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NORWAY, UNDP CONTRIBUTE K2.8BN TO STRENGTHEN CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSES

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Norway, UNDP contribute K2.8bn to strengthen climate change responses

Written by Kabanda Chulu

NORWEGIAN government and the UNDP have contributed a total of K 12.8 billion towards the Climate Change Facilitation Unit (CCFU) that is aimed at strengthening national efforts and mainstreaming climate change responses in the development process.

During the signing of the co-financing agreement for supporting CCFU activities in Lusaka yesterday, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) resident representative Macleod Nyirongo said climate change was one of the defining human development issues of this generation that threatens to erode human freedoms and choices.

“The effects of climate change are already visible here in Zambia, especially for the poorest. Exposure to prolonged droughts, intense storms, floods and environmental stress are slowing the efforts of people to build a better life for themselves and their children,” Nyirongo said. “Although Zambia has made strides towards meeting some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015, climate change has the potential to reverse progress built up over the years not just in cutting extreme poverty, but in health, nutrition, education and other areas.”

He said the Norwegian government has agreed to co-finance the activities of the CCFU, which would be under the ministry of environment.

“The Norwegian government will be providing K7.7 billion to augment UNDP’s contribution of K5.1 billion making a total of K12.8 billion towards CCFU activities over the period 2009 to 2010 and in this regard, UNDP will be responsible to manage and report on the use of these resources regularly, on behalf of the government,” said Nyirongo. “To effectively perform this role, we have engaged the deputy country director to provide oversight on project implementation apart from monitoring and evaluation functions.”

And Norwegian Ambassador to Zambia Tore Gjos said his government was committed to strengthening efforts towards climate change crisis and would continue enhancing the Zambian government’s work on the matter.

And ministry of environment permanent secretary Teddy Kasonso said recent scientific evidence indicates that world temperatures had risen and that human activities were largely responsible for these issues.

“These scientific findings also stress that global warming will increasingly affect human and natural systems with potentially disastrous effects on national economies,” said Kasonso. “Thus climate change can jeopardise human development gains and reverse any progress that has been made towards poverty reduction and attaining of the MDGs.”

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