



UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
REGIONAL SERVICE CENTRE FOR AFRICA

**RENEWED GOVERNANCE AND PEACEBUILDING
FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA 2022-2025**

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UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet.

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Africa is shaping the world, changing the face of development world-wide.

The continent carries the most fundamental promise of why the UN exists, solidarity and caring about others not in a patronizing way, but through being partners to one another's journeys – the chemistry that inspires development thinking

Achim Steiner
UNDP Administrator

Africa represents by far the most exciting frontier for sustainable development heading into the first quarter of the 21st century and beyond... **The future of sustainable development will be invented in Africa.**

Ahunna Eziakonwa
UN Assistant Secretary-General
UNDP Assistant Administrator and
Regional Director for Africa

Executive Summary

UNDP is the lead UN agency on governance and a key development actor for conflict prevention and peacebuilding within the UN system¹. UNDP takes a systemic and “*Governance of Things*” approach to governance. It defines governance as the system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, political and social affairs through interactions within and among the state, civil society and private sector. In the African context, it is essential to take a multi-level and broader approach to governance – and it is on this very approach that the UNDP Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa relies for a Foundational Enabler in accelerating the attainment of Africa’s promise. Peacebuilding meanwhile aims to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundation for sustainable peace and development. It is a complex, long-term process of creating the necessary conditions for sustainable peace². There is a direct correlation between peace and governance, especially in the African context as highlighted by the African Union in the Charter on Democracy, Governance and Elections and Agenda 2063. The UN Secretary General’s 2020 Report on Sustaining Peace and Peacebuilding³ also articulates this link, stating that peace depends on the quality of the governance, and the quality of governance can be affected by peace. Weak governance can contribute to conflict – and vice-versa.

UNDP’s renewed Governance and Peacebuilding Framework for Africa 2022-2025 applies two key signature solutions from UNDP’s Strategic Plan: ion of the UNDP Renewed Strategic Offer for Africa: Africa’s Promise and the Regional Programme for Africa, with a focus on peace and security and youth empowerment enabled by “*Governance of Things*”. It also seeks to contribute to the delivery of the prevention and governance offers of the UNDP Global Policy Network (GPN). Conceptually, it is anchored firmly on the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. **The overall goal of the Framework is to achieve transformative change characterized by people-centred, human rights based inclusive and participatory governance and peacebuilding systems and strengthened trust and social contract between state and citizens that will contribute to change Africa’s narrative to one of promise, and to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs) and Agenda 2063.**



PEOPLE



PROSPERITY



PEACE

The Framework takes a flexible, adaptable and fully integrated portfolio and systems approach to its implementation, leveraging opportunities, partnerships and capacities across the Regional Service Centre for Africa (RSCA) while harnessing advisory assets within RBA. Based on context analysis, review and evaluation of regional and national projects, as well as an extensive consultative process through UNDP’s Reimagining Governance and Peacebuilding process, it

¹ United Nations Development Programme, Prevention Offer: Development Pathways to Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding 2022-202

² <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/terminology#:~:text=Peacebuilding%20aims%20to%20reduce%20the,necessary%20conditions%20for%20sustainable%20peace.>

³ <https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/content/report-secretary-general-peacebuilding-and-sustaining-peace-2020>

focuses on the implementation of six key pillars through an integrated systems approach: **prevention and early action; investing in Africa's youth; economic governance; democratic governance and civic participation; promoting the rule of law, justice and human rights; and local governance and delivery of public services.** The UNDP Regional Governance and Peacebuilding Team will provide advisory services, thought leadership, applied research and support to implementation of initiatives at both national and regional levels. Key enablers are gender mainstreaming; prioritizing Africa's youth (which also has a dedicated pillar), governance and embracing digital technologies and innovation for governance and peacebuilding.

UNDP will apply adaptive responses to supporting governance and peacebuilding in various country contexts. In the contexts of transitions, UNDP will draw from the newly established Transitions Facility. Implementation of the Framework will also include a **Regional Governance Forum for Africa, a women's governance and peacebuilding forum, a youth governance and peacebuilding forum; an advisory group on transformational leadership, and a standby team of governance experts for rapid expert support, especially in transition contexts.**



Photo: freepik photos

Development Challenge

The AU's Agenda 2063⁴ outlines Africa's strategic aspirations for the 21st century. Achieving peace and prosperity ranks high among them. African countries have made some progress in pursuing these aspirations in the context of the first Ten-Year Implementation Plan Year, 2014-2023. However, major challenges remain, highlighting the gap between normative aspirations and implementation of regional commitments. Closing that gap requires effective governance and enhanced peacebuilding efforts in the region.



photo: gettyimages

The regional context is changing, particularly with regard to governance and peacebuilding trends, further complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The economic performance of African countries has long been heterogenous. Today, despite efforts to articulate and adopt common normative frameworks, these countries are also diverging increasingly with regard to governance and peacebuilding. Growing democratic recession, seen in an increasing number of coups d'état, extension of presidential term limits and disputed elections, is a disturbing trend. Between 2000 and 2021, 21 coups d'état have occurred in 14 African countries. Meanwhile, a growing trend towards constitutional revisionism has led 16 African countries to eliminate or modify presidential term limits (13 of them did so in the past six years). Increased human rights violations, disregard for the rule of law, and a rise in disinformation, misinformation and hate speech further fray the social contract and constrict civic space.

Inadequate representation of women and youth in decision-making is a key feature of Africa's governance context. Very few women have served as heads of the executive branch of African governments or heads of private sector corporations. Only five African countries have elected female presidents. Although women have done better in terms of parliamentary representation, they hold more than 30 percent of seats in only 11 African countries. Moreover, women and girls with disabilities are among the most marginalized and disempowered groups in the world, exposed to both gender and disability-based discrimination⁵. Last, although youth under 24 represent approximately 60 percent of the population, they are barely represented in policymaking or decision-making structures in African countries.

The broader peacebuilding challenges confronting the region are reflected in persistent fragility and conflict and rising terrorism and violent extremism, all resulting in the decline in peacefulness of the region. The Global Terrorism Index 2020 shows that 10 African nations rank among the top 20 nations in the world impacted by terrorism⁶. African countries are also increasingly suffering the adverse impacts of climate change, further exacerbating conflicts in the Sahel, the Horn of Africa and parts of Southern Africa.

⁴ <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/overview>

⁵ United States Agency for International Development (2016), *Advancing Women and Girls with Disabilities*, available at <https://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/gender-equality-and-womens-empowerment/women-disabilities>.

⁶ <https://www.economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/GTI-2020-web-2.pdf>

The COVID-19 pandemic has also had an impact on the governance and peacebuilding context in Africa. While it caused Africa's economy to contract by around -3.4 percent (-1.9 percent for sub-Saharan Africa) in 2020, it also highlighted communities' resilience. Africa defended multilateralism and international cooperation, even as many countries elsewhere retreated to nationalism. This showed the strength of its regional cooperation arrangements. Most intra-African borders remained open, albeit with restrictions, further proving the value of UNDP working closely with the AU and regional economic communities (RECs), particularly in promoting the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

However, at the national level, an analysis of the impact of African countries' COVID-19 containment measures adopted in 2020 at the initial outbreak showed that they imposed operational constraints on institutions across the public and private sectors and further marginalized citizens in their engagement with government, fraying the social fabric. Security agents' excessive use of force to enforce lockdowns and curfews led to violations of human rights and freedoms and, even worse, death in some instances, and eroded public trust in government. Restrictive measures curtailed freedom of assembly and had a disproportionate impact on poor and vulnerable groups, including women and youth, who work in the informal sector. This exacerbated existing grievances against government and increased economic inequalities. Persons with disabilities (PWD) often faced violence in situations of isolation, with women and girls with disabilities at even higher risk. Reporting domestic violence and accessing services and assistance are particularly challenging in this regard, as they generally do not cover PWD. Several countries continued to hold elections, albeit with restrictions. In the few countries where elections were postponed, tensions mounted based on perceptions that decisions had been made without consultation.

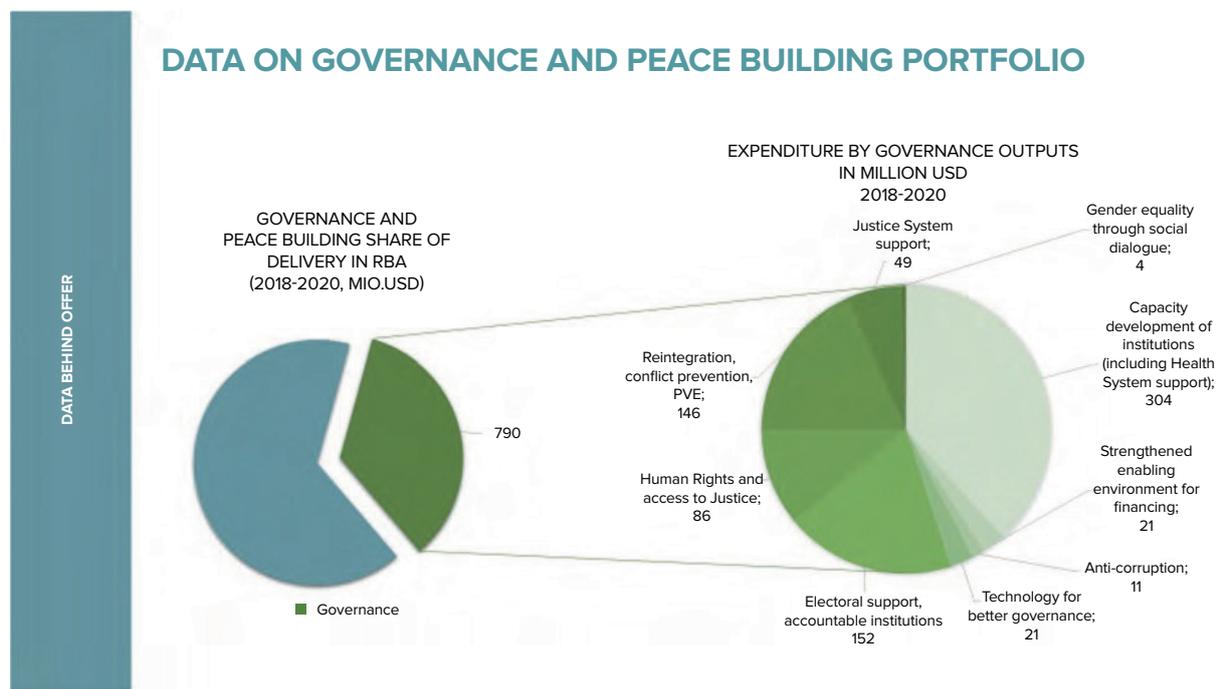
Despite these development challenges, there are also positive trends that can be leveraged upon to address these challenges, including enabling policy frameworks and treaties; a large youth population; opportunities for economic growth; decrease in conflict-related deaths; the digital revolution and more demands for good governance in particular that can transform this picture and narrative.



