Marsabit County Integrated Development Plan Improved

The delegation with the Governor of Marsabit, Ambassador Ukur Yatani. (Photo by RCO/UNDP)

The United Nations in Kenya conducted a workshop to review and improve the Marsabit County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP). The workshop, held in Marsabit town from 2 to 8 August 2015, was part of the preparatory phase activities of the Marsabit and Southern Ethiopia cross-border project. About fifty-two participants were drawn from the UN, the Ministry of Devolution and Planning, University of Nairobi, Sports with a Goal Africa and the County Government and local civil society organizations.

The workshop began with a presentation by the Governor of Marsabit, Ambassador Ukur Yatani, focusing on the opportunities and challenges facing the County. Ambassador Yatani appreciated the partnership between the UN and his County, highlighting rampant poverty, poor infrastructure, low levels of education and high levels of unemployment, as major challenges facing the area. Furthermore, he noted how insecurity, due to armed conflicts between different communities, tribes and clans, had discouraged prospective
investors.

The Governor highlighted some of his priorities including building a cohesive society by fostering peaceful coexistence among the fourteen ethnic groups living in the County. He also emphasized the importance of maintaining high quality livestock products since 80 per cent of the County’s economy depends on livestock. The Governor mentioned climate change as a major threat to sustainable development in the County. Changes in the frequency, intensity and duration of climate extremes, especially drought, adversely affect the livelihoods of the population, particularly the poor and other vulnerable communities. According to the Governor, extreme changes in weather patterns have increased incidences of natural disasters and impacted on key sectors of the economy, including agriculture, livestock and forestry, health and water resources. Therefore, effective strategies for poverty reduction, clean energy- with special focus on windmill and solar energy- and health issues, especially maternal and child mortality, are needed. He also underlined the need for partnerships with the private sector.

After the official opening of the workshop by the Deputy Governor and the County Commissioner, participants were taken through the legal and policy framework for preparing CIDP by the representative from the Ministry of Devolution and Planning. This was followed by an evaluation of the processes and challenges encountered while preparing the Marsabit CIDP, regional planning methodologies, and the steps in preparing CIDP.

Participants were also given refresher lectures on the importance of data in preparing CIDP, the framework, structures and challenges faced while preparing the Plan, and the role of community participation, and gender equity. A presentation was made by UNDP on “County Biashara Centres”, which attracted keen interest from the County Government.

The participants were divided into six teams to cover the different chapters of the CIDP as guided by the Ministry of Devolution and Planning’s “Guidelines for preparation of County Integrated Development Plans” (June 2013). UN members were assigned to different teams depending on their area of expertise. The teams’ responsibilities were to review the respective chapters, provide additional information, redraft where necessary, and identify any information/data gaps, including maps that should be included in the revised CIDP. Each team then presented their recommendations to the plenary for the benefit of all participants.

The workshop utilised a combination of training and sensitisation techniques that included lectures, field visits, group and plenary discussions. The lectures, delivered by experts, were followed by group work where participants were divided into six thematic areas as follows: County general information; County socio-economic challenges and strategies; County spatial framework; Linkages with other plans; Institutional framework; and Resource mobilization framework.

At the end of the workshop, the participants came up with an improved and scaled-up CIDP that is comprehensive, well-structured and clearly articulates projects and strategies that will guide the County Government in bringing about sustainable peace and development in the region.

In conclusion, it was agreed that the County Development Planners will integrate the revised document and harmonize it before forwarding it to the UN Resident Coordinator’s Office. The document will later be submitted to the sectoral heads of the County Government for their final review and input. The improved final draft will then be presented at a data validation and stakeholders’ workshop so as to promote ownership of the Plan and to make the process as participatory as possible. Finally, the revised Plan will be submitted to the County Assembly for approval, after which it will be launched.
Kenya celebrated, on 13 August, 2015 in Nairobi, thirty years since the third world conference on women. The occasion, supported by UN Women Kenya, brought together gender and women affairs ministers from across the continent to take stock of the progress made in the last thirty years in the African women's movement.

President Uhuru Kenyatta officially opened the Nairobi +30 conference and launched the two-thirds gender principal campaign to facilitate gender equity in Kenya. He highlighted major achievements realized since the 1st World Conference on Women held in Mexico.

"Women now hold major leadership positions right across this continent. That advance has been matched by unprecedented economic empowerment," the President said, adding that more needed to be done, as indicated in the recent review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action.

Devolution and Planning Cabinet Secretary Anne Waiguru, who was also in attendance, underlined that women empowerment was no longer an alternative in Kenya.

