



# REGIONAL CENTER

## End of Year Message

### From the Director's Office:



Dear members of the UNDP Family,

Instead of a traditional Christmas message, we decided to take this opportunity (and we hope you have the time to read it and share it with your staff and colleagues) to share some of the things that we did during 2008 and some of our plans for the new year.

As you will see from the messages of the different Clusters, we have made significant progress in staffing the Centre and are getting ready for providing you with support in all areas in 2009. We still have some key vacancies (and your support in identifying solid candidates is much appreciated) but we start the year with full teams in the Energy and

Environment and Capacity Development Clusters and partial teams in all of the other areas. Freddy has established a functional operations support unit, BOM has decentralized more than 10 support positions to Panama and Leida Mercado will take up her new duties as Chief of the Sub Regional Centre in Trinidad and Tobago in January.

We are also expecting the arrival of Nicole Deutsch in her capacity of Coordination Specialist and support to the RDT. Besides the Policy and Advisory services provision from all of the Clusters, the following is a very brief (and incomplete) list of things high on my agenda for the new year:

- Assure quality advisory services to all COs in the Region
- Establishment of the Centre Board and Cluster advisory panels
- Strong implementation and delivery in all Regional programs managed by the Centre
- Establishment of vibrant practitioner networks in all clusters
- Establishment of an expert data base that can provide TA to COs on short notice (including in this your senior staff members who are interested in gaining short term international exposure)
- Implement the KM strategy for the Region
- Support South – South initiatives

Enough from my side, wishing you all the best in the New Year and a happy festive Season.

**Beat Rohr**  
Regional Center Director  
Regional Deputy Director RBLAC



### Democratic Governance

#### Citizen Security and Justice:

This year, the team was able to move forward with the goals set forth in the UNDP Regional Programme Document 2008-2011, thus, fostering the participation of all sectors of society, the reinforcement of institutions and, the inclusion of vulnerable groups from a gender perspective. These efforts aim to reduce the incidence of violence and crime, hence, creating the context for human development and the exercise of good democratic governance practices with regard for the protection of human rights. Through the use of a wide range of methodologies and resources, the team provided extensive support to CO's, Projects, Regional Programmes and other UN agencies, reinforcing communities of practice and South-South cooperation by opening spaces for participation and debate, and also sharing experiences. The team has worked closely with more than 15 UNDP offices in the region through the Citizen Security and Justice team or, through a group of over 10 associated experts and Centers of Excellence, from 6 different countries in the region.

Next year, we look forward to the consolidation of the team (including the addition of a Citizen Security and Justice Advisor) and the establishment of the Conflict Area within the CPR Cluster in the RC. *For further details on the work of the team, please feel free to contact: [Gloria.manzotti@undp.org](mailto:Gloria.manzotti@undp.org) / +507-302-4562.*

#### Decentralization & Local Governance:

This year, the team focused on two key areas: joint work with CO's and Knowledge Management. In the first area, relationships with several CO's have been reinforced, through the provision of support in project formulation, identification of new windows of opportunity related to decentralization and institutional reform, identification of expert consultants, documentation of shared experiences and the joint implementation of projects. The network of associate experts completed a total of 27 missions in addition to other no-missions to the host country, Panama. In terms of KM, key activities focused on the conclusion of the codification of the Tools for Diagnosis in Decentralization. Other activities included the systematization of the pilot application, best practices and lessons learned in Panama, the inclusion of a statistical module in the web application of the Tools, a user guide and the improvement of the user interface of the application to make it user friendly. Beginning 2009, the tools for diagnosis will be validated and will become the standard model for statistical analysis in the region. We are also in the process of hiring the Local Governance and Decentralization Advisor. *For further details on the work of the team, please feel free to contact: [clara.luna@undp.org](mailto:clara.luna@undp.org) / +507-302-4577.*



### Message from the Clusters...

#### Capacity Development



Towards the end of 2008, the new Capacity Development (CD) Team in LAC was finally recruited and formed. The previous team launched the CD website for the LAC Region and translated the Practice Notes into Spanish. CD Roms for Capacity Development on Ownership, Leadership and Transformation were also produced in English and Spanish, and will be shared with Country Teams and national and regional institutions. Dialogues with COs, CTs and Governments have also taken place to help identify needs for 2009.

