A REGENERATION
UNDP’S CONTRIBUTION TO IMPLEMENTING UNISS: IMPLEMENTATION REPORT
Acknowledgements

We wish to express our profound gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the ongoing success of “A Regeneration” and to the development of this report. We look forward to continuing our work towards a peaceful, and prosperous Sahel.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

2030 Agenda
The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

AfDB
African Development Bank

AUC
African Union Commission

BMT
Baselines, milestones and targets

CNC
Computer Numerical Control

CODs
Country Offices

COVID-19
Coronavirus disease 2019 (SARS-CoV-2)

CSOs
Civil society organizations

DNS
Dialogue National Inclusif et Souverain (Inclusive and Sovereign National Dialogue)

ECOWAS
Economic Community of West African States

FAEP
Fermes agroécologiques polyvalentes (multipurpose agroecological farms)

FAO
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

GBV
Gender-based violence

GHG
Greenhouse gas

HIV
Human immunodeficiency virus

IDPs
Internally displaced persons

IRRF
Integrated Results and Resources Framework of the UNDP Strategic Plan

JALUFRA
Joint AfDB-LCBC-UNDP Fragility and Resilience Assessment

JAP
Joint Action Plan

kWh
Kilowatt hour

LCB
Lake Chad Basin

LCBC
Lake Chad Basin Commission

MPME
Ministry of Petroleum, Mines and Energy

PERIPERI U
Partners Enhancing Resilience of People Exposed to Risks

PERZI
Programme d’Electrification Rurale en Zones Isolées (Rural Electrification Program in Isolated Areas)

RSF
Regional Stabilization Facility

RSFRF
Regional Stabilization Facility Results Framework

RS-SRR
Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region

SDG
Sustainable Development Goal

SRF
Sahel Result Framework

TEF
Tony Elumelu Foundation

TRRC
Truth Reconciliation and Reparation Commission

UN
United Nations

UNCDF
United Nations Capital Development Fund

UNDP
United Nations Development Program

UNDRR
United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

UN-Habitat
United Nations Human Settlements Programme

UNICEF
United Nations Children’s Fund

UNISS
United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel

UNODC
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

UNOWAS
United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel

UN Women
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

WFP
World Food Programme
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Point E, Complexe Cctamil, Immeuble E
Dakar - Senegal
TRANSFORMING THE SAHEL
A Journey of Regeneration

As we reflect on our journey to transform the Sahel region, it is with great pride and optimism that we present the progress and accomplishments achieved in recent years. Our commitment derives from our framework known as the ‘Sahel Offer’, which aims to address the region’s challenges while unlocking its vast potential. Under this framework, the UNDP has supported the people and governments of the Sahel on their path towards sustainable development and positive change. This report encapsulates a year of implementing the Sahel Offer, showcasing the successes achieved by the UNDP as our contribution to the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) and the UN Support Plan for the Sahel (Support Plan).

The Sahel Offer has spearheaded an ambitious $3.6 billion initiative to unlock the region’s socioeconomic promise over five years. Through collaboration with sister agencies, national governments, civil society, and other varied partners, UNDP’s Sahel Offer not only addresses immediate humanitarian needs but also lays the groundwork for long-term livelihoods, youth employment, social cohesion, peace, stability and climate change adaptation. By placing Sahelians in the driver’s seat, the UNDP unveiled this approach to accelerate the pace and impact of investments in sustainable development for the ten Sahel countries.

The Sahel, a region brimming with development possibilities, has long been plagued by conflicts, political instability, poverty and food insecurity. The effects of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic and the repercussions of the Russia-Ukraine war have further exacerbated the challenges faced by Sahelians. However, we do not see the Sahel solely through the lens of crisis. Instead, we embrace a narrative that focuses on transforming challenges into opportunities, underscoring the incredible socioeconomic potential of the region.

Guided by our three core pillars of governance, renewable energy, and youth, we have made significant strides on delivering our promise of a regenerated Sahel. Stabilization efforts have been launched in pilot sites, with a particular focus on the Lake Chad Basin (LCB) and the Liptako Gourma region. By working closely with implementing partners such as the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and the Liptako Gourma Authority, we have fostered community stability, strengthened state presence, and improved livelihoods for the populations of the Sahel. It is only through such collaborative partnerships that our work can become truly impactful.

Acknowledging the crucial role of women and youth as agents of change, we have focused on empowering women economically, fostering youth entrepreneurship, and promoting deradicalization to counter violent extremism. Our initiatives have created employment opportunities, improved livelihoods for those in difficult circumstances, provided financial services to the youth, and empowered local governments to resume and better fulfill their mandates. Additionally, our support for small and medium-sized enterprises, cooperative societies, and creative start-ups has fostered diversity and bolstered underserved communities.

Delivering change would be impossible without building political momentum and assuring fiscal prowess in the region. The Sahel Offer plays a vital role in the creation of an environment conducive to transition in the Sahel. It ensures that the countries accelerate investments in the three core pillar areas of governance, renewable energy, and youth, thereby laying the foundation for a better future for all.

This report serves as a testament to our unwavering dedication and our collective vision for a regenerative future in the Sahel. We invite you to explore the comprehensive work we have undertaken and witness firsthand the transformative impact we have had on the lives of the people we serve.
The Sahel is an area that spans 5,000 kilometers below the Sahara Desert. The region faces the ongoing effects of conflict, political instability, poverty, and food insecurity affecting approximately 26 million people. The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these issues, pushing an additional 6 million people into extreme poverty in the Central Sahel alone. Despite these challenges, the region possesses significant potential for growth due to its abundant human, cultural and natural resources.

The United Nations (UN) is committed to the development of the Sahel region and has carried out efforts to promote peace and sustainable development in the area. In 2013, the UN Security Council adopted the UNISS as a comprehensive framework for supporting the region. The UNISS is structured around three strategic goals: governance, resilience and security.

In 2018, the Support Plan was introduced to accelerate results on the ground. Covering the period of 2018 to 2030, it aims to implement priorities to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and the African Union Agenda 2063. The Support Plan operationalizes the UNISS with a focus on six priority areas: a) cross-border and regional cooperation; b) preventing and resolving conflicts; c) inclusive and equitable growth; d) resilience to climate change; e) access to renewable energy; and f) women and youth empowerment.
Governance:
In the Sahel, the crisis of governance spans political, social, economic and environmental spheres. This situation has led to weakened social contracts and devastating attacks, resulting in significant loss of life and the displacement of millions. However, the crisis also presents an opportunity for positive transformation. The Sahel Offer is a comprehensive approach to addressing these governance challenges at regional, national and local levels. It aims to restore and strengthen social contracts, with particular focus on rural communities, while also fostering stronger relationships between citizens and the state. It seeks to institutionalize a political culture that embraces tolerance for diverse perspectives and advocates for peaceful transitions through elections. Furthermore, it aims to leverage digital governance as a tool to promote integrity, enhance human capital development and facilitate accelerated service delivery.

Renewable Energy:
Only 30 percent of the Sahel’s population has access to energy, a factor that significantly hinders the region’s potential for socioeconomic development. However, the Sahel holds the world’s largest renewable energy potential, estimated at 13.9 billion kilowatt hours (kWh) per year in contrast to the global consumption of 20 billion kWh per year. This signals the possibility of a transformative energy revolution that could drive socioeconomic development in the region. By harnessing renewable energy, the Sahel Offer aims to empower communities, create climate-friendly job opportunities, and promote good governance throughout the Sahel.

Youth:
The Sahel faces a crisis characterized by widespread poverty and high youth unemployment, which have been intensified by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite these challenges, the region’s demographic composition, with 65 percent of its population under the age of 25, presents a unique opportunity. This young population has the potential to propel global industries both now and in the future. The Sahel Offer presents a pathway for training, connectivity and financial support that will empower youth and expand their roles as workers, job creators and leaders across diverse sectors.

