

United Nations Development Programme



SAHEL



A REGENERATION

Implementing the **United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS)**:
UNDP's contribution



When a great tree falls, the roots and the stump remain, and can regenerate
- **Sahelian Proverb**



FOREWORD

A 5,000-kilometre belt of land below the Sahara Desert, the Sahel region stretches from Africa's Atlantic coast to the Red Sea. People across the ten countries of the region face the consequences of ongoing conflict, political instability, poverty -- and food insecurity which affects nearly 26 million people. The COVID-19 pandemic has pushed an additional six million people into extreme poverty in the Central Sahel alone while gender-based violence is rising. Despite these intertwined challenges, the region is endowed with abundant human, cultural and natural resources, offering immense potential for growth. It sits atop some of the largest aquifers on the Continent and holds enormous potential for renewable energy. With over two-thirds of the population under 25 years of age -- and with young women and girls constituting over 50 per cent of the population -- the Sahel is one of the world's most youthful regions. The United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) new programmatic offer for the Sahel region, *Regeneration - Implementing the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS)* aims to help unlock this massive socio-economic promise.

First, the offer aims to bolster governance systems given that extending state presence in neglected border areas and supporting local and national institutions is a precondition to foster stability and resilience. It will also help to create the space for citizen participation in pivotal social, economic, and political decisions. UNDP will expand its stabilization portfolio to allow communities affected by violent conflict to rebuild their lives. This entails providing and restoring essential infrastructure and basic services such as schools, health centres and markets. It also involves facilitating the rule of law and enabling civil servants and local authorities -- including police, courts, and county clerks -- to resume work. And UNDP will use the power of digital to enhance service delivery. This will strengthen security, social cohesion, and local economies.

Second, it will *invest* in young people because they hold the key to transformative development in the Sahel. UNDP already collaborates with the African Union on the YouthConnektAfrica Initiative, which is helping to open-up new opportunities for young people across the Continent. And our partnership with the Tony Elumelu Foundation to implement the Sahel Youth Entrepreneurship Programme aims to train, mentor, and financially support 100,000 young entrepreneurs. Such support is helping to ensure that young people are equipped with the skills they need for the jobs of today, and of the *future*. Moreover, the UNDP Accelerator Labs network, active in all ten countries of the region, will continue to surface and scale-up much-needed local development solutions.

Third, given that *two-thirds of people* in the region lack access to energy, UNDP will deploy its longstanding expertise in renewable energy to create decent green jobs & livelihoods. UNDP's new Energy Compact pledges to work with partners to provide access to clean and affordable energy to 500 million additional people -- including 150 million in the Sahel region. This will bring power to homes, hospitals, and schools for the first time and expand access to the internet, the *nervous system* of tomorrow's green economy. This will dovetail with UNDP's Climate Promise, the world's largest offer of support for the enhancement of countries' Nationally Determined Contributions. Through this assistance, countries such as Burkina Faso, The Gambia and Niger are investing in clean, renewable energy. Building this green economy is vital as climate change is causing temperatures to rise in the region 1.5 times faster than the global average.

Regeneration is an intrinsic part of the objective by the UNISS to move from *delivering aid to ending need*, which centres on the principle of putting the Humanitarian-Development-Peace nexus into action. That involves tackling the root causes of conflict and instability. *Regeneration* will also dovetail with the African Union's unwavering commitment to the region. That includes its leading role in creating the Great Green Wall, for instance -- this will be the largest *living* structure on the planet once completed. With the Global Goals guiding us, we invite new partners to co-invest in the pioneering efforts of Sahelians, the United Nations and our partners as we *regenerate* the Sahel -- helping to shape a peaceful, more inclusive, and more sustainable future for the people who call it home.

Achim Steiner
Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)



UNISS
UNITED NATIONS INTEGRATED STRATEGY
FOR THE SAHEL

THE UN SYSTEM AT WORK IN THE SAHEL

The Sahel is a top priority for the UN.

In 2013, to tackle root causes of the crisis, and empower the people, the UN Security Council adopted the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) - which carves out ten countries and focuses on three strategic goals: Governance, Resilience and Security.

