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Resilient nations.*

## United Nations Development Programme

### **UNDP support to countries for implementing the Ten-Year-Strategy (2008-2018) of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**

#### **UNDP and your country**

UNDP partners with people at all levels of society to help build nations that can withstand crisis, and drive and sustain the kind of growth that improves the quality of life for everyone. On the ground in 177 countries and territories, we offer global perspective and local insight to help empower lives and build resilient nations.

#### **UNDP and Sustainable Land Management**

Goods and services derived from natural ecosystems underpin human life and economic activity and need to be sustained in order for countries to meet their development objectives. UNDP recognizes that loss of these goods and services is a barrier to sustainable development. Yet effective management of ecosystems can maximize opportunities for sustainable development and inclusive and resilient economic growth. This is especially important for the poor. Many of the 1.2 billion people living in severe poverty depend directly on nature for food, clean water, fuel, medicine, shelter, and reduced vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. Relying on nature for their livelihoods and subsistence, the poor stand to suffer disproportionately from irreversible changes to fragile ecosystems. Some of the most vulnerable ecosystems and peoples are found in the drylands.

UNDP has decades of concrete development experience in countries ranging from fragile States to middle-income countries, helping build and share solutions to the challenges of poverty reduction including through managing the environment and energy for sustainable development. It reaffirms its commitment to support growth that is inclusive and sustainable, incorporating productive capacities that create employment and livelihoods for the poor. Part of this is developing solutions at national and sub-national levels for sustainable management of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystem services - all integral elements of sustainable

land management (SLM). This is a key element of UNDP's new Biodiversity and Ecosystems Global Framework 2012-2020: The Future We Want: Biodiversity and Ecosystems – Driving Sustainable Development. This has 3 signature programmes including integrating SLM and ecosystems management into development planning and production sectors to maintain goods and services that sustain human wellbeing and managing and rehabilitating ecosystems for adaptation to and mitigation of climate change.

UNDP delivers country support for SLM through different organizational units including the Drylands Development Centre (DDC); the UNDP-Global Environment Facility team; The Equator Initiative; the GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP); and its 135 Country Offices to support countries in building policy, governance and finance frameworks for the sustainable management of ecosystems for sustainable development and poverty eradication accompanied by knowledge management as a cross-cutting delivery mechanism.

#### **UNDP and the UNCCD**

With these comparative advantages and common goals, UNDP has a long history of supporting countries in implementing the UNCCD.

Most recently, UNDP has signed a UNCCD-UNDP Cooperation Programme (2012) that supports countries to mainstream drylands priorities into national and sectoral development planning; undertakes joint policy analysis and advocacy with particular attention to the linkage between SLM, climate change and biodiversity, and supports knowledge sharing, learning and actions for improving the profile of drylands issues. This cooperation framework is led by UNDP DDC through its Integrated Drylands Development Programme (IDDP), which has an overall goal to contribute to poverty reduction through the sustainable development of drylands leading to reduced vulnerability and improved livelihoods.

UNDP is an Implementing Agency for the financial mechanism for the UNCCD - The Global Environment Facility (GEF). The UNDP-GEF team is currently responsible for programming 30 percent of GEF Land Degradation resources. The UNDP-supported GEF-financed portfolio includes 48 multi-partnership projects that focus exclusively on SLM to reduce

land degradation, and have a value of approximately USD 170 million in GEF resources and USD 1.4 billion in co-financing from various partners. An additional 44 projects under a global SLM programme that strengthens capacities for SLM in Least Developed Countries (LDC) and Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) are nearing completion. The UNDP-supported GEF-financed portfolio supports a further 24 multi-focal area initiatives to mobilize multiple global benefits alongside national and local benefits; such synergies are found among efforts that include reducing land and forest degradation and carbon emissions and improving biodiversity conservation. This cohort of projects represents a further USD 100 million of GEF resources and triple that in partner resources.