This report offers a comprehensive overview of the key activities undertaken to implement the Sahel Offer under the three pillars.
# OUR IMPACT

This report covers efforts made through “A Regeneration”, highlighting UNDP’s contribution to implementing the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) across the 10 UNISS Sahel Countries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Metric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Countries</td>
<td>Were a focus of UNDP’s catalytic investments in the Sahel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>305 Projects</td>
<td>Implemented in the Sahel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>172.2 Million</td>
<td>People across the Sahel were reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.4 Million</td>
<td>Jobs and livelihood opportunities created</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91.5 Million</td>
<td>People benefited from governance and peacebuilding interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35 Million</td>
<td>New voters supported through voter registration processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Million</td>
<td>Young people received support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>107,000</td>
<td>Metric tons of chemicals disposed and reduced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.6 Million</td>
<td>Hectares managed under sustainable, conservation, access and benefit-sharing Programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.7 Million</td>
<td>People benefited from both nature protection and renewable energy initiatives in the Sahel</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SEEDS OF CHANGE
Charting a Sustainable Future in the Sahel

For more than a decade, the Sahel region has witnessed significant security and humanitarian crises, including rising geopolitical tensions, economic imbalances, democratic backsliding, and devastating climate change-related weather events. In addition, there have been lingering effects from the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in threatened lives and livelihoods, exacerbated anxieties, and millions forced into poverty. The UNDP has tackled complex issues in the pursuit of a regenerative future for the Sahel amid these conditions that risk undoing decades of development gains.

As part of its commitments under the Sahel Offer, UNDP has supported the Sahel region in the critical development areas of governance, renewable energy, and youth. We recognize the crucial need to confront the root causes of instability, poverty, structural inequality, disproportionate energy access, and other threats hindering the region's progress.

The ongoing implementation of the Sahel Offer is a demonstration of how crises can be transformed into opportunities through collaboration with national governments and local communities under a steadfast vision for future prosperity. UNDP has implemented a unique grassroots approach that places people at the heart of resilience and recovery efforts.

Notwithstanding the enormous challenges that have impeded progress in the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Sahel, we acknowledge that delays do not completely forestall attainment of a greener, more inclusive, and just transition for the region. We believe that the Sahel, with its abundant resources, is poised to achieve a metamorphosis.

Today, the Sahel Offer’s programming in governance, renewable energy, and youth appears more vital than ever. While there is still a long road ahead to achieving a vibrant political system, sustainable energy, and society-wide equality, the Sahel Offer has made immense strides toward the goals of the UNISS and Support Plan. Today, we passionately invest in future generations, knowing that they are vital to transforming the Sahel into a thriving, dynamic, and resilient growth engine.

The Sahel’s future growth trajectory is poised for takeoff. Youth can lead this leap, realizing their full potential to transform their communities and nations from the bottom up. While we have made considerable progress, complete regeneration of the region remains an ongoing journey. With our steadfast commitment, we are on a firm path to a promising and transformative future for the Sahel.

The following report outlines the implementation of UNDP’s Sahel Offer and its achievements across the ten countries of the Sahel.
FROM CRICES TO OPPORTUNITY: REGENERATING GOVERNANCE

PREVENTION & INCLUSIVE TRANSITIONS
- Pre & Post Electoral Violence Reduction
- Climate Security
- Inter-Faith and Customary Dialogue
- Early Warning Data Systems
- Peace Architectures at Community and Border Regions
- Leadership in Governance Series
- Human Rights, Security, Justice and Rule of Law (CoSED)

STABILIZATION
- Extension of State Authority
- Local Governance Restoration
- Livelihoods and Economic Revitalization
- Infrastructure Revitalization and Development

SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS (SALW)
- Social Service for Weapons Exchange
- Physical Security and Stockpile Management
- Decentralizations of Border Management Systems
- Ballots without Bullets

SAHEL GOVERNANCE OFFER

PREVENTING VIOLENT EXTREMISM (PVE)
- Local Mediation
- National Action Plans (NAPs)
- Reintegration of Ex-Extremists
- Strengthening Peace Architectures (local and national)
- Integrated Border Control and Management

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT
- Youth entrepreneurship and employment
- Youth and Climate Change
- Youth, Peace and Security
- Youth and Emerging and Creative industries

LOCAL AND ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE
- Digital Solutions for Strengthening Local Administration
- Tech4Governance
- Strengthening Local Governments and Border Authorities
- Anti-corruption and fighting against IFF
- Future smart and inclusive service delivery
- Digitalization of Civil Service Offerings in Municipalities
- Cross-Border Trade and Human Mobility

Key Pathways
- E-Governance
- Digitalization
Progress in Governance
Rethinking Governance in the Sahel

In the ever-evolving Sahel landscape, governance remains a critical pillar in the pursuit of peace, stability and development. Through concerted efforts and enduring partnerships, UNDP is committed to addressing the myriad challenges that impede good governance in the region. UNDP’s governance programme focuses on six primary domains: conflict prevention and political transitions, countering violent extremism, stabilization, promoting youth involvement in peacebuilding, discouraging weapons trafficking and strengthening the rule of law, and implementing local e-governance initiatives.

UNDP’s initiatives aimed to cultivate inclusive, transparent and accountable governance systems. These focused on strengthening local institutions, engaging communities, upholding human rights, and addressing the root causes of conflict and instability.

The Sahel Offer impacted 91.5 million people under this pillar, bolstering democratic institutions and processes, fostering an inclusive public sphere and promoting public participation.

Strengthening Electoral Processes and Expanding Access to Justice

Of the over 12 million people who received support to access justice, 6.5 million were male and 5.6 million were female. Among these, there were 4.9 million youth, 2.3 million people categorized as poor based on income levels, 277,000 individuals from minority ethnic groups (who could ordinarily face unique challenges or discrimination in the justice system), 23,000 persons from displaced populations (individuals forcibly displaced from their homes or communities due to conflict, disaster or other reasons), and 12,000 persons with disabilities.

Promoting Accountability and Reducing Corruption

Four countries in the Sahel region advanced efforts to enhance accountability (including social accountability) and to mitigate corruption risks. They undertook a comprehensive set of 28 impactful actions, including incorporating anti-corruption measures into the management of public funds and service delivery. Of these actions, six were at the regional level, nine were at the national level, six were at the sub-national level and the remaining seven were at the cross-cutting sectoral level. On a per country basis, Guinea was responsible for 18 of these actions, Chad undertook six actions, Senegal led three and Mali carried out one of these measures.

Supporting Institutional Systems to Manage Multi-Dimensional Risks and Shocks

At the country level, the results indicate varying levels of progress and commitment across the region. Guinea and Niger had the most interventions with 117 and 111 institutions, respectively. These institutions received support for strengthening public administration and government functions with the effect of enhancing community security, improving service delivery, undertaking prevention measures and achieving basic service delivery and peacebuilding. Chad and Nigeria received similar support for 42 and 22 institutions, respectively.

Expanding Capabilities for Conflict Prevention, Peacebuilding and Capacity Development

The Sahel Offer has been pivotal in the creation of 80 initiatives aimed at conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the Sahel region. These policies, strategies and action plans foster reconciliation through dialogue and understanding, and they address the root causes of violent extremism while promoting inclusive and peaceful alternatives. In addition, they integrate climate change considerations and emphasize the importance of reintegration for those affected by conflicts.

The area of reconciliation received significant attention, with the establishment of 51 policies, strategies and action plans (including 36 launched by Niger). There were also 17 instruments focused on preventing violent extremism.

Reinforcing Local Governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National institutions strengthened</th>
<th>New voters recorded across the Sahel</th>
<th>People, participated in elections</th>
<th>People supported through governance initiatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>292</td>
<td>35.7 MILLION</td>
<td>15.8 MILLION</td>
<td>94.5 MILLION</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Supporting Institutional Systems to Manage Multi-Dimensional Risks and Shocks

Early warning and preparedness measures serve as a crucial mechanism for mitigating the effects of conflicts, disasters, pandemics and other shocks. If effectively managed, they can preserve lives, protect assets, and enhance resilience. In the Sahel region, only two countries advanced in implementing a total of four such measures. Mali initiated three measures while The Gambia introduced one.

In terms of risk-informed development strategies and plans, a total of 142 of these were established in the region. Among these, 24 were introduced at the regional level, 14 were at the national level, 98 were at the sub-national level, and six were at the cross-cutting sectoral level.

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In order to strengthen conflict prevention and peacebuilding capacities, the Sahel Offer has also offered support to 441 organizations throughout the region. These entities encompass cross-border, regional, national, sub-national and community-based organizations. Among these, 409 focused explicitly on conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts while 44 of them targeted promotion of social cohesion within communities. Nine organizations engaged actively in addressing hate speech and information pollution, while eight facilitated dialogue and mediation processes to foster constructive conversations for conflict resolution. One organization provided mental health and psycho-social support to individuals affected by the region’s challenges. Through this extensive support to a variety of organizations, the Sahel Offer bolstered efforts at conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and overall well-being in the region.