In 2018, the UNISS Support Plan was elaborated to accelerate results on the ground. It targets 6 priority areas whose effective implementation will plant and nurture the seeds of transformation in the Sahel. These are cross border and regional cooperation; preventing and resolving conflicts; inclusive and equitable growth; resilience to climate change; access to renewable energy and women and youth empowerment.

The UNISS and its Support Plan are the two guiding frameworks for system-wide joint efforts to advance peace and sustainable development in the region. All UN entities in the region are involved in implementing the UNISS.

Leadership of the UNISS strategic goals and priority areas of the Support Plan is based on each agency's comparative advantage, but delivery strongly relies on joined-up action. For example, Resilience is led by UNICEF, WFP and FAO, while UNOWAS and UNODC lead Security. In all cases, all other UN entities contribute as participating agencies.

UNDP co-leads Governance together with UNCDF. It also works closely with other UN entities to add momentum to the priority areas of the UNISS Support Plan – such as renewable energy and women and youth empowerment. But operationalizing UNISS is not a UN-only affair. We work with national governments, regional entities, civil society organizations, international finance and development partners, donors, and other stakeholders.

Priority Joint Programmes



1

GOVERNANCE



UNDP, OHCHR, UNICEF, UNOWAS,
UNODC, UNWOMEN, UNHCR, ILO,
UNCDF, UNREC, UN-OCT, UNV, IOM,
UNESCO, OCHA, UNOPS



2

RESILIENCE



WFP/PAM, UNODC, UNICEF, OHCHR,
ILO, UNHCR, UNESCO, FAO, AGHRYMET-
CILSS, IOM, UNCDF, UNEP, WHO, UNDP,
UNWOMEN



3

SECURITY



UNODC, UNIDO, UNICEF, DPPA,
UNOWAS, OCHA, IOM, WFP, UNESCO,
UN Team of Experts ROL/SVC, PBSO/
PBCSB, PBSO/PBF, DPO/OROLSI, UNV
Programme, CTED, UNOCT

A FRAME FOR OUR PROGRAMMATIC OFFER

Our new Sahel offer is at the heart of the UNISS operationalization – and is proposed as a programmatic delivery framework. Nested within UNISS strategic goals and Support Plan priority areas, it represents UNDP’s holistic contribution to attaining the goals articulated in the UNISS, and within key national and regional frameworks. Through this offer, UNDP is committed to playing its part, with partners, to achieve the UNISS primary goal of driving transformation and sustainable development in the Sahel.



UNISS
UNITED NATIONS INTEGRATED STRATEGY
FOR THE SAHEL
Strategic Goals

INCLUSIVE & EFFECTIVE
GOVERNANCE THROUGHOUT
THE REGION IS ENHANCED

NATIONAL & REGIONAL SECURITY
MECHANISMS ARE CAPABLE OF
ADDRESSING CROSS-BORDER
THREATS

HUMANITARIAN DEVELOPMENT
PLANS & INTERVENTIONS ARE
INTEGRATED TO BUILD LONG-TERM
RESILIENCE

UNITED NATIONS
Support Plan Priority Areas

CROSS BORDER &
REGIONAL
COOPERATION

PREVENTING &
RESOLVING
CONFLICTS

INCLUSIVE &
EQUITABLE
GROWTH

RESILIENCE
TO CLIMATE
CHANGE

ACCESS
TO RENEWABLE
ENERGY

WOMEN & YOUTH
EMPOWERMENT



Sahel
Offer



GOVERNANCE



RENEWABLE
ENERGY



YOUTH

REGENERATION

UNDP AT WORK FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE IN THE SAHEL

The first instances of agriculture in the Sahel region of Africa occurred some 5,000 years ago, when sorghum, rice and millet were cultivated. In the millennia since those early human hands planted seeds and harvested crops, great empires have risen and fallen, trade routes have emerged and changed, countless stories and songs have been passed along — all of them leaving their traces in the languages and cultures of the more than 300 million people in the 10 countries of the Sahel today: Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, The Gambia, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal.*

Running just south of the Sahara Desert, the Sahel is home to such models of innovation as the universities of Dakar, the adobe architecture of Djenné, and the commerce of the river port cities of Niamey and N'Djamena. Outside the cities, there are vast stretches of grasslands and savannah. Among its waters are the mighty Lake Chad and the Niger River. Year-round sun and wind hold enormous potential for renewable energy.

