UNDP
knowledge services

Real-time Solutions for a Developing World

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June 2003

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The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) offers state-of-the-art knowledge services that engage our global network of development practitioners to provide timely and high-quality advice, expertise and know-how to policy makers and other partners in the countries where we operate—helping them pursue the best possible development solutions.

Knowledge services are provided principally through two mechanisms. Thematically defined "knowledge networks" function as global communities having a shared interest and professional focus. Geographically organized Sub-Regional Resource Facilities (SURFs) work for specific clusters of country offices, and have advisory and research capacity to address substantive issues in greater depth.

There are currently more than 4,000 participants in this initiative—over half of UNDP's entire staff from every part and all levels of the worldwide organization, as well as more than 400 members from the United Nations system and other

external partners. New members are joining every week. Included in this number are 160 full-time UNDP policy specialists, 80 of whom are located in the SURFs. Other than the full-time specialists, members of the knowledge networks participate on a voluntary basis.

The major networks currently number twelve: Democratic Governance; Poverty Reduction; Crisis Prevention and Recovery; Energy and Environment; ICT for Development; HIV/AIDS; Evaluation; Gender Equality; Human Development Reports; Management Practice; Millennium Development Goals; and Small Enterprise and Microfinance. The networks are dynamic and evolve in response to community interests, resulting in the creation of both new networks and sub-networks with more targeted themes or a regional focus.

The nine SURF country clusters are: Arab States; Caribbean; Central & Eastern Africa; Europe/CIS; Latin America; Pacific, North & South East Asia; Southern Africa; West & South Asia; and Western Africa.

> The knowledge networks and the SURFs are generating a real cultural transformation in UNDP. Sharing knowledge on the networks is now becoming second nature to most of us. And resident representatives and country office staff are better equipped to tackle the full range of development challenges, knowing that they are backed up by and able to access our global team of specialists.
>
> **Mark Malloch Brown**
> UNDP Administrator

Ask the Country Office

The knowledge services initiative is structured to provide clients with the most immediate and efficient responses. The nature of queries from country clients determines what combination of networks and SURFs will be engaged. The networks provide briefs distilled from global sources, while the SURFs offer on-site consulting by UNDP policy specialists who have in-depth, multi-disciplinary knowledge of the regions in which they operate.

It works like this: a national official or other local development partner requiring advice or expertise turns to a UNDP country office. The UNDP office consults its own staff and then turns to the networks, their SURF, or both. The query is circu-lated to network members as well as to external professional networks, colleagues in United Nations agencies and other bilateral and multilateral donor agencies.

Network archives are explored and searches are made for relevant publications, reports and internet sites. The various elements are incorporated into a timely and thorough response, provided by the country office or delivered through the office by SURF specialists—on average within five days. The client is thus equipped with the latest, best and most trusted knowledge or expertise on the subject.

Taken together, the knowledge services provided by the networks and SURFs include:

-technical and policy advice on specific development challenges, so that decisions made can be based on the best available information on the design, formulation, specifications and projected outcomes of a given solution includ-ing, when appropriate, advice on resource mobilization;

-success stories and comparative experiences from around the world so that knowledge of what has or has not worked elsewhere, in response to a similar challenge, can be taken into account;

-referrals to experts and trusted consultants who can be called on for more focused input to a particular develop-ment initiative, enabling a client to choose from a range of professionals who are familiar with the issues and the region, and who have been vetted in advance;

-research on issues to obtain the latest ideas, trends and insights on a given development issue from the United Na-tions system, bilateral or multilateral donor agencies, academic institutions, think-tanks, civil society and the private sector.

> "I am a member of MDGNet, and I have found it a great example of how technical skills and knowledge available across the UN agencies can be made available at the country level, as and when needed. If we could have similar networks for all the areas where the UN has technical expertise, it would really help the UN to respond to national needs in a timely, coherent, and cost effective way."
>
> **Sally Fegan-Wyles**
> Director, UN Development Group Office

Providing Knowledge, Building Knowledge

Offering knowledge services is a twofold operation in UNDP. The external activity engages the combined knowledge assets of thousands of network members to respond to queries from clients. Equally important is the internal focus on building the professional competencies of these same members.

