



## The Ride of a Lifetime



"I ride therefore I am"; a peculiar statement by an out-of-the-ordinary young man, whose days are spent riding a bicycle to tour the world and spread the message of peace.

### A Journey for Peace

Having lost his father in 1983, to the atrocities of war, Pushkar Shah, a young high school teacher

in Nepal decides in 1998 to embark on a long journey across the world, to bring a sense of peace wherever his bike, and his luck, leads him.

Solely dependent on the sympathy of others, with whom he hopes to share the complicity of wanting peace and working toward it- and the single Euro (100 Nepalese Rupees) his mother gave him-, Shah makes his way through countries of Asia, North America, South America, Central America, the Caribbean, Africa, Europe, and the Middle East.

"I have no official sponsor and have thus far been able to pursue my dream through the kindness and generosity of the many strangers who have befriended me along the way", Shah explains.

Throughout his visits, Shah tours schools and clubs in different communities, meeting with the local populace and with civic leaders, to speak about peace, respect for other religions and cultures, living in harmony, respect for human rights and democratic values.

### A stop in Lebanon

Ten years and 178955 kilometers later, Shah lands in his 115th destination, a place that has had its own share of war, and of recovery; Lebanon. Visiting the country's capital, Shah heads to the UN House, where he meets with UN-ESCWA Executive Secretary, Bader Omar Al Dafa, and shares with him the motives behind his journey, and the mission he has borne for ten years. "My mission is not about material gain or international fame", he says, "It is simply about spreading the message of peace".

Such is also the message the UN advocates and works towards. As Al Dafa explains to Shah, the UN holds sports dear for the positive role it can play amid all communities of the world, to further establish development, peace and respect for the other. The rules of sports, namely respect for opponents and for rules, teamwork and fair play, are indeed consistent with the principles that the World Organization upholds.

Al Dafa encouraged Shah to pursue his endeavor, so we can all do our share in building a better world.

After finishing his world tour next year, Shah has plans to climb Mount Everest, bringing the flags of all the countries he visited to its top.



## Sudan Social Policy

Sudan's Social Policy Country Profile was the subject of an expert group meeting (EGM) UN-ESCWA held in collaboration with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) Khartoum and the UN Economic Commission

for Africa (ECA), on 10 December 2007, in the Sudanese capital, Khartoum. The meeting aimed to review and validate the draft report on the state of social policy in Sudan. The meeting is part of UN-ESCWA's continuing techni-

cal advisory support to Sudan on Integrated Social Policy.

The meeting, held under the patronage of the Minister of State for Social Welfare, Women and Children, Dr. Sami Abdul Daem Muhammad Yasin, created a forum for government officials, civil society representatives and

Sudanese experts to debate social policy challenges and priorities. In his opening address Yasin stressed the importance of developing and implementing a coherent integrated social policy for Sudan in an era of economic growth. The meeting also presented an opportunity for participants to review options for fol-



## Rural Women and the Protection of Natural Resources

UN-ESCWA issued a study on the "Role of Rural Women in Water Resources Management, Energy Consumption Rationalization and Environment Protection in the UN-ESCWA Region". The study offers an assessment of the situation of rural women in UN-ESCWA countries for 2005, as well as their role in managing water resources, rationalizing energy consumption and protecting the environment, to determine the factors that impede their participation in these fields, and suggest ways to overcome these hindrances, in an effort to reinforce their active participation in development.

The study presents both regional and international perspectives on the role of women in development, with an emphasis on their relation to water resource management, and the ensuing environmental impact of the matter. The study also assesses the socio-economic conditions of rural women in UN-ESCWA member countries, and the link between this matter and sustainable development. In addition, it evaluates the availability of energy and water resources in rural areas, as well as the means to use them and pursuant environmental issues. The study also suggests a series of policies and programs that support the participation of rural women in managing these resources.



## Sudan Social Policy (Cont.)



low-up activities to the report, including the holding of a National Conference on Social Policy during the first half of 2008, which could assist the Sudanese Government in formulating a comprehensive vision of an integrated social policy.

The UN-ESCWA delegates to Khartoum also held meet-

ings with the Minister of State for Social Welfare and a number of senior officials from the Ministry as well with UNDP Sudan and the representative of ECA to discuss future cooperation concerning the activities that will follow the report including the National Conference on Social Policy.



## UN-ESCWA Meetings

Initial Implementation of Joint Management in Shared Aquifers Systems: A Case Study in the Western Portion of the Mediterranean - the Nubian Sandstones	14-15 January-Cairo, Egypt
EGM on Fostering Sustainable Development through Regional Integration in the Arab Region: A Strategic Vision 2010 - 2020	15-16 January Beirut , Lebanon
Technical Committee Meeting	17 January- Beirut, Lebanon
Initial Implementation of Joint Management in Shared Aquifers Systems: A Case Study in the Eastern Portion of the Mediterranean - Nahr El Kabir Al Janoubi	16-17 January Cairo, Egypt
Expert Group Meeting on Social Policy Report No. 2	17 January Amman, Jordan
Ninth Session of the Committee on Transport	26-28 February Beirut, Lebanon
Workshop on Incubation Schemes for Digital Arabic Content Development	18-20 March Beirut, Lebanon

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