However grand its past and however great its resources, the Sahel is in a complex crisis that has only intensified in the last two decades. Drought. Hunger. Poverty. Inequality. Environmental degradation. Border disputes. Recurring violent conflict. Lack of state authority in some places. All of this is made worse by climate change, which is turning once fertile land into desert, slashing food supplies and prompting more conflict over dwindling natural resources.

Each of these trends makes the others worse. For example, climate change and poor land management have degraded the environment, which in turn has undermined local economies, forcing many people to migrate and putting pressure on scarce natural resources. Where government is weak, tensions arise that often lead to persistent insecurity and violent conflict, including violent extremism, and this hampers efforts to address the socioeconomic and environmental challenges. Unravelling and ultimately reversing these complex trends is vital to transforming the Sahel.

* The 10 countries of the Sahel are included in the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS).
<https://unis-sahel.org/>

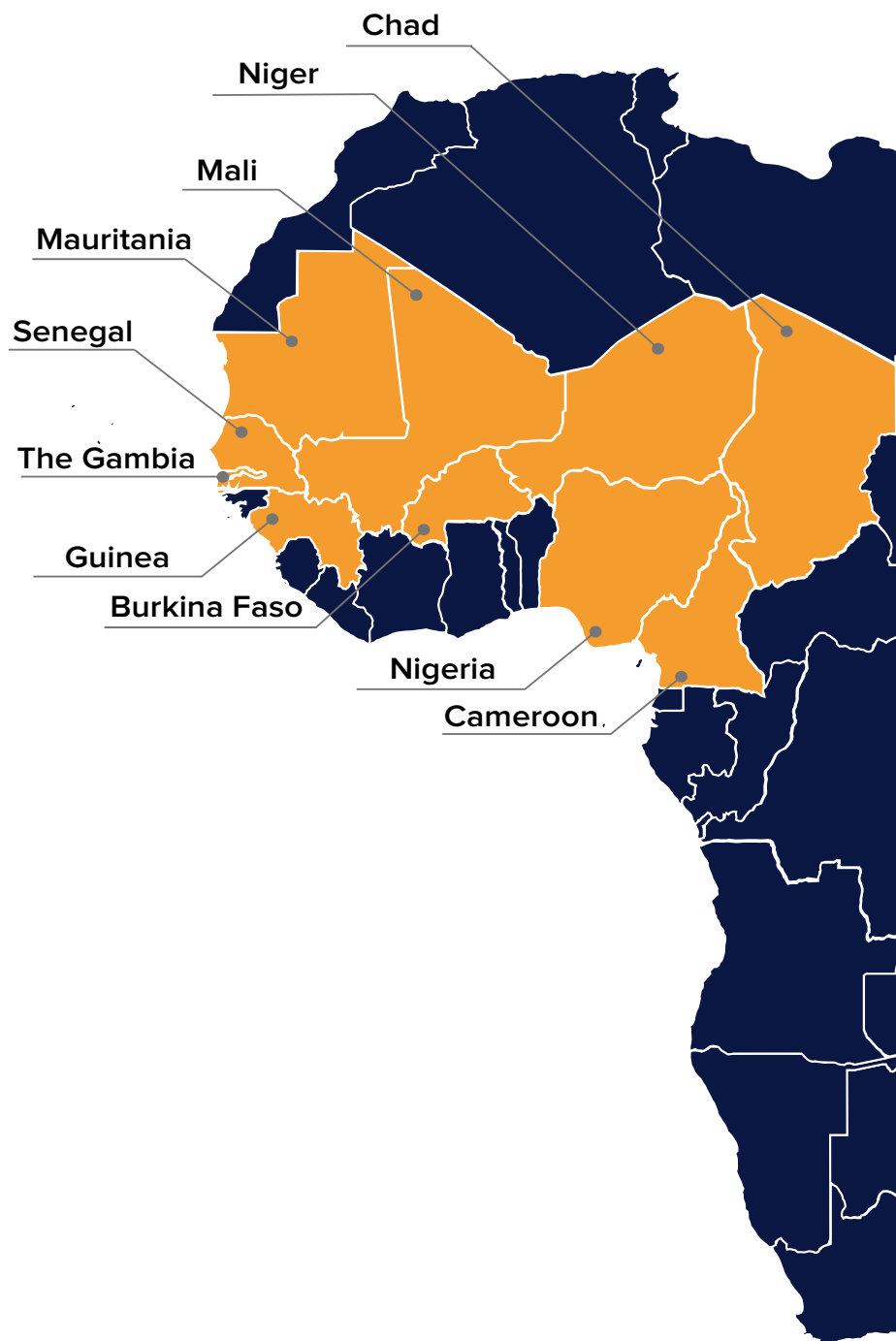




Image: UNDP Stabilization Work In Ngwom Village, Borno State Nigeria

And that was before COVID-19. **The pandemic has only more clearly exposed how many people have been cruelly excluded from social, economic and political life.** Among those most pushed to the margins are young people and women, who together make up two-thirds of the population of the Sahel. Many of those most exposed to COVID-19 are essential workers on whom whole societies depend.

Faced with such obstacles, the people of the Sahel are pressing forward with solutions both old and new. In [Nigeria](#), women are in dialogue to stop deadly conflicts between farmers and cattle-herders. In [Chad](#), horseback troubadours are educating people in rural areas about COVID-19. In [Cameroon](#), a biomedical engineer created a medical-oxygen-producing machine that allows even remote hospitals to serve their patients on site. In [Senegal](#), researchers created a 10-minute coronavirus test that costs just one dollar. In [Niger](#), a digital platform has enlisted youth to educate their peers about COVID-19.