"We are thankful for the women who have gone before us and opened the door and fought the hard battle in bringing gender issues to the development decision-making table. We are cognizant that were it not for them, we would not be where we are today. We hope that as we advance this agenda, we may make them proud and honor their efforts," she said.

The Kenya Women Parliamentarian Association Chairperson, Ms. Cecily Mbarire, celebrated the women who had participated in the fight for gender equality mentioning Phoebe Asiyo, Zipporah Kittony, Martha Karua and the late Professor Wangari Mathai, among others. In her remarks, she acknowledged the achievements since the third world women conference in Kenya, highlighting the increase in the number of women in parliament.

Ms. Mbarire thanked the President for being gender sensitive and challenged him to push more for the two third gender principle.

The participants in the conference were urged to recognize the milestones achieved by the Government, although a lot still needs to be done.

The two-day conference brought together ambassadors from the countries that have hosted the world conference of women, namely Mexico, China and Denmark. More than 1000 people attended the conference, including women from all over Kenya and Government officials.

The conference was an opportunity to underline that more needs to be done with regards to women's equality and empowerment. In addition, more women need to be in decision-making positions and economically empowered.

Kenya hosted the third United Nations World Conference on Women in Nairobi in 1985. The conference aimed to evaluate the progress made during the UN Decade for Women and devise a new course of action for the advancement of women.
In defence of maternal health in the military - UNFPA supports KDF

UNFPA and the Ministry of Health, through the Reproductive and Maternal Health Services Unit, last July conducted the first course in Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) for health care providers based in various facilities of the Kenya Defense Forces (KDF).

The one-week course was attended by thirty two senior officers from military health units in Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru, Eldoret and Thika.

The training gave participants the knowledge and skills in emergency maternal and neonatal care to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality and morbidity.

Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care is the critical attention of women and newborns during pregnancy, delivery and at the time after delivery. It is a vital component in reducing maternal and neonatal deaths. Globally, 75% of maternal deaths are due to five essentially preventable and treatable causes, namely haemorrhage (bleeding), obstructed labour, sepsis (infection), high blood pressure, and unsafe abortion.

During childbirth, pregnant women can develop potentially life-threatening complications that call for skilled care and/or major obstetrical intervention to survive.

Although post-partum haemorrhage can kill a woman in less than two hours, for most other complications, a woman has between six and twelve hours or more to get life-saving emergency care. Similarly, most perinatal deaths occur around delivery or in the first 48 hours afterwards.

Maternal deaths and disabilities are usually caused by delays by the family in deciding to seek care, logistics of reaching appropriate services or delay in receiving care at health facilities.

The training seeks to manage the delay in receiving care at health facilities by improving the quality of care and availability of staff and equipment. Addressing these situations is an essential condition for ensuring that obstetric emergency situations are efficiently and effectively managed.

One of the key barriers to the provision of emergency obstetric services is lack of skilled providers, a shortage that UNFPA and the Ministry of Health are working to address. It is for this reason that UNFPA Kenya Country Office, through the Ministry of Health, has committed to build the capacity of health units/facilities within KDF to provide quality care to women during pregnancy and delivery.

Participants appreciated the support and recommended that the training be provided for other staff in their facilities. UNFPA, through the Ministry of Health, looks forward to improve skills of at least 80% of the health workers in maternal and newborn health service delivery points.
Farhan Akhtar calls for gender equality

Farhan Akhtar, a renowned Indian film director, producer, actor, singer and campaign champion for Men Against Rape and Discrimination (MARD) was in Nairobi, Kenya on 22 August, 2015 for a concert that also doubled up as a call to action for the HeForShe Campaign.

The concert brought together members of MARD, a social initiative designed to create awareness to instill gender equality and respect towards women. It also included champions for HeForShe, a solidarity movement for gender equality which urges men and boys to be change agents and advocates for gender equality.

Farhan and his band pushed for a positive response towards gender equality, calling on all men to show their commitment to fighting gender inequality and violence against women by signing up for the HeForShe Movement. The concert saw over 200 men and boys pledge their commitment for the HeForShe Campaign.

On 20 June 2015, I was appointed as UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador for East & the Horn of Africa. This is the region where my motherland, South Sudan, is situated.

It pains me to see my country--and indeed my continent, Africa--continually plagued by wars that brutally scar children in their wake, and that similar destructive forces are wreaking havoc on families across the globe. It pains me that untold numbers of innocent people continue to die mostly at the hands of fellow citizens, and that those who survive are doomed to a largely unpredictable existence, buffeted by forces that they do not control.

