

# FAST FACTS



United Nations Development Programme

*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

## UNDP in Africa



Over the last ten years, thanks to impressive growth rates and a favorable global economic climate; improvements in governance and targeted investments in basic social services, Sub-Saharan Africa has made notable progress toward achieving a number of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the internationally agreed effort to halve extreme poverty by 2015.

These efforts will nevertheless continue to be met with challenges, including economic volatility, political upheavals and internal conflicts, demographic pressure, youth employment, climate change and food insecurity.

### On the Ground in Sub-Saharan Africa

As the United Nations' global development network, UNDP operates in 45 Sub-Saharan African countries, building the capacities of governments and communities to help them achieve sustainable human development. UNDP will continue to focus its efforts on helping to empower people and forge resilient nations.

UNDP also builds the capacities of institutions such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the Southern African Development Community to respond to Africa's current and emerging priorities.

### MATTERS OF FACT

- Africa is now recovering from the global crisis of 2009. With the gradual recovery of North African economies, the continent's average growth is expected to rebound to 4.5% in 2012 and to 4.8% in 2013.
- The human development performance of many African countries over the last 10 years offers grounds for renewed optimism. Nine of the ten countries with the largest gains in UNDP's Human Development Index (HDI) are in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Africa has the highest number of countries with democratic systems to date since the 1960s. Between 2010 and 2011 African Countries conducted a record of 40 elections.

### Our Focus

UNDP supports African countries so they can achieve people-centered growth, helping them to strengthen the private sector, expand social protection, create jobs for the poorest, and bolster food security for all. We focus on women's empowerment not only from a human rights perspective, but also because they are a pathway to achieving the MDGs.

In addition, UNDP supports African societies so they can become more resilient, working to prevent conflicts, build peace and pave the way for long-term recovery. We also help to minimize the impact of natural and climate-related disasters, helping to prevent human and physical losses and recover from these events.

Finally, we work to ensure sustainability, encouraging a development process that is less carbon-dependent, better suited for Africa and that uses the vast natural wealth of the continent in a way that is economically, socially and environmentally sound.

**Democratic Governance:** UNDP strengthens people's involvement in decision-making and supports democratic institutions and principles at the national and regional levels.

In 2011, for instance, UNDP supported 19 largely peaceful elections across Africa, encouraging participation from all.

In the **South Sudan** Referendum on Independence of January 2011, UNDP worked with the country and development partners to manage US\$56 million in donor funds; procure 7.5 million ballots and 8,500 polling booths.

In Eastern and Southern Africa alone, UNDP supports 11 national human rights institutions, including in **Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe.**

**Poverty Reduction and the Millennium Development Goals:** UNDP promotes inclusive and sustainable human development and works to reduce poverty in all its dimensions, helping to make growth and trade benefit everyone in developing countries.

We help countries to implement strategies that can effectively tackle the MDGs. To that end, UNDP has developed the MDG Acceleration Framework (MAF), which provides a systematic way for countries to identify bottlenecks and develop their own action plans to tackle off-track MDGs. **Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Niger, Tanzania and Togo** have embarked on the MAF with a focus on food security. **Ghana and Uganda** are focusing on maternal health. **Ghana** has also decided to use the framework to tackle issues relating to access to sanitation.

From reducing HIV to promoting rural development, we focus on interventions that have a transformative impact. In **Liberia**, for instance, a UNDP-led programme helped the Ministry of Health to become the principal recipient of a multi-million dollar grant by the Global Fund to Fight HIV and AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Thanks to this programme, more than 150,000 people had received counseling and treatment for HIV and AIDS by the end of 2010.

At the global level, UNDP is at the centre of the UN's efforts to reduce poverty, chairing the UN Development Group, which includes key UN players in international development. At the country level, the head of UNDP serves as the coordinator of the UN's development activities.

**Environment and Energy:** UNDP helps developing countries to expand access to sustainable energy, achieve low-carbon paths to development and fight climate change. We are leading a vast programme that is providing energy services for 3.5 million rural dwellers in seven countries of

West Africa. With diesel and biofuel engines installed in rural communities, the initiative has helped to reduce the time women and girls devote to domestic chores by two to four hours a day. This is enabling them to go to school or to raise revenue from other activities.

With technical and financial support from UNDP and Britain's Department for International Development (DFID), **Ethiopia** embarked on a plan that aims to boost the country's development over the next twenty years while keeping its greenhouse emissions to current levels. The initiative is expected to have a broad impact on human development in Ethiopia.

**Crisis Prevention and Recovery:** UNDP works to strengthen the capacities of African countries so they can prevent and recover from crises, paving the way for long-term development.

In **Ghana**, UNDP supports the National Architecture for Peace through a USD 4 million programme that has successfully promoted community dialogue and served as an early warning mechanism on potential conflicts since 2005. The scheme has led to the creation of national, regional and district-level peace councils that directly mediate disputes between rival political and ethnic factions.

In **Sierra Leone**, where Sexual and Gender-Based Violence is an important issue, UNDP financed and provided logistical support to Saturday Courts. The courts focus on women's issues, and have expedited judicial processes, clearing a backlog of 700 cases in 2011.

**Knowledge-sharing and analytical work:** UNDP seeks to enhance understanding of development issues on the African continent. We provide intellectual leadership and analytical work to inform African policy-makers, contributing to solutions that can achieve transformational change. We work with regional partners to produce a number of yearly publications such as the [African Economic Outlook](#), which provides an overview of the economic prospects in 53 African countries; and [Assessing Progress Towards the MDGs in Africa](#), highlighting advances, challenges and policy options for the achievement of the MDGs on the continent. UNDP also contributes to the [African Economic Conference](#), promoting innovative thinking and policy dialogue on the region's economic issues.

In 2012, UNDP published the first regional [Human Development Report](#) focused on Africa, which examines the relationship between food security and long-term human development in the region. *To learn more about UNDP in Africa, please visit [www.undp.org/africa](http://www.undp.org/africa)*



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