Improving Livelihoods, Boosting Infrastructure, and Advancing Social Cohesion
Implementation activities under the Sahel Offer reached 8.4 million persons to improve livelihoods in crisis and post-crisis settings. Of these, over 4.3 million were male and over 4 million were female. There were approximately 680,200 youth, 480,000 refugees, 420,100 persons categorized as internally displaced populations, and 148,000 persons with disabilities.

The programme also enhanced infrastructure in the region, with approximately 612,700 people benefitting from improved infrastructure services for recovery in crisis or post-crisis settings. The highest number of beneficiaries comprised females, totalling around 245,500 while there were around 198,600 male beneficiaries with an additional 168,600 individuals not disaggregated based on gender.

Through the UNDP Sahel Offer, the region has experienced a wave of integrated and targeted interventions aimed at bolstering social cohesion, positively impacting the lives of more than 4.8 million people in fragile settings, of which around 2.6 million were male and 2.2 million were female.

In host communities welcoming refugees from neighbouring countries, around 1.7 million people benefitted from initiatives to promote integration. Additionally, our efforts helped reach approximately 1.4 million individuals from “internally displaced populations”, 11 million refugees, 338,900 returnees and 339,000 “economic migrants”.

These concerted efforts have been instrumental in fostering stability and rebuilding trust in conflict-affected communities across the region.

Providing Services and Assets for Sustainable Livelihoods
The Sahel Offer reached 12.7 million people for the provision of basic services, financial services and non-financial assets. Notably, this reveals that 7.2 million men and 5.5 million women received this significant support and assistance. Among these were approximately 4.5 million youth, 4.3 million individuals classified as poor based on income measures, 11 million informal sector workers, 450,800 persons from displaced populations, 106,600 individuals with disabilities, and 30,000 persons belonging to ethnic minority groups.

Stabilization Efforts in the Lake Chad Basin and Liptako Gourma Regions
The Regional Stabilization Facility (RSF) is a multi-donor facility launched in July 2019 to support stabilization efforts of the UNDP and its partners in the LCB area. This initiative focuses on the four countries of Cameroon, Chad, Niger and Nigeria, which straddle both the Sahel and the LCB. The programme targets “immediate stabilization”, which involves increasing community stability and state presence in Joint Action Plan (JAP) locations. The second priority area is “extended stabilization”, which entails the oversight, coordination and implementation of stabilization and recovery efforts by local, national and regional stabilization structures. The RSF also provides support in the Liptako Gourma region, which includes parts of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. A key area of RSF implementation, among others, is governance and the social contract. UNDP’s contributions in the Sahel region, under the RSF, Sahel Offer and other programmes, are integrated within the overarching framework of the UNISS. This section of the report details UNDP’s stabilization efforts in the LCB and Liptako Gourma regions.
Bolstering community security, human rights protection, and fostering collaboration

Significant strides had been made in the LCB in the areas of security and collaboration. Delivering essential social services and infrastructure, supporting livelihoods, and empowering women in the LCB and Liptako Gourma regions

The Sahel Offer provided support for essential social services in areas such as administration, healthcare, water management, sanitation and education facilities. A total of 452 such public infrastructure projects were constructed, equipped and handed over to local authorities and communities. In addition, the programme equipped 132 public facilities with renewable technologies. These efforts have significantly enhanced the provision of essential services and infrastructure in the region.

Additionally, 26 JAP locations were equipped with operational early warning systems, 3,453 security providers received training on human rights and prevention of gender-based violence (GBV), and 2,069 streetlights were installed. Furthermore, 31 JAP locations benefitted from the reporting of local human rights defenders on human rights violations and civilian protection issues. These findings represent significant advancements in enhancing security, justice, and community engagement.

Substantial efforts were also undertaken in training key stakeholders to ensure effective coordination among relevant participants in the stabilization process. A total of 226 officers from various entities, including local governments, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, CSOs, and community stabilization committees, received training on promoting social cohesion. This enabled the convening of eight coordination meetings, as well as the implementation of joint advocacy initiatives and fundraising activities involving UNDP, other UN agencies, and various development partners. These activities aimed to facilitate collaboration, information sharing, advocacy for common goals, and mobilization of resources to support the stabilization process and development initiatives.

RSF funding also facilitated 86 initiatives to improve communications and coordination across the region. These included the development of 51 strategic communications products and programs, as well as the issuance of 18 knowledge products that included reports, studies, and research findings. In addition, 11 instances of surge capacity were provided to national windows, enhancing capabilities to respond effectively during emergencies or periods of heightened demand.

The programme also equipped six JAP locations to enable cross-border trade and cooperation. These initiatives fostered effective communication and collaboration, leading to enhanced cross-border coordination and cooperation.

Additionally, 4,205 individuals benefited from cash-for-work programs, offering them income-generating opportunities. These efforts resulted in improved livelihoods, promoted economic activities, and addressed the specific needs of individuals.

RSF support empowered over 1.4 million people including 800,000 women in the LCB and Liptako Gourma regions.

These initiatives were designed to facilitate women’s economic empowerment, advance women’s leadership and equal participation in decision-making, and prevent GBV while addressing harmful gender social norms.
Once plagued by crime and fear, the vibrant community of Gambissara has emerged as a shining example of unity. In this tale, the journey towards rebuilding trust between communities and the police unfolds, showcasing the potential of grassroots security efforts.

Gambissara, with its population of 10,100, was fortunate to have a police station just 14 km away. However, for decades, its traditional leaders restricted the access of the police resulting in a staggering 72% increase in crime, according to Police Inspector Yaya Jallow.

Realizing the urgent need to address these pressing issues, The Gambia Police Force in 2020, partnered with UNDP and other stakeholders to introduce a community policing initiative aimed to foster collaboration between community members and local law enforcement, encouraging information sharing and joint patrols.

UNDP provided technical support in the form of an implementation plan, a volunteer guide for community policing, a communication strategy, and a district police plan. These documents were endorsed by the government and integrated into police training programmes for 293 police officers and 161 community members, leaders, youth and other stakeholders with an additional 200 volunteers serving as advocates in the community.

By 2022, just two years after the inception of the community policing initiative, the residents of Gambissara had experienced a remarkable transformation. Under the leadership of Ali Bongo, a community policing volunteer, the once crime-ridden streets became safer for community members. Ali proudly recalls: “Prior to the initiative, not a day went by without an incident of theft, rape or domestic violence within the community. Since the launch of the initiative, these issues have drastically reduced, and we now enjoy peaceful coexistence.”

Corporal Mai Jeffang emphasizes the shift from conventional crime control to community policing. Through visible policing and patrols in every district, crime was deterred, and citizens’ fears were addressed before they escalated. Police Commissioner Lamin Jaiteh believes that community policing not only restores trust and confidence between the police and communities but also cultivates a democratic policing culture.

The success of Gambissara’s community policing initiative has rippled across The Gambia. Similar programmes have been implemented in other regions, fostering collaboration between law enforcement and communities.

Building trust, one step at a time, the people of Gambissara have redefined the relationship between communities and law enforcement, creating a safer and more harmonious society for all. Through their unwavering dedication and collaborative spirit, they not only reclaimed their peace but also set an inspiring example for the nation.

To further support these efforts in the Gambia, UNDP will construct a model police station with gender and child-friendly facilities in Essau, North Bank region. Other endeavours will include facilitating the digitalization of the police force and incorporating a geographical information service to monitor personnel deployment in real-time. In addition, novel systems for court automation and case management will be instituted to expedite adjudication processes and enhance access to justice.
Malam Ari was a resident of Baroua village in Diffa, Niger but was forced to flee to the Arowidi internally displaced person (IDP) site following Boko Haram exactions. Undeterred, Malam Ari, holder of a training diploma in metal carpentry, wasted no time to initiate an income-generating activity. He opened his own carpentry workshop in the city of Diffa but asserts that the journey has not been without challenges: “Being internally displaced is not easy. You have to start all over again while adapting to a host site which is an entirely new environment. I was getting very few orders at the beginning.”

The situation began to improve after Malam Ari attended the celebration of the International Day of Volunteering held in the city of Diffa. There, he received support from the LCB stabilization project and has since witnessed tremendous improvements in his business.

“Thanks to the funding received, I can now work without depending on customer orders. I can plan ahead, prefabricate and sell my products... This new model has generated a lot of revenues. It allows me to support the needs of my parents and fellow young people, which is my greatest achievement.”