The networks function as professional communities that provide basic services for members, helping them become a more valuable source of development knowledge and expertise by:

-facilitating dialogue between members so that they can share information and comparative experiences, identify best practices and explore substantive issues as professional colleagues;

-promoting collaboration and mutual support among UNDP staff spread out through country offices, headquarters and SURFs, as well as participants in the United Nations system and other development partners;

-publishing online newsletters that report on the life of the community and highlight achievements, increase the visibility of success stories, share new online resources and publications, and provide news pertaining to the thematic area;

-encouraging innovation and new ideas through workshops and other forums that bring network members together with governments, development partners and other stakeholders;

-building new knowledge by continually distilling the outcomes of queries responded to into lessons learned, and sharing these insights with the networks.

The Practice Networks

Six of the networks play an additional role in building the core professional capacity of UNDP staff members around its main thematic specializations, or "practice areas": Democratic Governance; Poverty Reduction; Crisis Prevention and Recovery; Energy and Environment; ICT for Development; and, HIV/AIDS. Known as "practice networks", they provide the same basic service as other networks—to which the following career development aspects are added:

-upgrading of staff skills through training initiatives that include the Virtual Development Academy, which provides an on-line curriculum of self-learning modules for each practice community;

-offering consultancies and short-term missions to practice members, at all levels within UNDP, allowing them to gain valuable professional experience under the guidance of policy specialists in the SURFs and at headquarters;

-creating incentives to reward and recognize practice members for their investment in career development towards becoming thematic specialists;

-utilizing resource facilities that focus on specific practice themes, such as the Oslo Governance Centre which is available to explore key governance issues in more depth.

> " I have found the networks extremely effective as a knowledge sharing tool. To me, the most important benefit is the ease with which one can get practical advice and learn ways in which similar issues and problems have been tackled eleswhere in UNDP. "
>
> **Sandra Baptise Caruth**, Programme Specialist, UNDP Trinidad and Tobago

Looking to the Future

Only a few years old, this UNDP initiative is beginning to set a benchmark for knowledge-based advisory services in the public sector. Its potential was demonstrated in 2002 when network members and policy specialists in the SURFs responded to almost 3,000 queries from country clients, double the number from 2001. As it becomes ever more effective in the timely and systematic delivery of knowledge services, UNDP is helping to forge a new era in development cooperation.

{ Networks in Action

Democratic Governance Practice Network (DGPNet)

Focus: improving the choices available to the citizens of developing countries, through greater government accountability and more effective institutions. | Established: 1999 / Members: 700

DGPNet in action:

Query from UNDP-Suriname: the government of Suriname was about to initiate a public sector reform programme with a national visioning exercise in order to build popular consensus on the long-term direction for the nation. The Trinidad and Tobago country office, covering Suriname, requested comparative examples from other countries.

Network Response: the query elicited UNDP experiences with visioning exercises in Dominican Republic, Guatemala and Sierra Leone, and with public sector reform programmes in Viet Nam and Mozambique. Contacts were suggested with a regional project on civic dialogue methodologies, a USAID project for implementing policy change, a UNICEF experience in Indonesia and the African Futures programme. Web-related resources were provided on participatory development approaches from Costa Rica, Sudan, Malawi, Bolivia and Rwanda.

Impact: the results were compiled and provided to government, and formed the basis of a UNDP-supported project under the Cabinet of the President.

Poverty Reduction Practice Network (PRNet)

Focus: breaking the cycle of deprivation and hopelessness that is the first obstacle to every kind of development. Established: 1999 / Members: 665

PRNet in action:

Query from UNDP Paraguay: the country office asked for advice and comparative experiences to help them formulate support to the government in aligning the National Poverty Reduction Strategy with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)—with a particular emphasis on how best to include gender related goals and what additional indicators should be used in setting out these goals.

Network Response: after reviewing the first draft of indicators being considered by the government, six members suggested additional indicators such as land tenure and ownership; access to credit, banking and health services; the proportion of administrative and managerial positions held by women, possibly with focus on the public sector; trade union membership by women; the number of social and professional organizations headed by women; the salary gap ratio of female wage income to male wage income by level of education; and the level of gender disaggregation of public data and information. Another member proposed that because the MDGs for primary levels are specified in terms of completion, rather than enrollment, anti-poverty strategies

should look at completion data at all levels. The importance of measurement methodology was elaborated on, noting that some individual indicators can reflect success but not accurately reflect overall MDG achievement.

Impact: the government policy makers received recommendations from the country office on how best to measure gender equality, and these recommendations took into account current thinking of development practitioners engaged in this issue from different parts of the world.