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is working alongside communities and governments in the Sahel to regenerate the region: to provide clean energy and water, to educate the young and care for the old, to provide decent jobs with good pay to raise a family, to guarantee healthcare for all, to ensure that a little girl with a heart full of dreams can make it just as far as a little boy.

At UNDP, this work involves technical matters like infrastructure and policy and economics. But in truth, the goal is simple, if difficult: a thriving Sahel.

The struggles and the solutions of the Sahel may take a particular shape. But all other countries around the world can see themselves reflected in the rivalries, the refugees and the resources under threat. The people of the Sahel are the brothers and sisters of all humanity.

Just as thousands of years ago, when ancient ancestors tended the land and grew cereals to sustain themselves, UNDP today is working with the people of the Sahel to plant seeds that will grow into peace, prosperity and regeneration.

At UNDP, this work involves technical matters like infrastructure and policy and economics. But in truth, the goal is simple, if difficult: a thriving Sahel.



UNDP IN THE SAHEL

WHO WE ARE AND WHO WE WORK WITH

UNDP has close to 2000 staff working in the Sahel, many of whom were born and raised in the region. Our work in the Sahel is supported by regional hubs in Addis Ababa, Nairobi, Dakar and Pretoria, which, identify regional trends and replicate successful innovations in areas like resilience, development finance and digitalization. Our efforts in the Sahel also benefit from our Africa Borderlands Centre which addresses cross border issues and the unique challenges of people living in borderlands, and our Global Policy Network, which generates and shares wisdom from over 160 countries. UNDP's Accelerator Labs provide opportunities to develop and scale homegrown solutions.

Partnership is UNDP's watchword. In everything we do, UNDP works with other UN agencies, governments, businesses, civil society, development banks, community groups and regional entities.