Photo: UNDP Mali

Review of UNDP's Programmatic Interventions in Governance and Peacebuilding

Since its establishment in 1965, UNDP has supported many governance and peacebuilding programmatic interventions at both regional and national levels, engaging with partners from the AU, RECs, national governments, civil society, think tanks, faith-based organizations (FBOs), women's networks and youth groups, among others. A review of UNDP's work over the past 10 years was undertaken as part of the process leading to the development of a renewed Governance and Peacebuilding Framework for 2022–2025.



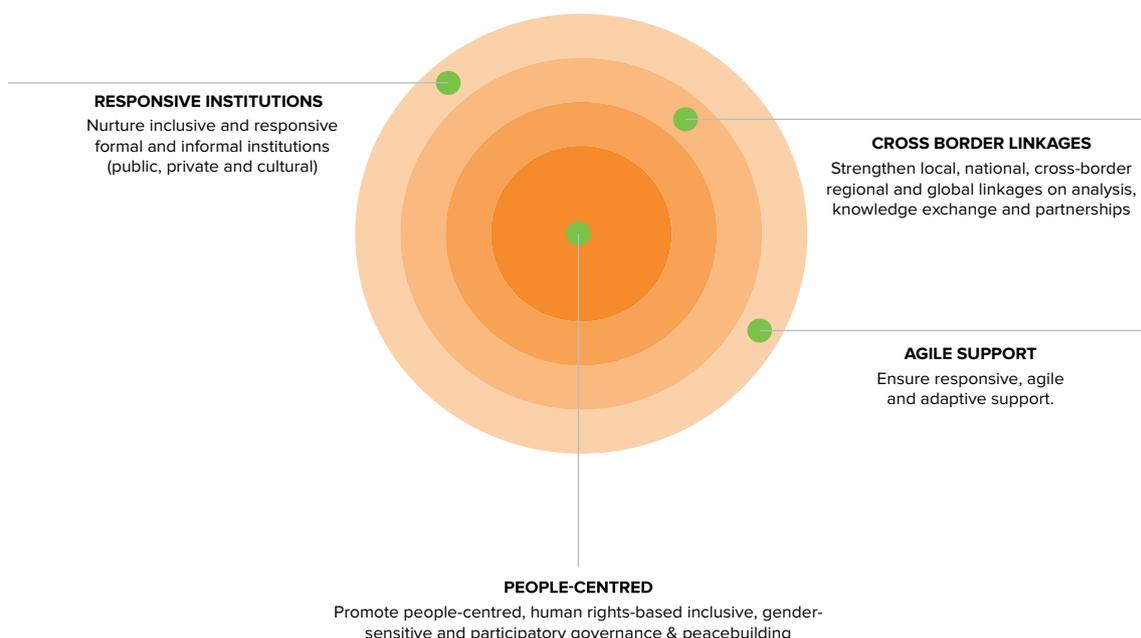
Data on Governance and Peacebuilding Portfolio: 2018-2020

The review classified UNDP's programmatic interventions into two categories - regional and national projects - and organized the conclusions accordingly. It highlighted three positive conclusions in the regional projects category, noting that they had succeeded in: promoting dialogue and participation across borders; supporting institutional bodies and developing policy frameworks; and improving coordination and coherence in regional stabilization. Specifically, the regional project, Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism in Africa: A Development Approach, was found to have catalysed effective regional coordination and shared planning, resulting in the development of the Lake Chad Basin Commission's Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region. The project Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism also had a positive unintended impact: it shaped the discourse on that issue, in particular changing how governments respond to violent extremism. The joint AU-UNDP project, Accelerating the Ratification and Domestication of African Union Treaties meanwhile plays an important role in establishing the policy framework; its implementation can provide an enabling environment and address a number of structural issues.

However, the review noted that in most cases, UNDP tried to address too many areas with limited capacities, thus limiting its capacity to achieve concrete results in governance and peacebuilding. The report recommended narrowing the focus of some of the regional projects and ensuring that women’s empowerment is mainstreamed in all regional projects. Last, the review identified a need to increase financial and technical support for gender equality and women’s empowerment and participation in regional projects; several evaluations found those to be behind and low.

The review of the national-level projects produced six conclusions and recommendations. First, UNDP’s institutional support for a variety of countries is yielding significant results. Second, some of the programmatic interventions should narrow their focus and take a portfolio and integrated approach. Third, tiers of government are increasing their cooperation. Fourth, UNDP should reflect further on the process for renewing and exiting from projects to avoid mandate creep. Fifth, gender equality and women’s empowerment remain marginal in several national projects. Sixth, enhancing state governance capacity helps African countries improve service delivery; building dialogue between government and public is important in this regard. However, strengthened institutions and reforms have not resulted in transparent, accountable and inclusive institutions. Public trust in institutions continues to decline, especially at the national level, while the public looks to local governments, to deliver basic services.

The key message from the review is that UNDP has largely been successful in building the capacity of institutions in all 46 Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA) countries. However, the context in which the state was the only actor in governance and peacebuilding in Africa has changed. The rise of civil society organizations (CSOs) and religious leaders, the re-emergence of traditional leaders in some countries, and the increasing role of the private sector require a shift in the approach to governance and peacebuilding. Digital technologies have brought new actors to the fore, including youth, and highlighted the diaspora’s ability to influence narratives, sometimes in violation of African countries’ cyberlaws, but beyond their jurisdiction. Yet even in this changing context, the bulk of UNDP governance and peacebuilding resources are still invested in institutions, while fewer target people-centred approaches. The result has to widen the gap between people and institutions. The renewed framework seeks to reduce it and support building trustworthy, accountable and inclusive institutions as a means to address concerns over the fraying social contract and the associated governance and peacebuilding challenges.



The Framework takes a flexible approach to its implementation, leveraging opportunities, partnerships and capacities across the Regional Service Centre for Africa (RSCA) while harnessing advisory assets within RBA.



Strategy

UNDP's renewed Governance and Peacebuilding Framework for Africa 2022-2025 focuses on applying two key signature solutions from UNDP's Strategic Plan: governance and resilience. However, with a focus on integration, its implementation will also contribute to achieving gender equality and reducing poverty and inequality. In addition, it will leverage new opportunities and innovation and enhance the focus on applying digital technologies. The renewed Framework implements action in furtherance of the UNDP Renewed Strategic Offer for Africa: Africa's Promise - using the governance of things as an enabler to attain the 6 core pillars: natural resource governance, sustainable energy, women and youth, structural economic transformation, peace and security and climate change. It also supports implementation of the Regional Programme for Africa. Rooted in the UN Charter, it also contributes to Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want and Agenda 2030's SDGs, particularly SDG 5 (achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls); SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth); SDG 16 (promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels); and SDG 17 (strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development).

The main task for governance and peacebuilding in Africa is to tackle the challenge of legitimacy of authority, peace, and stability as well as to advance economic development and promote national and social cohesion. This was one of the key lessons learned from the regional projects review and feedback from extensive consultations as part of the March-July 2021 Reimagining Governance and Peacebuilding process. The consultations involved 1,285 individuals, including: representatives of African regional organizations; Africans in the diaspora; African think tanks and research organizations; regional professional, civil society, youth, women's, religious and traditional leaders' organizations; refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs); PWDs; private sector executives; individual experts; political leaders; and UNDP staff.

The Framework takes a regional approach, while providing tools for adaptive responses to governance and peacebuilding at the country level. It builds on the success of the Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism in Africa: A Development Approach project, which takes both a regional and a country-facing approach. The strategic advantages of this approach include: making use of peer synergy as a driver of change, grounded particularly in AU legal mechanisms, and achieving Agenda 2063; facilitating actions regionally that may be impossible or politically sensitive at a country level; providing entry points to work with actors who are otherwise inaccessible at the country level; making it possible to nurture innovative actions; leveraging other entry points to maximize results, including involving change actors engaged in other regional UN and entities' initiatives, such as those supported by other partners (for example, those established through the regional project to prevent and respond to violent extremism); and facilitating collaboration on thematic areas in countries with overlapping representation in regional organizations, such as the AU, League of Arab States and Organization of Islamic Conference.

While building upon past UNDP work on governance and peacebuilding, and based on the consultations and reviews held, the renewed Framework:

- Broadens the focus and narrative on governance from the political elite to a people-centred approach that pays much more attention to economic governance, local governance and delivery of public services. In this way, it is centred on the thematic of the ‘*governance of things*’ as encapsulated in the UNDP Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa.
- Builds productive synergies between UNDP’s regional and country presence to fully harness African regional institutions and policy instruments.
- Advocates for investment in Africa’s women and youth to ensure that they are well positioned to maximize opportunities in the One African Market (AfCFTA) as a vehicle to spur economic development and strengthen social cohesion.
- Incorporates lessons learned from adaptations to COVID-19 especially on digitalization, innovation.
- Adopts a developmental approach to democratic governance to rebuild trust in elections Recognizes the strategic importance of inclusive and participatory political transitions for reviving and sustaining governance institutions in conflict settings.
- Promotes early action, inclusiveness, capacity strengthening and continuous political economy analysis.
- Expands the range of stakeholders and partnerships to include the Diaspora, the private sector and traditional leaders.
- Adopts integrated and whole-of-UNDP approaches that bring together all relevant parts of RBA and the GPN for more effective implementation and results.
- Identifies new areas and defines strategies for generating, curating and applying hitherto unavailable or ignored data to the design, implementation of, and reporting on GPB initiatives.

Photo: UNDP Chad

Based on this, the Framework offers the following theory of change, which adopts a people-centred, holistic and harmonized approach at the regional, subregional and national levels to foster a renewed focus on governance and peacebuilding.



Theory of Change for RBA Governance and Peacebuilding Framework





Photo: UNDP Kenya

Pillars



Six Pillars of Implementation

Prevention and Early Action

Investing in Africa's Youth

Economic Governance

Democratic Governance and Civic Participation

Promoting the Rule of Law, Justice and Human Rights

Local Governance and Delivery of Public Services



The renewed Governance and Peacebuilding Framework is drawn from the UNDP Strategic Plan; specifically, the governance and resilience signature solutions. It is based firmly within the new Regional Programme for Africa 2022-2025 and is consistent with the RBA's Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa and the UNDP GPN's prevention and governance offers. It will contribute to the following Regional Programme priority areas:

- **Priority Area 1 – People:** African citizens (especially women and youth), in a context of reinvigorated social contracts, have a stronger voice and influence in AU and RECs'/RMs' policymaking and implementation processes.
- **Priority Area 2 – Prosperity:** African citizens (especially women and youth) benefit from a regionally integrated, structurally transformed, and inclusive economy
- **Priority Area 4 – Peace:** African citizens (especially women and youth), supported by the AU and RECs'/RMs, make measurable progress towards sustainable peace.