Crisis Prevention and Recovery Practice Network (CPRPNet)

Focus: helping countries in and after crisis and violent conflicts to pave the way to development through effective transition, reconstruction and prevention. | Established: 2002 / Members: 500

CRPNet in action:

Query from UNDP Albania: a national disaster reduction plan was being developed with input from various government ministries, other stakeholders in the country and UNDP. For its part in this operation, UNDP asked the network for experiences related to developing national disaster plans with a particular focus on institutional setup, participation, resource mobilization, budgeting and implementation.

Network Response: members shared diverse experiences and lessons learned from the development of national disaster management plans in Algeria, Cambodia, China, Haiti, India, Madagascar, Pakistan, Philippines and Sri Lanka. The contributions emphasized the importance of a participatory approach that combines both political clout from the government along with technical and operational support from regional and local actors and international experts. Suggestions were made regarding UNDP Albania's potential role in facilitating dialogue and ensuring the involvement of local people in the drafting and implementation process.

Impact: the Albanian government was able to fine tune its approach to preparing the disaster management plan, and was reinforced in its need for creating broad ownership in government and civil society for the disaster planning process at both technical and political levels. Six provinces are now engaged in a contingency planning process that will provide input to the comprehensive national disaster plan, and members of a technical commission have been identified.

Energy and Environment Practice Network (EENet)

Focus: strengthening developing country capacity to provide access to energy and to manage and use natural resources for poverty eradication and sustainable development. | Established: 1999 / Members: 700

EENet in action:

Query from UNDP Jordan: the country office requested urgent feedback from the network on a proposed structure for the newly established Jordanian Ministry of Environment.

Network Response: within the 48-hour deadline, fourteen network members offered comparative experiences from a wide range of countries as well as detailed substantive advice. Several members were working in collaboration with their own governments on similar projects and so were able to share organigrams of their Environment Ministries and copious useful resources. Specific suggestions were provided on some key specific functions and responsibilities that should be included.

Impact: the government invited UNDP Jordan to mobilize resources and technical support for structuring and establishing the first Ministry of Environment. When completed, several of the network's suggestions had been incorporated, including the creation of an Assistant Secretary General post, a legal directorate attached to the Minister, a unit to coordinate offices in different regions and governorates, and a human resources unit to focus on staff empowerment and capacity development.

ICT for Development Practice Network (ICTDNet)

Focus: helping developing nations to bridge the digital divide and use ICT to bolster other development initiatives.
Established: 1999 / Members: 375

ICTDNet in action:

Query from UNDP Djibouti: as part of its national ICTD strategy, the Government of Djibouti was considering the possibility of a project using community radio, but had not yet made a decision. A UNDP consultant in the country office helping to formulate the strategy asked for information on best practices on the use of community radio as an ICT tool for development.
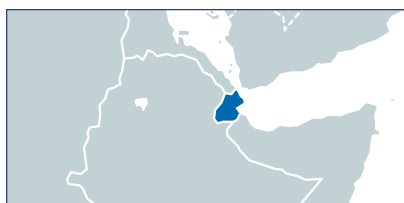
Network Response: fourteen network members shared their experiences from a wide range of countries around the world — from Solomon Islands to Niger to Bolivia — highlighting some of the stakeholder and community ownership issues that should be taken into account when considering policies to support community radio. They pointed out the potential impact of community radio, and the relatively low cost of such a service. They indicated the international leaders in this field and the names of the project managers in the other countries to contact for more information. A comprehensive list of web-based sources drew together the majority of organizations around the world that have direct experience in

the successful operation of community radio, including its integration into ongoing community education initiatives.

Impact: following the information from members, the National ICTD Strategy for Djibouti included community radio as one of the priority projects.

HIV/AIDS Practice Network (HIV/AIDSNet)

Focus: strengthening national responses to meet the governance challenge posed by the HIV/AIDS epidemic through creating the enabling environment for building a truly multi-sector response to HIV/AIDS. | Established: 1999 / Members: 350

HIV/AIDSNet in action:

Query from UNDP Mauritius: the country office requested comparative experiences on human rights and legal issues related to HIV/AIDS, to prepare for a brainstorming meeting convened by the Ministry of Health and Quality of

Life, which had been charged with submitting recommendations to the National Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS.

Network Response: thirteen network members responded to the question, providing relevant documents and websites. UNDP Zambia described the process they followed in implementing rights-based projects in relation to protection of people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS. This included a review of the constitution and relevant legislation, working with the human rights commission on education and awareness, training for the judiciary, expansion of legal aid centres and piloting alternative dispute resolution methods. A similar approach was being developed by UNDP Fiji, where UNDP was in the process of reviewing legislation. UNDP Burundi contributed two reviews on laws protecting the rights of people

living with HIV/AIDS. The HIV/AIDS focal point of the regional Bureau for Africa drew attention to the rights-based constitution of South Africa, which enables the human rights and HIV/AIDS issue to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

Impact: the information received from the network was shared with the head of the National HIV/AIDS unit of the Ministry, and was used to prepare the terms of reference for the core group preparing recommendations to the National Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS.