Malam Ari recruited two trainees and helps them develop their skills. He looks forward to the future and, with a sense of purpose and responsibility remarks that: “For me, success is also about helping others. I hope to bring to the youth all the support that I received to build back my life.”
Stabilization provides the basis for the government to align military operations with support to the state, to rebuild communities and improve governance in areas that have been ravaged by conflict.

DIANE LOUIS OFWANA
FORMER RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE, UNDP NIGER
"I remember waking up to the sounds of loud noises and seeing that the insurgents had come again to attack our town. The destruction this time around was massive. They burnt our town to the ground and took whatever they could, leaving our community in pieces. Nothing was left for us."

In 2015, the community of Ngarannam in Borno State, Nigeria was burnt down and destroyed due to conflict in North-East Nigeria. Thousands of residents witnessed extreme violence and were forced to flee. Their only option was to live in camps as IDPs.

Amina was 12 years old when she witnessed this attack and, like the other residents, would end up in a crowded IDP camp in Maiduguri. Prior to the insurgency, the community of Ngarannam boasted flourishing diversity with residents from Fulani, Gamargu, Kanuri and Shuwa cultures. In this once lively town, where residents enjoyed a close-knit community, the primary occupations had been agriculture and livestock farming.

Following the attacks, the community grappled with new circumstances. Their shelter, livelihood opportunities and social structures had become fragmented. Families and residents remained separated, putting a major strain on communal living.

As the displacement prolonged, the conditions for this community remained extremely difficult. Ngarannam was identified by the Nigerian government as a target location to receive stabilization support from the RSF. Stabilization interventions aim to support communities that are impacted by such violent attacks, to help restore security, provide access to basic services such as education and health, and enable livelihood opportunities. In the case of Ngarannam, it was the first time that the Nigerian government and UNDP’s stabilization interventions partnered to completely rebuild a town, from the ground up, so that the community could return to the place they used to call home.

In 2020, activities commenced to rebuild the town. In 2022, over 360 housing units were completed, including a newly constructed marketplace, police outposts and residences, as well as a health clinic, community centre, primary school and residual housing facilities for teachers. Other critical infrastructure was constructed and the town was connected to solar-powered drinking water facilities.

Throughout the process, the Nigerian government and UNDP focused on using a ‘human-centred design’, where the rebuilding of the town was meticulously aligned with the cultural, environmental and climatic needs of the community. This entailed extensive consultations with the community to design and develop a new town that would be appropriate, conscious and respectful of their way of life, culture and daily needs.

The rebuilding of Ngarannam progressed efficiently with the official reopening in 2022. The prospect of returning home marks the beginning of reconstructing the lives of the Ngarannam people for a better future.

"I really want to return to my community; it is my roots. I’m happy that the government is putting our needs first and considering our culture in the rebuilding process. That way, it will feel like we never left once we return", Amina concluded.
The stabilization facility is actively prioritizing the provision of basic services including education, health, income generating livelihood, housing and security. Such investments help reverse recruitment to extremism and strengthen the social contract between the government and the people.

MOHAMED YAHYA
FORMER RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE, UNDP NIGERIA
Sahel Offer Pillar 2

RENEWABLE ENERGY
FROM CRISIS TO OPPORTUNITY: THE ENERGY TRANSITION

ENABLING CONDITIONS
- Partnerships and Coordination
- Policy and Financial Derisking
- Innovation and Skills Building
- Data and Information Systems

SAHEL RENEWABLE ENERGY OFFER

GREEN PRODUCTIVE USE
- Mini-Grids
- Standalone Systems for PUE
- Integration into Ecovillages and Green Economic Hubs

IMPROVED PUBLIC SERVICES
- Solar 4 Health
- Solar 4 Education

CLEAN COOKING
- Support to Entrepreneurs
- Scaled-up Dissemination

A Regeneration: UNDP's Contribution to Implementing UNISS
Advancing Renewable Energy

Igniting a Green Transition

70.7 MILLION
People benefited from both nature protection and renewable energy initiatives

54.6 MILLION
beneficiaries of renewable mini-grids initiative

27.6 MILLION
hectares managed under sustainable and benefit-sharing regimes

$2.3 MILLION
leveraged to support the green economy in the Sahel

Around the world, climate challenges are intensifying and the need for energy security is becoming increasingly urgent. This issue is particularly dire in the Sahel region, where UNDP’s efforts have been geared towards advancing technological innovations, expanding renewable energy capacity, increasing energy efficiency and facilitating access to clean energy in underserved communities.

Through the Sahel Offer, UNDP’s renewable energy initiatives are primarily focused on four key areas: enabling conditions, improved public services, clean cooking, and green productive use. This section of the report provides an overview of the progress made.

UNDP’s renewable energy initiatives and efforts to protect nature in the Sahel region benefitted 70.7 million people. Accomplishments included the expansion of energy access via mini-grids, including the provision of direct and indirect benefits to 54.6 million people. In addition, there were activities undertaken to manage up to 27.6 million hectares of land under sustainable use, conservation, access or benefit-sharing regimes.

Broadening Renewable Energy Access via Mini-Grids

The green productive use initiative is centred around renewable energy mini-grids, with specific focus on solar-battery mini-grids. This intervention aims to enhance access to clean energy by improving financial viability and encouraging increased commercial investment in low-carbon mini-grids. The initiative prioritizes cost-reduction strategies and innovative business models to achieve these goals.

The programme achieved significant results with 54.6 million people benefitting from direct and indirect renewable energy mini-grid solutions, including:

42.5 Million
People gained access to electricity at 1.2 million additional indirect beneficiaries

21,900 Enhancements
and new connections made to existing mini-grids.

57,500
of 149,000 direct beneficiaries of renewable energy mini-grid solutions were women

239 Megawatts
Increase in solar photovoltaic capacity

11.9 Million
Tons of greenhouse gases emissions reduced

These results demonstrate the programme’s role in expanding the utilization of sustainable and renewable sources of power.

Additional activities included the establishment of new measures and improvement measures for 65 shared water ecosystems (freshwater and marine), as well as the reduction, disposal or avoidance of 107,000 metric tons of chemicals.

Restoring Natural Resources for Sustainable Management

Under the Sahel Offer, several accomplishments were made in terms of creating or enhancing protected areas, restoring forest areas, strengthening ecosystem resilience to climate change, and implementing improved landscape practices.

Ignoring a Green Transition

26.1 Million
Hectares of terrestrial and marine protected areas advanced to preserve and sustainably manage natural habitats and biodiversity

634,800 Hectares
of forests and forested land restored, contributing to the recovery and preservation of the forest ecosystem

459,400 Hectares
of land used for reforestation activities including measures to strengthen the ability of communities and individuals to cope with climatized shocks and stresses

370,200 Hectares
of area improved practices were implemented on over 370,000 hectares of area within landscapes, excluding those covered by protected areas.

Harnessing Biodiversity and Sustainability Initiatives

Approximately 6 million people in the Sahel directly benefited from mechanisms for biodiversity and climate solutions funded by public and private sector resources. An additional 2 million people benefited from initiatives to protect nature and promote sustainable use of resources. 1.1 million of whom were women. This involved activities such as conservation projects, sustainable farming practices or renewable energy programmes.

Transitioning Towards Green Recovery

To accelerate the transition to renewable energy and to achieve green recovery in the Sahel, UNDP has made significant efforts that have resulted in improved access to clean energy solutions as well as substantial investments for promoting a sustainable and environmentally friendly economy. The region was supported to enhance the installed capacity of various renewable energy sources, including solar, wind, biomass, hydro and geothermal.

Assessing fragility and resilience in the Lake Chad Basin

The Regional Strategy for the Stabilization, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin Region (RS-SRR) is a five-year programme garnering the support of national institutions, multilateral institutions, bilateral partners, CSOs and other stakeholders towards stabilization, recovery and resilience interventions in the LCB region. As part of contributing to the RS-SRR, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and LCBC launched with UNDP a Joint AfDB-LCBC-UNDP Fragility and Resilience Assessment (JALUFRA) to assess causes, features and drivers of fragility in the LCB region. The aim of the assessment is to examine historical and contemporary drivers of fragility in the region. The assessment is designed to facilitate comprehensive dialogue among stakeholders about the causes of conflict and fragility, with the goal of achieving a minimum level of agreement. It will identify critical fault lines that need to be considered by policymakers and planners when setting priorities and designing interventions. It would allow a range of stakeholders in the sub-region to express their views of the past, present and future of the region.