Through the following pillars, which will be implemented in an integrated portfolio approach:

PILLAR 1: PREVENTION AND EARLY ACTION

Goal: Sustained support to regional and national institutions to implement existing frameworks for ensuring inclusive political transitions, addressing structural vulnerabilities, building resilience, strengthening infrastructures for peace and early warning, and encouraging early action to prevent conflicts and violent extremism

The UN Secretary General’s report to the General Assembly (A/75/917 & S/2021/562), ‘Promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa’, which reflects its forward-looking orientation, highlights that across the world - and, notably, in Africa⁷ - instability and conflict continue to generate and exacerbate poverty and institutional fragility. This, in turn, decreases resilience and the prospects for peace. The report cites a 30 percent increase in wars and violent conflicts in Africa from 2015 to 2020.



in Africa, instability and conflict continue to generate and exacerbate poverty and institutional fragility



Conflict prevention is the core of the UN’s mandate. This pillar will contribute towards implementing UNDP’s Prevention Offer in the Africa region. It is a corporate effort to articulate UNDP’s prevention and peacebuilding ambition and promote a strong development lens that calls for acting early and at scale in conflict and crisis prevention and peacebuilding. Its objectives are to: (i) stabilize and protect hard-won development gains; (ii) mitigate risks of relapse or recurrence; and (iii) build institutional and community resilience to sustain peaceful development pathways⁸. Through its Africa Promise, UNDP Africa focuses on prevention, stabilization, transformation and transition to address the needs emerging from both trends in both traditional and non-traditional conflict, such as violent protests, election-related violence and terrorism-related deaths.

This pillar builds on UNDP’s conflict prevention and peacebuilding work with the AU, RECs, civil society networks and UN Member States on support towards infrastructures for peace (I4P) including conflict early warning and response mechanisms; insider mediation particularly in politically complex settings such as transitions and elections; social cohesion that includes trust building and social contract; prevention and response to violent extremism, and implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and UNSCR 2250 on Youth and Peacebuilding. The foundation of this work has been hinged on sound and up to date conflict analysis, which includes identification of key stakeholders such as key interlocutors or insider mediators; and applied research, for example the Journey to Extremism 2.0 study that includes exploration of the extent to which UNDP’s PVE-interventions (in the security sector, faith-based organizations, communities, etc.), that are firmly grounded in, and informed by, the findings of the Journey to Extremism in Africa (2017), have demonstrated ‘behavioural change’ effects in the target group of at-risk youth. UNDP’s conflict prevention and peacebuilding work contributes to other streams of work such as stabilisation, elections and human mobility. Areas of work that have recently been developed include integration of violent extremism indicators within conflict early warning and response mechanisms; community-based reintegration in PVE contexts; increased cross-border engagements and multi-count

⁷ <https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2F75%2F917&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False>

⁸ UNDP, Prevention Offer: Development Pathways to Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding 2022-2025

ry initiatives; enhancement of measurement tools such as trust; and inclusion of behaviour insights and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) in peacebuilding.

Within this context, the pillar focuses on: Strengthening continuing analysis using available tools, such as the Crisis Risk Dashboard and emerging digital technologies; investing in research to further enhance thought leadership and adaptive approaches; supporting implementation of regional frameworks; and building support for transitions and stabilization efforts. It will also leverage a governance pool of experts and networks of women in governance and peacebuilding. As UNDP contributes towards the broader UN peacebuilding and prevention agenda, a focal point from the RSCA Governance and Peacebuilding Team will participate in the UN coordination mechanisms at headquarter-level, such as the Regional Monthly Reviews (RMR).

KEY AREAS:

1. Systems and solutions enabled, and partnerships strengthened for coherent and sustained support to achieve inclusive political transitions, build institutional resilience and contribute to stabilization

Some African countries are experiencing political transition. Transitions provide unique opportunities to strengthen citizen participation, engagement, dialogue and transformative change. However, they are also moments of vulnerability during which development and governance gains may be lost. To ensure the sustainability of inclusive political transitions and, thus, their ability to deliver both democratic transformation and economic dividends, UNDP will provide predictable, flexible and continued support to the AU, RECs, CSOs, youth organizations and the private sector to ensure their sustained engagement at various levels. Supporting transition processes would also require an integrated and holistic approach that combines recovery and stabilization efforts aimed at improving community safety and security, restoring essential infrastructure and basic services, and providing livelihood opportunities for households in the affected communities. It would also aim to build the capacities of local, regional and subregional organizations to support stabilization efforts.

UNDP established in late 2021 an operational and funding architecture to support the effective management of inclusive transitions. This facility will make resources and technical capacities available to UNDP COs in their conflict prevention and transition support activities. Systems will be established to ensure that experts are deployed efficiently, resources are available through funding windows, and fast-track operational measures are implemented.

2. AU, RECs/RMs, and national and regional institutions enabled to promote structural transformation, conflict prevention and early warning /early responses, including prevention of violent extremism

Holistic prevention efforts require deploying direct and structural conflict prevention measures simultaneously. Efforts to understand the political economy and root causes of conflicts and early action should complement direct prevention efforts deployed by the UN, AU, RECs and other actors. The AU and RECs have developed tools to address the structural causes of conflicts, including the Africa Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and Country Structural Vulnerability and Resilience Assessments. While early warning mechanisms have proved effective in providing timely information, few countries take appropriate action promptly. UNDP will invest in gathering data that would support the case for early response by the AU, RECs, Member States, and other national, local and community infrastructures. UNDP will continue to support the integration of prevention and response to violent extremism (PVE) and

other threats to ensure that early warning systems are equipped with the necessary tools and capacities to tackle emerging threats and promote development responses. Support the development, dissemination and translation into programming of conflict prevention and peacebuilding tools and promote sharing of knowledge products, specifically on social cohesion and insider mediation, PVE, early warning and early response (EWER), and climate security risks focussing on inclusiveness (women, youth and PWDs) and gender equity at regional, national and subnational levels.

3. Responsiveness and efficiency of subregional, national, local actors in addressing and preventing climate-related security risks strengthened

While climate change does not cause violent conflict in and of itself, it can have negative impacts on international peace and security through interactions with other social, political and economic factors. Consequently, it can become a key theme to be addressed when working on prevention and early warning. It is increasingly clear that climate change is occurring in Africa, exacerbating existing conflict potential and dynamics in hot spots across the continent. It worsens existing drivers of conflict between and within communities and states as it intensifies competition over limited natural resources, while degrading ecosystems and landscapes. Its negative impacts on occupational opportunities, settlement and transhumance patterns, including access to pasture and arable land are also clear. Thus, climate change is a threat multiplier. UNDP will continue to support ongoing and/or new pilot initiatives at regional and country levels to address climate security, which will include capacity on climate governance, while promoting capacity building for several stakeholders, including UN Member States, regional organisations, CSOs, FBOs and private sector entities, and exchange of experiences. The link with the private sector in this regard is paramount and UNDP aims to support a blended finance initiative on the climate security nexus. To ensure that COs are equipped with the appropriate tools to address climate security-related risks, this Framework will also develop knowledge products on climate security in Africa, reviewing CO and regional experiences and building on the work of subregional organizations and their early warning systems.

4. Transformational leadership capacities of formal and informal institutions improved at all levels

During the consultative process on Reimagining Governance and Peacebuilding in Africa, participants generally acknowledged that transformational leadership is essential for Africa to implement Agenda 2063 and achieve the SDGs in 2030. Such leadership should prioritize the collective interest of African countries, rather than individual or corporate interests, and aim to improve the lives and livelihoods of African citizens. The design and practice of UNDP's Programme on Leadership for Results, which mobilized individuals and institutions in the fight against HIV and AIDS, offers an important example of mobilizing transformational leadership for action. That effort involved "practitioners and partners in leadership positions from around the world. It is the shared leadership and the ability of each member of that platform to support each other, which led to transformation⁹" through operational strategies for full-spectrum response, which helped the HIV/AIDS pandemic to wane.

Transformational leadership is about empowering and strengthening people and society by achieving tangible socio-economic development results and transforming institutions, organizations and individuals, including values, norms, mindset and ideological convictions.

⁹ Sharma, M., *Radical transformational Leadership, Strategic Action for Change Agents*, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, California, 2017, pp. 44 and 60.



Photo: UNDP Chad

On an individual level, efforts will promote citizen engagement, particularly among youth, women, and marginalized social groups such as persons with disability, so that they can develop resilience, sharpen their sense of the national interest, ethics and critical thinking ability, and serve as agents of transformation. The Framework will focus on current leaders, while also making investments in the leaders of tomorrow by targeting youth.

PILLAR 2: INVESTING IN AFRICA’S YOUTH

Goal: Africa’s youth fully included in all regional and national governance and peacebuilding initiatives



60 percent of african population is under the age of 24. This offers the continent the opportunity to lead the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR)



Africa has the world’s youngest population: more than 60 percent of its population is under the age of 24. This offers the continent the opportunity to lead the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) by leveraging their innovation and digital technology capacities, including among youth returning to Africa – to create those products that will transform Africa. The AfCFTA, which came into effect in 2021, has the potential to increase access to markets for the goods and services that Africa’s youth produce. However, this depends on States’ efforts to provide a regulatory and policy environment conducive to intra-African trade, and to the right investments and attention to building productive capacity – both of which are currently very limited¹⁰.

It also requires youth to share knowledge on the AfCFTA and understand how to use it to advance youth-led enterprise. While evidence shows that investing in youth entrepreneurship would significantly reduce unemployment, regulatory barriers continue to hinder young people from maximizing their innovation potential. Thus, the roll out of the Renewed Governance and Peacebuilding offer will have a youth spine – and anchor its economic governance – related work on creating sufficient awareness of the opportunities for youth, and the actions to galvanize their capacities to benefit from these opportunities. This work will promote narratives around viewing economic governance as critical for sustainable development, peace and security – and will touch on actions policy makers must take, including in the areas of creating enabling environments, promoting production and facilitating accelerators such as digitalization, to make the AfCFTA play its role in accelerating Africa’s structural economic transformation.

