

New Cross-region Initiative to Use Sport for Peace Education **12 Afghans Part of First *Peace Through Sport* Initiative of Prince Feisal of Jordan**

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Twelve youth representatives from the Afghanistan Ministry of Education, the Afghanistan National Olympic Committee, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and civil society organizations participated in the inaugural *Peace Through Sport* pilot camp that was launched on 21 October in Amman, Jordan by HRH Prince Feisal Al Hussein, president of the Jordan Olympic Committee.

The representatives from Afghanistan, among the 70 delegates from six countries and four religions, participated in ses-

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sions tackling the issues of sports and disability and sports and social cohesion.

"The delegates are our *Peace Through Sport* pioneers who are being equipped with the know-how to return to their own communities to cascade *Peace Through Sport* programmes", said HRH Prince Feisal in his remarks at the start of the 10-day training session for the youth pioneers.

Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Sudan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan are participating in this first-of-its-kind initiative.

The *Peace Through Sport* camp has three main elements to the training: the leaders are trained how to recruit children from all sides of a divided community.

Training comprises practical sporting sessions working on scenarios that the youth leaders could expect to face in their communities; peace education and classroom based activities with specialist training in conflict resolution amongst young people and training the leaders to cascade the programme.

UNDP support was provided in the form of identifying leaders of youth in the selected countries

including Afghanistan.

Peace Through Sport, a brainchild of HRH Prince Feisal Al Hussein of Jor-

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dan, was launched in April 2007. The initiative seeks to bring together leaders of youth from divided communities around the world and train them in how to use sport to unite children from both sides of the divide.

Through mutual participation in sport, and careful guidance from the leaders of the youth that have been trained, the

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initiative seeks to encourage children to build dialogue with each other; understand and respect their differences; show greater tolerance and begin to appreciate humankind through sport.

Peace through Sport has partnered with the charity "Sporting Goods To Go", that will provide sports equipment to leaders of youth for use in their local community

Once the delegates have returned to their respective countries and communities, systems will be set up to support the youth leaders including information and advice to the youth on issues they are facing in sharing their successes on an online forum. Peace through Sport has partnered with the charity "Sporting Goods To Go", that will provide sports equipment to leaders of youth for use in their local community once they have completed the training.

The 10-day training camp being held in Amman drew to a close on November 1.

Working WITH youth not just FOR Youth: Afghanistan Joint National Youth Programme

The biggest challenge for the Afghanistan Joint National Youth Programme is to be able to know what the youth want and to be able to respond to their needs. This is the focus of the efforts of eight ministries and seven UN organizations. When one asks youth what they see as their needs the answers vary as do the ages, the background, and the gender. Over 300 youth from 34 provinces were brought together in August to discuss how their lives and the lives of other youth can be improved. Their discussions created a draft declaration of 20 clear points ranging from better access to education to employment opportunities. In November more youth consultations will occur in the provinces. Youth from the villages and districts will be welcome to share their opinions. The challenge of the Joint Programme will be to take these valuable opinions and respond to them in a positive way. A way that will truly contrib-

ute to a better life for some of the youth in Afghanistan. The Programme aims to work with the youth and not just for them. This Programme should be youth-friendly and youth-led.

The Programme can

provinces. Over 300 members of provincial Child Protection Action Networks participated in provincial workshops which aimed to establish a common understanding of the use of various tools to prevent and respond to abuse



Youth Parliament in Session in Kabul © UNDP

and violence, exploitation and discrimination against children. 3541 youth of the ages 14-18 years received literacy, vocational skills training and health education as part of reintegration for ex-child soldiers and other war-affected youth. 46 peer educator supervisors trained in adolescent sexual and reproductive health. Youth Information & Contact Centres (YICC) have been initiated under the leadership of the Office of the Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs in six pilot provinces. YICC aims to provide information useful

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for young people and facilitate access to services, with a special focus on protecting high-risk adolescents and youth from abuse and exploitation. All premises of six YICCs have been provided by the Office of the Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs.

The Ministry of Information and Culture Office of the Deputy Minister of Youth Affairs leads the Programme and UNDP provides coordination support. Partner ministries are Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Womens Affairs. The UN agencies are UNDP, UNICEF, UN-HABITAT, UNV, UNFPA, and UNAMA. We acknowledge the contributions of the donors who recognize the importance of youth. Thanks to USAID, Govt of US, Spain, NORAD, and SIDA.

The continuing challenge of the Joint National Youth Programme will be to ensure the youth are fully engaged. We need to hear their voices and we need to respond. They are the present and the future of Afghanistan and we must give them our best today.

