



From
the People of Japan



IMPACT REPORT

Women, Peace and Security

Stories of impact from UNDP's Japan-funded projects in Africa,
2022 - 2024





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Acknowledgement

This Impact Report on Women, Peace and Security highlights some of the key outcomes of Japan funded projects focusing on women, peace and security, which were implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) between 2022 and 2024. These projects and the considerable positive impact they have had on countless lives in Africa, would not have been possible without the unwavering support of our partners in Japan, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), civil society organizations, and the private sector. Their close collaboration is crucial in implementing a wide range of strategic projects and advancing Africa's development towards building inclusive, resilient, and peaceful societies.

Further, we are grateful for the support from colleagues and partners across the continent, including Japanese embassies, national and local Governments and line ministries, implementing partners, development partners, CSOs, private sector representatives and the wider UN Country Teams. By leveraging our comparative advantages and expertise, these strong partnerships contributed to the effective delivery of concrete actions supporting people and institutions in tackling increasingly complex challenges in Africa.

UNDP wishes to recognize and appreciate the dedication, expertise and guidance of UNDP colleagues across Africa and beyond, including the Regional Service Centre for Africa and its various hubs, the Global Policy Network, and the Bureau for Policy and Programme Support. Last but not least, we would like to commend the commitment of project officers and all staff in UNDP country offices, without whom timely and comprehensive action would be impossible, and who continuously uphold the unique Japan-Africa partnership and collaborative spirit through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) process.



Foreword

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



In a world where conflicts and crises continually threaten the fabric of societies, the resilience and strength of communities shine brightest in the darkest times. Across Africa, women have emerged as powerful agents of change, driving peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts with unwavering determination and courage. This report showcases their extraordinary achievements, emphasizing the significant impact of their daily commitment on their families and communities. Their experiences are a testament to their indomitable spirit and the vital role they play in shaping a brighter, more stable future for all.

In South Sudan, women like Nya Law Lual and Ayak Akol have transformed their lives through socio-economic empowerment initiatives supported by UNDP and Japan. Their stories of overcoming adversity, rebuilding businesses, and providing for their families exemplify the transformative power of targeted support and skill development. Similarly, the community dialogues in Cameroon, led by women like

Aissatou Halidou, underscore the critical importance of women's involvement in reconciliation and peace processes. Their efforts to mend fractured bonds and foster a culture of forgiveness highlight the unique perspectives and strengths women bring to peacebuilding.

The partnership between Africa and Japan has been instrumental in driving these successes. Japan's commitment to promoting peace, stability, and sustainable development through projects such as the Liptako Gourma and Lake Chad Regional Stabilization Facility has been pivotal. These initiatives have not only rehabilitated critical infrastructure and restored livelihoods but have also prioritized the inclusion of women and youth in peace and development efforts.

In Nigeria, the stories of resilience continue with individuals like Zara Bello, who, despite being displaced by conflict, have found hope and opportunity through UNDP and Japan's

livelihood recovery programs. Zara's entrepreneurial journey and her aspirations to educate and empower other young women embody the spirit of resilience and forward-looking ambition that is crucial for sustainable peace and development.

Our long-standing collaboration with Japan in supporting democratic processes and institution-building across Africa has further reinforced the foundation for inclusive governance. Women like Lilian Gwanyanya in Zimbabwe and Aisha Mohammed in Guinea Bissau have taken up leadership roles in advocating for the rights of women and ensuring accountability within their communities. Their advocacy and dedication to creating safer, more inclusive environments for all are inspiring examples of the profound impact women can have when given the platform and support to lead.

As we look to the future, it is imperative that we continue to reinforce and expand these collaborative efforts. The challenges we face are complex and multifaceted, but by working together, we can build resilient communities, foster inclusive governance, and ensure sustainable peace and development. The stories in this report are not just reflections of past achievements but also a call to action for continued partnership and innovation.

Let us draw inspiration from these remarkable women and the enduring partnerships that have supported their journeys. Together, we can create a future where peace and prosperity are within reach for all, and where every woman has the opportunity to contribute to the rebuilding and strengthening of her community.

Ahunna Eziakonwa

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



Introduction



Overview

Founded in 1993, TICAD is the oldest and one of the most recognized multilateral platforms to explore innovative, sustainable, and equitable development pathways for Africa, based on the principles of African ownership and international partnership. It is grounded in the principles of African ownership and international partnership, aligning with 'The Africa We Want', the Pan-African Vision stated in the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In 2023, TICAD celebrated its 30th anniversary, with stakeholders in Tokyo, Japan, reflecting on its value and relevance to Africa amidst evolving political and socio-economic contexts both on the continent and globally. This year, TICAD will host the Ministerial Meeting, setting the stage for TICAD 9, which is scheduled to be held in Yokohama, Japan, in August 2025. The TICAD Ministerial Meeting 2024 provides crucial opportunities to discuss ways to strengthen cooperation in fostering African and global development.