The African Union Youth Charter recognizes youth as assets and effective and capable partners who can make a unique contribution to ongoing development. Indeed, their involvement is a prerequisite for peace and prosperity. The Charter further provides an important continental framework to guide African states in ensuring that youth are integrated into the social, economic and political spheres. Similarly, and consistent with the Charter, the adoption of UN Security Council Resolutions 2250 (2015), 2419 (2018), and 2535 (2020)¹¹ on YPS marked a fundamental shift in development programming to enable meaningful participation by youth at all levels of decision-making. This was further enhanced by the development of the YPS programming handbook that seeks to inform the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of

¹⁰ <https://au.int/sites/default/files/documents/38076-doc-afcftaenglishfinal20200123-2.pdf>

¹¹ See <https://www.youth4peace.info/UNSCR2250/Introduction> , <https://www.youth4peace.info/unscr2419> and <https://www.youth4peace.info/UNSCR2535>

context-specific interventions that are youth sensitive and youth inclusive.

However, these frameworks have not been effectively matched by specific transformative actions or adequate implementation of AU Member States' commitments. Many young people remain unemployed¹² and marginalized and face challenges in accessing public resources and quality social services. Moreover, contributions to policy formulation, programme development and decision-making has been limited, fragmented and, often, ad hoc. Including young people effectively in peacebuilding processes and infrastructures remains critical to maintaining peace and promoting economic development, given their innovation and digital technology capacities. Growing evidence of peacebuilding best practices, including as reported in a recent RSCA study¹³, suggests that a coordinated approach through targeted, well-designed and inclusive mechanisms improve community resilience and social cohesion. UNDP should thus help to harness and scale peacebuilding and governance solutions that leverage Africa's youth as an important resource.

The Reimagining Governance and Peacebuilding consultative process with youth organizations and networks revealed the importance of UNDP's unique role and comparative position at regional and national levels in advancing youth integration in formal decision-making processes. Participants recommended that UNDP enhance its advocacy work, institutional capacity building and programmatic support to government to ensure that youth are included systematically and over the long term, as well as ensure overall accountability in policy implementation. As with UNDP's overall approach, this Framework will seek to invest in capacities, systems, mechanisms and approaches that lay the foundation to harness the potential of Africa's youth, while recognizing the diversity of their contexts and abilities. The Framework is also consistent with the Youth Charter's articles on youth development, participation, and peace and security. The approach will also include engagement with youth in the diaspora. Implementation will have a particular focus on young women, and leverage on existing on networks such as the AU African Youth Ambassadors for Peace, and the African Young Women Fellowship alumni, among others.

KEY AREAS:

1. Policy and regulatory reforms supported to best position youth to benefit from the AfCFTA

Africa's youth will drive implementation of the AfCFTA. To do this they must create, invent, innovate, and produce the goods, services and ideas that will transform the continent. A trade governance agenda will be needed to accompany Africa's youth to attain these goals. According to the United Nations Population Fund, Africa's GDP could grow by \$500 billion per year for 30 years if it invests in the human capital that young people represent¹⁴. An inclusive economic transformation, with youth as the foundation, is therefore an urgent proposition for Africa. This will include making the necessary policy and regulatory reforms to unleash the potential of young people to lead on the Made in Africa Revolution¹⁵.

2. Capacity building, peer-to peer exchange and knowledge sharing for youth enabled to ensure opportunities for equal access

UNDP will continue to support opportunities for youth capacity building, networking and

¹² ILO, Global Employment Trends for Youth 2020: Africa. In addition, underemployment rates remain quite high in many sub-Saharan African countries (60-80 percent, according to an ILO study) and employment is often in the informal sector.

¹³ United Nations Development Programme, Review of Youth-Led Peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa, Great Lakes and the Sahel

¹⁴ https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/EN-SWOP14-Report_FINAL-web.pdf

¹⁵ <https://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/library/reports/futures-report-2021.html>



peer-to-peer learning. UNDP will also promote the use of digital platforms for youth mobilization and participation in peacebuilding and development processes.

3. Policy frameworks and institutional mechanisms enabled at regional, sub-regional and national levels for meaningful participation of youth in decision-making, transition, peacebuilding and development processes

To advance the agenda of youth inclusion in governance institutions and peacebuilding, including the YPS agenda, UNDP will support enabling environments and (safe) spaces for meaningful youth participation at local, subnational, national and regional levels. This is particularly relevant in countries in political transition and where political environments are changing and includes youth participation in electoral processes. This strategy will set the foundation for a long-term approach that moves beyond decision-makers interacting with young people through youth structures to integrating young people into decision-making positions. Thus, their ideas will filter both up from below and down from above. UNDP will also support the creation of youth sounding boards in all countries to foster youth consultative and advisory roles in decision-making processes. The Framework will further seek to leverage UNDP's GPN of experts and practitioners with a view to providing timely development advice, knowledge, resources and networks of best practices through context-specific support to COs and stakeholders.

PILLAR 3: ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

Goal: Economic governance capabilities of partner countries, including on natural resource management, are strengthened to contribute to social cohesion and delivery of the economic dividends of democratic governance



Africa is one of the richest regions in the world in terms of its abundant natural resources, including oil, natural gas, gold, phosphates, diamonds, copper, iron ore, bauxite, biological diversity and precious woods



Africa is one of the richest regions in the world in terms of its abundant natural resources, including oil, natural gas, gold, phosphates, diamonds, copper, iron ore, bauxite, biological diversity and precious woods. According to the 2017 Resource Governance Index, resource-rich countries in Africa are also among the most poorly governed¹⁶. The report states that 99 percent or more of African copper and gold production comes from countries where resource governance is rated as less than satisfactory. Risks related to governance issues, such as acquiring licenses, uncertain taxation, and failure to acquire the social license to operate, have contributed to preventing African countries from transforming resource wealth to production and revenues and, thus, to lasting development. As efforts to limit the use of fossil fuels increase, so will the demand for critical resources such as cobalt and lithium, which are abundantly available in Africa. This will require African countries to revise and update their mining laws and regulations and strengthen their contract negotiation capacities.

To harness the potential of natural resources to achieve better development outcomes for Africa's population, which is projected to double by 2050, the continent must address accountability and

¹⁶ <https://resourcegovernance.org/sites/default/files/documents/2017-resource-governance-index.pdf>

transparency, particularly in the extraction industry. This requires mobilizing domestic resources and ensuring efficient revenue collection and rent management. Corruption and illicit financial flows must also be addressed. Managing environmental and social impacts, addressing communities' and citizens' concerns, managing volatile revenues, and reducing commodity dependency and associated fiscal imbalances and debt crises are critical components of economic governance. Establishing an enabling environment for diversification, industrialization and job creation is also important.

The global economy continues to digitalize, although the rules and regulations enabling the digital economy are still in their nascent stage in many African countries. National strategies are developing much more slowly than technological innovation and cyber risks. As economic activity increasingly takes place online, especially in the context of COVID-19, UNDP would need to extend its support to Member States to design e-commerce and digital trade rules and regulations.



The challenge of financing development agendas, including the SDGs, Agenda 2030 and the African Agenda 2063, is more fundamental than simply raising more funds. Africa's economic paradigm must thus shift to address systemic and structural issues, such as inadequate citizen engagement with the economic governance ecosystem (especially among women and youth). Growing social and economic inequalities, triggered primarily by COVID-19, that undermine social cohesion must also be addressed. The size and structure of African economies contribute to their lack of competitiveness at the global level. The laws on economic crime in some countries are weak and their judiciaries have limited capacity to prosecute offenders. These issues, along with weak tax systems in more countries, require urgent attention.

Most countries were facing economic challenges prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, which were exacerbated by lockdowns and the global economic slowdown. Social protection programmes, such as unemployment insurance or social assistance provided to extremely poor people, do not cover the informal economy, which includes up to 85 percent of all employed and self-employed persons in sub-Saharan Africa¹⁷. The impact of the pandemic has been particularly pronounced in Africa's borderlands, which have been disproportionately impacted by border closures. These closures heightened the problem of insufficient social protection, particularly for women and youth engaged in farming, pastoralism and informal cross-border trade.

¹⁷ United Nations Development Programme, *Informality and Social Protection in African Countries: A Forward-looking Assessment of Contributory Schemes*, New York, 2021.

Integrated national financing frameworks (INFFs) help countries strengthen planning processes and overcome impediments to financing sustainable development and the SDGs at the country level. In this context, an effective economic governance system refers to the structure of institutions and procedures, as well as ideals such as transparency and accountability. This involves accountability in resource mobilization, allocation and spending, expenditures, and development outcomes. It is also firmly rooted in the principle of a social contract, which implies inclusion and participation, by promoting a whole-of-society approach to bringing private, public, and civil society actors together and redesigning integrated, sustainable, and inclusive national financing frameworks aligned with the 2030 and 2063 Agendas. The ultimate goal is to help strengthen African economies, strengthen the social contract with citizens, make more effective and strategic sustainable investments, create jobs, improve anti-corruption efforts, reduce poverty, and achieve the SDGs overall by changing the economic governance paradigm.

The AfCFTA “connects 1.3 billion people with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) estimated at US\$3.4 trillion¹⁸.” It is a significant milestone on the path to African integration and development and a catalyst for new ways of doing business, producing, working and trading within Africa and with the rest of the world. The AfCFTA is fostering cooperation among AU Member States on issues ranging from trade and customs matters to industrialization and investment. Therefore, it provides an opportunity to undertake much needed structural reforms across Africa to strengthen regulatory frameworks, increase transparency and cooperation among states to enhance economic governance, and combat illegal practices such as IFFs. The Framework will leverage recent UNDP’s Memorandum of Understanding with the AfCFTA Secretariat to support the AfCFTA as a development enabler and accelerator that can move the continent beyond COVID-19 recovery, towards the achievement of the Africa We Want and the Sustainable Development Goals.

AU Member States have shown a strong commitment to the United Nations Convention against Corruption¹⁹, with 54 of the 55 ratifying it. In addition, 45 of the 55 have ratified the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC)²⁰. Both conventions promote, facilitate and regulate cooperation among State Parties to ensure the effectiveness of measures and actions to prevent, detect, punish and eradicate corruption and related offences in Africa. They also promote coordination and harmonization of policies and legislation among State Parties to prevent, detect, punish and eradicate corruption on the continent, and to establish the necessary conditions to foster transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs. Both conventions provide expressly for government reporting to demonstrate accountability.

