

## United Nations Development Programme

Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People

برنامج الأمم المتحدة الإنمائي/ برنامج مساعدة الشعب الفلسطيني



### PRESS RELEASE

#### UNDP and Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development sign agricultural agreement

**Jerusalem, 12 July, 2007** – The United Nations Development Programme/ Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (UNDP/PAPP) signed yesterday, Wednesday July 11, an agreement with the Arab Authority for Agricultural Investment and Development (AAAID) to support the badly damaged agricultural sector in the Rafah Governorate.

The agreement was signed in Amman by the President of AAAID Abdul Kreem Mohammed Al Amri and UNDP Deputy Special Representative for Operations Khaled Shahwan.

Mr Shahwan expressed his appreciation for the generous grant and said that the AAAID is interested in establishing a partnership with the UNDP to ease the suffering of the Palestinian people and that this agreement will be followed by other agreements in the future.

The US\$ 273,000 grant will help improve the livelihood conditions of 500 poor farmers by increasing their production. The pilot project includes the reclamation of 160 dunums, renovation of 320 greenhouses and construction of 100 home gardens. It will also help raise the farmers' awareness on integrated pest management.

The project will, in addition, improve food security in the governorate and help maintain and create sustainable jobs in the agricultural sector.

According to data published by the Palestinian Ministry of Agriculture, the total losses to the agricultural sector in the Rafah Governorate in the past years are estimated at US\$ 20 million.

A recent UNDP poverty paper indicates that 70% of the people in the Rafah Governorate live under the poverty line, including 44% who suffer from extreme poverty.

**For further information, please contact:**

In Jerusalem: Dania Darwish, Communications Officer, Tel. +972-2-6268229 – e-mail: [danialdarwish@undp.org](mailto:danialdarwish@undp.org). Wadi Razzouk, PR Specialist, Tel. +972-2-6268311 – e-mail: [wadi.razzouk@undp.org](mailto:wadi.razzouk@undp.org), In New York: Sausan Ghosheh Communication's officer, Tel. +1 (212) 906-5382 – e-mail: [sausan.ghosheh@undp.org](mailto:sausan.ghosheh@undp.org). For more information on UNDP/PAPP see <http://www.undp.ps>.

*UNDP is the UN's global development network, advocating for change and connecting countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build a better life. We are on the ground in 166 countries, working with them on their own solutions to global and national development challenges. As they develop local capacity, they draw on the people of UNDP and our wide range of partners.*