A key agenda item for discussion is the cross-cutting element of **women, peace, and security**. Japan has been a leading advocate for the active participation of women in development and peace-keeping efforts across the African continent. Since the adoption of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000, member states have recognized women's influence in maintaining and promoting peace and security.

Japan-funded projects have addressed the impact of armed conflict and of violence against women. They have promoted their meaningful engagement in preventing and resolving conflict, as well as their role in maintaining international peace and security.

As the report illustrates, women in Africa are pivotal in conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding. They are often at the forefront of change, working tirelessly for the safety, dignity, and well-being of their families and communities, even amid protracted conflicts. Supporting these vital efforts demands a commitment to equal educational opportunities, sustainable economic growth, social development, inclusive governance, and equal participation in political and public life.

The meaningful leadership and involvement of women at all stages of the peacebuilding processes are imperative to ensure that both women and girls in Africa are safeguarded from war and violence and have access to effective justice and accountability mechanisms. This is not only crucial for their safety and empowerment but also for the overall stability and prosperity of societies.

Japan's support to UNDP Africa

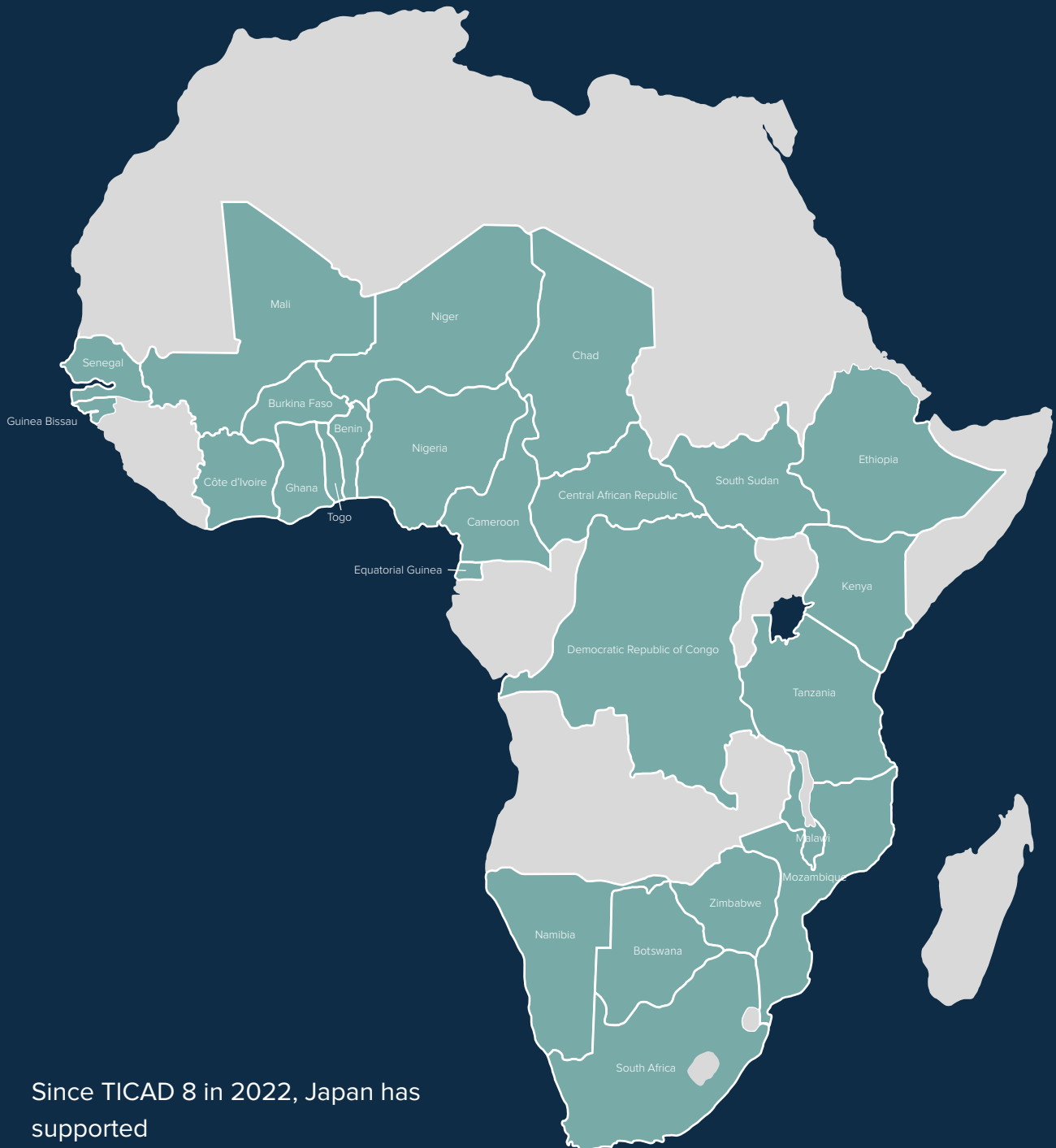
UNDP, in partnership with the Government of Japan, has worked closely to support projects that have contributed to transformative change in African countries. Thematic areas supported include the restoration of livelihoods and early recovery efforts, mitigating the impacts of climate-change through climate-smart agriculture, strengthening the capacity of local governance institutions, promotion of social cohesion, and supporting peaceful and inclusive elections, among others. The empowerment of women and gender equality are embedded as a cross-cutting element in all projects supported.