A Regeneration: UNDP’s Contribution to Implementing UNSS

A Regeneration: UNDP’s Contribution to Implementing UNSS
While JALUFRA may draw from many existing studies, its distinct contribution lies in capturing and accentuating the perspectives of stakeholders in the LCB. Many of these stakeholders would ordinarily not be engaged in regular dialogue with sub-regional and national authorities or other policy-making bodies. The process ensures that the perspectives of those affected by the fragility are considered in a first step to developing solutions owned by the people of the region. This also suggests that progress towards greater stability and resilience can be achieved in an incremental fashion, using a step-by-step approach for resetting state-society relations and building the confidence of the affected populations. The JALUFRA commenced in 2022 and concluded in 2023.

Enhancing disaster and climate risk management capacities

The Sahel Resilience Project, a collaborative of continental, regional and national entities, UN agencies and the academia, aims to bolster resilience of communities and governments in the Western Sahel and Lake Chad Basin region in the face of disasters, climate change, conflicts, and demographic and economic shifts. Supported by the Swedish government, the partners include the African Union Commission (AUC), AGRHYMET Regional Centre, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), IUCN, PERIPEPI U, UN-Habitat, UNDP, UNDRR and UN Women, as well as national disaster management agencies and gender ministries in the seven countries of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal. Over the period of 2019 to 2023, the Project strengthens disaster risk management and climate change adaptation capacities of regional and national institutions to prevent, mitigate and respond effectively to humanitarian crises, and climate-related shocks such as droughts, floods and epidemics.

Amidst ongoing conflicts, food insecurity, and poverty, the Project achieved significant progress in generating data and analytics for evidence-based decision-making, while strengthening risk governance, recovery preparedness and urban resilience within the ECOWAS region and at the continental level. It facilitated the establishment, by AUC, of an operational framework for multi-hazard early warning and action systems in Africa.

The Project improved the collection of regional and national data on the impacts of climatic and geophysical hazards for comprehensive risk management and better coordination among disaster management agencies, statistical offices and academic institutions. The AGRHYMET Regional Centre was also pivotal in developing an Integrated Risk Information Platform, which will connect with national disaster databases in the seven countries.

Other developments relating to disaster risk management and risk-informed development in the Sahel region include:

- Knowledge generation and decision-making: Comprehensive reviews in the Sahelian countries evaluated the progress of disaster risk reduction measures and assessed the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the population and governance systems. The studies, which were published in October 2022, played a pivotal role in guiding decision-making and fostering political commitment towards disaster risk reduction.

- Biennial reports on Disaster Risk Reduction: UNDP supported the Africa biennial reports on disaster risk reduction, contributing to AUC’s efforts to build resilience and monitor progress in achieving the goals of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Africa Programme of Action, including in the Sahel.

- Public expenditure and institutional reviews: In Burkina Faso and Niger, evaluations of public spending and of institutional structures for disaster risk reduction and climate action led to various initiatives. These included public financial management reforms and climate change negotiations.

- Continental frameworks for action: In February 2022, the African Union Heads of State and Government endorsed the establishment of two continental frameworks that provide policy and strategic guidance. One framework focused on multi-hazard early warning and early action, while the other was dedicated to COVID-19 recovery planning.

- Advancing recovery preparedness: The ECOWAS expert roster for recovery was bolstered by improving regional capabilities in post-disaster needs assessment and recovery planning.

- Urban Resilience Programme: The AUC developed the Africa Urban Resilience Programme, with UNDP support, which lays the foundation for enhancing urban resilience across the continent. It serves as an advocacy and operational mechanism, promoting inter-sectoral coordination among Member States and regional economic communities. To support the implementation of this continental framework, AUC, UNDP and UN-Habitat established the Joint Regional Programme on smart urban resilience that offers a suite of solutions, across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus at the continental, regional, national and local level, underpinned by a transboundary perspective.

- Spatial Development Strategy for the Sahel: Since 2022, UNDP and UN-Habitat support development of the Spatial Development Strategy for the Sahel in eight countries. This involves using evidence-based territorial analysis to shape the region’s spatial framework, which in turn will guide strategic investments aimed at maximizing the development potential of the area. This is particularly crucial given the volatility and unpredictability present in conflict-affected areas marked by extensive displacement and uncontrolled urbanization.

- Guiding community-centered urban resilience: UNDP and UN-Habitat supported municipalities in seven secondary cities across the Sahel in developing participatory planning of urban resilience actions leading to city development and investment choices through viable projects, while advocating for their broader implementation and expansion.

- Prioritizing health system improvements, HIV intervention and pandemic preparedness

To address both communicable and non-communicable diseases as well as mental health matters, country offices (COs) in the Sahel region implemented strategies to strengthen healthcare systems and improve vaccine deployment. These measures included adopting sustainable waste management practices, integrating clean energy solutions, leveraging data analytics and implementing digital solutions. These initiatives reduced environmental impacts and bolstered the resilience of healthcare systems. They further promoted decision-making and fostered equitable distribution of vaccines.

Digital solutions for vaccine delivery and health systems were implemented in four instances. These solutions included technologies such as online registration systems, appointment scheduling platforms, and digital health records. In addition, two measures were introduced to implement scalable and reliable clean energy solutions across COVID-19 vaccination sites. Furthermore, COs implemented two measures related to deploying hyperlocal vaccine data analytics. Finally, there was one instance of a mechanism introduced for environmentally and socially sustainable disposal of immunization waste.

As part of delivering health-related interventions, the Sahel Offer provided essential support and resources to approximately 2 million individuals affected by HIV. The programme’s commitment to ensuring equitable access and tailored interventions for both males and females is evident from the gender-specific data. Notably, there were 585,000 male and an almost equal 580,000 female recipients of antiretroviral therapy. In addition, more females (450,000) than males (360,000) benefitted from behavioral change communication initiatives. The programme’s approach emphasizes the recognition of distinct needs and challenges faced by different genders in relation to HIV prevention and treatment.
Three multipurpose agroecological farms, or fermes agroécologiques polyvalentes (FAEP), have been built by the UNDP in Burkina Faso. The programme envisions crop sustainability by supporting producers throughout the construction of multipurpose hedges, windbreaks and shrub-legume corridors around the FAEP. In total, between the three functional FAEPs, which each consist of a minimum of five hectares, there have been acquisitions of 23,000 plants for hedges, 1,800 plants for windbreaks, and 6,000 plants for legume corridors. This represents more than 30,000 plants produced onsite at FAEP nurseries. The plants are situated strategically, buried in several rows along a screened fence using a millimeter-spacing technique.

Reforestation efforts began in earnest in 2021 and carried over into the following years with the expectation that seedlings would develop and would naturally demarcate the boundaries of the farms to create a formidable barrier against incursions from animals while bulwarking the cultures against strong winds.
The Amchidé Health Centre, located in the Far-North region of Cameroon, was severely impacted by violence in the Lake Chad Basin. Following its destruction, the lack of electricity hindered medical examinations and forced patients to travel long distances for healthcare.

To address these challenges, the UNDP, in collaboration with other partners, installed a solar power plant, enabling the restoration of services and improving the quality of care. The plant has contributed to the efficient operation of the hospital, including the preservation of vaccines and the smooth functioning of the laboratory. As a result, patient attendance has tripled, and the community no longer needs to travel long distances for medical care.
Stabilization is a unique instrument to rebuild the social contract in deeply fractured societies and it offers a foundation for lasting peace, security and development in affected communities.

JEAN-LUC STALON
RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE, UNDP CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (FORMERLY UNDP CAMEROON)
UNDP, in collaboration with the Mauritanian government, is dedicated to harnessing the country’s vast renewable energy potential spanning 1,030,000 km². This potential encompasses wind, solar, biomass and green hydrogen. The execution of this plan can address various challenges within Mauritania.

Since 2018, UNDP has assisted with several initiatives to improve Mauritania’s energy standing. For example, it helped develop and launch a new electricity code promulgated in December 2022 by the President of the Republic. The code seeks to spur and regulate a national energy transition based on solar, wind and green hydrogen capacities. This framing promotes public-private partnerships as it reassures investors and thereby facilitates the involvement of the private sector in energy development in the country. To encourage more investment in the renewable energy sector, the electricity code contemplates, in the short and medium terms, a lifting of the technical barriers that could limit connections to renewable sources of electricity. Research programs intended to encourage energy transition, particularly in terms of electricity storage, are also part of the structural advantages provided by this code.