UNISS and UN agencies: UNDP works with the entire UN family in the Sahel. UNDP plays a vital role in the UNISS, which ensures that all UN entities work together on the same team for progress in the region. UNDP leads on UNISS's governance goal, and plays a substantial role in its efforts on resilience and security as well as the UN Support Plan Priority Areas of Renewable Energy, Youth and Women Empowerment.

Regional entities: Within the Sahel, we're working with entities such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the African Union, G5-Sahel, Sahel Alliance, Lake Chad Basin Commission and the Liptako Gourma Authority.

Host-country governments: We work closely with governments in all 10 countries of the Sahel, helping them achieve their development goals and partner with other countries and entities.

Resource partners: UNDP offers a platform for partners to engage in new ways, embedding their support firmly with Sahelians and their institutions at all levels. We work with all partners, including OECD DAC countries, non – OECD bilateral donors, other governments, international financial institutions (IFIs), development finance institutions (DFIs), and the private sector.

Sahel population: Ultimately, our partners are the people of the Sahel. Whether through formal collaborations, community meetings, or online platforms, we engage with the business community, academia and research institutions, creatives, civil society and community groups so that our work reflects the spirit of the Sahel.

A NEW LANDSCAPE OF ENABLERS

UNDP has strengthened its institutional mechanisms – at global, regional and national levels – putting us in a stronger position to deliver on this offer.

Global Corporate Enablers

[Global Policy Network](#)

[Accelerator Labs](#)

[UNDP Digital Strategy](#)

[UNDP Finance Sector Hub](#)

[The Climate Promise](#)

Regional Enablers

Senegal

Sub-Regional Hub
Special Delivery Facility
Sahel Accelerator Lab

Ghana

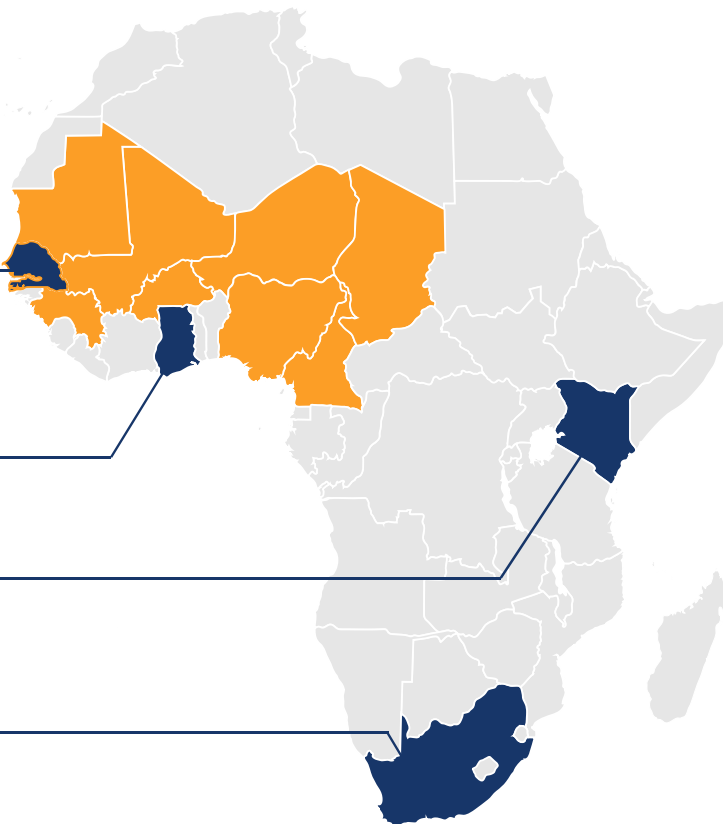
Strategic support to the AfCFTA Secretariat