In 2009, CD services will be launched in Latin America and the Caribbean, including plans for sustained CD and Aid Effectiveness (AE) support to middle income countries (MICs) and piloting Capacity Assessments (CA) in the region. The team will help identify country office needs and implement a strategic work plan to achieve optimal results; host a Capacity Development workshop to increase understanding of the CD mandate and activities; create a roster of experts who can respond to demand and advocate CD activities; and update our website. Furthermore, the team will identify and respond to South-South, Knowledge Management and Aid Effectiveness challenges in the region through partnerships with governments and civil society. *For further details on the work of the team, please feel free to contact: [ines.brill@undp.org](mailto:ines.brill@undp.org) / +507-302-4587.*

#### Conflict Prevention & Recovery

In 2008 the team provided high-level technical advice to the on Disaster Risk Reduction and Recovery in the LAC region through the pool of out-posted personnel and a network of more than 50 associated experts and practitioners. Based on the corporate priorities in the area of Crisis Prevention and Recovery BCPR LAC focused on 5 key sectors for intervention: Systematization of experiences: building up the practice; Early Recovery and pre disaster recovery planning; Integrated Climate Risk Management; Urban Risk; and Gender and Disasters. In 2008 BCPR fielded sixty eight technical support/emergency/recovery missions to twenty three Country offices. For 2009, the team will continue to focus its efforts on building up DRR Sub-Practice through Knowledge Management and South-South Cooperation; Building institutional capacities at national and regional level for mainstreaming DRR into development policies and practices and improving governance for risk reduction; Enhancing capacities for early recovery and pre disaster recovery planning; Fostering knowledge transfer on urban risk management; Promotion of risk identification and of a regional climate risk Agenda; Enhancing awareness on gender and disasters; and Strengthening Regional Networks and Inter-agency partnerships. Furthermore, we are awaiting the selection of the Practice Team Leader and the recruitment of the team which includes additional staff focus on Disaster reduction and prevention as well as a team dedicated to Conflict prevention. This team will significantly strengthen services to be provided to CO's in the near future and work closely with BCPR Experts in Geneva and NY. *For further information on the work of the team, please contact [anaeles.arenas@undp.org](mailto:anaeles.arenas@undp.org) / +507-4554.*



#### Gender

The Gender cluster tends to the needs of our offices and their counterparts in the promotion of gender equality and the articulation, coordination; formulation and monitoring of different regional initiatives such as gender mainstreaming and women empowerment. First on the agenda for next year, is the drafting of a report resulting from conversations with all COs to identify their policies and frameworks, as well as projects and activities developing in each country in addition to any other needs that may arise. The cluster will also support and expand the work developed by the América Latina Genera project. While still waiting to gather all COs frameworks and interest, thematically for 2009 they will approach different areas like women participation in politics and reform/modernization of the State, eradication of gender violence and the incorporation of a gender focus on public policies, programs and other projects. The team will also take part in the elaboration of a report together with ILO about Family and Labour, and support to the Latin America and the Caribbean Observatory on Gender Equality, among other challenges like the consolidation and expansion of the knowledge platform América Latina Genera ([www.americalatinagenera.org](http://www.americalatinagenera.org)). As of 2009, the team also expects to integrate to the group a Practice Team Leader. *For further details on the work of the team, please contact: [neus.bernabeu@undp.org](mailto:neus.bernabeu@undp.org)*



