

Millennium Development Goal 3 **Promoting Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women** **in the State of Kuwait**

In the efforts to reach MDG Goal 3 "Promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women", UNDP interventions have reaped some progress despite of various challenges:

- Kuwait CO worked to include in the new CPAP 2009-2013 under the Gender and Social Development area, women's political, economic and legal empowerment to promote the equality of women and men.
- In 2006 a successful awareness campaign was conducted to Kuwaiti Women in the Parliamentary Elections (29th June 2006). Kuwaiti women were called to urgent action this year when the Emir of the State of Kuwait decided to dissolve the parliament and called on the electoral constituency to elect a new parliament on June 29, 2006 which was originally expected to be held in July 2007. In response, UNDP worked with various CSOs in launching an extensive media and awareness campaign. The main messages of the campaign were as follows:
 - to encourage women to vote with emphasis on their civic responsibility and independence from tribal and family influences;
 - to assure women of the legal certainty of their political participation, in addition to the Islamic jurisprudence; and
 - to raise awareness on the voting procedures.

These messages were translated on billboards, buses, television advertisements, newspapers, in addition to the distribution of flyers across campaigning headquarters.

- In July 2008, a project titled "Support for Expanded Political Participation and Empowerment" was signed by the Government of Kuwait. The aim of this project is to support and enhance the participation of women in political life targeting all segments of society. Through civic education campaigns, capacity building interventions targeting "opinion makers", these groups individually and through civil society will be encouraged to support political participation

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and political empowerment of women and change the stereotype attitudes of the society which are hindering women's full participation and empowerment and preventing meaningful partnership at the decision making levels.

The cooperation between the State of Kuwait and this project will facilitate an endogenously- driven march to equitably deepen Kuwaiti democracy. The project's strategy will encompass three areas:

- Awareness and educational campaigns
- Capacity Building / Institutional Strengthening
- Communication and Outreach Strategy

Currently under this project, and as the 2008 elections took place on the 17th of May 2008, a post election follow up and institutionalized support to the national and local initiatives is being conducted.