I feel the pain because I was a refugee as a young boy. I experienced the trauma and upheaval of war and separation from my family. Becoming a refugee meant losing everything that was familiar. I was catapulted into turbulence where death

"Why the role of Goodwill Ambassador is important to me."

by Ger Duany

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was the only constant. Death stared me in the face so many times. Miraculously I survived. Many did not.

Today, large groups of people in South Sudan are going through unbearable torment. On 9 July 2015, as we marked the third anniversary of our nation’s Independence, over two million citizens huddled for safety in squalid conditions in United Nations bases and various sites in the country, or fled into exile in neighboring countries.

Thousands of youth and children have been drawn into the fighting in South Sudan, often forcibly recruited by fighting forces, amid disturbing reports about the abduction and sexual abuse of women and girls, and of people being burnt alive. I’ve heard heartbreaking first-hand accounts of some of the experiences of those who fled.

I am not a refugee today, not in legal terms. However, I consider myself to be a refugee in the sense that in order to visit members of my family I must go to refugee camps in Kenya or Ethiopia, or to internal displacement sites in South Sudan.

These are some of the reasons why the role of Goodwill Ambassador is so important to me. I speak for the same cause I went through and continue to go through because of the situation in my country. In this role, I am using my story and the support from those who lend me an ear to help spread awareness about the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Sharing my story is cathartic. It helps me to rise above painful memories and contemplate how those experiences can be utilized to create good. It took many years for me to dare face the demons of my childhood. It meant reliving memories of war, commotion, famine and of seeing many of my friends and family members die. As UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador I have elected to focus on the areas of Youth and Education.

Up to 90% of refugees in any settlement tend to be women and children. Behind the staggering statistics are vulnerable children who have been exposed to abhorrent forms of violence. Women bear an inordinate burden of displacement as the main caregivers of the young, the elderly and infirm. Believe me, I’ve been there and I know. I believe that failure to address displaced children’s specific needs in a deliberate manner is synonymous with condemning them to a lifetime of uncertainty particularly in terms of human security. Proliferating the vulnerabilities of millions of displaced people would not augur well for stability on the African continent, or the globe for that matter.

I see myself as an “invisible bridge” between the many worlds that I belong to—my birthplace, my nations, my continents, and the multiple spaces that I occupy that bind me to the rest of humanity everywhere in the world.

I am indebted to all people in my life who educated me from my earliest days and to those who helped me in the many places I’ve lived to remain steady and grow as a person, ultimately becoming who I am today.

I am grateful for the transformation that resettlement to the United States allowed me to experience. It is difficult to imagine what I might have become if I had not had the opportunity to discover and realize my God-given possibilities.

Reflecting on my story, it is evident that the opportunities I was given allowed me to become what I am: an actor and a fashion model able to speak to world audiences in languages other than my mother tongue. I went to the United States as a refugee. I worked hard and here I am, a tax paying citizen now endeavoring to give back to the refugee cause.

Given a chance, refugee kids excel. They are not powerless; they don’t need pity. They can be citizens of any country; respectfully and constructively contributing to humanity’s goals.
Kenya is at the cusp of a “demographic dividend” which could transmute the country’s fortunes in the first half of the 21st century -- but only if it takes the right steps towards investing in the current youthful population.

Millions of people in East Asia were lifted out of poverty by lowering dependency ratio and individuals and families were able to make savings which translated into investment and boosted economic growth in countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Combined with robust policies in education, health, employment and empowerment of its women, they were able to capitalize on their demographic window during the period 1965 and 1990.

Today, youth form two-thirds of Kenya’s population, many of them unemployed, with the ratio of youth unemployment to overall adult unemployment standing at 46 percent (2009 Kenya Population and Housing Census). At the same time, there are eight dependents for every ten working Kenyans, meaning that the average worker will very often have little left to save or invest for growth. Kenya’s low gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of US $1246 has contributed to increased family poverty and economic inequalities.

Our ability to seize the opportunities available to our young population will depend on how we address the key challenges plaguing Kenya’s education, health, empowerment and employment.

However, if Kenya does not act, the demographic dividend risks becoming a demographic disaster, since large numbers of unemployed, frustrated and unemployable youth fall prey to the blandishments and falsehoods spread by extremists and fanatic groups.