#### HIV/AIDS

At the beginning of the year the HIV/AIDS Regional Programme was relocated in Panama, from Trinidad & Tobago. In mid-2008, a team was recruited to perform administrative and research duties in areas of knowledge management and sexual minorities. During the year, 9 pilot projects in Gender, Governance and Human Right issues were implemented in 8 different countries. The completion of another phase contemplated in the MoU signed by UNDP and West Indies University in T&T, which aimed to provide training for the Caribbean authorities in terms of HIV/AIDS planning and mainstreaming was accomplished. Additionally, our Transformational Leadership programme trained over a hundred people, including government and civil society representatives, as well as sexual workers, people living with HIV/AIDS, and sexual minorities. Moreover, Haiti and Granada are in the process of integrating HIV/AIDS projects into Poverty Programmes at the national level, reflecting the advancement in mainstreaming efforts. In 2009 the regional programme will lead several projects, some involving sexual minorities, particularly of Men who have sex with men (MSM), and some involving the provision of advisory services to CO's. One of the main challenges ahead will be the materialization of HIV/AIDS mainstreaming on joint projects with other clusters and the roll-out of a knowledge systematization initiative. As of January, María Tallarico will assume her new role of Cluster Leader. *For further information on the work of the team, please contact: [araciela.castillero@undp.org](mailto:araciela.castillero@undp.org) / +507-302-4707.*



## Energy & Environment



During 2008 the Environment Cluster fielded over 85 missions to 29 countries in the region. Also, the LAC Energy and Environment Practice mobilized resources for 14 projects to conserve biodiversity, mitigate climate change and protect shared international waters resources. As part of the Regional Program initiative, financial resources were mobilized from Spain to build the capacities of countries

to access the Clean Development Mechanism and prepare themselves for negotiations to develop the post-Kyoto greenhouse gas emissions regime. Another achievement in this category was mobilization of funds to build the capacities of countries to negotiate the development of the post-Kyoto greenhouse gas emissions regime, and the approval of financing for 19 concepts. An important attainment was the establishment of regional partnerships with other agencies such as UNEP, ECLAC, FAO and to build country level capacities to adapt to climate change, to produce Stern reports and other analyses on the costs of adaptation to climate change, to assist pilot countries in the region to prepare programs to access resources from the REDD (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation) funds made available by the World Bank and Norway, and to work with pilot countries to identify policy measures to integrate environment and poverty alleviation. For further details on the work of the team, please contact [nick.rempel@undp.org](mailto:nick.rempel@undp.org) / +507-302-4767

## Operations & Support Unit



Currently, the RC is, prepared to service and collaborate with all clusters and units in project formulation, execution and monitoring activities. Towards the end of 2008, the unit team was constituted and trained. All along the team has demonstrated full commitment to its

work and has significantly contributed to respond to the current demand. Regarding IT services, our e-premier looks at information and communications technology (ICT) for the Regional Centre through a fully operational and supporting lens. It provides a functional perspective to issues regarding ICT policies; access and control; new e-mail platform; training and skill development; content development, and introduces a "Service Tracker" framework to integrate the RC's internal procedures and processes into ICT Website tools and empower people. The team looks forward to meet new challenges which include the integration of all information systems and tools: internal, corporate and new developments. Furthermore, a new design for the LAC Workspace was launched during 2008. This structure complements internal work among the LAC COs in the Region, condenses a great amount of systematized documents, reflects a strategic anchoring of global and regional objectives, and seeks to generate more interaction with LAC Cos and other UN agencies. For the new year to come, the RC is looking forward to launch its web page, in order to reflect its work on the LAC Region and to consolidate the imminent expansion of KM and CD tools, and lessons learned within the LAC countries. For further information on the work of the team, please contact: [fredy.iustiano@undp.org](mailto:fredy.iustiano@undp.org) / +507-302-4552.