Despite the ratification of these conventions, sub-Saharan Africa’s yearly average score of 32 percent on Transparency International’s Corruption Perception Index places the region last in the ranking²¹. Data from Afrobarometer supports this, showing high levels of corruption in many of those countries. The Global Corruption Barometer – Africa 2019 reveals that, on average across 35 countries, more than half (55 percent) of all citizens stated that corruption in their country had increased in the previous 12 months²². Approaches to combating corruption must therefore include improving integrity standards, advocating policies that limit opportunities for corruption, and designing institutional reforms that level the playing field for all businesses.

¹⁸ <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/trade/publication/the-african-continental-free-trade-area>.

¹⁹ https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNCAC/Status-Map/UNCAC_Status_Map_Current.pdf

²⁰ <https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36382-sl-AFRICAN%20UNION%20CONVENTION%20ON%20PREVENTING%20AND%20COMBATING%20CORRUPTION.pdf>

²¹ Corruption Perception Index 2020, pg 6 https://images.transparencycdn.org/images/CPI2020_Report_EN_0802-WEB-1_2021-02-08-103053.pdf

²² https://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Publications%20conjointes/partenaires/ab_r7_global_corruption_barometer_report.pdf.

Africa loses an estimated \$88.6 billion annually in illicit capital flight. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, these outflows are nearly equal to the combined total annual inflows of official development assistance to Africa, valued at \$48 billion, and annual foreign direct investment, pegged at \$54 billion. All these factors further strain the social contract, undermining Africa's ability to achieve the SDGs and the AU's Agenda 2063.

KEY AREAS:

- 1. Promote and facilitate regional and national efforts in the prevention of and the fight against corruption and illicit financial flows, including through the use of technology and innovation.**
- 2. In collaboration with African Chambers of commerce and other institutions, work with member states to improve integrity standards, develop policies that limit opportunities for corruption, and design institutional reforms that level the playing field for all businesses.**
- 3. Strengthen the capacity of the African Union Advisory Board of Corruption (AUABC), to advocate with member States on the full implementation of the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC).**
- 4. Strengthen capacities for economic and natural resource/environmental governance through designing, updating and upgrading policies, institutions and regulatory arrangements.**
- 5. Especially in the context of political transitions provide technical support to review the economic architecture and structure of the economies with specific focus on the informal sector.**
- 6. Support the use of data and evidence-based policies to promote economic governance,**
- 7. Provide platforms to bring together stakeholders at the national and local levels towards a common viewpoint on economic governance.**
- 8. Conduct comparative studies on natural resource governance systems in Africa to encourage peer-to-peer exchanges among countries and to inspire the champions of good governance of natural resources.**
- 9. Support efforts that leverage the AfCFTA, including in the area of trade governance and regulatory convergence among African countries, to increase development outcomes, especially for Africa's youth and women**



Photo: UNDP WACA

PILLAR 4: DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE AND CIVIC PARTICIPATION PARTICIPATION

Goal: Trust rebuilt in democratic governance and citizen participation promoted, especially among youth, in electoral processes

AU Member States have adopted some of the most robust governance mechanisms, including, specifically, the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the African Charter on Democracy, Governance and Elections (ACDEG)²³. Together with the APRM, they provide a strong foundation for promoting democratic governance and citizen participation. Agenda 2063 recognizes that regular and genuine elections are at the heart of democratic governance. When conducted with integrity, elections allow citizens to have a voice in how and by whom they are governed. For the citizenry to participate in elections and to do so with the trust and confidence that their choice will be meaningful is a cornerstone of democracy. Securing the electoral process and ensuring its integrity is therefore crucial. This pillar of the Framework addresses Priority 1 (People) of the Regional Programme for Africa (2022-2025), which aims to ensure that, in a context of reinvigorated social contracts, African citizens, especially women and youth, have a stronger voice and influence in AU and RECs/RMs' policymaking and implementation processes.



For the past 30 years, UNDP has actively supported elections all over the world, both in countries in transition from authoritarian rule and in stable democracies. During this period, UNDP's election assistance in Africa has grown.



For the past 30 years, UNDP has actively supported elections all over the world, both in countries in transition from authoritarian rule and in stable democracies. During this period, UNDP's election assistance in Africa has grown. In addition to government institutions, support has been extended to civil society, the media, political parties and parliaments. The development and adoption, by the UN and its partners, of the electoral cycle approach to assistance has sought to ensure support for all phases of an electoral process – before, during and after election day. UNDP takes the approach that democracy is always a work in progress. Strengthening democratic institutions and promoting truly democratic elections is central to overcoming democratic deficits and fostering the link between democracy and human development. In Africa, UNDP had largely been successful in building the capacity of electoral institutions, such as electoral management bodies (EMBs). Many of them have since held three or more election cycles without extensive international technical support.

On a regional and subregional level, UNDP has supported institutions such as the AU, RECs, and other subregional electoral networks, including the Electoral Commissions Forum of Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries. In recent years, UNDP has facilitated observer training for the AU and various RECs (mainly the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)), the East African Community (EAC), the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Economic Community of Central African States), all to improve the quality and credibility of elections on the continent.

However, recent studies point to troubling emerging trends, including: high voter apathy and low

²³ <https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36384-treaty-african-charter-on-democracy-and-governance.pdf>

turnout, especially among young people; lack of trust in EMBs to conduct credible elections due to perceived political interference; increased election violence, especially gender-based, limiting women's participation as candidates and voters; increased number of contested election results, with constitutional courts nullifying results in some countries; rise in the spread of misinformation and disinformation via social media intended to undermine election integrity; and long-term concerns for financial sustainability based on the high cost of elections (mostly technology-related) compared to investment in development. This is the backdrop for the renewed Governance and Peacebuilding Framework, which seeks to shift the focus from UNDP's traditional role – providing technical support to EMBs – to an approach that emphasizes investing in an environment that supports credible elections, addressing emerging trends, particularly regarding voter apathy and information pollution, and rebuilding trust in democratic governance.

The overall goal is to contribute to strengthening democracy in Africa by promoting inclusive participation, strengthening electoral institutions and processes, and creating space for engagement between institutions and civil society. As stakeholders emphasized during the Reimagining Governance and Peacebuilding consultative process, holding elections is necessary but not sufficient to ensure a democratic process. Achieving meaningful citizen participation in decision-making through genuine elections thus requires a broader approach. On a continent where more than 60 percent of the population is under 24 years of age, loss of trust in democratic governance could have longer-term impacts on peace, security and development. The context also offers a real opportunity to shift the paradigm on democratic governance and rebuild trust in electoral processes, especially among young women and men.

Africa has proved that it has a long and strong history of peer-to-peer exchanges and commitment to South-South cooperation. The renewed Framework seeks to build on this and harness the influence that regional and national level actions can have on each other through peer-to-peer relationships, collaborative approaches and shared information. A multiplier effect can be created across the region by sharing national-level innovations and lessons learned at the regional level. The review of regional standards that establish common good practices can also support change, which can then help stimulate and support national-level initiatives for improvement. Furthermore, support to a range of partners, and increased dialogue among them, creates multiple entry points and synergistic dynamics for change.

This pillar will build upon lessons learned and the coordination/management mechanisms of existing UNDP regional electoral projects (primarily the project on improved electoral processes and political participation in the Arab region). This implies strong internal cooperation with the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs' Electoral Assistance Division in its role to support the Focal Point for UN electoral assistance, particularly on external partnerships. The regional project will build upon existing national contexts and will work through COs and Chief Electoral Advisers. Activities will be coordinated with the Bureau of Policy and Programme Support (BPPS) governance team and, specifically, with the Oslo Governance Centre on disinformation.

KEY AREAS:

1. Platforms established for leaders and citizens to share views and challenges facing leadership and governance in Africa

Given the crucial importance of rebuilding trust in governance systems and processes, UNDP will work with the AU to establish an annual Africa Governance Forum. The objective will be to provide a platform to take stock of governance trends, challenges and opportunities based on

the achievement of Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want and the AU's Shared Values. It will harness citizens' voices, offer them a valuable platform for airing their perspectives and provide an opportunity for Africa's leaders to engage in dialogue on key governance issues. The Forum will also afford opportunities to senior policy officials, political leaders, members of the diaspora, private sector leaders and international partners to gain first-hand insights into citizens' aspirations for the future. The Forum would be a forward-looking, action-oriented platform where, based on open conversations, participants will generate concrete proposals to renew and enhance governance approaches and solutions in Africa. The Forum will adopt the action plan and the stakeholders will then implement it. The Forum's organizers will create a mechanism to monitor and follow up on the action plan and an accountability system to ensure that stakeholders act on their commitments to the recommendations that the meeting generates.

2. Inclusiveness, effectiveness and sustainability of regional institutions, platforms and processes that strengthen national-level electoral processes are increased

This contributes to the development of effective, accountable, and transparent institutions and platforms in line with SDG 16, within the framework of enhancing electoral and democratic processes. This will be done by strengthening the role of regional bodies in supporting national agencies with a direct role in electoral processes through implementation, policymaking, and decision-making. This will also be advanced by enhancing coordination at regional and national levels with bodies that advise, monitor and influence the policy agenda, including CSOs. The legitimacy that these regional bodies draw from their members establishes them as important platforms for enabling peer exchange, raising awareness, fostering policy dialogue, and developing standards and principles that improve electoral processes.

The Framework will promote inter-sectoral dialogue. Through these dynamic interactions, it will enhance an understanding of the sectors' positive roles and seek convergence on principles that may be integrated at the national level. To further advance South-South and triangular cooperation, this output will also encourage linkages with similar regional platforms in other parts of the world, including in the Arab States, given the overlap of countries in the different platforms.

This output aims to target, in particular, its key partners, such as the AU, SADC, International Conference of the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), ECOWAS, Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), EAC, Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS), and the Conference of Constitutional Jurisdictions of Africa (CCJA), as the responsible intergovernmental and professional organizations for promoting genuine elections in the region. In addition, the output seeks to foster engagement by regional CSOs as key partners that monitor, advocate, educate and mobilize. In addition, the project will involve other regional bodies as relevant, such as the Network of African Human Rights Institutions (NANHRI), the Pan-African Parliament and/or regional associations of parliamentarians, and regional media networks.

3. Electoral and political rights, information, and accountability strengthened, including countering information pollution in social media

This output contributes to promoting electoral and political rights within the overall international human rights framework and advances SDG 16 through public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms. It aims to do this by advancing election

norms and standards, fostering accountability, and helping to create an environment in which genuine elections and political participation can take place. Beyond specific electoral rights, such as the right to vote and stand for election, “participation in the electoral process cannot be effective unless a wide range of rights are respected: freedom of expression and opinion, freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of movement, freedom from discrimination, and freedom from fear and intimidation²⁴.”