Kenya

Resilience Hub
Africa Borderlands Center

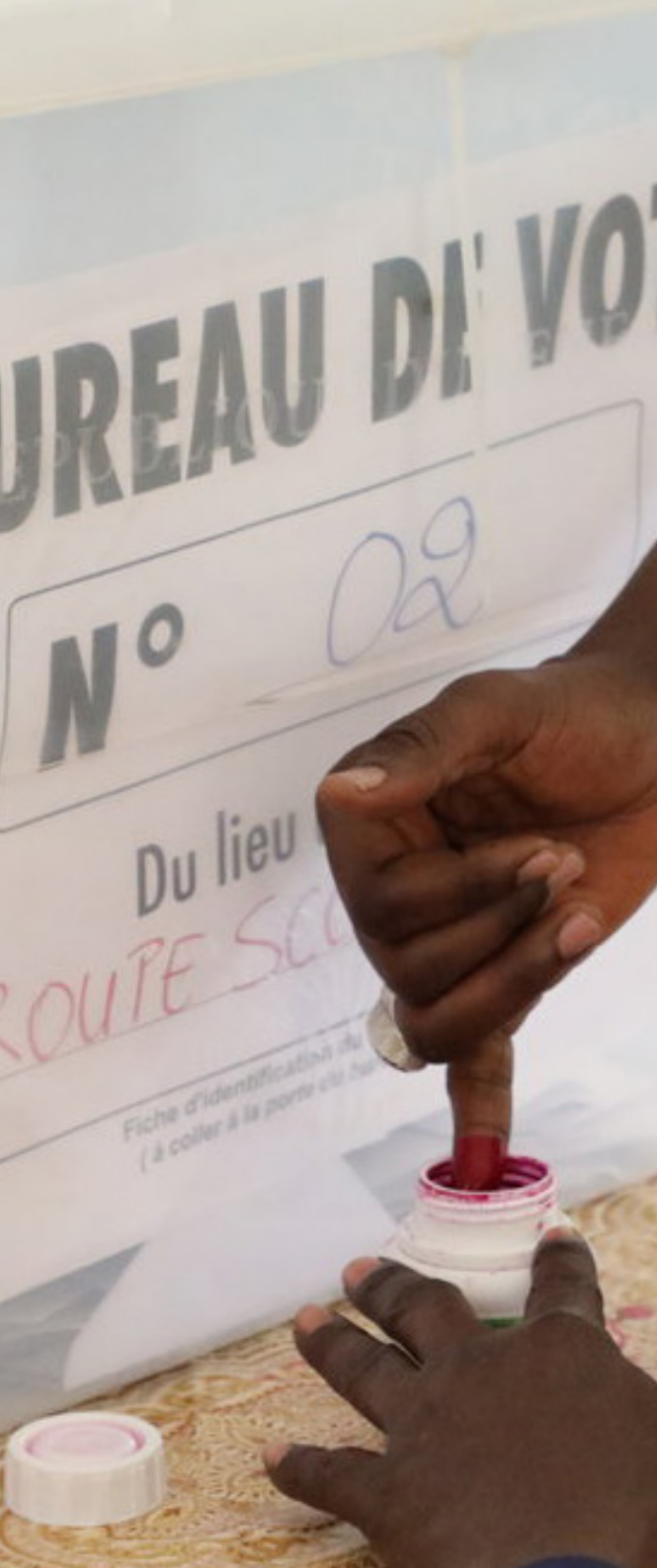
South Africa

Africa Finance Sector Hub



Accelerator Labs in UNISS Countries

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



UNDP IN THE SAHEL

HOW WE WORK

UNDP addresses some of the thorniest problems facing the Sahel — and, indeed, all of humanity. Half-hearted measures won't do. In all our work, we at UNDP focus on being empowering, regional, forward-looking, preventive, and innovative.

Empowering: We put knowledge and resources in the hands of the people of the Sahel. From job creation to skills training, from cash transfers to credits and grants, from village dialogues to government engagement, UNDP works to ensure that communities are the owners of change.

Regional: UNDP tailors our work to the needs of each of the 10 countries of the Sahel. We also recognize that some challenges transcend national boundaries: the potential spread of violent extremism across countries, especially in the Liptako Gourma area, which covers Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger; as well as the increasing vulnerability of neighbouring countries and borderland communities. These regional problems call for a comprehensive regional response.