Kenya is at a demographic transformation. Fertility levels are declining gradually and Kenyans are living longer. There is reason for optimism that Kenya can benefit from a demographic dividend within 15 to 20 years. It is estimated that Kenya’s working age population will grow to 73 percent by year 2050, bolstering the country’s GDP per capita 12 times higher than the present, with nearly 90 percent of the working age in employment. (NCPD Policy Brief: Demographic dividend opportunities for Kenya, July 2014.)

But this is only “a window of opportunity”, which shuts in an average period of 29 years. There’s nothing pre-ordained about a youth bulge producing a growth dividend.

First, improvements in health and nutrition status, especially of girls, women and children, will contribute to a decrease in the number of children born to each family, as survival improves.

It calls for programmes to increase access to family planning to prevent unintended pregnancies leading to fewer births. Reductions in fertility coupled with child and maternal mortality declines are all associated with greater power for women to make decisions about how many children they want and how to raise them. As women cease spending their most productive years having and raising children they can then enter the workforce and contribute to economic production.

The second step is investment in the education of youth. Appropriate education and skills will enable youth to participate in the economy and provide needed labour for its growth. In addition, studies have shown that girls’ education, particularly secondary level, and empowerment will delay early marriage and slow adolescent fertility. Cultural, social and economic barriers that hinder empowerment of girls and women should be addressed.

Women are half of Kenya’s demographic dividend; if they are given the right tools and community support, they can not only become financially independent, but be the engines that fuel Kenya’s future growth.

The third step is to have an economic environment where the educated youth can find well-paid, decent jobs. Economic policies must target job creation in areas that have potential for longer term returns, including technical and vocational education, agriculture and technology.

Kenya is about to reap the biggest demographic dividend in world history of a young, working age population at a time when many other economies of the world will be aging.

Investments in health, education and economic policies must then be underpinned by good governance, the exercise of public authority which entails adherence to the rule of law and enhancement of human rights applied universally.

By ensuring healthy, educated, productive populations, do we have any chance at all of making the Kenyan dream of a prosperous middle to high income country a reality in our lifetime.

Dr Josephine Kibaru-Mbai is the Director-General, National Council for Population and Development, Government of Kenya.

Siddharth Chatterjee is the Representative of UNFPA Kenya.
THE International Organization for Migration (IOM) organized a three-day European Union (EU)-funded capacity building workshop for policy makers and practitioners working in the field of migration, environment and climate change, that kicked off on 10 August 2015.

The workshop, designed to help vulnerable communities to cope with environmental and climate change, and adapt through migration, was organized by IOM, in collaboration with Kenya’s National Environment Management Authority.

The Authority seeks to address environmental challenges facing Kenya, which for years has suffered massive displacements of people, due to the increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters and environmental degradation.

The workshop preceded the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) 21, which will take place in Paris in December 2015. The conference will address the integration of human mobility into the expected Paris Agreement.

There were over twenty participants from academia, government and civil society organizations, who discussed the inclusion of environmental change in migration policies at national and regional levels. Germany’s Bielefeld University – part of a consortium advising Kenya in this field – is the key resource institution.

In Kenya, pastoralists are at a higher risk of displacement as land resources shrink and rain-fed agriculture becomes untenable. Urbanization is also placing additional pressure on the environment and resources, with the rate for the next five years predicted at 4.15 per cent.

IOM Kenya Chief of Mission, Mr. Michael Pillinger, highlighted the severity and frequency of flooding and drought that have increased in recent years, forcing more people to relocate to other regions or urban areas.

“From 2004 to 2006, an estimated 3.5 million people were affected by drought in Kenya. The agricultural sector still employs 80 per cent of the Kenyan population residing in rural areas,” he noted.

Other topics under discussion included the incorporation of migration in environmental and development policies, and strategies for adaptation to climate change and disaster risk reduction. Facilitating information exchange among the policymakers and practitioners on migration, environment, climate change and adaptation was also discussed.

The workshop was expected to come up with a plan for policies to transform voluntary and forced movements of people into well-managed human mobility that will foster the resilience of individuals and communities to cope with environmental and climate changes.

The workshop was within the framework of the project “Migration, Environment and Climate Change: Evidence for Policy (MECLEP)”, which is funded by the European Union and the IOM Development Fund. Kenya is among the six countries where the project is being piloted, together with the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Mauritius, Papua New Guinea and Viet Nam.
UN Women joins hands with Eastern Africa police chiefs

ON 20 August, 2015, UN Women Kenya was officially accepted as a cooperating partner of the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO), a regional body that was established in 1998, to serve as a platform to fight transnational and organized crime in thirteen countries (Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda) in the region. The acceptance was during the EAPCCO Annual General Meeting in Naivasha.