## Knowledge Management



During 2008, the Knowledge Management Team, based in Bogotá, focused its efforts in two main areas: Firstly, advisory services to CO's, clusters, UN agencies, and others in terms of strategy formulation, knowledge management, product systematization, demand identification, and knowledge transfer. And secondly, on research development and innovation of knowledge services. The team worked on the use and adaptation of 2.0 web applications and made progress on the design of a social knowledge network, aimed to improve communication, the exchange of information and KM in the region. For further information on the LOGOS knowledge

network, please visit: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7nTdTVtL6k0>

In 2009 we will open to the public the LOGOS network in its phase 1, and will continue to develop phases 2 and 3. Other priorities for the year include increasingly coherent work with the thematic clusters, and the extension of our supporting services to a greater number of country offices in the region. For further details on the work of the team, please contact: [juan.manuel.salazar@undp.org](mailto:juan.manuel.salazar@undp.org).

### Interagency Projects:

During 2008, the RC-LAC negotiated several agreements with other UN agencies (UNICEF, UNFPA, WFP, PAHO-WHO, ECLAC) in an effort to enhance system-wide coherence and aid effectiveness, in congruence with the UN Reform. For UNDP, inter-agency collaboration represents an important opportunity for the exchange of information, strategies and valuable knowledge between agencies that, ultimately contribute to the achievement of the MDG's in the region. Progressive enhancement of system-wide coherence and collaborative work points to the achievement of three main goals: reinforcement of inter-agency cooperation, the promotion of knowledge management and capacity development. For further details on the work of the team, please contact: [guillermina.martin@undp.org](mailto:guillermina.martin@undp.org) / +507-302-4565



## Regional Audit Center - LAC



The Regional Audit Centre - LAC executed its work plan for 2008 completing a total of eight audits in the region, six of which pertain to Country Office audits (Jamaica, Chile, Uruguay, Haiti, Bolivia and Ecuador) and two of which focused on a number of DEX projects implemented by the Country Offices at Nicaragua and Guatemala. The DEX audits have been outsourced in a joint effort by both the COs and the RAC LAC whereby the RAC LAC assumes full responsibility for the content and quality of the audit report process through a quality assurance mechanism. The RAC LAC has drawn some lessons learned based on the results of the audits undertaken in the past two to three years, which are relevant, but not limited, to the areas of Financial Management, Procurement and Development Services. In 2009 a tentative work plan has been devised and initially agreed with RBLAC, although final approval by the UNDP Administrator is pending. It will hopefully contemplate seven Country Office audits, two audits of DEX projects similar to the approach adopted in 2008. In addition, we plan to introduce in 2009 the audit of trust areas for which we have selected the procurement function. As a way of adding more value to our work, we will audit exclusively the procurement function in five selected Country Offices (different from those selected to be fully audited) aimed to be able to come up with a consolidated report that will highlight the most significant lessons learned in undertaking procurement services. It will be a pilot that we expect to be replicated to other Country Offices and to other operational activities (e.g. development services, human resources, etc.) in future audits. For further details on the work of the team, please feel free to contact: [quillermo.munoz@undp.org](mailto:quillermo.munoz@undp.org) / +507-302-4527

## Sub-Regional Center - T&T

In January 2009, Leida Mercado will assume her new position as Chief of the Sub Regional Centre. In 2009, the TT Sub-Regional Centre will consolidate ongoing work and new initiatives. The main objectives and priorities for next year are: (i) To have the Sub-Regional Centre in T&T fully staffed and operational by the end of the 1st semester of 2009; (ii) Establish strong working relationships with COs and provide high quality and timely response to COs demand in UNDP strategic areas and a swift communication and coordination with Panama RC and RBLAC-HQ, (iii) Foster cross-practice approaches and activities to enhance UNDP-work and effectiveness; (iv) Ensure that Capacity Development, Gender Equity and Knowledge Management are integrated into UNDP work in the Region, and (v) Compliance with operational practices established by the Panama RC, and HQ units. Last but not least, quickly fill the vacant positions in the centre in the areas of HIV/AIDS, Disaster prevention and recovery and Citizen Security and Justice. For further information on the work of the team, please contact [Leida.mercado@undp.org](mailto:Leida.mercado@undp.org).