UNDP contributes to the UN Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (UNDDDD) and is an active member of the Inter-Agency Task Force implementing the Decade. Through the DDC, UNDP has contributed to the elaboration of the Decade's Strategy and Action Plan and is supporting the implementation of related activities, for example the UNDDDD side event on "Practical Steps to Drought Preparedness and Risk Management" which was held on 11 March 2013 in Geneva. The event kicked-off an UN-wide global campaign in 2013 to raise awareness on how drought and water scarcity

relate to desertification, land degradation and biodiversity loss in the context of the International Year of Water Cooperation. Moreover, UNDP is engaged with the UNCCD in the elaboration and implementation of a concept note on "monitoring changes at the community level". The objective is to identify a number of Drylands Villages to be put in the spotlight using the momentum around the UNDDDD to accompany changes, document and share lessons learned and mobilize international attention, partners and resources.

In doing so, UNDP has contributed substantially to the four objectives of the UNCCD Strategy:

- To improve the living conditions of affected populations;
- To improve the conditions of affected ecosystems;
- To generate global benefits through implementation of the UNCCD; and
- To mobilize resources to support the implementation of the Convention through building effective partnerships between national and international actors.

As illustrated below, **UNDP supports:**

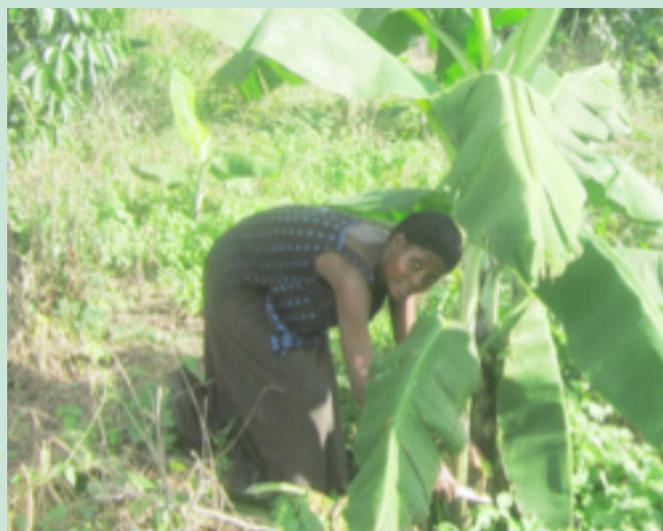
## Mainstreaming of drylands issues into national policies, planning and development frameworks

### Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in six cattle corridor districts of Uganda

The cattle corridor also known as the drylands covers approximately 84,000 square km, receives an annual average precipitation of between 450-800 mm that supports both rain-fed agriculture and livestock keeping. The corridor supports some 90% of the national cattle herd. Despite the large number of cattle, poverty indicators show that the drylands constitute a severe poverty hotspot.

In Uganda, 90% of population depend on natural resources for their livelihoods. The high dependency on rain-fed agriculture and exploitation of natural resources makes the country very vulnerable to climatic variability. In response to this challenge, the Government of Uganda in its National Development Plan has recognized land degradation as a major impediment to sustainable growth in agriculture, natural resources productivity, the forestry sector and national economic development. This is especially due to the limited possibility of bringing additional land resources into production; given the growing population and subsequent reduction of land per capita.

In support of this action, UNDP, together with the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, with the financial support from the Royal Norwegian Government, has mainstreamed SLM principles into district and local development plans and budgets, and identified and implemented priority SLM interventions to improve livelihoods of local communities in six Cattle Corridor Districts. The IDDP has facilitated environment action planning processes, including establishment of task forces; sensitization at community, sub-county and districts levels; identification of environment and SLM issues through wide reaching stakeholder consultations, which has led to their prioritization in the Action Plans. Over 200 Environment Action Plans have been developed in all sub-counties and districts. These have supported the integration of local environmental issues into development planning and budgetary frameworks, and the process has catalyzed significant developments that ensure sustainability. For example, the District of Nakasongola has integrated water harvesting at household levels into its Development Plan and allocated a budget of up to 12 million UGX for 2012. At national level a SLM Country Strategic Investment Framework (SLM-CSIF) was developed, a harmonized SLM platform and 5 sector Inter-Ministerial National Steering Committee and Agriculture Sector Working Group established to oversee SLM activities; a Rangelands Policy and Pastoral Code developed; and SLM was mainstreamed into the National Development Plan, Agriculture Sector Development Strategy and Investment Plan.



