The United Nations Development Programme (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. UNDP operates in more than 166 countries, working with them in close collaboration on their own solutions to global and national development challenges.

UNDP’s central mandate is to help developing countries build their own national capacity to achieve sustainable human development. As countries develop local capacity, they are more proficient in drawing on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners. In this and other ways, UNDP helps developing countries to attract and use development aid effectively. In all our activities, UNDP encourages the protection of human rights and the empowerment of women.

At the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, world leaders placed development at the centre of the global agenda by adopting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which set clear targets for reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women by 2015. UNDP’s global network connects countries to the knowledge and resources needed to achieve the MDGs, while it also facilitates its partners and the UN System in raising awareness and tracking progress towards these goals.

UNDP has been operating in Suriname since 1994 supporting the Surinamese Government and the people to achieve national goals

UNDP’s substantive focus in Suriname is as follows:

- Democratic Governance
- Poverty Reduction
- Energy and Environment
- Crisis Prevention and Recovery

What does the UNDP want to achieve?

Fighting poverty
UNDP’s mandate is to fight poverty. As the development organization of the United Nations, UNDP works to achieve this through supporting human development in a sustainable way. This concept is called Sustainable Human Development (SHD). Recently, poverty has been more concretely defined through the Millennium Development Goals.
The Millennium Development Goals
In 2000, the members of the United Nations set the international agenda for the beginning of the new century. The resulting Millennium Declaration is a broad commitment of all UN member states. The declaration applies the principles of the UN Charter to a new world and a new millennium. The declaration defines a new international agenda in seven key areas:

- peace, security and disarmament
- development and poverty eradication
- protecting our common environment
- human rights, democracy and good governance
- protecting the vulnerable
- meeting the special needs of Africa
- strengthening the United Nations

The Millennium Development Goals extract and refine those elements of the Millennium Declaration which are related to development. UNDP has worked with other UN organizations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to agree on these goals. The UN General Assembly has approved the Millennium Development Goals in 2001. The UN Secretary-General has asked UNDP to be the coordinator of the Millennium Development Goals in the UN system - helping to make them an integral part of the UN's work worldwide. The UN Secretary General also asked UNDP's Administrator to be the campaign leader and scorekeeper for the Millennium Development Goals.

The goals are time-bound, starting in 1990 and to be achieved by 2015. They comprise only those elements of the Millennium Declaration which are both related to development and quantifiable. Only if they are quantifiable, can one objectively measure progress.

The MDGs
GOAL 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
GOAL 2: Achieve universal primary education
GOAL 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
GOAL 4: Reduce child mortality
GOAL 5: Improve maternal health
GOAL 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
GOAL 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
GOAL 8: Develop a global partnership for development

Focus Areas
In order to support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, each UN agency focuses on what it does best and where it is able to optimize its proven expertise, experience
and comparative advantages to be most valuable to developing countries. UNDP’s focus is helping countries build and share solutions to the challenges of:

- Democratic Governance
- Poverty Reduction
- Crisis Prevention and Recovery
- Energy and Environment
- HIV and AIDS

Further UNDP helps developing countries attract and use aid effectively. In all our activities, we encourage the protection of human rights and the empowerment of women.

**Democratic Governance**
Democratic governance is central to the achievement of the MDGs, as it provides the ‘enabling environment’ for the realization of the MDGs and, in particular, the elimination of poverty. The critical importance of democratic governance in the developing world was highlighted at the Millennium Summit of 2000, where the world's leaders resolved to "spare no effort to promote democracy and strengthen the rule of law, as well as respect for all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development." A consensus was reached which recognized that improving the quality of democratic institutions and processes, and managing the changing roles of the state and civil society in an increasingly globalised world must underpin national efforts to reduce poverty, sustain the environment, and promote human development.

**Poverty Reduction**
UNDP’s work on poverty reduction is governed by several internationally agreed frameworks such as the Millennium Declaration, the MDGs, and the International Development Goals. Our core services focus on three main areas: Strategies and Policies for Poverty Reduction, Inclusive Globalization, and Support for MDG-Aligned National Development Strategies. In addition, UNDP’s work is reinforced by the International Poverty Centre, a joint project between UNDP and the Brazilian Government that promotes South-South Cooperation on applied poverty research, and by its network of over 166 country offices.

**Energy and Environment**
UNDP’s work on Energy and Environment is focused on six priority areas:

- Frameworks and strategies for sustainable development
- Effective water governance
- Access to sustainable energy services
- Sustainable land management to combat desertification and land degradation
- Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity
- National/sectoral policy and planning to control emissions of ODS and POPs

The poor are disproportionately affected by environmental degradation and lack of access to clean affordable energy services. Therefore, energy and environment are essential development and the eradication of poverty. Relatively few core resources are spent on this practice area, since activities can be funded through additional resources such as the Global Environmental Facility (GEF). Together with the World Bank, Regional Development Banks the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), UNDP is one of the managing partners of the Global Environment Facility. The facility is a $2 billion fund that helps countries fight ozone depletion, global warming, loss of biodiversity and pollution of international waters.

Crisis Prevention and Recovery
4. Many countries are increasingly vulnerable to violent conflicts or natural disasters. Conflicts and disasters can erase decades of development and further entrench poverty and inequality. Therefore, UNDP supports crisis prevention and recovery through the recently created Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. While the ideal is to prevent a crisis, UNDP also supports countries in post-conflict or post-disaster situation and works towards:

- Preventing the incidence of violent conflict and natural disasters;
- Supporting the recovery efforts of both conflict and natural disasters;
- Protecting women in crisis and promoting gender equality; and
- Establishing foundations for sustainable peace and recovery.

HIV and AIDS
HIV/AIDS is threatening to halt and reverse progress in development. To prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS and reduce its impact, developing countries need to mobilize all levels of government and civil society. Combating HIV/AIDS remains a major concern in Africa and Asia. The United Nations also has a dedicated programme to focus exclusively on HIV/AIDS, called UNAIDS.

The protection of human rights and the promotion of gender equality (www.undp.org/gender) are not a separate practice area, but are integrated into most programmes. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) (sdnhq.undp.org/it4dev) is treated similarly as an important tool to be incorporated into programmes. This approach proved to be more effective than separate programmes, and is called “mainstreaming”. Furthermore, the increase of local capacity is the most promising approach to support sustainable human development. (www.undp.org/capacity)