The year 2022 yielded additional advances in the renewable energy sector of Mauritania. UNDP worked directly with Mauritania’s Ministry of Petroleum, Mines and Energy (MPME) to plot the conditions for an energy transition with the ultimate goal of clean electricity in all localities of the country. The UNDP country office, in its integrating and unifying role, set up a platform for broader partnerships, integrating the private sector and civil society to consolidate interventions.

UNDP also helped create a National Unit for the Promotion of Renewable Energies and Rural Electrification to coordinate all interventions in the rural electrification sector of Mauritania. The Mauritanian electricity network has expanded to 200 villages in vulnerable, rural areas across all wilayahs (regions) in the country. With the collaboration of MPME, this happened through the solar-powered mini-grids project and the ambitious Rural Electrification Programme in Isolated Areas, or Programme d’Electrification Rurale en Zones Isolées (PERZI). PERZI functions as a business platform which, beyond promoting technological innovation, encourages possible productive uses to improve the livelihoods of local populations. PERZI also serves as a framework that strengthens the collaboration between UNDP and the Ministry of Energy, as well as other partners operating in the sector. This programme contributes to Mauritania’s energy transition and GHG reduction objectives, following an integrated and inclusive local development approach. It aims to lift more than 300,000 people out of poverty (60% of which will be women) by giving them access to renewable energy sources. This will support the creation of sustainable income streams and increase access to basic social services (health, water, education, etc.). Thus, community development is at the heart of this programme that, in the face of climate change, hopes to strengthen local resilience and enhance support for production systems.
In 2022, the Integrated Natural Resources Management Project in the Bafing Falémé landscape was launched by the UNDP in conjunction with the Guinea national government. In total, three buildings and a meeting room were constructed for the initiative. The Guinean Office of National Parks and Wildlife Reserves provided technical equipment for community usage. These included 15 motorcycles, 18 laptops, personal protective equipment for surveillance in protected areas of the landscape, various kits, and two drones that would allow for continuous monitoring of the forest ecosystems in nearby protected areas. All equipment was selected in accordance with Guinea’s green transition strategy, ensuring their usage would be environmentally friendly. The Bafing-Falémé landscape is rich in natural resources and biodiversity, including an estimated population of 5,000 chimpanzees.

Overall, the project concentrated on four primary actions: a) integrating the management of the Bafing Falémé landscape; b) operationalizing management of surrounding protected areas; c) developing an ‘eco-village’ model in the area; and d) mainstreaming gender, knowledge management and learning.

Apart from the bases constructed in three areas, resources were allocated to renovating the buildings at the project headquarters in Labé, and to building three additional bases in Mali, Tougué and Siguiri.

The purview and success of this project falls under a 5-year initiative led by the Global Environment Facility and UNDP for approximately $7.5 million.
Sahel Offer Pillar 3

YOUTH AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT
MAXIMIZING THE YOUTH BULGE

AFRICAN YOUNG WOMEN LEADERS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME
Female Leaders Trained Over Five Years

YOUTH FOR CLIMATE
EcoBrigade - Agroentrepreneurship and Value Chains
10 Cubed Initiative

BOOSTING YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Support to Young Entrepreneurs
Support to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

SKILLS TRANSFER FOR DEVELOPMENT
Sahel Volunteering Scheme
National Volunteers Deployed Across the Sahel

CONNECTING YOUTH
YouthConnekt
Intergenerational Dialogues
Development Solution Hackathons
Arts and Culture for Development
Fashion Economics

YOUTH IN POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND PUBLIC SECTOR
Youth mobilized as civic educators
Youth mobilized for social accountability
Young leaders engaged in political parties and local governance

SAHEL YOUTH OFFER

EcoBrigade - Agroentrepreneurship and Value Chains
10 Cubed Initiative

Sahel Volunteering Scheme
National Volunteers Deployed Across the Sahel

YouthConnekt
Intergenerational Dialogues
Development Solution Hackathons
Arts and Culture for Development
Fashion Economics

Youth mobilized as civic educators
Youth mobilized for social accountability
Young leaders engaged in political parties and local governance
Empowering Youth and Women
Leveraging the Sahel’s Demographic Dividend

As part of UNISS implementation, and under the Sahel Offer, UNDP’s contributions primarily focus on youth entrepreneurial development and economic empowerment, youth deradicalization efforts against violent extremism and women’s economic empowerment ventures.

Young people in the Sahel represent a vibrant and diverse demographic capable of unlocking sustainable peace, development, and transformation in the region. By creating pathways for skill development, education, employment and resilience building, the Sahel’s youth can become agents of change in advancing sustainable development in the region.

Sahelean women are also an undeniable driving force at the heart of community resilience. Although economic, security, climate and structural crises have often pushed women into the informal economy, they represent the foundation for reducing communal vulnerability to various shocks. Yet, according to the ADB’s Gender Equality Index, the gender gap in the Sahel region remains wide (68.1% across the three dimensions of measurement, including economic, social and representation). These women have been hindered by discriminatory traditions and gender stereotypes, often sidelined to work in the agricultural labor force rather than in production.

Providing Services and Assets for Empowerment, and Securing Access to Justice
The Sahel youth empowerment programme aims to enhance access to employment and e-commerce opportunities for young people. With a specific emphasis on fostering the creation of green and digital technology-related jobs, it focuses on engaging youth in political processes, peacebuilding efforts, socioeconomic development and climate resilience initiatives.

The Sahel Offer has successfully provided support to approximately 10 million youth by facilitating their access to basic services, financial services and non-financial assets. Of these, 4.9 million youth were supported to access justice and 4 million accessed basic services such as healthcare, education, water access and sanitation.

These solutions were implemented at national and sub-national levels and suggest that efforts can be made even in fragile settings, to enhance the livelihoods of people. Additionally, implementation efforts also included stabilization initiatives that aim to restore stability in the affected areas, creating an environment conducive to recovery and development.

In terms of guaranteeing access to justice, the programme’s goals were to expand the civic space, address racism and discrimination, and strengthen human rights, equity and the rule of law. The youth benefiting from these services were able to seek legal remedies and challenge violations of their rights, ultimately contributing to a more equitable and fair society.

The combined efforts resulted in a significant number of young individuals in the Sahel being empowered to improve their skills, financial situation and overall well-being, thereby contributing to their potential for sustainable livelihoods and job opportunities.

Integrating the 2030 Agenda and Other Frameworks into Development Plans
To integrate the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement and other frameworks into national and local development plans, the Sahel countries implemented several initiatives. There were 83 actions across different areas indirectly advancing peace and security, governance, resilience, human development and regional integration. These initiatives aimed to promote development, reduce poverty and inequality, enhance social cohesion and stability, and protect the environment. Among these initiatives were qualified policy measures that enabled the enhancement and implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement. These measures included laws, regulations, strategies and plans that address climate change mitigation and adaptation in various sectors such as energy, agriculture, forestry and water.

In addition, 19 data collection and/or analysis mechanisms were established to provide disaggregated data for monitoring progress towards the SDGs. These mechanisms included surveys, censuses, administrative records and statistical systems that collect and analyze data on various indicators related to economic, social and environmental dimensions of development.

Enhancing Women’s Leadership and Participation
Women’s leadership and participation in decision-making are crucial for attaining sustainable development and peace in the region. This is particularly significant in crisis contexts where women are often affected disproportionately. In recent years, countries in the region had 16 partnerships with women-led CSOs and other entities and networks that foster women’s leadership, participation and gender equality. The countries also implemented several measures to empower women in the region. The most progress was made in the establishment of mechanisms for women empowerment in mediation, reconciliation and peacebuilding. There were eight of such measures, along with seven measures in public institutions and in natural resource management. Progress was also made in the judiciary and in elected positions (including parliaments), each of which saw the introduction of five measures. Finally, there were four initiatives for women empowerment in the private sector.

Responding to Gender-Based Violence and Harmful Gender Social Norms
The Sahel Offer led to the execution of several initiatives aimed at effectively preventing and responding to GBV. This was achieved by addressing detrimental social norms and discriminatory practices in order to transform societal perceptions about GBV. They provided victims with support, including counseling, legal assistance and other resources. Furthermore, they ensured that perpetrators were brought to justice and held accountable for their actions.