## Bureau of Management (BOM)

### Regional Advisory Committee on Procurement



The RBLAC-RACP has been chaired during 2008 by the Regional Chief Procurement Officer (RCPO), which reviewed procurement, contract and assets disposal cases submitted by many of the RBLAC COs. This regional committee, which is composed by members identified by 21 CO, met 50 times during the year, reviewing about 316 cases and approved contracts for a total amount over USD 53 million. The role of RCPO, included giving procurement advice and advocacy to CO on procurement related issues, training to procurement and program staff as well as CAP members on its functioning and regulations. During 2007 and 2008, out of the 24 RBLAC CO, 18 CO were visited and 3 week-long Procurement Seminars were organized for practitioners, CAP Chairs and RACP members. During 2009 some modifications are expected in the role and functions of the RCPO and Chair of the RACP, which are being discussed at HQ level in order to involve in a more active way the RBLAC Senior Management of the CO Procurement activities. Nevertheless the RACP will continue to meet on a weekly basis in order to comply with the Procurement and Financial Rules and Regulations applicable to all UNDP CO, Regional Centre and other Business Units. As of today, already 17 CO have nominated RACP members for the 2009. In the few days the rest will follow. Plans are already made to continue with the RCPO's visits and training at CO level (for the initial months, visits are scheduled to Honduras, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago and Surinam) and during April or May a new Procurement Seminar will be held for RACP members and Senior Procurement Practitioners. Other CO visits will follow on a demand driven basis. An equally important activity refers to continue with the certification of procurement related staff (Procurement Unit, CAP members and other staff with Atlas "buyer" profiles among others) as well as the integration of the Procurement Planning as part of the Programme activities carried out by all COs. For further information on the work of the team, please contact: [Rodolfo.sanjurjo@undp.org](mailto:Rodolfo.sanjurjo@undp.org) / +507-4517.

### Information & Communication Technologies



Within BOM, the Office of Information Systems and Technology (OIST) serves the ICT needs of UNDP. In March 2008, OIST fielded in close collaboration with the RBLAC, a Regional ICT Advisor (RIO) at the Panama RC in order to bring direct support closer to Country Offices. Highlights of the year include an ICT Workshop to foster ICT operations, review the Regional ICT Strategy and training in the implementation of UNDP's new messaging platform (MS Exchange). ICT Infrastructure Baselines were established and gaps identified for all COs in the region. One important decision is that the RIO constitutes the Coordination Mechanism for all local application development efforts at the regional level to avoid duplication. Beyond ICT support missions to Haiti and Jamaica, the Uruguay Centre was visited in order to integrate their work with OIST, and review options for regionalization and globalization of ICT solutions used in LAC. During 2009, the RIO will direct efforts to the completion of the roll-out of UNDP's messaging platform and work with COs to ensure that all ICT Infrastructure gaps are closed. Other priorities are further roll-out of IP telephony to reduce costs and improve integration, implementation of a regional LTA with HP allowing COs and projects to purchase ICT hardware at competitive prices and provide direction and support to COs regarding the ICT implications of UN reform and One UN. The RIO will work closely with the KM Cluster in order to support the establishment of a common KM and E-document system for the region. For further details on the work of the ICT, please contact: [jarle.herikstad@undp.org](mailto:jarle.herikstad@undp.org) / +507-302-4540

### Management Support Centre



MSC Panamá provided extensive user support to country offices through the ATLAS helpdesk, MPN practice networks, regional workshops, tailored training missions and special project mission in collaboration with the regional bureau. MSC also participated in the User Acceptance Test for the ATLAS upgrade, OnDemand content development and revision including other initiatives of agencies such as UNOPS. For 2009, MSC's plans include continuing on the same mandates to ensure smooth implementation of ATLAS 9.0 and other corporate initiatives to include IPSAS implementation. For further information on the work of the team, please contact: [gonzalo.gomez@undp.org](mailto:gonzalo.gomez@undp.org) / +507-302-4538

