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.

UNDP's work in democratic governance is reinforced by its network of over 166 offices and its global partnerships with democratic governance institutions.

UNDP's core services to support national processes of democratic transitions focus on: Policy advice and technical support; strengthening capacity of institutions and individuals; Advocacy, communications, and public information; Promoting and brokering dialogue and Knowledge networking and sharing of good practices.

UNDP Suriname's work in democratic governance is portrayed by the following programs:

- **Preparatory Assistance Agreement: UNDP Assistance to Suriname elections 2010**

In view of the forthcoming free and fair elections of 25 May 2010, the Government of Suriname is undertaking steps for institutional improvements to the electoral administration and strengthening of the Electoral Management Teams at national and local level responsible for the preparation and organization of the forthcoming elections. The project will assist in funding electoral education activities to ensure that the population at large is well-informed of the importance to participate in the elections and to provide all relevant information on the elections and its processes. UNDP/IDB assistance will also go towards funding training for the government officials who are involved with the organization of elections and support to the Independent Electoral Bureau in its role of independent verification of the various electoral
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processes. The project also foresees in a post electoral component which includes lessons learned workshops with the view of designing steps for improvement of the electoral system in Suriname.

- **Strengthening national capacities for Aid Coordination and Monitoring of Development Plans and MDG Achievements**

The development vision for Suriname has been set by the MDGs which are fully reflected in its Multi-Annual Development Plan for 2006-2011. From the perspective of development cooperation the Rome and Paris Declarations call for more national ownership, harmonisation and alignment. Therefore it is of mutual benefit for the government of Suriname and its development partners to take immediate measures to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the development assistance programme. This is to be achieved through two strategies: firstly, to improve the government capacity to coordinate, manage and report on official development assistance as part of its overall planning and policy-making process. The second strategy is to improve its current monitoring and evaluation functions so that they become more inclusive and therefore have greater influence on adjusting the national development plans to progress towards achieving the MDG goals. Both strategies also strengthen the Government’s accountability function towards other stakeholders and the public at large.

- **Support for implementing the policy plan for protection of Legal Rights and Safety - Legal Protection and Human Rights, and Anti-Corruption**

Suriname’s Multi Annual Development Plan (MOP) 2006-2011, lays heavy emphasis on the protection and promotion of human rights. Suriname has signed and acceded to most of the important international and regional human rights treaties and declarations, and is actively developing interpretations of the fundamental human rights, which are included in the constitution and will be more specified in other legislation, including access to justice, access to medical care, development of a national gender policy and action plan, development of youth policies, and periodic reports to and follow up on the recommendations of Treaty Bodies. This project will support institutional and capacity development needs for domestication of selected international human rights instruments, strengthening of the legal aid system, public education and awareness, as well as enhance proper monitoring and managing processes towards
improving the mechanisms for protecting and promoting the human rights of the citizens of Suriname. The Project will also support the Government’s efforts to prevent, detect and manage corruption through enhanced understanding of corruption and the fundamental institutions and transparency and accountability measures needed for the prevention and management of corruption.

- Assistance for Development of a Capacity Strengthening Plan for the Ministry of Social Affairs and Public Housing