This partnership has had a profound impact on local communities by fostering resilience and sustainable development. For instance, climate-smart agriculture initiatives have improved food security and income for smallholder farmers, while capacity-building programs for local governance have enhanced transparency and accountability. The focus on social cohesion and inclusive elections has helped stabilize regions prone to conflict, ensuring that peace and democratic processes are maintained. The emphasis on women's empowerment and gender equality ensures that the benefits of these projects are experienced broadly across society, leading to more equitable and inclusive growth.



Mr Hiroyuki Kumagai, Deputy Ambassador- Embassy of Japan giving solidarity remarks ©UNDP

Japan's support at a glance (2022-2024)



Since TICAD 8 in 2022, Japan has supported

58 projects
26 countries
Totalling 92 million USD



Partnership with Japanese entities

The support of key partners, including African institutions, Japanese entities such as JICA, NGOs, CSOs, academia, and the private sector, has been crucial in the success of Japan-funded projects. Their expertise has enabled a positive impact in strengthening the capacity and participation of women in both the promotion of peace and security, as well as enhancing economic resilience.

JICA, a long-standing partner in Japan-funded projects, has contributed its extensive technical knowledge and experience. JICA's proven approaches, such as KAIZEN and the Smallholder Horticulture Empowerment and Promotion (SHEP) model, have been successfully scaled and implemented in countries including the Central African Republic, the Liptako Gourma region, and Malawi.

Between March 2023 and March 2024, UNDP and JICA conducted workshops in North-East Nigeria to enhance the capacity of state and local governments to enhance and strengthen localisation and ownership of recovery processes in specific regions. Focused on achieving durable solutions, these workshops also supported both male and female officials from the North-East Development Commission in developing a coordination and visioning strategy to ensure alignment across state and federal levels.

In Malawi, UNDP carried out a series of trainings for trainers in horticulture, with a focus on small holder market-oriented empowerment and promotion since March 2023. Over 5200 farmers have been trained as a result of the series, including almost 2000 women who have built skills in growing food and plants to sell. UNDP also distributed

starter kits including watering cans, fertilizers and fungicides to vulnerable households, enabling them to kick-start horticulture and increase their income. Close work with JICA enabled project planning and implementation.

The Japanese private sector has also been a crucial partner in driving innovation, creating jobs, and contributing to economic empowerment of women and youth across Africa. In 2023, UNDP Mali engaged with the multinational Japanese chemical company Asahi Kasei and Italian textile company Brunello to tackle challenges in health and environmental impacts associated with the textile industry.

Brunello has been creating top-quality fabrics and linings made in Italy since 1927, including the high-end fabric branded “BemBAZIN™.” It uses the “Bemberg” yarn produced by the multinational Japanese chemical company Asahi Kasei, which is manufactured sustainably from cotton linter, a natural by-product of the cottonseed oil production process. The BemBAZIN™ fabric is being sold in Mali through a local vendor. Activities supported in partnership with the companies include health check-ups, construction of a water point, training on communications and digital marketing skills, personal protective equipment and a sensitization campaign on the health risks for women dyers.



Ahunna Eziakonwa, Director, Regional Bureau for Africa, UNDP, meets with women dyers.



