.

UNDP's work in crisis prevention and recovery is enabled by strong and expanding partnerships that continued to grow through 2012. Collaboration with bilateral donors, UN agencies, other multilateral institutions, such as the World Bank and regional development banks, civil society organizations, the private sector and academia multiplied the advantages for each partner throughout the year. As always, it was primarily through partnerships at the country level that UNDP was able to create platforms for better delivery and support to communities before, during and after crises.

Strengthening other partnerships, such as through the *New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States*, opened up a new space for fragile and conflict-affected countries to take on the major challenges of transitioning from instability to development throughout the year.

UNDP was also active in 2012 in its role as global coordinator, advancing the global crisis and development agenda. For example, UNDP worked closely with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) to develop an integrated approach to peacekeeping and special political missions - and as the main implementer of projects conducted under the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF).

As this report shows, 2012 was an extraordinary year for UNDP to advance its commitment to bring the benefit of development to countries beset by crises. Given the indisputable challenges that confront our times, crisis prevention and recovery must remain a vital and core part of the world development agenda. Building on the knowledge and experience gained from our country level work, the strong support from our donors, and the trust and confidence of our stakeholders and country partners, UNDP looks forward to continuing to play a critical role in preventing crises, ensuring preparedness and promoting recovery.

### Jordan Ryan

*Assistant Administrator and Director, Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery*

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<sup>1</sup> Hereafter referred to in the context of UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)

# Highlights 2012

## HAITI

By the end of 2012, UNDP had provided temporary work to more than 300,000 people recovering from the devastating 2010 earthquake. Much of the rubble has now been removed and there has been clear progress in rebuilding critical infrastructure destroyed by the quake.

## CUBA

When Hurricane Sandy, one of the largest Atlantic storms on record, made landfall in Cuba, UNDP-supported investment in disaster preparedness paid off. Deaths and damage were significantly lower than in neighbouring countries. UNDP support also helped ensure that recovery started early by subsidizing shelter and offering interest-free loans to help rebuild homes and other basic services.

## GUATEMALA

Government measures to fight impunity, including the support provided by UNDP over several years to investigators, the Attorney General and police, bore fruit in 2012 with the opening of criminal cases and prosecution of top-level officials.

## THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Skopje University and UNDP jointly launched a mobile application that allows users to pinpoint disaster locations on a map, locate emergency centres and contacts, and receive live updates and other critical information.

## KOSOVO\*

UNDP-supported legal aid clinics helped almost 5,000 people, an increased of more than 40 percent since 2011.

## GHANA

In December, UNDP support to the National Peace Council helped to ensure a peaceful presidential election.

## SIERRA LEONE

Conviction rates for serious offences jumped by 72 percent due to UNDP-supported efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Law Office Department. Over 300 victims of rape and domestic violence received free medical attention, counseling, shelter in safe houses and legal assistance.

## CÔTE D'IVOIRE

With UNDP assistance, police stations, courts and prisons became operational again following the 2010

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