— **Paulette Schatz**

17 October 2007

The International Day for the Eradication of Poverty 2007: Message from Kemal Dervis, the Administrator of UNDP



Seven years ago

the world came together and committed to tackle poverty in all its forms and work to build a better world for everyone. This vision

ing child and maternal mortality; combating HIV/AIDS and other diseases and ensuring environmental sustainability.

These Goals are underpinned by a commitment to build a global partnership for development, a compact

Now, at the midpoint towards the 2015 target, it is clear that significant progress has been made in many areas.

The number of people living on less than one dollar a day has fallen by roughly 250 million people and so, at the



Afghan people go about their daily business chores © Getty images

was encapsulated in the Millennium Declaration and the eight Millennium Development Goals that emerged from it, which include halving the number of people living in extreme poverty and hunger by the year 2015; achieving universal primary education; promoting gender equality and women's empowerment; reduc-

between poor countries that commit to focus on reducing poverty, and the richer world that commits to be an active partner in supporting developing country efforts.

The MDGs represent an internationally agreed set of goals that can be achieved if all actors work together and do their part.

global level at least, it looks like we will meet the goal to halve extreme poverty and hunger. In some regions more children are in school – both girls and boys – and people can expect to live longer and more productive lives.

However this is not happening in all parts of the world. As I saw in

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my visit to Mozambique, Tanzania and Rwanda last week, while many African countries are making real progress in the fight against poverty, the challenge of achieving the MDGs and other development objectives in sub-Saharan Africa is particularly acute, where only some countries are progressing sufficiently to achieve some of the Goals.

Today, worldwide, more than one billion people still lack access to safe drinking water; 6,000 people die of HIV and AIDS each day; and more than 750 million adults cannot read - half a billion of them women.

The impact of climate change also poses a particularly daunting challenge to many developing countries, especially the poorest.

But this picture does not have to remain the same.

Many of the Goals remain eminently achievable in the vast majority of countries. For this to happen, though, two crucial aspects of the partnership for development must be respected.

The first relates to the theme of this year's International Day for the Eradication of Poverty: 'people living in poverty as agents of change', where it is clear that developing countries themselves should own their development process and that UNDP's role is to help build the capacity to empower them to take charge of their own development. It also means that the support we provide will be more effective as it will be given in support of the priorities of poor people, and on their own terms.

The idea that people living in poverty are agents of their own change can be applied at the local level, but also extends through the national level where people can get involved in monitoring policies and reviewing budgets, as well as at the international level where poorer countries must be able to contribute fully to the global institutions and processes that can shape progress in their country.

The second component of the partnership is that while poor people must be in the driving seat of their development, we have also committed to provide them with the necessary support.

Implementing the commitments that the international community has already made - on increasing and improving aid, dealing com-

prehensively with the debt problems facing developing countries, and delivering a trading system that puts the needs of poor countries at its heart - would go a very long way in ensuring that the MDGs can be met.

The policies and actions of all countries on issues such as the environment and migration must also be made as supportive as possible of development, lest we give with one hand and take away with the other.

On this International Day for the Eradication of Poverty we should recommit to achieving the MDGs as a whole, and to these two components in particular in the fight against poverty, so that the world can come as close as possible to achieving the ambitious Goals we all set for 2015.

Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP Afghanistan

New Project To Build Capacity for Greater Focus on Gender-sensitive Programming

UNDP Afghanistan launched its gender initiative in October 2007 with the constitution of a multi-disciplinary team comprising representatives from such units as Human Resources, Learning, Programme and Communications. They will each take the lead in implementing activities to enhance gender sensitivity in the organization and in UNDP programming. The work of the team will be supported by the "Gender Mainstreaming in UNDP Afghanistan" Project, which was approved also this month. It seeks to build the capacity of UNDP Afghanistan to contribute more effectively to the national goal on gender equality as contained in the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (I-ANDS) and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The project will focus on developing the knowledge and skills of UNDP staff, particularly programme officers and managers, to recognise gender gaps and to design gender sensitive projects. UNDP country office and project staff in management and operations will likewise be involved in improving the ratio of female to male staffs and building gender-friendly work environment. UNDP supports the goal of the Government of Afghanistan on gender equality, which is also Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals.

An evaluation in 2006 found that while UNDP Afghanistan is supporting the capacity building of the Afghan government mainly through the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA), many of the UNDP projects in Afghanistan are missing opportunities to support equal development and participation for women and men.

The project will supplement the activities envisaged under the Institutional Capacity Building for Gender Equality, which is UNDP's banner project to support capacity development of the Government of Afghanistan by facilitating co-ordination and promoting synergy with related UNDP supported projects in key ministries. These include the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, the Ministry of Finance and Economy, and MoWA.