Through the programme, 53 entities received support to implement legislation, policies, action plans and initiatives aimed at preventing GBV. Among these were 22 sub-national entities, 15 national entities, 15 CSOs and one entity in the private sector. Through these collaborations, the Sahel Offer fostered a multi-sectoral approach to addressing GBV that facilitated a wide reach and impact at the grassroots level, and enabled the implementation of GBV prevention measures and support services in local communities. By strengthening the capacities of these entities, the programme improved the comprehensive response to GBV in the Sahel.
Since April 2021, following the demise of the President of Chad, power was assumed by a Transitional Military Council (TMC). An Inclusive and Sovereign National Dialogue, or Dialogue National Inclusif et Souverain (DNIS), was held from 20 August to 8 October 2022 to create a socio-cultural and political environment conducive to the achievement of gender equality. The dialogue led to several resolutions and recommendations aimed at enhancing women’s participation, combating sexist cultural and religious norms, opposing gender-based discrimination, and improving women’s access to elective and nominative roles through defined quotas.

The proceeding involved a diverse group of participants that ensured an inclusive and transparent process, fostering a diverse range of perspectives. Overall, more than 500 participants contributed to the dialogue. A further 7 million people, particularly women and youth, were empowered to indirectly participate in and observe the pre-dialogue and dialogue processes in real-time. Supporting the dialogue at the administrative level, UNDP assisted with the successful operationalization of Chad’s Ministry of Reconciliation along with corollary technical bodies.

The programme actively trained women, youth, and persons with disabilities, in conflict prevention and management. It also helped establish a technical and financial support mechanism for CSOs involved in promoting human and women’s rights. Furthermore, it strengthened the holistic care mechanism for victims of GBV by guaranteeing them free legal assistance. The dialogue also reignited efforts to adopt the Personal and Family Code by establishing a sub-committee tasked with reviewing all reservations expressed by religious leaders.

By utilizing a cross-cutting approach, the national dialogue and the social policies it inaugurated have the potential to empower women and youth to positively contribute to economic development, particularly in rural communities.

Despite the accomplishments of the DNIS, there is still a significant amount of work to be done to achieve complete gender parity in political participation. The engaged political parties reported that only 9% of participants were women and some leading opposition entities boycotted the process, including the “Transformateurs” party of Succès Masra, which mainly comprises urban youth in the capital, and the “Wakit Tamma” (“Time’s Up” in Arabic) opposition platform, which comprises over 30 political parties and civil society organizations. Popular mobilization could have also been hindered by the inherent prejudices and gender stereotypes, which misconstrue women’s participation as a funding instrument able to be co-opted politically.

Towards the conclusion, participants made a number of contentious decisions. Notably, it was decided that the transitional authorities, including the President of the TMC, would be eligible to participate in the next elections in contradiction with the key demand of the African Union Peace and Security Council and other partners.

Many promising recommendations however resulted from the national dialogue, with the potential to fortify the social contract and cohesion in Chad. While Chad’s political future stands at a crossroads, it is evident that women and youth are now rightfully gaining their place at the decision-making table.
After enduring 22 years of autocratic rule, The Gambia embarked on a complex path towards justice, peace and reconciliation. Guided by the voices of victims, the Truth Reconciliation and Reparation Commission (TRRC) was established, allowing survivors, particularly women, to share their stories of human rights abuses without fear of intimidation or retaliation. With the support of UNDP, the TRRC process became a catalyst for healing, reconciliation, and societal transformation.

UNDP focused on addressing GBV within the context of transitional justice. Through collaboration with the Network Against Gender-Based Violence, three centres and a shelter were renovated to enhance access to justice for GBV survivors. Standard operating procedures, referral pathways, and training for social workers were developed, along with support for survivor advocacy groups. UNDP also provided mental health, psychosocial, and livelihood services to GBV survivors, contributing to post-TRRC efforts. Amplifying the voices of victims, UNDP played a crucial role in advocating for truth, accountability and justice during the transitional justice process.

Ayesha Harun, co-founder of the Gambia Center for Victims of Human Rights Violation and daughter of a victim, emphasized the importance of creating an environment where citizens can freely express their experiences and rebuild trust. “Justice goes beyond holding wrongdoers accountable. It requires a society where healing and inclusivity thrive.” According to one beneficiary of the programme, “We [women] the victims are the main stakeholders of the process and have played a crucial role in the TRRC process as truth-tellers, advocates for justice, and catalysts of healing, influencing policies and drivers of reconciliation. We as victims continue to actively participate in the process to ensure absolute healing and societal transformation, fostering empathy and dialogue towards a more inclusive and just society.”

The transitional justice process, supported by victims, CSOs, stakeholders, and the government, shows a strong commitment to implementing the TRRC’s recommendations as outlined in the government’s white paper. UNDP takes pride in supporting the Government of The Gambia, and participated in key events, such as the Stakeholder Conference and Donor Roundtable. Efforts during elections involved capacity building, supporting the Independent Electoral Commission, facilitating civic and voter education, enhancing election security, promoting inter-party dialogue for peace, and collaborating on conflict prevention systems. These endeavors contributed to a more inclusive, transparent, and peaceful democratic development in The Gambia for all citizens.

The implementation of the TRRC’s recommendations remains critical for transitional justice, good governance, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding initiatives. Victims continue to engage actively in the process, with the goal of healing, societal transformation, empathy, and dialogue. This participation ultimately contributes to the creation of a more inclusive and just society.
Gambia’s transitional justice process set a benchmark for transparency and inclusivity across the continent. UNDP’s continued support in collaboration with OHCHR, including a post-TRRC programme and EU-funded judiciary assistance reflects a resolute step towards ensuring lasting peace and justice in the country.

“AISSATA DE
RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE, UNDP CAMEROON (FORMERLY UNDP THE GAMBIA)
Beginning in November 2020, UNDP, in partnership with the Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF), undertook the Mali Youth Entrepreneurship Programme to empower 10,000 young Malians over a period of three years. This initiative is aligned with the MoU signed in 2019 between UNDP and TEF to empower 100,000 young entrepreneurs in Africa over a period of 10 years. UNDP funded the programme’s pilot phase, from November 2020 to December 2021, in the amount of $6,000,000. The second phase, undertaken under Mali’s Ministry of National Entrepreneurship, had a timeline of January 2022 to December 2023 with funding of up to 2,250,000 Euros from the Government of Luxembourg.

From November 2020 to December 2022, the programme improved livelihoods for 3,694 young people in key economic sectors, including agriculture, livestock, trade, and service delivery. Among the beneficiaries, 40 percent were women. In addition, subsidies have been offered to 2,560 companies, ranging from $200 to $5,000 each, along with a further 2,360 subsidies for up to $2,500 each. Further, 6,580 jobs have been created for young people, 35 percent of whom are women. Overall, value chains in the above-mentioned key sectors have been developed to increase profits, create more jobs, and ensure the continued economic sustainability of enterprises.

The story of Fatoumata Keïta, 22, illustrates the impacts of the programme on the life of one young beneficiary and her community. A first-cycle graduate in agro-economics, Fatoumata completed her apprenticeship as well as advanced training in agricultural health fields. As a result of limited opportunities, she did not obtain a job following these endeavors. Having acquired professional experience in processing agricultural products, Fatoumata applied for the second phase of the programme with the aim to create a business in the field.

In October 2022, Fatoumata attended a training session in entrepreneurship and business management organized by the programme. The training enabled her to develop a business plan, which she submitted and defended during the November 2022 pitch competition for selecting beneficiaries. As the competition winner, she received in 2023 a grant of $2,500 in two installments to enable her acquire tomato processing equipment and officially set up her company “Touma Tomate” in Ségou. Discussing her experience, Fatoumata said, “Through this programme, I learned to target my customers, make risk reduction forecasts, make smart decisions, adapt to customer needs, and formalize my business by registering in the commercial register.”

The aim of Fatoumata’s enterprise is to transform tomatoes into preservable by-products that will include powders (flavored with celery, parsley, and garlic) as well as tomato paste, often referred to as “locoti”. She explained, “The idea of processing tomatoes came to me during one of my trips to Niono, where women are forced to sell off their production due to a lack of means for preservation during the harvest period. I also noticed that all processed tomato products are imported into Mali. However, Mali has excellent tomato production of around 40 tonnes per hectare. That’s where it all started.”