Impact stories



Participants in social cohesion activities in Chad

Stabilization

Efforts to achieve stabilization are deeply rooted in the Human Security approach which addresses the urgent needs of conflict-affected communities by promoting their freedom from fear and want. This involves supporting community security and social cohesion, as well as providing livelihoods and essential social services. Japan has shown unwavering commitment to fostering peace, stability, and sustainable development through its support for stabilization projects.

Japan has supported impactful stabilization projects, including the Liptako Gourma and Lake Chad Regional Stabilization Facility. These efforts reached millions of people in Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Mozambique, Nigeria and South Sudan. By focusing on rehabilitating critical infrastructure, restoring livelihood opportunities, and strengthening social cohesion mechanisms, these projects have made significant strides. Particular emphasis has been placed on the participation of women and youth in the process of restoring peace, security and trust among the community.





➤ South Sudan

PROJECT

Stabilization of conflict affected communities for a dignified and sustained return of displaced populations in Eastern Equatoria and Upper Nile States

Mar 2023 – Sep 2024

Strengthening reconciliation and building skills in Malakal

“I am no longer just a survivor; I am a warrior, ready to face whatever lies ahead with resilience and courage.”



In the heart of Upper Nile State, South Sudan, the town of Malakal stands as a symbol of resilience amidst adversity. The region, deeply affected by past and ongoing violent conflicts, faces immense challenges, particularly for its young women – many of whom have survived sexual violence and conflict.

Their stories of transformation offer a glimpse into the impact of recent support initiatives.

Nya Law Lual, a widowed mother of five, has seen her life change dramatically. “Before receiving assistance, I struggled to manage my business and was barely making a profit,” Nya explains. Through training in business management and a start-up kit provided by UNYDA, UNDP, and Japan, Nya has turned her fortunes around. She now earns 270,000 SSP per month and saves 100,000 SSP, allowing her to cover school fees and essentials for her family.



Business support beneficiary Ms. Nya Law Lual, at her stall, selling vegetables in Malakal

Ayak Akol, a thirty-two-year-old mother of four, describes her journey from displacement to stability. “During the crisis, my husband and I were displaced,” Ayak recalls. “We had no beds and often went without food.” With the help of UNYDA and UNDP, Ayak received support that enabled her to start a small business. Her new skills in business management have led to significant improvements: she has purchased three beds for her home, paid school fees for

her children, and addressed medical needs for her family. Her monthly savings are also growing.

Monica Daniel, who operates a tea business in the local market, has also experienced a transformation. “I learned how to save money and keep my tea business stable,” Monica says. “Staying at home felt like a trauma in itself. I was constantly hoping for food. Now, I’m able to rebuild my business and regain my independence.”

These women’s stories emerge from a backdrop of significant challenges. Many in Malakal, survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, face displacement, loss of family, and limited access to healthcare. Social stigma and discrimination compound their difficulties, making it hard to secure stable livelihoods.

In response, the Upper Nile Youth Development Association (UNYDA), with support from UNDP and Japan, launched a transformative initiative in 2024. This project aimed to equip women survivors with essential socio-economic skills, strengthening their role in peacebuilding efforts. Over two training sessions, eighty

women from Malakal PoC and Malakal town acquired crucial knowledge in business management, including budgeting, marketing, financial planning, and entrepreneurship. Each participant also received a start-up kit to support their business endeavors.

The initiative took a holistic approach, integrating income-generation support with psychosocial assistance. Training workshops on trauma awareness were conducted specifically for young female survivors of conflict-related sexual violence. One survivor shared, “The training gave me inner peace, filling a gap within myself.” Another noted, “The workshop provided me with knowledge, a sense of belonging, and empowerment. I am no longer just a survivor; I am a warrior, ready to face whatever lies ahead with resilience and courage.”

In Malakal, these women are not merely surviving—they are thriving, reclaiming their lives, and forging a path toward a brighter future with newfound strength and determination.





Magwi Community Multipurpose Centre for Training
@ UNDP South Sudan Magwi (October 2023)

Rebuilding lives and communities

Built to support those affected by the conflict between cattle herders from Jonglei State and farmers in Magwi County, this center is more than just a building—it's a haven for peace, discussion, and development.

Youth were encouraged by community leaders to contribute labor to the project. They cleared the bush, opened access roads, and excavated foundations and pit latrines. Under the guidance of community leaders, women and young people rolled up their sleeves, clearing the bush, opening access roads, and digging foundations and pit latrines.

Women played a crucial role as well. With no machine-operated quarries or crushers available, they provided essential local materials like hand-crushed aggregates, burnt clay bricks, and sand. Some women also took on the task of cooking meals for the laborers, ensuring that everyone stayed nourished and motivated.