Evaluation Network (EvalNet)

Focus: crafting better tools for measuring, monitoring and evaluation that will in turn foster improved results-based performance in the field of development. | Established: 2003/ Members: 432

EvalNet in action:

Query from UNDP Niger: the country office asked for best practices in the elaboration of logical frameworks (logframes) for the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) process. The Niger Ministry of Economy and Finance was organizing a related workshop and had requested UNDP's help in provision of materials on global and sectoral logframes.
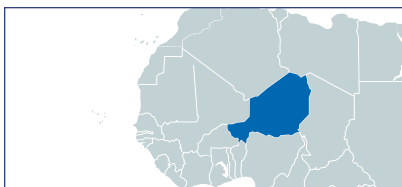
Network Response: several network members offered advice on the strengths and the drawbacks of logframes that drew on their own experience. They identified a number of publications that outline such frameworks. One member was able to share the experience of Tanzania, where a logical framework was used in its PRSP. Other members recommended specific logframe tools developed outside of the UN system that might prove useful, and a list of web-based resources was provided.

Impact: the country office was able to provide specific advice to the Government of Niger, and continues to work closely with them on their PRSP logical framework

Gender Equality Network (GenderNet)

Focus: promoting gender equality and the advancement of women, in partnership with governments.
Established: 2001/ Members: 400

GenderNet in action:

Query from UNDP Burundi: the country office asked for comparative experiences in order to assist the Ministry of Gender Affairs in developing a National Gender Policy and Action Plan.

Network Response: members shared their experiences, and in several instances project documents, from similar situations where national gender policies were designed in Algeria, Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Pakistan, Palestine Territory, Rwanda and Zambia. A member

from Chile shared lessons learned from supporting the government in coordinating a project of mainstreaming gender in government sectors as part of their National Gender Policy. The member from Algeria noted that UNDP is currently involved in the same exercise there, and subsequently kept the network informed on the last phase of that project.

Impact: Burundi received this information and is still in the process of developing its policy. After the reply was sent, the country office in Côte D'Ivoire made a similar request and the information was shared with them. The country offices in Côte D'Ivoire and Algeria subsequently kept in close contact until Algeria released the final phase of its proj-

ect and Côte D'Ivoire finalized its National Gender Policy. Subsequent to this query, the network received a similar one from the country office in Sao Tome & Principe and all contributions from the original query, additional replies and the relevant consolidated replies were sent in response to this request to assist the Ministry of Women's Affairs of Sao Tome & Principe for draft its corporate plan.

Human Development Reports Network (HDRNet)

Focus: supporting the publication of national and regional reports that advocate development as a process of enlarging people's choices to have a meaningful and creative life with human dignity. | Established: 1999 / Members: 595

HDRNet in action

Query from UNDP Sudan: the country office requested comments on the inception report for the preparation of the first National Human Development Report for Sudan. The theme was "Post-war Sudan: the Burden of Conflict and the Challenges of Peace-sustaining Human Development." This report was seen as an important UNDP contribution to the peace building process that has gathered momentum in Sudan
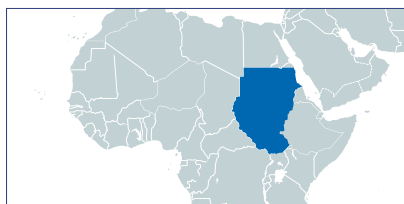
over the past year. Inputs were sought as to how a rigorous report can be produced in the absence of reliable and up-to-date data.

Network Response: responses were received from UNDP Iraq, Latin America SURF and two network members in UNDP headquarters. The inception report was commended by network members for its effectiveness in capturing the complexities of the issues at hand. The discussion included suggestions to consider linkages with the Millennium Development Goals campaign; to look at other resources financing the conflict and to emphasize the most vulnerable population's

voices; and to seek consultations beyond surveys and individual contributions such as reading circles drawn from different sectors, as was done for Somalia's National Human Development Report.

Impact: as a result of the discussion, the Sudan team was able to rethink the structure and organization of the report by merging two of the proposed sections and modifying the contents of a third. Reference to the experiences of other countries, and the proposal of relevant National Human Development Reports were particularly useful to the team.