Fatoumata expects her business to bolster the surrounding local economy and value chain by sourcing raw materials exclusively from rural riparian farmers. Speaking of her prospects, she adds: “I plan to vary my products by adding jam production and creating a training centre for young people in my community and beyond. As for my processing unit, I would like it to become a factory able to function and distribute goods nationally.”
Senegal, a vibrant country on the Western coast of Africa, hosts a treasure trove of talent and creativity among its informal artists and craftworkers. These skilled individuals, although abundant in number, face numerous challenges due to limited access to digital skills and equipment. Yet, the craft sector, which is a crucial employer in Senegal and second only to agriculture, holds the potential for the transformation of lives and upliftment of communities.

UNDP Senegal has embarked on a joint venture with the Dakar American University of Sciences and Technology and other national entities to empower 50 young artisans by harnessing the power of digital tools.

The project set out with four key objectives: provide comprehensive training in various crafts, equip trainees with locally designed and manufactured cutting-edge computer numerical control (CNC) machines, foster technology transfer and autonomy, and establish an exclusive e-commerce portal for Senegalese artisans. The investment aimed to bridge the gap between traditional craftsmanship and modern technology, fostering a new era of innovation.

The results were nothing short of transformative. The initial cohort of 50 young artisans experienced a profound shift in their creative process and prospects. Armed with new digital skills, they seamlessly blended traditional craftsmanship with modern technology, giving rise to intricate designs and innovative creations. The fusion of heritage and digitalization captivated local communities and opened doors to global markets. Locally designed and manufactured CNC machines, such as 3D printers, CNC plasma/laser cutters, CNC routers, and computerized sewing and embroidery equipment revolutionized the creative process. As each participant embraced the power of digitalization, the craft sector began evolving into a force for integration and second chances. What was once a refuge for school dropouts became a thriving ecosystem of creativity and progress.

Through collaboration and unwavering belief in the youth, this initiative enabled a shift from tradition to transformation. Digitalization became the catalyst for empowerment, unlocking new opportunities for informal artists and craftworkers, particularly those from marginalized communities. In the future, the project is expected to scale nationwide and target 1,500 young people across Senegal. This results-oriented initiative not only enhances economic opportunities but also preserves cultural heritage and ignites a spirit of innovation.

As the world witnesses the remarkable accomplishments of these young artisans, the impact reverberates beyond Senegal’s borders. Senegal’s artisans and craftworkers, once limited by lack of access, are now equipped with the skills and resources to thrive in an increasingly digital world. Senegal’s youth artisans are rewriting their narratives, and their journey from the informal sector to global recognition is an inspiration for other nations seeking to uplift their own talented youth.
UNDP is committed to nurturing the potential of young people by enhancing their skills, fostering their entrepreneurial spirit and supporting their journey towards becoming key contributors of the continent’s transformation.

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NJOYA TIKUM
DIRECTOR, UNDP SUB-REGIONAL HUB FOR WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA AND RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE, UNDP SENEGAL

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Who We Work With

In our journey to foster stability and development in the Sahel region, the true architects of change have been the people themselves. This thinking has shaped several partnerships with community leaders, business communities, academia and research institutions, creatives, civil society and community groups. As key partners in our endeavours, their resilience, knowledge, and unwavering spirit are the cornerstones of our work. We believe that the most effective solutions are those that are community-led and reflective of the needs and aspirations of communities. By collaborating closely with local populations, we ensure that our initiatives are not only impactful but also sustainable.

Our efforts were also built on partnerships with Sahelian Governments themselves and these are:

Sahelian Governments

- Burkina Faso
- Cameroon
- Chad
- Guinea
- Mali
- Mauritania
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Senegal
- The Gambia

By leveraging the unique strengths of diverse actors such as continental bodies, regional and sub-national organizations, international financial institutions and specialized technical agencies, we were able to tackle complex challenges and improve the lives of millions. Some of these partners include:

Regional Entities

- African Union
- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
- Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)
- Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC)
- Liptako-Gourma Authority (LGA)

Financial and Technical Partners

The results in this report are a reflection of the commitment and support of our financial and technical partners who have made the efforts we have undertaken in the Sahel possible. These include the following:

- African Development Bank (AfDB)
- Canada
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- European Union
- France
- Generation Unlimited
- Germany
- Global Environment Facility
- The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
- Green Climate Fund
- Islamic Development Bank (IsDB)
- Italy
- Japan
- Netherlands
- Nigeria
- Norway
- Sustainable Energy for All (SEforAll)
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- United Kingdom
- United Nations Agencies, Funds and Programmes
- United States
- World Bank

*List of partners not exhaustive or reflective of contributions
Despite significant crises and tensions in the Sahel, which were exacerbated by the impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic, UNDP in collaboration with its partners made remarkable progress in bringing stability to the region. Our contribution, through our $3.6 million Sahel regeneration plan, accomplished numerous targets towards implementation of the UNISS and Support Plan. This ‘Sahel Offer’ focuses on the three pillar areas of governance, renewable energy, and youth.

Across the three priority areas, the governance programme had the most significant impact, positively influencing the lives of 91.5 million individuals. Over the same period, the renewable energy programme supported 70.7 million people while the youth intervention benefitted 10 million young people.

In the area of governance, achievements included the facilitation of voter registration for 35.7 million individuals, with 15.8 million actively participating in elections. Other governance initiatives included the streamlining of access to justice systems for 12 million individuals, including women, youth, individuals from ethnic minority groups, persons from displaced populations, and persons with disabilities. The governance efforts strengthened 292 national democratic institutions to enhance community security, improve service delivery and institute conflict prevention mechanisms. Implementation activities reached 8.4 million persons for improved jobs and livelihoods in crisis and post-crisis settings, while over 600,000 people benefited from improved infrastructure. Access to basic services, financial services and non-financial assets was provided to 12.7 million people. A core element of the governance programme was the interventions in the LCB and Liptako Gourma regions, which benefitted from RSF funding. Governance structures were established in 43 JAP locations, 26 early warning systems were installed, and 2,069 streetlights were furnished at different JAP sites. In addition, six JAP locations were equipped to facilitate cross-border trade, coordination, and cooperation. In the LCB and Liptako Gourma, over 800,000 women were empowered through initiatives that provided employment opportunities, skill development, and financial support.

Under the programming for renewable energy, the Sahel Offer reached 70.7 million individuals through the expansion of clean energy access in communities. Other achievements included the management of 27.6 million hectares of land under a sustainable use, conservation, and benefit-sharing regime. In addition, efforts relating to biodiversity, water, oceans, and climate solutions benefited 6 million individuals while actions to protect nature and promote the sustainable use of resources benefited a further 2 million people. The Sahel Offer helped the region increase renewable energy capacity for solar and hydro by 102 megawatts. Through UNDP’s collaboration with various partners, and particularly through the Sahel Resilience Project, the region also received substantial support in the area of disaster risk management, including to address political and humanitarian crises, and climate-related shocks. In the area of health, UNDP’s initiatives improved healthcare system resilience and provided HIV-related interventions to 2 million individuals while also enhancing pandemic preparedness.

As part of UNISS implementation, UNDP’s contributions under the third pillar focused on youth entrepreneurial development and economic empowerment, youth deradicalization efforts against violent extremism, and women’s economic empowerment. Through the Sahel Offer, UNDP empowered over 10 million youth, comprising justice-support to 4.9 million youth, essential services for 4 million youth, jobs and improved livelihoods for 680,200 youth, financial services for 438,000 youth, and access to non-financial assets for 24,500 youth. UNDP’s interventions included a spearheading of 16 partnerships with organizations charged with fostering women’s leadership, enhancing women’s participation, and promoting gender equality. In addition, several initiatives served to combat GBV, including the provision of support to 53 national and sub-national entities, CSOs and the private sector for implementation of legislation, policies, action plans, and other initiatives aimed at preventing GBV.

As we reflect on the attainments of the Sahel Offer, we carry forward valuable lessons into subsequent years. We aim to fortify our collaborations with governments of the Sahel, donor partners, CSOs, and all stakeholders. We anticipate an increase in involvement from our funding partners, which may take the form of concessory loans or grants. We will focus on enhancing loan utilization to advance development. The implementation of robust accountability and anti-corruption strategies will play a crucial role in reestablishing responsive governance in the region. With the goal of leaving no one behind, we will focus on broadening our initiatives towards empowering even more women, and extending our reach to more individuals from disadvantaged groups, including minority communities and people with disabilities. Above all, we remain unwavering in our commitment to actively involve the people of the Sahel in devising and implementing solutions that they can claim as their own.

Join us in empowering communities and shaping a brighter tomorrow for the Sahel.