More than 50 women and youth came together, each playing a part in bringing the Magwi Community Centre to life. The center now boasts two halls with seating capacities of 100 and 50, respectively. These spaces are crucial for community governance discussions and initiatives aimed at improving livelihoods.

For Madam Atto, a community member who was recruited to provide meals, the center's impact extends beyond the physical structure.

The income she earned allowed her to reinvest in her small business, providing essential support for her family's food and medical expenses. Madam Atto also knows that in the future she will benefit from the community centre as a member of the women's group.

The Magwi Community Centre is more than a place; it is a testament to the collective effort and spirit of those who built it. It symbolizes a brighter future for Magwi County, where unity and collaboration pave the way for lasting peace and development.



> Chad

PROJECT

Enhancing Stabilisation and Human Security through Trade
for Peace in the Lake Chad Basin

Mar 2023 – Mar 2024

“This gives me hope for a better future, not only for myself but for our whole community.”



Finding unity on the football pitch

In the conflict-affected regions of the Lake Chad Basin, a story of resilience and new beginnings unfolds. Solange, a 32-year-old farmer and trader from Kassalaré, Chad, had her life upended in June 2021 when armed groups attacked her village. Forced to flee with her family, Solange found temporary refuge and relative safety in the town of Baltram.

In Baltram, the challenge of integrating into a new community loomed large. Understanding the need for social integration and cohesion, UNDP, with support from the Government of Japan, launched initiatives designed to bring displaced individuals and local residents together. These efforts included social activities, conflict prevention workshops, and friendly football matches.

Solange’s life took an unexpected turn when she accepted an invitation to join a soccer team organized as part of these initiatives. Initially, she saw it as a way to make friends. Yet, it quickly became much more. “When I was invited to join the team, I immediately accepted because it was an opportunity to promote positive exchanges with our host community. It was my first time playing soccer. Usually, it’s the boys who play,” Solange recalls.

To her surprise, Solange discovered a hidden talent for the sport. “Thanks to soccer, I felt we were becoming a team, and that was incredible. I even became captain and won several tournaments.”

The success of Solange and her team did not go unnoticed. They earned a cup from the Hadjer-Lamis regional authorities, a symbol of their triumph both on and off the field. Through soccer, Solange not only regained a sense of normalcy but also emerged as a catalyst for positive change within her new town. “This gives me hope for a better future, not only for myself but for our whole community,” she says.



Solange holding her trophy, Baltram, Chad



➤ Cameroon

PROJECT

Enhancing Stabilisation and Human Security through Trade
for Peace in the Lake Chad Basin

Mar 2023 – Mar 2024

Transforming lives, one birth at a time

At the Logone Birni District Medical Centre, the arrival of a new maternity building has ushered in a new era of health and hope for mothers and their newborns. Atta Youssouf is a 29-year-old nurse, helping mothers, babies and families at the Centre. She remembers how before the new facilities nurses were forced to use a small room for deliveries due to lack of a proper maternity block, making the care for several mothers at the same time very difficult. “In addition to being cramped, it did not meet standard norms: no post-delivery rest room, no toilets, etc., prompting some women to prefer home childbirth.”

Since the inauguration of the new building, working conditions have greatly improved, encouraging more women to choose hospital childbirth. “In just one month, we have recorded 16 deliveries, a spectacular and encouraging figure that testifies to the positive impact of these improvements. Being the only maternity block in the district, we anticipate a continuous increase in these numbers.”

The nurses are faced with a growing influx of patients and together they plan to request additional staff and to increase the number of beds. “We express our gratitude to UNDP for its valuable support and hope for the continuation of this collaboration, which is essential for the renovation of our center, currently in a state of disrepair and in need of new buildings,” says Atta.



Maternity Unit at the Logone Birni District Medical Centre, April 2024

Women at the heart of community dialogues

“Together, we are building a future where peace is our most precious resource.”

In Logone Birni, a town shaken by conflict and mistrust, Aissatou Halidou, 32, stands at the forefront of a crucial transformation. As a dedicated member of the Local Stabilization Committee, Aissatou embodies the spirit of reconciliation and renewal that the community so desperately needs.

“During the crisis that shook our community, bonds were strained, families stopped talking to each other, and a veil of mistrust descended upon our village. Women, once bearers of peace, saw their prominence fade, relegated to the background. We felt disarmed in the face of this situation,” remembers Aissatou.