It also seeks to strengthen the ability of organizations and citizens to seek accountability and advocate for electoral and democratic change. Effective engagement requires understanding these rights and their relevance within the electoral context, the ability to monitor and report on electoral and political processes, and broad access to reliable information. These are critical for empowering stakeholders to participate in informed dialogue and place information in the public domain. In addition, open data policies and practices, which provide for scrutiny, are needed to prevent corruption and promote accountability. Of course, a balance must be struck with protecting personal data to prevent abuse and misuse. Interventions will address key sectors that can be instrumental in strengthening accountability, transparency, and electoral rights, including human rights institutions, civil society and the media, as well as their interface with other institutions and agencies. It will also seek to expand the capacities of UN Member States to address information pollution, including that spread through social media by diasporas outside the jurisdiction of individual Member States.

4. Inclusive participation enhanced in electoral processes and democratic dialogue

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, United Nations Member States pledged to “leave no one behind.” That pledge is now embraced as one of three guiding principles of the United Nations’ work on sustainable development. This output supports these principles of equality and non-discrimination through ensuring women’s full and effective participation and equal opportunities in political and public life (SDG 5), political inclusion without discrimination (SDG 10), and responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels” (SDG 16)²⁵. This output is central to UNDP’s work on inclusive political processes, which gives priority to the political participation and civic engagement of persons and groups in society who are marginalized, excluded and under-represented in political institutions and

²⁴ Manual on Human Rights Monitoring – Chapter 23 - Monitoring Human Rights in the Context of Election
<https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Chapter23-MHRM.pdf>

²⁵ <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>

decision-making processes. This is based on the premise that establishing more inclusive political processes strengthens citizens' political influence, builds more accountable governments and institutions, and leads to more inclusive and peaceful societies. To achieve this, interventions may need to address legal, institutional, policy, technical and societal challenges to inclusion.

The Framework approaches this objective through dual and interconnected, perspectives on inclusiveness and participation: to enhance equality and opportunities within legal and institutional structures and policies, and to strengthen the active engagement of individuals and groups with those frameworks. This output will target women and youth, as well as other marginalized groups, such as PWD, minorities and displaced persons. Interventions will be addressed with all regional partners and platforms through a multi-stakeholder approach, encouraging collaboration and creating opportunities for dialogue among them. In addition to focusing on specific groups in society through this output, the Framework supports increased citizen engagement in public affairs by providing knowledge, tools and opportunities for their voices to be heard. This would be facilitated through outreach by institutions, research and facilitating dialogue.

The Framework advocates for gender equality and opportunities for women throughout its interactions and targets women who are at greatest risk of exclusion, including internally-displaced women and women from marginalized communities (including with disabilities). Although youth make up 65 percent of Africa's population, their political participation remains low. The Framework aims to contribute to the Youth 2030 Agenda, in line with the United Nations Youth Strategy launched in 2018 and, in particular, its priority areas of promoting youth engagement, participation and advocacy and supporting the civic and political engagement of young people, including the right to participate in public affairs. This will be approached through complementary and interrelated perspectives for promoting youth inclusion in regional institutions and encouraging their direct active engagement as agents for change.

PILLAR 5: PROMOTING THE RULE OF LAW, JUSTICE AND HUMAN RIGHTS

Goal: Justice and security institutions accountability and effectiveness strengthened, and rights holders empowered to claim rights, including those proclaimed in AU treaties, in a protected and inclusive civic space

A society's resilience in the face of crisis, conflict, natural disasters, and climate, and social and economic shocks is strongest when justice and security institutions are accountable and effective, when citizens and human rights actors are empowered and able to claim rights and accountability, and where civic space is protected and inclusive. Recent context analyses and consultations highlight Africa's fraying social contract. This results from the state's heavy-handed approach and the application of restrictive laws and measures that limit citizen voices and participation. In addition to the other framework documents, the outputs are also based on Phase IV of the Global Program on Rule of Law, Security and Human Rights (2022-2025)²⁷.

UNDP's efforts under this pillar will support COs and the respective national and regional counterparts

²⁶ United Nations, Youth 2030: Working with and for Young People - United Nations Youth Strategy, 2018 https://www.un.org/youthenvoy/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/18-00080_UN-Youth-Strategy_Web.pdf

²⁷ <https://www.rolhr.undp.org/content/ruleoflaw/en/home.html>



Photo: UNDP Zambia

to ensure that people, particularly women, youth, people with alternative gender identities, homosexuals and PWD, have the knowledge and tools to claim their rights and seek accountability if they are violated. It will support human rights actors and systems, including CSOs, human rights defenders and national human rights institutions, to ensure that they have the necessary freedoms and capacities to protect and promote human rights and to hold governments accountable for their commitments. Governments must also have the commitment and political will to implement policies and practices that enhance the inclusiveness, transparency, accessibility and responsiveness of justice and security systems. UNDP will also support initiatives to ensure that justice and security institutions have the resources, competencies and technical capacities needed to better serve the public and instill public trust in the rule of law.

“ A society’s resilience is strongest when justice and security institutions are accountable and effective, when citizens and human rights actors are empowered, and where civic space is protected and inclusive ”

Thanks to its extensive country-level presence, close relationships with governments, and its integrator and coordinating roles, including through such mechanisms as the Global Focal Point for Rule of Law²⁸ and the Tripartite Partnership on NHRIs²⁹, UNDP has a comparative advantage in the area of rule of law, human rights and justice. Using these advantages and establishing and/or building on existing partnerships with regional UN entities and other organizations in the area, UNDP COs could focus on developing alliances and coalitions for transformative and meaningful change under the pillar. The outputs will also be implemented using digital technologies to advocate for, defend and exercise rights, while acknowledging that the same means are used to violate rights, especially of the most vulnerable. Therefore, UNDP will carefully consider the risks related to human rights, exclusion and discrimination associated with digital tools.

By adopting many progressive legal frameworks since its founding, the AU has demonstrated its capacity and commitment to set norms. However, implementing them remains a key challenge for the AU and its Member States. These norms have been encapsulated in AU Shared Values, which are principles and practices developed that provide the basis for collective actions and solutions to address the political, economic, and social challenges that impede Africa’s integration and development. A Shared Value is considered an important tool for ensuring economic success and enables leaders to maximize the competitive value of solving social problems in new markets and promoting cost savings, talent retention and more. These values are embedded in governance and human rights treaties, which Member States are expected to ratify, domesticate and implement.

KEY AREAS:

1. AU, RECs and their Member States’ capacities enhanced to ratify, domesticate and implement AU normative frameworks

The AU provides an institutional framework for advancing the achievement of development-related goals across the continent. AU treaties provide the normative and legal mechanism through which Member States can foster greater political and economic integration, while simultaneously enhancing peace and security and poverty reduction and

²⁸ https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/gfp_factsheet.pdf

²⁹ <https://ganhri.org/tripartite-partnership/#:~:text=Tripartite%20Partnership%20GANHRI%20UNDP%20DOHCHR,human%20rights%20for%20all%20people.>

achieving the SDGs and Agenda 2063. UNDP's experience in implementing its flagship AU Treaties Project shows that ratifying, domesticating and implementing AU treaties broadens citizens' rights, provides best practices and peer learning opportunities, and promotes regional and continental integration. In addition, treaties improve the countries' legal framework and provide benchmarks to hold states accountable to their regional and international commitments.

For instance, UNDP has used these legal frameworks to achieve gender equality through the Regional Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment project and the Spotlight Initiative³⁰. Ratification, domestication, and implementation of AU treaties contributes to achievement of the SDGs, particularly SDG 16 on building inclusive, peaceful, and just societies. This is essential because the treaties cover the entire landscape of peace, security, and development issues. In addition to setting continent-wide standards for human rights and good governance, the selected treaties help the AU to achieve its Shared Values. The focus will enable the AU Commission (AUC) to support treaty ratification, domestication and implementation. AU Member States are able to rapidly and effectively ratify, domesticate and implement AU treaties when citizens have improved knowledge of the treaties and can demand compliance.

2. Regional and national stakeholders and institutions have the capacity to promote and protect human rights and rule of law; accountability mechanisms and processes strengthened to contribute to preventing and responding to human rights violations/abuses and impunity

The status of human rights in a country reflects the health of its democracy overall. The broad consultations under Africa's Reimagining Governance and Peacebuilding process highlighted the rampant disregard for the rule of law, leading to a deficit of constitutionalism and functional democracies in Africa. This output recognizes the importance and role of national authorities, CSOs, national human rights institutions, academia, private businesses, and regional and international organizations in the multifaceted task of efficiently protecting and promoting human rights on the continent. The output's focuses on implementing SDG16 and the Regional Programme's priority to support the establishment of "effective, accountable, inclusive and responsive institutions, protecting and promoting human rights, gender equality, transparency, social cohesion, and enhancing the quality of governance and the rule of law³¹." The activities will prioritize enhanced engagement of women and youth and other marginalized groups in regional and national processes and will support establishing and strengthening partnerships with regional and national civil society platforms and national human rights institutions, as well as private businesses that recognize their role in upholding human rights.

3. Justice and security institutions and systems strengthened and equipped to provide greater access to justice and more people-centered security, including through innovation and digital transformation

In some countries, the judiciary and security institutions are the last line of defence in protecting the rule of law, civic space and the principles of democratic governance. However, in other contexts, they are the weakest link. Some of the challenges they face include lack of independence, lack of women's inclusion, weak financial and technical capacities, and lack of popular trust. This output seeks to achieve efficient, transparent, inclusive and people-centred justice and security systems, ensuring access to justice for all by providing technical support to

³⁰ <https://www.spotlightinitiative.org/>

³¹ United Nations Development Programme, Regional Programme for Africa 2022-2025

these institutions and systems at a country level, while helping to increase public trust. Such systems and institutions will enable governments to address injustices and discrimination, prevent human rights violations and instability, strengthen social cohesion, sustain peace, and increase societies' resilience to crises. The output will target not only formal justice institutions but also informal ones that often predominate, especially in rural Africa. Women, PWD, rural populations and other marginalized segments of society often face significant challenges when they enter and navigate judicial systems. The activities included under this output will prioritize these groups and integrate them in meaningful ways. Regional platforms for dialogue and peer-to-peer support for justice and security institutions make a difference, especially through continental bodies such as the CCJA. The output will also emphasize technology as a powerful tool that can help to achieve more efficient, accessible, transparent and accountable justice and security systems. The COVID pandemic has shown the importance of embracing digital innovations, such as e-justice, digital courts and case databases, while ensuring that the system does not create greater harm (for example, digitalization must not further marginalize already-marginalized segments of the population).

