
Community Development a Focus Area of UNDP Activities

PRESS RELEASE

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*Community Development a Focus Area of UNDP Activities *

United Nations, Yerevan - On 26 June Ms. Consuelo Vidal, the United Nations Resident Coordinator / UN Development Programme Resident Representative in Armenia paid a visit to Lusadzor community of Tavush region to get an insight on the progress of the community-based integrated development projects implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the village since 2007, in partnership with the Government of Italy.

In line with the recommendations of the Third Armenia-Diaspora Conference, UNDP works in Lusadzor through locally-based participatory planning and the implementation of development projects to revitalize the community. As a result, an integrated development plan 2007-2008 was elaborated with the participation of the mayor and the representatives of the citizens of Lusadzor. Together with other five neighboring villages, Lusadzor was included in the first rural development cluster addressed under the Rural Development Program of Hayastan All-Armenian Fund. In line with the Program, the Government of Italy has provided a total of 500,000 EUR for the projects' implementation in Lusadzor, which has been supplemented with co-funding from UNDP.

With three projects already completed, UNDP currently works on three more initiatives targeting the recovery of the socio-economic infrastructure of Lusadzor and the creation of income generation opportunities for the rural households. Under its Community Development Project, UNDP has supported the construction of a 4.8-kilometer gas network to supply natural gas to around 200 households. A total of 150 households have been provided with 17 tons of high quality wheat seeds as well as diesel and fertilizer to return non-tilled arable lands into crop cultivation. This year wheat crop cultivation will result in an increase of community income by 60,000 USD. Over 5,000 persimmon seedlings have been distributed to replace the old gardens of the beneficiaries with newly planted orchards. In four years the persimmon production in the community will total up to 1,000 tons, which is almost one third of the annual consumption of persimmon in the country. The persimmon production will have a major impact on the income of Lusadzor households, as it will increase by 2,000 USD per household.

Currently a 2.5-kilometer internal irrigation network reconstruction is underway and UNDP has also undertaken the rehabilitation of the local cultural center to help address the cultural and sports needs of the villagers. To support around 120 households engaged in cattle breeding, UNDP has started a project on artificial insemination of the community livestock aimed at improving its genetic qualities and fertility.

New community development initiatives, such as the establishment of garlic demo farms, enlargement of persimmon orchards and reconstruction of the potable water network, are part of the project and are in the process of being implemented.

UNDP is on ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. UNDP in Armenia was established in 1993 and supports the Government of Armenia to reach its own development priorities and the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.