Forward-looking: The crisis in the Sahel is, by definition, pressing. In some areas, state authority is all but absent, and there are few or no basic social services. Such

failures of governance leave people to fend for themselves, and conflict is often the result. Many of those most exposed to COVID-19 are essential workers on whom whole societies depend. Even as UNDP works to address emergent crises, we also take a long view, investing in solutions that make way for a more sustainable future.

Preventive: We invest in creating the foundations needed for longer term development, working with governments and local communities to restore state authority, rule of law, build needed basic infrastructure for organized community living (like houses, market stalls, clinics and schools), boost local economies, reinforce local government capacities and foster social cohesion while attracting youth to productive activities and away from the lure of recruitment into violent extremism.

Innovative: We're always looking for new ways to add speed and scale for development solutions. In five of the ten Sahel countries, our [Accelerator Labs](#) are tapping into young people's creativity to power local development solutions. In the Sahel and throughout UNDP, we deploy the latest digital tools to innovate for democratic systems, e-governance and local technology.

WHERE AND WHY

UNDP provides tailored responses to the diverse conditions around the Sahel with respect to conflict and security and climate vulnerability. Depending on the particular conditions, our development response is framed around four objectives: **prevent, stabilize, transform** and **sustain**.

CONFLICT-AFFECTED AREAS

UNDP prioritizes **Stabilization** to lay the foundation for longer-term development and **Prevention** of a relapse into conflict. This entails restoring state authority, rule of law and basic services such as roads, schools, markets and hospitals.

Case in point: In Borno State in north-eastern Nigeria we built over 300 houses, nearly 300 market stalls, as well as clinics and schools, to stabilize the economy and community life. Our work also provided livelihoods for young people to avoid falling into poverty or being recruited into violent extremism.

We facilitated the voluntary surrender of over 40,000 small arms and light weapons (SALW) in West Africa.

AT-RISK OR POST-CONFLICT AREAS

UNDP prioritizes **Prevention, Stabilization** and **Transformation** to help chart a course for a sustainable future. We help build resilience against climate change, empower women and youth and create opportunities for economic livelihoods so that people are not drawn into violent extremism. In such contexts, we also apply a unique UNDP development model called PUDC, the French initials for the Emergency Community Development Programme. PUDC delivers rapid social and economic development results in partnership with governments and communities. Its four components address socioeconomic infrastructure, institutional capacities, rural entrepreneurship, and satellite mapping of infrastructure. In Africa, this innovative model has been applied in such countries as Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Senegal and Togo.

Case in point: In Guinea and Burkina Faso, UNDP is helping establish hybrid power plants, digital hubs and ecovillages, grow rural and peri-urban businesses, and expand agricultural value chains. In Niger, from 2018, 45 infrastructures such as bus stations, shops, sheds, mini-dairies, independent water supply points, livestock markets, health facilities, market gardening sites, and others were constructed across 26 municipalities. They provide facilities to people with reduced mobility, generate income for grassroots communities, especially for women, while offering additional revenues to municipalities.

AREAS UNAFFECTED BY CONFLICT AND VIOLENT EXTREMISM

In countries such as Senegal, The Gambia, Mauritania, and peaceful places within conflict-affected countries (such as large parts of Nigeria, Niger and Mali), UNDP applies classic development programming with an eye on acceleration, **Prevention** and **Transformation**, unleashing the region's potential, including through economic empowerment, good governance and regional trade. This is the same approach that is used in areas that are under-served, where PUDC-type models are applied for catch-up development through investment in core infrastructure.

Case in point: In Senegal, to contribute to structural economic transformation, in just two years, UNDP provided basic services for communities, promoted rural economies for over 2 million people in 2,060 villages, and reduced inequalities and rural migration, thereby helping make progress on 16 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs. In Togo, Chad, and Cote d'Ivoire, UNDP is working to strengthen human capital development.