The introduction of community dialogues marked a turning point. Facilitators emphasized the pivotal role women must play in the peace process, reigniting their voices within the discussions. “Following these exchanges, we embarked on awareness campaigns in the neighborhoods, enlightening our brothers and sisters about the urgent need to live together, transcend divisions, and heal past wounds. The result was remarkable: families reconciled, and smiles blossomed where mistrust had dug trenches. Within the local stabilization committee, we tirelessly emphasize the importance of forgiveness. It is

through forgiveness that we rebuild our social fabric, weaving strong bonds for the future.”

Aissatou’s commitment extends beyond dialogue and reconciliation. “We, the women of Logone Birni, are determined to contribute to peacebuilding in our village. We are the guardians of hope, the artisans of dialogue, and every day, we work to restore dignity and serenity to our community. Together, we are building a future where peace is our most precious resource.”

Aissatou Halidou and the women she leads are building a future where peace is not just a dream but a shared reality. Their efforts are a vivid illustration of the power of collective resilience and the unyielding strength of community spirit.



Aissatou Halidou, member of the CLS of Logone Birni



Voter showing inked finger © UNDP

Elections and institution building

Both UNDP and the Government of Japan recognize that transformative change is enabled by the participation of women as advocates of an inclusive political process. The strengthening of democratic institutions and support to credible, inclusive and peaceful elections across Africa is integral to UNDP's work in the promotion of inclusive governance. Electoral cycle support and institution-building is not an end goal in itself but is rather seen as an integration into broader efforts to strengthen inclusive political processes.

UNDP and Japan have maintained a long-standing partnership in the electoral support process. Since TICAD 8, UNDP has supported electoral processes in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea, Mali and Zimbabwe with democratic institution-building supported in Ethiopia and Guinea-Bissau. Japan-funded projects have featured women's active contribution in building the capacity of election management bodies and ensuring the inclusive participation of women in governance dialogues.





➤ Zimbabwe

PROJECT

Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project
Phase

Feb 2023 – Dec 2024

Advocating against violence

Lilian Gwanyanya, a 56-year-old advocate, has dedicated her life to fighting for the rights of women and girls, particularly those with disabilities. Her remarkable journey began at a UNDP workshop on violence against women in elections, where her passion for women's rights was ignited.



Lilian Gwanyanya

“The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission Capacity Building Project’s training enabled me to share my knowledge and stand up for the rights of fellow women,” says Lilian. “I am now part of a feminist group where we discuss issues of violence against women and girls with disabilities. I also lead sessions at community gatherings, addressing the challenges faced by women with disabilities due to violence.”

Lilian, who suffered from poliomyelitis at a young age, has a physical disability. In 2019, she founded the Centre for Children with Disabilities, an organization advocating for the rights of persons with disabilities, especially

women and girls. She realized her disability cannot hinder her from fighting for the rights of others.

“I now speak with confidence and without fear of my disability. I am actively involved in peace-building programs and provide organizations with ideas on how to include persons with disabilities in their programs. I also participate in Parliamentary Policy and Bill consultations, where my recommendations focus on policy changes that promote disability inclusion and a peaceful environment.”

UNDP Zimbabwe, in collaboration with UN Women and supported by the Government of Japan, has been instrumental in holding sensitization activities to end violence against women in elections. The training shed light on the real-life challenges faced by women, hindering their participation, and emphasizing the role of everyone must play in addressing violence and promoting peace.

“The training deepened my understanding of the challenges faced by African women and girls due to violence. Women with disabilities are at even greater risk. Still, together, we can stand up for each other, unite our voices, and advocate against the violence experienced at home, church, in politics, and the workplace.”

Lilian aspires to continue changing the lives of other women, as contributing to a violence-free society is crucial to her personal growth.

“Having a disability will not limit my ability to speak out. To achieve our vision for 2030 as a country, I must play my part in creating a peaceful environment. Working with the youth, women, and girls to change their mindset against violence is essential for a better future.”



➤ Guinea Bissau

PROJECT

Transparency and Accountability in governance to Prevent Corruption and Build Peace

Dec 2022 – Nov 2025

“As women in law enforcement, we have a unique perspective and the ability to foster trust and cooperation.”



Supporting women in law enforcement

Aisha Mohammed, a 32-year-old police officer from Buba, has always dreamed of making a significant impact on her community. Growing up in a small village where law enforcement was often seen as corrupt and inefficient, Aisha knew that the only way to change perceptions was to become an agent of change herself. Despite the challenges she faced as a woman in a predominantly male profession, she persevered, driven by her passion for justice and equality.