Based on priorities identified in the DEAPs, the programme has supported small scale farmers to promote various SLM technologies. These technologies constitute important components within the climate change adaptation strategies of small scale farmers to unsustainable use of land resources in crop and animal production, and deforestation for fuel wood to meet their energy needs and charcoal production for economic purposes. For example under the Conservation Agriculture (CA) component over 400 small scale farm holders were supported to grow maize, beans using CA techniques. This has helped to offset some of the severe impacts of climatic variability, poor natural resources management practices, inappropriate farming systems and, reduced soil fertility.

### **Mainstreaming Drylands Development Issues into National, District and Community level Development Policies, Plans and Programmes within the Context of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification in Ghana**

The drylands in Ghana fall within three administrative regions namely the Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions also known as the Northern Savanna Ecological zone. This zone covers approximately 41% of the country's total land area and is home to about 17 percent of the country's population.

70-80% of the population living here are engaged in agriculture and most practice rain-fed, small scale, low input subsistence agriculture - an approach that results in their high dependency on natural resources and eco-systems services for their livelihoods. This makes them extremely vulnerable to environmental stress/shocks. According to the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS 4), poverty is highest among resource-poor subsistence farmers operating in these drylands areas.

UNDP together with the Governments of Denmark and Turkey, and the European Commission, have been supporting the programme in six drylands districts namely, Savelugu-Nanton, West Mamprusi, Talensi-Nabdam, Bawku West, Garu-Tempane and Lawra. The programme has been implemented by the Ghana Environment Protection Agency in collaboration with other national and district partners and the UNDP Ghana Country Office.



The programme has been implemented in two **components**: **Component 1** addressed policy related issues, including policy dialogue and advocacy, awareness creation, developing methodologies and tools for mainstreaming, building capacity at national and district levels for mainstreaming and applying the methodologies and tools developed to mainstream environment and drylands issues into District Medium Term Development Plans (DMTDPs, 2009 - 2011). **Component 2** focused on implementation of issues mainstreamed at district levels into DMTDPs on the ground. This was achieved through an **Integrated Community Livelihoods Initiative (ICLI)**. ICLI was developed with the aim of improving living standards of the rural population, enhancing food security, generating rural employment and contributing to the protection of environmentally sensitive areas as well as providing ecological services. ICLI promotes alternative livelihoods and combines income generating activities with the promotion of SLM practices/technologies. The following activities have been implemented under ICLI:

- 1. Alternative livelihoods improvement activities:** Guinea fowl and small ruminants production.
- 2. Promotion of SLM practices/technologies:** Raising environmental awareness, bush fire control/management and land use planning, establishment of tree nurseries, economic tree planting, woodlots establishment; rain-fed crop production, integrated soil fertility management and agro-forestry.

The programme has built capacity in the use of the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) as a key tool for mainstreaming environment and drylands issues. Consequently, SEA was used to review development plans of 24 districts, and environment and drylands mainstreamed into DMDTPs of 2009-2011. At the broader policy level (national), the country's current medium development term blueprint, the "Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda 2010-2013" clearly advocates the adoption of environmentally sound resource management strategies since the country's development is highly natural resources-driven. The plan recommends the adoption of the SEA methodology as a strategy for ensuring that poverty reduction and other development goals are not undermined by unsustainable use of natural resources. The plan also promotes alternative livelihoods as a strategy for the reduction of the "vulnerability of the national economy, population and ecosystems to the impact of climate change".