4. Women equipped to participate meaningfully in decision-making

Gender equality and the rule of law are essential foundations for sustainable peace and development. They feature prominently in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the AU Agenda 2063. Despite growing recognition of the importance of women's participation in the justice sector, representation lags behind that in other public realms in many countries. While women's participation and representation in formal justice systems has increased, their role in alternative justice mechanisms – mainly mediation, arbitration and conciliation – remains limited, as it is in community and traditional justice mechanisms. Moreover, access to justice for women, particularly victims of gender-based violence, is still limited, thus heightening victims' vulnerability and promoting impunity.

Incremental progress has been achieved in Africa over the past decade. Women have become judges and heads of judiciaries nationally and serve as judges in international courts and tribunals. However, even if some have broken the glass ceiling, women are still vastly underrepresented in decision-making positions, especially top-ranking ones. Beyond representation, the capacities of the justice and security sector to mainstream gender equality principles, particularly in delivering services, has been limited, thus deepening inequalities and affecting social cohesion. This output will specifically target the professional empowerment of women in the rule of law, human rights, justice and security sector. It will contribute to the UNDP/AU's Women in Governance and Political Participation Initiative.

PILLAR 6: LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES

Goal: Enhanced local governance capacities, decentralization and public service reforms to increase effectiveness, accountability, inclusion, resilience, delivery of core government functions and delivery of basic services to meet citizens' expectations

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the fragilities in national systems, as well as local communities' resilience in dealing with economic shocks. The demands on local governance systems to deliver basic services, particularly during COVID-19 lockdowns, requires rethinking UNDP's work at the country level to invest in subnational systems. Strengthening responsive, accountable and inclusive core governance functions is an important vehicle for ensuring service delivery, build social capital (horizontal) and strengthen the social contract (vertical), and ensure



Photo: UNDP Zimbabwe

the basic functionality of state governance. Strengthening states' core governance functions is an important investment in both public administration and service delivery and in enhancing resilience, strengthening the social contract, and building peaceful and resilient societies. This Framework refocuses UNDP's programming on strengthening the centre of government to include the subnational level and on building strong public service sectors for service delivery.

To achieve the SDGs and the Agenda 2063 for Africa, development interventions should focus on both the national and local levels. In many African countries, despite the rise of urbanization, the majority of citizens still live in non-urban settings where the public services delivered are of poor quality, if they exist at all. Moreover, if local communities are well organized and cohesive, they can play an important role in strengthening social cohesion and sustaining peace in fragile settings because most conflicts tend to occur at local level (that is, ethnic conflicts and land disputes).



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Investing in building local governance institutions can also help to address some of the worrying trends that are visible worldwide, including climate change, migration and rising inequality (horizontal and vertical). However, an RSCA survey indicates that while almost all African countries have legal and policy frameworks on local governance and decentralization, only 15 UNDP COs have robust local governance or decentralization projects. The average investment in support of these initiatives is less than 20 percent of the COs' overall budgets. However, a needs assessment should be conducted in countries where scaling up initiatives to strengthen local governance/decentralization portfolios would deliver added value and support this increase. Innovation and technology, especially digital technologies, are key enablers for local governance. Emerging digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence and machine learning, have the potential to improve economic planning and resource management and ensure efficient delivery of services. Consistent with UNDP's refocusing on local governance, the Framework would support e-governance at the local level and increase the capacity of local governments to deliver public services.

Regional organizations and regional structures provide essential frameworks that support local governance including through the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Developments. UNDP has an important role in supporting the regional aspect, as it is important to advance issues for development and provide fora for peer-to-peer support and exchange of best practices and lessons learned among countries. Local governance in border and cross-border regions also presents important regional dimensions, as reflected in UNDP's work through the Africa Borderlands Centre and its stabilization work in the Sahel, the Lake Chad basin and the Liptako-Gourma regions. Through this work, UNDP has witnessed the limits of development approaches that focus exclusively on national development and overlook the unique challenges of borderlands. The Framework will therefore support and facilitate development of borderlands programming in the field of local governance, service delivery and social cohesion with a focus on whole-of-society and systems approaches.

KEY AREAS:

1. Capacity of states' core government functions enhanced to promote local economic development

This will entail providing support to UNDP COs to develop states' core governance functions where this is found to be a way to improve service delivery, resilience, adaptability and effectiveness. Studies show that a more competent centre of government (including at the subnational level) can handle the essential aspects of governance and cross-cutting issues, such as climate change, the fight against corruption, crisis management (such as COVID response), human mobility, inequality, and national policies affecting youth and women. This is likely to increase citizens' trust in government and improve the quality of state outputs and accountability. In this context, whole-of-society approaches and multi-level governance are required to deliver on Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063, as well as handle the challenges listed. This, in turn, requires a system for collaborating across sectors, between levels of governance and with many different parts of societies. The assessment, planning and implementation phases of such a system call for sensitivity and a creative approach to structural, functional and cultural differences.

2. Local governance capacity of Member States enhanced to localize and implement Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063

Achieving the SDGs is fundamental to achieving the AU's Agenda 2063. According to results of VNRs on the SDGs of 45 African countries presented at the United Nations High-Level Policy Forum (HLPF), few of them are on track to meet the SDGs. The COVID-19 pandemic and delayed economic recovery, exacerbated by vaccine inequality, have worsened the situation. The Decade of Action intended to boost implementation of the SDGs across the world began in 2021. At the 6th meeting of the African Regional Forum for Sustainable Development, African states recommended that sustainable development reviews be held at the district, governorate and municipality levels to localize the SDGs, acknowledging that if the SDGs are not on track locally, national achievement would be limited.

3. Local governance capacity enhanced for efficient, accountable, equitable and accessible service delivery by leveraging the use of digital technologies

Public service delivery at the local level enhances local development and ensures that economic grievances are addressed locally, playing a strategic role in conflict prevention. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical role of local authorities, especially in service delivery and particularly during lockdowns.

Innovation in data collection is important for evidence-based decision-making and strengthening transparency and accountability. The Framework aims to build the capacity of local governments to collect data, which would involve assessing people's needs, and to evaluate development policies and programs. Beyond needs assessment, capacity assessments are important tools to understand the obstacles to better governance and delivery of services. Local populations' concerns and challenges regarding transparent governance systems need to be considered in the analysis. UNDP will facilitate innovation and the development of methodologies for this purpose. Innovation may include technical innovation as well as approaches and solutions to building structures and making systems work. UNDP will contribute to increased integration in local governance and multi-level governance, improved coordinated partnerships (including partnerships between UN actors), supporting access to platforms and networks for sharing experiences on innovation.

Leveraging digital technologies and data for e-governance can increase local development. Building local governments' resilience and ability to absorb shocks, including those caused by pandemics and natural disasters, is critical. Ensuring that youth and women are included fully are key components of this Framework.

4. Capacities for adaptive, resilient and inclusive local governance enhanced by supporting platforms, partnerships with regional organizations that address local governance, and cross-national exchanges and coordination for local governance actors

The African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Developments, adopted in 2014, provides an important framework for enhancing regional cooperation on local governance. Building on similar initiatives, UNDP will work with the AU and RECs to facilitate peer-to-peer support to address regional and cross-border peace, security, humanitarian and development challenges. UNDP will also build on its current experience to engage further in frameworks such as the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) to apply an integrated regional approach to enhance local governments' capacities at and across national borders. Another important element is to support regional organizations such as the AU and advocate for the entry into force of the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation. UNDP will also work to maintain and develop its partnerships with African organizations on local governance and regional challenges, such as urbanization and social cohesion. Some of the key partners on local finance issues include United Cities and Local Governments of Africa, Local Governments for Sustainability, East African Local Governments Association and subregional monetary unions. UNDP will also work through thought leadership and knowledge exchange on issues and impacts of human mobility and forced displacement at the local level in Africa.



Photo: UNDP Chad



The Framework takes a flexible approach to its implementation, leveraging opportunities, partnerships and capacities across the Regional Service Centre for Africa (RSCA) while harnessing advisory assets within RBA.

Photo: UNDP WACA

Framework Implementation Approach

Implementation of the renewed Framework will consider the SDG pledge to “leave no one behind” and apply UN programming principles as reflected in the 2030 Agenda and grounded in the UN Charter and international treaties and norms: human rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment; sustainability and resilience; and accountability. Sensitive to the context, the Framework’s implementation will seek to establish the humanitarian-peace-development nexus. This is essential to ensure that UNDP’s support on the ground is effective and coherent.

Regarding implementation, in addition to regional, subregional engagement and country-level support, the renewed Framework will also prioritize support at local levels, particularly in borderlands areas, complementing the work of the Africa Borderlands Centre. To enhance ongoing analytic capacities, the Framework will leverage existing tools such as the Crisis Risk Dashboard, particularly on a subregional basis. The Framework will prioritize political economy analysis, including reflecting the impact of the diaspora, remittances and returnees in Africa’s development.

UNDP will apply a people-centred and gender-sensitive approach to addressing the justice needs and rights of the disadvantaged, excluded and marginalized and those experiencing inequality and discrimination. Disenfranchised groups, such as women and girls, people in conflict situations, youth and children, refugees and migrants, detainees, PWD, and indigenous peoples will receive special emphasis. Thus, support for justice and security institutions will focus on the needs of the persons those institutions were established to serve.

UNDP will also provide technical expertise and tools to UNDP COs so that they can effectively mainstream human rights, conflict sensitivity, political economy, violent extremism and gender in their programming and analyse the dimensions of inequality, including through intersectional frameworks. UNDP will integrate outcomes-based monitoring, evaluation and learning tools and processes so that quality can be collected and analysed, thus improving the measure of impacts and generating learning, new knowledge and good practices that can inform improved programming in concrete ways. UNDP will support the country- and regional-level exchange of related knowledge, learning, tools and expertise, including by engaging South-South cooperation and similar frameworks.

1. Digital Technologies and Innovation for Governance and Peacebuilding

Digital technologies will be applied as an enabler across the renewed Framework, along with a focus on the governance of digital technologies. To enhance the use of digital technologies, countries will receive support to strengthen e-governance, focusing on transparency, accountability and efficient delivery of public services, especially by local government. The capacity of national and subregional mechanisms will be strengthened to develop tools and collect and use big data and artificial intelligence for enhanced early warning and early action. Human rights-compliant public policy frameworks will be improved to strengthen data protection and privacy and to ensure access to technology, particularly for marginalized communities. Support will be provided for online CSO partnerships with social media platforms to expand peacebuilding campaigns, address hate speech and conduct digital outreach.