Management Practice Network (MPNet)

Focus: helping UNDP's managers, on the ground in 166 countries, to share, learn from each other and draw on best practices from the public and private sector in order to provide effective management and operational support to achieve development results. | Established: 2002 / Members: 1,100

MPNet in action:

Query from UNDP Thailand: the country office made an urgent request on behalf of the Government of Thailand for materials relating to programme management in UNDP; resource management and mobilization strategies; and, the role and functions of program support units. These materials were needed to provide background information for a forthcoming mission by the Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation to China, Vietnam and Brazil.

Network Response: a few weeks earlier, a request from UNDP Turkey for simplified programme/project management guidelines resulted in a rich exchange of materials with contributions from Albania, Argentina, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, India, Laos, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Philippines, Slovak Republic, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, as well as UNDP Headquarters. A search of the UNDP Intranet located a detailed evaluation of the Latin American country offices experience in resource mobilization, and the Management Practice Network knowledge base yielded a comprehensive listing of documents relating to service centers that addressed the question of project support units.

Impact: with only a day and a half to respond, all the materials were collected and made available to the country office, who were then able to fully brief the Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation in advance of their mission.

Millennium Development Goals Network (MDGNet)

Focus: monitoring progress at the national level in implementing the Millennium Development Goals, which represent the best chance yet to lift millions out of poverty, illiteracy and sickness. | Established: 2002 / Members: 852

MDGNet in action:

Query from UNDP Kenya: the UN country team asked for examples of terms of reference for a country-level Millennium Development Goals costing exercise and for recommendations of experts who might undertake the exercise.
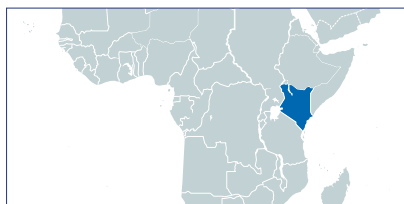
Network Response: members from Cameroon, Egypt, Lesotho, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda provided lessons learned from costing exercises in their countries, issues to take into account on costing methodologies, copies of terms of reference documents and, in several cases, the names of experts they would recommend.

Impact: based on the information received, the UN country team in Kenya adapted and formulated an MDG costing terms of reference that builds on the lessons learned by others—and particularly responds to the methodological difficulties experienced by others undertaking these studies.

Small Enterprise and Microfinance Network (SEMFINet)

Focus: reducing poverty by increasing access to permanent services for poor and low-income people, particularly women, in developing countries through self-sustaining microfinance sectors. | Established: 1999 / Members: 350

SEMFINet in action:

Query from UNDP Turkmenistan: the country office asked for information on ways to support microfinance operations, following a request from the Union of Entrepreneurs of Turkmenistan. The country office added a related question on strategies for including microfinance and other approaches to private sector development into an umbrella initiative for UNDP.

Network Response: members responded with their experiences from East Timor, Ethiopia, Honduras, Laos, Romania, Slovakia and Uzbekistan, to which was added input from the microfinance specialists at the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)/Special Unit for Microfinance (SUM) that maintains UNDP's microfinance knowledge services and the network facilitation. Together they provided an overview of UNDP's policies, programming approaches and key principles in microfinance. This led to a technical expert mission, prepared with support of UNCDF/SUM, to assess Turkmenistan's microfinance sector and formulate a project on downscaling commercial banking to reach to poor clients. In respond-

ing to the second question, the main recommendation was to focus UNDP's efforts in the very broad concept of private sector development where real value can be added and policy and programme objectives defined that are both realistic and specific. Members pointed out additional country experiences from Macedonia and Bulgaria, Egypt, Hungary and Romania.

Impact: drawing on this input, the Turkmenistan country office carried out a microfinance sector review, and it became an ongoing resource to the Government and private sector. An additional important contribution was the identification of web-based documents on microfinance in Russian, which were much appreciated by various stakeholders in Turkmenistan.

{ SURFs in Action

Arab States SURF

Office: Beirut, Lebanon

SURF in action:

Request from UNDP Algeria: the country office requested information and assistance in supporting reform of the justice system in that nation.

SURF Response: the SURF provided technical assistance and policy support through the country office in the area of judicial reform and the rule of law, leading the Algerian government to recognize UNDP's pivotal role in this process. The intervention led to an agreement between UNDP Algeria and the Ministry of Justice in support of its efforts to institutionalize respect and protection of human rights through improving citizens' access to justice and modernizing the justice system. Two complementary programmes have been designed with instrumental support from the SURF: one focuses on modernization of two pilot courts and the Ministry of Justice, utilizing ICT, while the second is focused on designing and establishing a modern rehabilitation institution and developing social integration programmes to facilitate the reintegration of detainees into society and public life.