*Ghana's and Uganda's experiences will be presented in more detail at a related COP11 side event to be held on Thursday, September 26th.*

### Country Pilot Partnerships (CPP) on SLM

Competing land uses in production landscapes in **Cuba**, as in many countries, are increasing in rate, magnitude and spatial reach, significantly taxing natural resources, affecting ecosystem dynamics and eroding services vital to development. Some 76% of agricultural land suffers erosion to some extent and needs remedial action; ecosystem function, resilience and productivity is jeopardized over large areas of the island. Cross-sector harmonization and multi-scale integration of SLM is needed to reduce competition between land use systems, control and prevent land degradation, and improve the livelihoods of people dependent on the use of natural resources. Working in partnership with the Government of Cuba, FAO and UNEP, UNDP has supported a GEF-funded Country Pilot Partnerships (CPP) on SLM that addresses the complexities of multi-sector pressure on land. This CPP has five sub-projects to be implemented over 10 years. The first project, which focuses on SLM capacity building, has improved the previously-limited inter-sector and inter-institutional planning by supporting the development and implementation of efficient frameworks for institutional coordination; these frameworks enable the integration of planning processes, at national, regional and local levels and the inclusion of new legal frameworks on land management and land use planning. In the provinces of Pinar del Rio and Guantanamo where its field interventions are focused, the project has been instrumental in implementing new farming practices and diversifying and increased feedstock for farmers, with a significant increase in yields of staple crops—which will improve food security. As a result, in some sites, water use efficiency is estimated to have increased 70% and losses of more than 1200 m<sup>3</sup> of soil have been avoided. Up scaling to larger landscapes has started through mainstreaming these practices into extension services guaranteeing social and environmental benefits beyond the life of the project. *The challenges and opportunities for Cuba's CPP-SLM as a vehicle for transformational change to arrest land degradation and promote sustainable development will be discussed along with those of two other UNDP supported GEF funded CPP-SLM Burkina Faso and Namibia in a COP11 side event on Thursday, September 19th.*



Because **Namibia** is the driest country in sub-Saharan Africa—with 92% of its land considered semi-arid, arid or hyper-arid—land degradation is a serious issue in the country, and is expected to only worsen in the face of climate change. The Country Pilot Partnership Programme (CPP) in Namibia began in 2008 with support from UNDP and financing from the GEF. The CPP programme has focused on the development and testing of integrated SLM practices that would help Namibia combat its chronic land degradation, manifested through vegetation, habitat and soil productivity losses, particularly as the threats of climate change are expected to bring additional multiple challenges. The Namibia CPP examined how best environmental sustainability could be formally incorporated into national development planning processes to address livelihood concerns (for e.g. of the indigenous OvaHimba people) in North-Western Namibia. The OvaHimba, who are well-known within and outside Namibia, are a vulnerable and somewhat marginalized group, who dwell in challenging dryland ecosystem with limited access to central services. They largely still practice a traditional system of 'extensive pastoralism'. This practice, given Namibia's aridity, puts them at the mercy of their already harsh environment, thus they are likely to experience composite of vulnerabilities due to their social status. The Namibia CPP therefore brought their limited livelihood issues to the fore and proposed solutions that would, among other things, see environmental sustainability mainstreamed into existing natural resource management programmes. At least five income generating initiatives have been piloted on a small-scale level and replicated in other sites, including, the development of a local cold storage facility (for supporting marketing of horticultural products), the development of aquaculture fish ponds, the replication of climate change adaptation measures such as acquisition of improved small livestock breeds, construction of plastic granaries (for food preservation to adapt) and adoption of biomass energy efficiency stoves. The significant achievements of the Namibia CPP made through initiatives such as conservation agriculture particularly drip irrigation, the rejuvenation of livestock marketing structures (auction kraals and farmer's marketing calendars) and its support for capacity building and value added processing and marketing provided inspiration and foundation to a landmark Cabinet resolution in support of the CPP and the absorption of its achievements into national development planning and the programs and budgets of line ministries; all in aid of sustainable land and natural resource management. As a pilot programme in its first five years, the Namibia CPP offers SLM lessons and practices that can be enhanced to ensure the integrity of dryland ecosystems through a combination of environmentally-friendly dryland products and practices to transform and add value to economic and livelihoods benefits for the dryland inhabitants. *Learn more about the Namibia CPP at a COP11 related side event to be held on Tuesday, September 24th (by invitation only).*