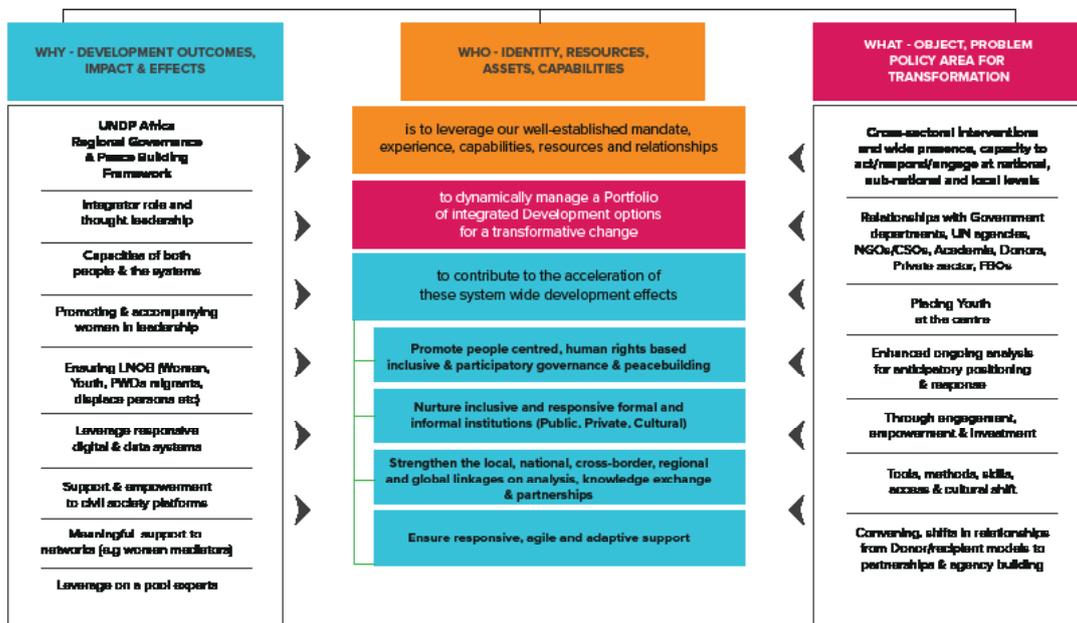
2. Sense-Making and Adaptive Responses to Supporting Governance and Peacebuilding in Various Country Contexts

As a development agency of the United Nations with principal responsibility for governance, UNDP has a particular interest in how political trends and changes affect governance and peacebuilding in Africa. UNDP works in a variety of country settings. Notwithstanding the country contexts, its activities involve forging relationships of trust with national governments and effective partnerships with a range of stakeholders, including other national actors, youth, women, the private sector, civil society, donors, regional and subregional organisations, other United Nations agencies, and international financial institutions. Maintaining and deepening these relationships depends on the technical competence and financial resources that UNDP brings to bear. To enhance responsiveness, the renewed Framework adopts an adaptive response approach based on the specific country context. It will also aim to be more agile in changing contexts, in particular through support for transitions. Adaptive response covers the gamut of creative adjustments, such as reprogramming or repositioning when national contexts change.

Following an intense sense-making exercise, UNDP developed a Statement of Intent for this Framework, as illustrated in Figure 3. It outlines the transformative development effects intended to be achieved, as well as distinct enabling resources and capabilities. While the statement of intent provides clear direction, it will be reviewed periodically given the adaptive and responsive approach that the renewed Framework will take. The intent is to leverage UNDP’s well-established mandate, experience, capabilities, resources and relationships to dynamically manage a portfolio of integrated development options for transformative change in the governance and peacebuilding space. To contribute to the acceleration of the following system wide development effects, the renewed Framework does the following:

1. Promotes people-centred, human rights-based inclusive, gender-sensitive and participatory governance and peacebuilding;
2. Nurtures inclusive and responsive formal and informal institutions (public, private and cultural);
3. Strengthens local, national, cross-border regional and global linkages on analysis, knowledge exchange and partnerships; and,
4. Ensures responsive, agile and adaptive support.

OUR INTENT



3. Communications

Communications will receive priority during implementation of the renewed Governance and Peacebuilding Framework to communicate key results; establish a feedback loop with beneficiaries and partners; and also contribute to the transformation of the narrative to one of promise.

Communication platforms will also receive support to enhance cross-learning across the RBA region and promote inter-regional cross-learning. The Maendeleo Policy Forum³² will be held regularly to continue to promote UNDP thought leadership and new platforms will be established to continue engagement with stakeholder groups, such as the diaspora and youth active in governance and peacebuilding. Communication will further be enhanced to facilitate UNDP's regular interactions with partners and build positive mindset towards governance and peacebuilding principles.

4. Transitions Facility

A Transitions Facility has been established, primarily, to ensure timely and effective support to countries in various transition contexts. This will enable UNDP COs to access the technical and financial support they need to strengthen their support to countries in these contexts. To facilitate ownership of the Facility, UNDP will mobilize contributions from UN Member States, IFIs, regional institutions, the private sector and individuals.

5. Tools and Platforms

The renewed Framework will support a women's governance and peacebuilding forum; a youth governance and peacebuilding forum; an advisory group on transformational leadership; and a standby team of governance experts (which includes former Resident Representatives and Peace Development Advisors) for rapid expert support. UNDP will conduct an assessment to determine governance imperatives and key governance deficits that impact sustainable economic development and develop a strategy for addressing them.

6. Partnerships

The renewed Governance and Peacebuilding Framework will build upon and strengthen existing partnerships, including through the network of RBA COs. It will expand the RSCA's engagement with Member States, civil society, academic institutions and the private sector. As an RSCA Framework, implementation will require close collaboration among the Governance and Peacebuilding Team, the Inclusive Growth Team, the Nature, Climate and Environment Team, the Regional Programme, the Gender and Women's Empowerment Unit, the Innovation Unit, the Communications Team, the African Finance Hub (based in Pretoria), the West and Central Africa Hub, based in Dakar and the UNDP Resilience Hub in Nairobi. The RSCA Director will provide overall leadership and leverage the capacities at RBA and GPN in New York.

UNDP will also strengthen strategic partnerships with the regional organizations and IFIs, including the AU, ECOWAS, EAC, SADC, IGAD, ECCAS, the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank and the World Bank, as well as networks, such as the African Disability Forum (ADF) Consistent with the principles of the Reimagining Governance and Peacebuilding process,

³² <https://www.africapi.org/maendeleo-forum>

efforts will be made to engage with borderland communities, IDPs, migrants, PWDs, and the diaspora, among other groups.

To continue to promote thought leadership, the Framework will give priority to continued investment in ground-breaking research, such as the Journey to Extremism study³³. The Framework will leverage implementation of work to highlight emerging issues and release applied research, knowledge products, which will be part of the of the broader RSCA Partnerships and Communications Plan (PCAP). Innovative communication tools will be used – including policy briefs, blogs to showcase important lessons emerging from a ‘governance of things practice’ at the country and regional level. The Maendeleo Forum³⁴ will be maintained as a platform for knowledge sharing and policy debates. UNDP will conduct an assessment to determine governance imperatives and key governance deficits that impact sustainable economic development and develop a strategy for addressing them, as well as governance and peacebuilding lessons learned study at the start of The Africa Trade Governance Dialogue Series will also be mainstreamed – within the implementation Maendeleo Forum to keep a spotlight on the AfCFTA side of the renewed Framework. narratives.

The renewed Framework will promote South-South cooperation and learning for national and regional counterparts across the African region, as well as with other regions. The Framework will also provide platforms for sharing experiences and knowledge across RECs in response to demand. Mechanisms such as the PVE, youth, and human rights and rule of law CoPs will continue to receive support.



33 <https://journey-to-extremism.undp.org/>

34 <https://www.africapi.org/maendeleo-forum>

Photo: UNDP Eswatini

Risks³⁵

Geopolitical challenges: While the African Union has prioritized using its mechanisms to address peace and security challenges in Africa, it is increasingly evident that external geopolitical factors contribute immensely to Africa's peace, security and development landscape. External factors have an influence on the political economy of many African countries, posing a risk to the implementation of the Framework. Geopolitical issues also have an impact on prevention of violent extremism work, in particular the links with illegal trade, organised crime and transnational violent extremist groups. Mitigating these risks requires careful navigation of the terrain, good intelligence, and creativity in how UNDP frames the work – pushing the impact of our work in smart ways.

National level challenges/Political will: more accountable, inclusive and effective governance is not always in the interests of power-holders, and some national governments can perceive UNDP as 'service-providers' rather than partners in transformative change. UNDP can encounter particular challenges in emphasizing people-centred approaches, as well as supporting civic space and civic engagement. More familiarity with and experimentation with the extensive bodies of research and learning on how to 'work politically' and 'go with the grain' to navigate such tensions in governance work, while upholding values and ensuring that we 'do no harm' (as a minimum), will be important.

Adequate financial resources: Shrinking ODA, and very stretched capacities internally, with high geopolitical tensions, and the severe development challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic creates a challenging environment for resource mobilisation. Efforts should be made to expand the funding resources tapping into non-traditional donors, private sector, etc. to ensure predictable, multi-year funding.

Weak capacity to implement changes: One way to address this issue is to assess the capacity of the receiving institution and adjust the level of change to accommodate the entity's capacity and build from there. The pace of change may be slower, but this may launch a longer journey. A mechanism to coordinate the partners' efforts in this area; for example, a platform to share ideas and support the process can be created.

Disruptions due to shocks, pandemics, etc: Apply the flexible implementation modality, have ongoing analysis, and review programme implementation on an ongoing basis to adjust to changing circumstances.

³⁵ Partly drawn from the UNDP internal Governance Options Paper (2021)

The renewed Framework will be implemented under the overall supervision of the Governance and Peacebuilding Team Leader, with oversight from the RSCA Director and the Deputy Director of the Crisis Bureau. The RSCA Governance and Peacebuilding Team will work in close collaboration with other teams in the RSCA, as well as with the hubs in Dakar, Nairobi and Pretoria. It will also draw on the GPN teams in the BPPS, the Crisis Bureau and RBA.

The RSCA Director will chair the project board. Members will include the AU, RECs, donor partners, CSOs, youth organizations and think tanks. The board's overall task will be to set the strategic direction of the renewed Governance and Peacebuilding Framework, review implementation and approve annual work plans. It will meet annually.



Photo: UNDP Kenya





Photo: UNDP Chad

Photo: UNDP Zambia



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