Impact: the two projects are seen as a breakthrough in relations between the Government and UNDP, and have placed UNDP as the leading partner in this previously sensitive domain. Discussions are underway to replicate this experience in neighboring countries.

Caribbean SURF

Office: Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago

SURF in action:

Request from UNDP Jamaica: the country office requested assistance in preparing a proposal for submission to UNDP's Democratic Governance Trust Fund (DGTTF) to support a national civic dialogue process for democratic governance in Jamaica.

SURF Response: the project proposal was prepared, and SURF support provided for national consultations on the proposed civic dialogue process. SURF representatives also participated in the Project Appraisal Committee, and continue to provide the country office with advice on the project.

Impact: the project was accepted and financed by the DGTTF and is now being implemented in Jamaica. It concentrates on three action areas in community pilot projects: crime and violence, employment creation, and anti-corruption The project makes use of the "scenario planning methodology" which was developed in the business world to help strategic thinkers make dramatic, creative shifts in perception to break the deep-seated complex patterns of behaviour that sustain the current reality, hindering growth and development. The reframing of issues, based on the shared national vision that will emerge from the civic scenario/civic dialogue process and the action areas, will inform solutions to national problems that will bring forth a better future.
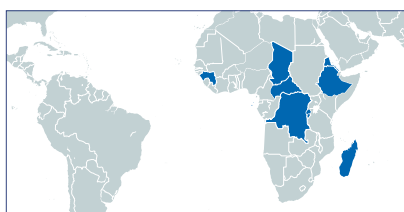
Central & Eastern Africa SURF

Office: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

SURF in action:

Request from the Region:
The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) promotes the development of national capacity for debt management, working in the Africa region through three sub-regional organizations—Macroeconomic and Financial Management Institute for Eastern and Southern Africa (MEFMI), the West African Institute for Financial and Economic Management (WAIFEM), and Pole Dette (for Francophone countries) in Africa. Several countries in the region are not covered by these organizations and are therefore deprived of the developments and progress in up-to-date debt management techniques. Their respective country offices requested the SURF for help in getting information on debt management tools.

SURF Response: the SURF linked up with UNCTAD and the African Capacity-Building Foundation to organize a training session for capacity development on debt management, which was held in Nairobi in November 2002. The organizers invited African countries that do not belong to the above groups: Burundi, Central Africa Republic, Chad, Congo DR, Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Madagascar, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe.

Impact: an important step was taken to bring the participating countries to par with other countries in the region in the field of debt management. Participating countries received crucial software that allows them to conduct their own debt sustainability analysis and to integrate the results into sound macroeconomic management.

Europe/CIS SURF

Office: Bratislava, Slovakia

SURF in action:

Request from the Region: UNDP country offices in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Georgia requested input on strengthening community participation in poverty reduction—including policy development, implementation and review.
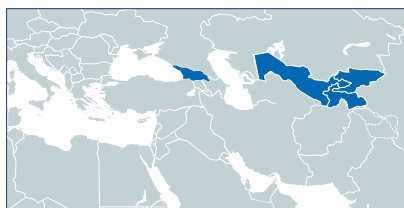
SURF Response: drawing on SURF resources, a project is now being implemented in these four countries in partnership with the UNDP country offices in each, and linked with the World Bank Institute's initiative for building a Community Empowerment Network in Central Asia and the Caucasus. The project attempts to assess the potential for community based organizations and grassroots groups in poverty monitoring, and the possibility of drawing them together into a network that could serve as an efficient mechanism for the collection of information on the cumulative effects of social and economic policies and reform measures.

Impact: when the project is concluded and these networks are established, specific strategies will be proposed to the governments of the countries involved for promoting long-term community participation in poverty reduction that incorporates their collective input into policy development, implementation and review.

Latin America SURF

Office: Panama City, Panama

SURF in action:

Request from the Region: Latin America and the Caribbean hosts a wealth of local governance expertise and experience, but much of it is not readily accessible to practitioners at the regional level due to lack of codification, documentation and dissemination of this knowledge.

SURF Response: SURF expertise was combined with resources from UNDP's Regional Programme for the Latin America and the Caribbean to organize a fair called "Experience Bogota" in Colombia in December of 2002, as the culmination of the first phase of a larger initiative designed to capture successful local governance experience and document and transfer it to other potential beneficiaries. Participants in the fair came from around the region to connect the 'supply' and 'demand' for such experience and expertise.