## Reducing vulnerability of drylands communities to environmental, economic and socio-cultural challenges

### Rehabilitation of Degraded Rangelands in Kenya

In the Mount Suswa region of Kenya – one of the most scenic and sacred areas of the Maasai community – families have watched helplessly for years as the land washed away due to unrelenting erosion. Natural features make these drylands susceptible to erosion, while social-economic changes in the community and restructuring of the land tenure system have further accelerated the degradation of the once-productive. Large water gullies have formed throughout the region, washing rich top soil downstream and creating a physical reminder of the changing environment. Today, the communities are breathing a sigh of relief because of support from the GEF, UNDP and the Government of Kenya. Through multi-pronged approaches, a new project is working to conserve the environment, rehabilitate the degraded lands, and promote livelihood resilience among the pastoral and agro-pastoral communities. This work includes innovative land-use practices such as water harvesting, cultivation of drought resistant crops, and terracing methods. New breeds of cattle are being introduced and cultivated; these breeds are hardier and require fewer land resources.

Bee-keeping and dryland farming are being promoted as ways to diversify farmers' income. Honey production has taken off in the area, and many community members have shown interest in the new and growing industry. By 2016, the project will see at least 25 percent of the area's woodlands and 70,000 ha of pastoral land in recovery. These improvements are expected to directly benefit local communities by reducing the need for food aid by 30 percent.



### Programme Oasis Sud (POS), Morocco

The Programme acts as a framework for local development and investment in the Oases of Southern Morocco. It is implemented by "L'Agence du Sud" in partnership with UNDP, with a budget of about \$30 million funded primarily by the Government of Morocco with contributions from Finland, Japan and the MDG Achievement Fund. POS is conceived to enhance the regionalization of national policies in terms of investment and employment, good governance, environment and sustainable development. It aims to support: 1) Local development planning processes; 2) Local investment and value adding (ecotourism, dryland/food products, renewable energy, etc.); 3) Middle and small enterprise development; and 4) Sustainable management of natural resources. Significant results were achieved within the framework of POS including: elaboration of local development plans; strengthening of local authorities and women groups; successful investments in ecotourism and agro-food processing, generating income and employment for local populations; improving the management of land and water resources in the oases to improve sustainability and adaptation to climate change.



## Improving local governance, management and utilization of natural resources

### Integrated Land and Ecosystem Management to Combat Land Degradation and Deforestation in Madhya Pradesh, India

In the State of Madhya Pradesh in India, the livelihoods of tribal and rural communities have both contributed to and suffered from the consequences of the degradation of important river catchments. These are fragile ecosystems, in a region marked with high poverty rates among communities largely dependent on the forests for their livelihoods. Common practices in the region include intensive land use, expanding agricultural land, forest degradation and uncontrolled grazing—all of which exacerbate land degradation. To address the issue of land degradation in this region, the Government of India has partnered with UNDP and the GEF in the implementation of a project that promotes ecologically sustainable rural livelihoods in five districts of Madhya Pradesh. With support from this project, a community-based Watershed Management Initiative is now treating 3,000 hectares of degraded forest land; the rehabilitation of such degraded lands has impacted and benefitted nearby farmers through the conservation of soil and water. With increased water availability, farmers can now grow more than one crop in a year. At the same time, an increased groundwater level, which can be attributed to the project's interventions, has improved the rural communities' access to drinking water. Additionally, about 12,000 ha of degraded bamboo forest is being treated, protected and managed by 789 families, who receive monthly stipends to compensate them for this work. This initiative has largely addressed a number of pressures targeted by the overall project, such as the illegal grazing and collection of fuelwood—which had been done by the same families who have transformed into protectors of these forests.



## Linking Policy and Practice and Sharing of knowledge beyond local, national and regional boundaries through South - South cooperation

### The Africa-Asia Drought Risk Management (DRM) Peer Assistance Project

The Africa-Asia Drought Risk Management (DRM) Peer Assistance Project commenced in late 2010 with the financial support of the Government of Japan. Globally, drought is one of the most significant natural disasters in terms of spatial extent, duration and long-term socio-economic and environmental implications. Relative to their population and land productivity, drought is the greatest natural hazard in Africa in terms of economic impact and loss of life, particularly affecting the drylands of Sub-Saharan Africa; while Asia has the greatest number of people who are regularly exposed to drought. The project aims to mitigate the risks of drought and improve human livelihoods



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