In October 2023, Aisha had the opportunity to participate in a comprehensive training session led by UNDP. This initiative aimed to provide law enforcement agents with strategies to mitigate the risks of corruption within their ranks. The training, attended by 180 agents across the country (113 men and 67 women) focused on integrity, responsibility and community involvement.

“This training was a turning point in my career,” said Aisha. “It’s not just about learning new strategies; it’s about realizing the power we have to transform our communities. As women in law enforcement, we have a unique perspective and the ability to foster trust and cooperation.”

Throughout the training, Aisha was an active participant, often leading group discussions and sharing her ideas. By the end of the program, she had built a network of like-minded agents committed to upholding the principles of fairness and transparency.

The impact of the training on Aisha’s life was profound. Equipped with new skills and a renewed sense of purpose, she returned to her community with a clear vision. Through Japan’s support of the UNDP training program, she has become a catalyst for change, inspiring not only her colleagues, but the entire community to strive for a better, corruption-free future.



Aisha takes part in training



Zara Bello © UNDP Nigeria, Amalachukwu Ibeneme

Resilient livelihoods

Amidst today's ongoing multidimensional conflicts and crises, the quest for enduring peace requires a holistic approach that seamlessly integrates humanitarian aid with development efforts. Japan has emerged as a global leader in championing the “humanitarian-development-peace nexus,” recognizing that addressing the root causes of conflict involves not just immediate relief but also long-term strategies for economic development and poverty eradication.

UNDP and the Government of Japan continue to support African countries in developing resilient and inclusive societies through sustainable, safe, and dignified livelihoods. Japan-funded projects have supported livelihood recovery efforts in countries including the Central African Republic, Ethiopia, Lake Chad and Liptako Gourma regions, Malawi, and Senegal among others to strengthen vulnerable population's capacity to participate in economic activities, restoration of market-oriented infrastructure, and training for income generation. Central to these efforts are women and youth, who play pivotal roles in these economic recovery activities. By participating in and leading training programs, they are not only strengthening their own capacity but also making a significant impact within their households and communities. Through these initiatives, Japan and UNDP are not merely addressing immediate needs but laying the groundwork for a future where peace and prosperity are attainable for all.





➤ Nigeria

PROJECT

Fast track of early and sustainable recovery of conflict-affected communities in the North-East Nigeria

Mar 2023 – Sep 2024

Zara Bello, from Gwoza in Borno State, was forced to flee her hometown when Boko Haram attacked. She escaped to Adamawa State and has been living in the IDP camp in Daware community. Before the attack, Zara was a student who also helped her parents on their farm occasionally. The insurgency took everything from them. “Life in the camp is challenging, especially for women and children. The temporary shelters are not comfortable, and we rely mostly on humanitarian organizations for food and other essential items,” says Zara.

The hardships faced by internally displaced people highlight the urgent need to support their recovery. To address this, UNDP, in collaboration with the Adamawa State Government and the Government of Japan, launched a programme to promote social stability and security for youths in conflict-affected communities.

Zara was among the youths selected for an eight-week training in various trades including tailoring, cosmetology, leather production, knitting, and catering in Adamawa State. After completing the training, participants received grants to start new business or support an existing one. Zara was trained in catering, and now she has started her own food business in the Daware community market. Every morning, she wakes up early to prepare delicious meals like jollof rice, beans, pasta and yams, which she sells to traders and other community members. Her business is thriving, and she plans to expand by opening a proper restaurant and to return to school.

“My dream is to earn enough money to move out of the IDP camp and open a restaurant and return to school,” Zara says. “I also want to help other young girls by teaching them about the food business so they can be independent like me and build a good future for themselves.”



Zara Bello © UNDP Nigeria, Amalachukwu Ibeneme



➤ **Mali**

PROJECT

Liptako Gourma Stabilisation Facility

Mar 2022 – Mar 2023



Participants in a cash-for-work programme in Mali

Economic relief with long-term potential

In the heart of Bandiagara, Mali, Fanta Bah found a path to independence and empowerment through the cash-for-work program at the Liptako-Gourma Stabilisation Facility, supported by the Government of Japan. This initiative is not just about providing immediate economic relief but also about creating lasting change within the community.

Fanta recalls the transformation that began with simple yet impactful tasks. “During the first phase of the programme, we cleaned the streets; the second phase was devoted to cleaning the gutters,” she explains. These efforts, though modest, paved the way for something much greater.

With the funds she earned from the program, Fanta was able to open her own food processing store. This new venture marked a significant turning point in her life. “The funds obtained through this work allowed me to open my own food processing store. This made me financially independent from my husband,” Fanta shares with pride.