Impact: a total of 50 potential UNDP interventions, with signed agreements, resulted from interactions carried out during the fair and 300 specific cases were identified for codification and documentation.

Pacific, North & South East Asia SURF

Office: Bangkok, Thailand

SURF in action:

Request from UNDP China: the country office requested help in identifying a team member to join a joint UN/Government mission to Guangdong Province for a three-week study of the animal-human habitat in tropical conditions and potential risky practices leading the transfer of the SARS virus from animals to humans. The team will include individuals provided by FAO, WHO, HABITAT, UNDP, UNICEF & WFP—each providing insights representing perspectives gathered from each organization's networks.

SURF Response: 11 prospective top-ranked candidates, each with relevant backgrounds and experience, were identified and suggested to UNDP China for the UNDP team member.

Impact: this joint mission between six UN agencies and members from relevant ministries of the Government of China will identify potential risky practices and will propose areas for further research and options to reduce or avoid these practices, contributing to a deeper understanding of the issues at stake.

Southern Africa SURF

Office: Pretoria, South Africa

SURF in action:

Request from UNDP Swaziland: Swaziland faced both national protests and international criticism in relation to its governance system, which is based on the supremacy of the traditional system. The country office requested SURF support in their efforts to assist the country to address this challenge.
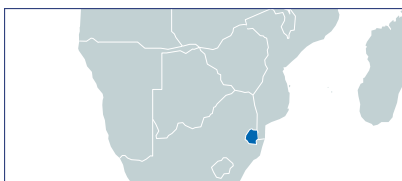
SURF Response: the SURF responded by undertaking several missions to Swaziland which resulted in a concept note, informed by these missions and extensive dialogue with key members of the stakeholders and review of governance practices globally. The note recognized the right of Swaziland to develop its own democratic governance, drawing from their own experiences but also meeting fundamental and internationally acceptable standards of good governance. The paper was discussed with government at all levels, with major donors to Swaziland and with UNDP headquarters-resulting in a consensus to assist Swaziland to evolve a governance programme rather than condemn it.

Impact: the result is that UNDP, in spite of its relatively small financial contribution, is at the centre of governance support to Swaziland. UNDP now leads a consortium that includes the European Union, United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID), Commonwealth Secretariat and others. Governance is now being openly discussed with donors. The UNDP country office, with SURF support and DFID funding, facilitated a stakeholder's forum that included princes, royal family institutions, the public and private sectors, trade unions, civil society and donors. The output from these seminars is helping to shape the constitutional development process currently underway.

West & South Asia SURF

Office: Kathmandu, Nepal

SURF in action:

Request from UNDP Nepal: the country office turned to the SURF to help with a request for assistance in designing a process of thematic consultations related to the Nepal National Human Rights Action Plan (NHRAP).

SURF Response: input was given on the design of a series of structured workshops to serve as thematic consultations. A presentation was made on linking a human rights framework into the initiative, and resource people and co-facilitators were provided for three thematic workshops focused on women, minorities and the disabled, and education.

Impact: the findings and recommendations from all the consultations were consolidated to draft the Nepal NHRAP. This had an important policy impact in that it led to the decision to include a chapter on human rights in the 10th Five Year Plan of the Government of Nepal.

West Africa SURF

Office: Dakar, Senegal

SURF in action:

Request from UNDP Benin: several country offices in the region approached the West Africa SURF, through UNDP Benin, regarding the need of African parliamentarians to share information and experiences relating to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) in order to lead their countries towards effective participation in this important regional initiative. They also requested greater access to information about implementation strategies for national initiatives and UNDP's role in support of NEPAD.
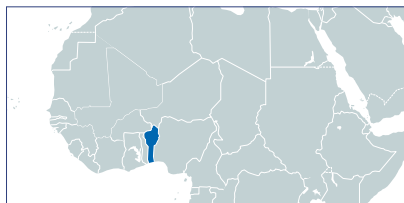
SURF Response: the SURF, along with UNDP Benin and the Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA) provided multidisciplinary support to the Government of Benin in holding a Parliamentarian's Forum for NEPAD involving more than 400 African parliamentarians and representatives of the international community. Topics included the role of parliamentarians in NEPAD, good governance, attracting private investment, ensuring access to international markets and taking action on gender issues. Recommendations were made for publications and establishing a parliamentarian's network on NEPAD using ICTs.