The three-day annual general meeting was officially opened by Deputy President William Ruto of Kenya and presided by high level dignitaries and officials from EAPCCO member countries. Deputy President Ruto emphasized the need for continuous and stronger cooperation among the member countries with regards to battling insecurity in the region. He further encouraged the police chiefs to be candid during their discussions, share strategies and successes, underscoring the continued surge in transnational organized crime and criminal networks that are threats to the safety, security, and economic growth of the region.

“There is need for structured ways of sharing experiences by engaging each other… As regional policy makers we must continue to replace borders with bridges… expanding transnational infrastructure,” he added.

Since 2014, UN Women Kenya has been working closely with the INTERPOL Regional Bureau and EAPCCO, providing technical support on gender mainstreaming within their programmes and other interventions. More recently, UN Women supported the development of a gender training manual that addresses gender related crime and other security priorities, including radicalization, substance and human trafficking in the region. UN Women, being a strategic partner of EAPCCO, will provide a platform to engage with the chiefs of police, not only in Kenya, but the region and use this platform to push for elevating the profile of women in police and the larger security sector.

Following the extensive deliberations, the Council of Police Chiefs of member countries committed to work with UN Women in their respective countries to carry out activities geared at combating gender involvement in organized crime and build on the outcome of the Kigali International Conference Declaration on gender based violence against women and children.

With the continued rise of human trafficking in the region, member countries acknowledged that women and
girls are largely affected by trafficking and face great violations to their human rights. As a result, the EAPCCO Gender Sub-Committee, through the support of UN Women Kenya, recommended the need for concerted efforts to curb the plight and address the increasing risks by launching a regional campaign to raise awareness on the consequences of organized crime, broadly, and specifically human trafficking. It also recommended the need for capacity building activities for law enforcement agents, conducting regional research on trafficking, and sharing of evidence and data among member countries.

The meeting was also attended by representatives of INTERPOL, the African Union, Institute for Security Studies, Regional Center for Small Arms, Australian Federal Police, UN Women and African Policing Civilian Oversight Forum, among others. The 18th and 19th EAPCCO Annual General Meetings will be hosted by Tanzania and Ethiopia respectively.

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On 25-27 September 2015, over 160 Heads of State and Government, together with leaders of civil society and the private sector, will gather at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in New York for the adoption of the new sustainable development agenda. This bold and ambitious agenda aims to end poverty and promote prosperity and people’s well-being while protecting the environment over the next 15 years. The Summit represents a key milestone in this year of global action.

The UN Kenya Newsletter will, from this month, feature two goals per edition for your information, until all the 17 goals have been featured.

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

- Globally, the number of people living in extreme poverty has declined by more than half from 1.9 billion in 1990. However, 836 million people still live in extreme poverty. About one in five persons in developing regions lives on less than $1.25 per day.
- Southern Asia and sub-Saharan Africa are home to the overwhelming majority of people living in extreme poverty.
- High poverty rates are often found in small, fragile and conflict-affected countries.
- One in four children under age five in the world has inadequate height for his or her age.
Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

- Globally, the proportion of undernourished people in the developing regions has fallen by almost half since 1990, from 23.3% in 1990-1992 to 12.9% in 2014-2016. However, one in nine people in the world today (795 million) are still undernourished.
- The vast majority of the world’s hungry people live in developing countries, where 12.9% of the population is undernourished.
- Asia is the continent with the hungriest people – two-thirds of the total. The percentage in southern Asia has fallen in recent years, but in western Asia it has increased slightly.
- Sub-Saharan Africa is the region with the highest prevalence (percentage of population) of hunger. About one person in four there is undernourished.
- Poor nutrition causes nearly half (45%) of deaths in children under five – 3.1 million children each year.
- One in four of the world’s children suffer stunted growth. In developing countries the proportion rises to one in three.
- 66 million primary school-age children in developing countries attend classes hungry, with 23 million in Africa alone.
- Agriculture is the single largest employer in the world, providing livelihoods for 40% of today’s global population. It is the largest source of income and jobs for poor rural households.
- 500 million small farms worldwide, most still rain fed, provide up to 80% of food consumed in a large part of the developing world. Investing in smallholder farmers is an important way to increase food security and nutrition for the poorest, as well as food production for local and global markets.

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10. Promotes maternal health, saving the lives of millions of women a year

For more information please visit: www.un.org

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