Through hard work and determination, Fanta has not only improved her own life but has also contributed to the resilience and stability of her community. Her story exemplifies the profound impact of the Liptako-Gourma Stabilisation Facility and the vital support of the Government of Japan.



Fanta Bah, Cash-for-work programme participant in Bandiagara, Mali



Literacy training offers new confidence and opportunities

In Central African Republic, UNDP and the Government of Japan are constructing and supporting literacy centers. These centres offer both women and men a chance to further their education and expand economic development. “I’m a shopkeeper. I’m here to learn how to count and write to improve my business” said Gbossoua Angèle. “For me, it’s also a question of pride. At 54, I feel no shame in coming to literacy classes. I feel proud that I can do this and continue learning. It gives me more confidence in myself.”



Gbossoua Angèle, trainee



Patago Lydie, apprentice

“I dropped out of school in the fifth grade. My mother was seriously ill and I had to take care of her. I’ve always been disappointed not to have been able to continue school. Today, at 42, I’m happy to be back at school,” says trainee Patago Lydie.

“Thanks to the literacy training, I can read and I’ve learned to write my name. I’ll always remember the day I wrote my name for the first time. Knowing how to read, write and count has given me greater self-confidence. I stand proudly and feel more confident now,” says Piti Jeanne.



➤ Mali

PROJECT

Support the Mali Peacekeeping School to strengthen the conflict prevention and management capacities of ECOWAS countries

Mar 2023 – Mar 2024



Incorporating gender in conflict management

Joffrey Olympio, a human rights lawyer from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), found his calling at the Mali Peacekeeping School. This institution, in collaboration with UNDP, offers training to military, police, and civilians to enhance their conflict prevention and management skills. For Joffrey, the Gender, Peace, and Security course was particularly transformative.

“I’ve learned to carry out a gender analysis followed by an upstream needs analysis, so as to be able to provide a relevant solution through my project. My projects are now more focused, taking into account all the dimensions of gender and responding precisely to the problems identified. Today, I’m able to run gender programs in my country.... I came away with a very positive experience in terms of gender issues and taking gender into account in conflict management.”



Sanitation of the inner courtyard of CPADD, Benin

Peacekeeping operations

UNDP and Japan have maintained a long-standing partnership in advancing Africa's capacity to lead peacekeeping efforts through support to its peacekeeping operations (PKO) centres. Through Japan's support, UNDP has supported PKO centres to become regional and international centers of excellence in peacekeeping, peace building and conflict resolution, including on specialized topics such as de-mining and the maintenance of maritime security. Since TICAD 8, Japan has supported PKO centres in 6 countries (Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, and Togo). Through the Japan-funded projects, women have been trained as important contributors to prevent the outbreak of conflict and violence.





➤ Benin

PROJECT

Project to Support Peacekeeping and Peace consolidation through Capacity Building of the Post-Conflict Demining Training Center (CPADD)

Mar 2023 – Mar 2024

Supporting post-conflict decontamination

Since its creation in 2003, the Center for Improvement in Post-Conflict Mine Clearance and Depollution Actions has seen an increase in its reception capacity thanks to funding from Japan through UNDP-Benin.

Before 2024, during the rainy season, certain buildings were difficult to access. Moving from one side of the site to the other was an ordeal for the trainees who had to jump from one brick to another to get there. There was no bathroom dedicated to female staff or for those visiting. As part of a UNDP-Benin and Japan funded project a new toilet bloc has been constructed with dedicated facilities for female staff.

The sanitization of the courtyard has also helped eliminate mosquitos and reduce malaria cases.



Shelter for implementing explosives



Sanitization of the inner courtyard of CPADD





➤ Ghana

PROJECT

Preventing Violent Extremism, Radicalisation and Small Arms Proliferation in the Sahel and adjoining Coastal Countries in West Africa

Mar 2023 – Mar 2024



Preventing violent extremism

The Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre has collaborated with the Japan Embassy in Accra through UNDP since 2008. Together with UNDP and the Government of Japan the Centre has implemented multiple regional projects over these years,

Trainings were provided in 2023 on the prevention of violent extremism, radicalization and small arms proliferation in the Sahel and adjoining coastal countries in West Africa.

“One of the sessions centered on the susceptibility of women to recruitment by terrorists and highlighted the importance of addressing their vulnerability. The session enhanced my knowledge of the strategies that are used by the terrorist for their recruitment. It also emphasized strategies, such as economic empowerment to deter women from joining terrorist groups” – Participant.



Regional resource people meet to design the course on violent extremism, radicalization, terrorism, and small arms and light weapons (SALW) control course at KAIPTC



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