Impact: participants learned of UNDP's vision and approach to NEPAD, including specific programmes in the area of parliamentary support, democratic governance, e-governance and gender mainstreaming. A website was created to provide access to Forum proceedings and documents in both French and English in order to disseminate knowledge and experiences from the meeting, and E-Parliament Networks are being developed for NEPAD in Benin, Mali, Niger, Senegal and other African countries.
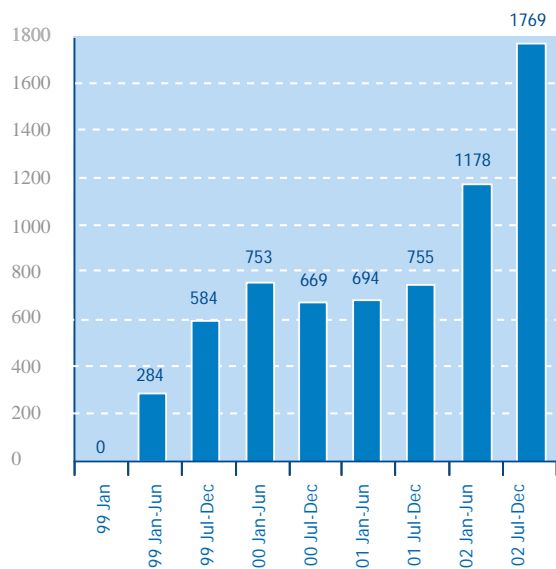
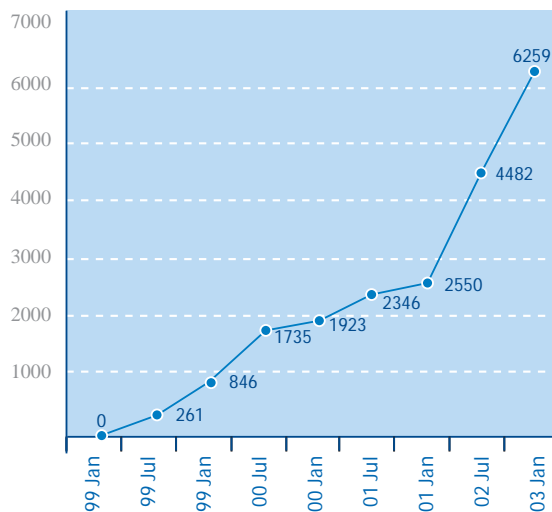# UNDP Knowledge
Services Performance

Quantitative Results:
January 1999 to December 2002
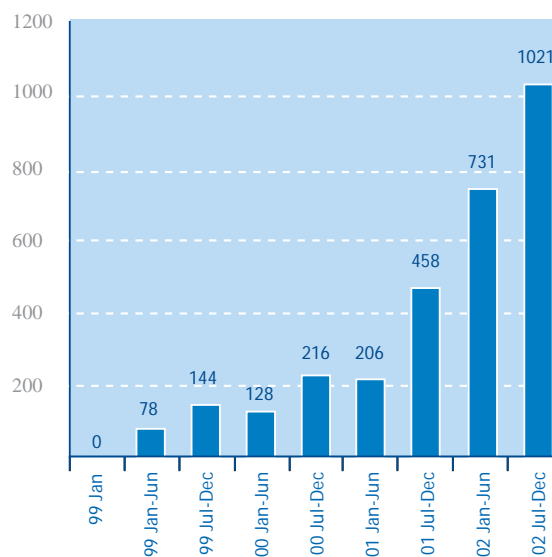
Referrals Fields Per Six-Month Period

Period	Value
99 Jan	0
99 Jan-Jun	284
99 Jul-Dec	584
00 Jan-Jun	753
00 Jul-Dec	669
01 Jan-Jun	694
01 Jul-Dec	755
02 Jan-Jun	1178
02 Jul-Dec	1769

Total Subscriptions To all Networks*

Period	Value
99 Jan	0
99 Jul	261
99 Jan	846
00 Jul	1735
00 Jan	1923
01 Jul	2346
01 Jan	2550
02 Jul	4482
03 Jan	6259

*as of December 2002 there were 3,000 individuals involved, many of whom were members of more than one network

Country Office Support Per Six-Month Period

(person/weeks)*

Period	Value
99 Jan	0
99 Jan-Jun	78
99 Jul-Dec	144
00 Jan-Jun	128
00 Jul-Dec	216
01 Jan-Jun	206
01 Jul-Dec	458
02 Jan-Jun	731
02 Jul-Dec	1021

*1999 & 2000 figures converted from number of missions to estimate person-weeks equivalent