Informing Public About Returnees' Travails

Since 2002, UNHCR has helped over 4 million refugees in Pakistan and Iran come back to their homeland in Afghanistan. There are over 3 million remaining in neighbouring countries. While headlines often focus elsewhere, these are the people who, today, are the most vulnerable.

In many ways, they are the forgotten people and communities. They fled violence and persecution on a scale that few understand. Today, they

have returned to their country to try and rebuild their lives in extremely difficult conditions. Many of them don't have access to drinking water, shelter and land.

Basic facilities such as schools and medical care are often a luxury. In many areas, security remains a major concern and access for UNHCR is becoming more and more restricted in such areas.

Work as an International UN Volunteer Commu-

with UNHCR is not just like any other job. Volunteering in such a way means being in touch each day with those who are amongst the most in need and marginalised. As communications coordinator, I ensure

UN Volunteer Speak

Work as an International UN Volunteer Communications Coordinator with UNHCR is not just like any other job. Volunteering in such a way means being in touch each day with those who are amongst the most in need and marginalised

that our teams works to inform public opinion about the situation of refugees in Afghanistan, but also developments in Iran and Pakistan.

A lot of work is done in Kabul but much of it also happens in the field in provinces across Afghanistan.

Missions take us to Mazar and Kunduz, Kunar and Jalalabad, Herat and Kabul.

In some settlements, you see cheerful children who don't have access to drinking wa-

ter and for whom going to schools means trekking over two hours on foot. In others, you wonder how men can support their families when they have no job opportunities. The next day, widows sit and tell you over green tea how they worry about what the future holds.

Being a refugee is something - in Afghanistan and elsewhere - no one has chosen to be. For the millions of refugees returning to their homeland, the road is often long.

Volunteering for the United Nations through UNHCR is a way to make a personal contribution to the lives of these people who have been caught by war and today are trying to

place they can finally call home.

Their resilience and spirit has been an inspiration. In a way, volun-

Volunteering for the United Nations through UNHCR is a way to make a personal contribution to the lives of these people who have been caught by war and today are trying to make their way back

teering has meant a fantastic opportunity not just to meet some of the most humble and kindest people I have met to date, but also learn from them. It has also been a way to give back a little something to those who have so little, but yet so



Ear to the Ground as Returnee Woman Shares Her Story © UNHCR

make their way back and, after nearly twenty years in exile, find a

much to give.

—**Maryann Maguire**



Afghanistan

UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life.

Overview of UNDP in Afghanistan

UNDP has been present in Afghanistan since 1956, providing development assistance to the country and helping build the capacity of national institutions. During the Taliban regime, UNDP continued to provide assistance to communities throughout the country from its relocated offices in Islamabad. During that decade, UNDP delivered US\$200 million of assistance to Afghanistan. In early 2002, UNDP inaugurated its new office in Kabul.

The human development challenge for Afghanistan is enormous. According to Afghanistan's National Human Development Report (NHDR) 2004, the Human Development Index ranks Afghanistan at 173 out of 178 countries worldwide and its MDG indicators place it below the majority of Sub-Saharan African countries. The depth of poverty in Afghanistan is reflected consistently in all human development indicators, revealing a mosaic of a nation in need of sustained assistance. Not surprisingly, therefore, Afghanistan has been identified as a global priority for addressing the Millennium Development Goals.

UNDP operates within the framework of the integrated United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) and within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). In December 2005, UNDP signed a three-year Country Programme Action Plan with the Government of Afghanistan focusing on three development areas: state-building, democracy and civil society empowerment and sustainable livelihoods. UNDP new Country Programme focuses on capacity development, national ownership and policy dialogue. UNDP aims to enhance government institutional capacity to deliver public services in an equitable and sustainable manner and to create an enabling environment for legitimate livelihoods.

The expected results are pursued in line with the Interim Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) objectives and benchmarks. In particular, UNDP supports the Government in achieving a number of development benchmarks in the field of security and the rule of law, administrative reform, transparency and accountability, local governance, political processes (elections and parliament), civil society empowerment, gender equality, human rights, environment and rural energy, the reintegration of former combatants into society, the implementation of the national counter-narcotics strategy, as well as rural development planning and private sector development.

All UNDP activities are undertaken in close collaboration with the Government of Afghanistan, sister UN agencies and other development stakeholders.

UNDP has built strategic partnerships with a number of government institutions such as the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry for Rural Rehabilitation and Development, the Ministry of Interior, the Civil Service Commission, the Independent Election Commission, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Women's Affairs. UNDP's top ten donor partners in Afghanistan are the US, the EC, Japan, CIDA, UK, Netherlands, Italy, Germany, Norway and the World Bank.

UNDP is thankful for the support and confidence lent by its national and international development partners.

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