- All interventions are delivered with an eye towards **Transformation, Sustainability** and resilience. The work helps communities prepare for environmental and health hazards and ensures that Sahelians “own” the path to peace, security and prosperity. Our work across borders is essential for lasting solutions — and comes in response to the UN’s “Sustaining Peace” agenda in 2015, which called for new approaches to address conflict and deliver development services. Now with COVID-19 realities, UNDP is working to better prepare communities for resilience to environmental and health hazards such as the **COVID-19 pandemic**, and to ensure that Sahelians lead and own the dividends of peace, security and strong resilient economies.
- Some development needs such as jobs or health care are ongoing and call for long-term action. Others require urgent attention, such as in the case of the outbreak of a disease or violent conflict. We can’t always anticipate exactly what emergencies will arise, but we can be ready to act when they do.

WHAT WE'VE DONE AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

In the next section, you’ll learn about how UNDP’s work in the Sahel is changing. But first, let’s look at what UNDP has done.

UNDP has worked in the Sahel for decades at the national and regional levels. In collaboration with our partners, we’ve helped advance human development on all fronts: jobs, gender equality, energy, inclusive growth, governance, climate action, small arms and light weapons control, peace dialogues, social contracts, and more.

UNDP programmatic investment in the 10 countries of the Sahel, in all areas, was over \$202 million in 2019 and over \$305 million in 2020.

In the past two years alone, we’ve invested well over \$500 million in the Sahel. Below are some examples of our recent work:

- Our stabilization programmes in the Lake Chad Basin and the Liptako Gourma regions have enhanced community safety, provided basic infrastructure, and created livelihood opportunities.
- With support from UNDP’s partnership with the West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), women have been empowered to play more effective roles in political transitions in the Sahel.

- UNDP and the Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF) have supported some 4,000 young entrepreneurs in seven Sahelian countries through a joint entrepreneurship programme, and boosted thousands more start-ups by providing business development services and access to finance, through a regional “YouthConnekt” project based in Mali.
- With millions of people in the Sahel lacking access to energy, UNDP’s Solar for Health initiative helps governments improve health services through the installation of solar energy systems at health centres and storage facilities located in poor and hard-to-reach areas. This ensures constant and cost-effective access to electricity, while also mitigating the impact of climate change and advancing multiple SDGs.
- In addition, we are working on [COVID-19 socioeconomic response and recovery strategies](#).

We’ve always strived to be as high-impact as possible. That means that we must always rigorously reassess our own work and the changing circumstances in the Sahel. And we must adapt.

UNDP'S NEW OFFER FOR THE SAHEL

EXPONENTIAL IMPACT

Building on the work done under the UNISS and its Support Plan, including its frameworks on governance and energy, and following consultations with our partners, UNDP has zeroed in on three programmatic pillars that have the greatest opportunity for impact. They represent what UNDP and its partners do best.

Any one of these pillars can effect change in the Sahel; all three of them together can drive true regeneration.

Big challenges require big solutions. And big solutions require the deep involvement and ownership of the people who call the Sahel home. That is why, in each of these pillars, UNDP will continue to work ever more closely alongside communities throughout the region to help build the infrastructure and systems necessary for lasting change.

In focusing on these three critical areas of work, UNDP provides a solid foundation for progress on all the SDGs. All of this work advances the goals of the UNISS.



FROM CRISIS TO OPPORTUNITY

GOVERNANCE



Crisis: Failures in governance (political, social, economic and environmental) create ground for weakened social contracts and deadly attacks in which thousands are killed and millions displaced.

Opportunity: Increased levels of citizen engagement and participation, and an enhanced culture of democratic transitions.

UNDP's Offer: A multifaceted approach to interventions at regional, national and local governance levels emphasizing outreach to rural populations to help restore and reinforce social contracts, and build social capital between citizens and the state. We will work to institutionalize a political culture of tolerance for divergent views and peaceful transition through elections, and invest in digital governance to promote systems of integrity, human capital formation and accelerated service delivery.

YOUTH



Crisis: Widespread poverty and high youth unemployment worsened by COVID-19.

Opportunity: Sixty-five percent of the population is under age 25 — young people who can drive the global industries of today and tomorrow.

UNDP's Offer: Train, connect and finance youth to expand their roles as workers, job creators and leaders in energy, governance and other sectors to create a sustainable future.

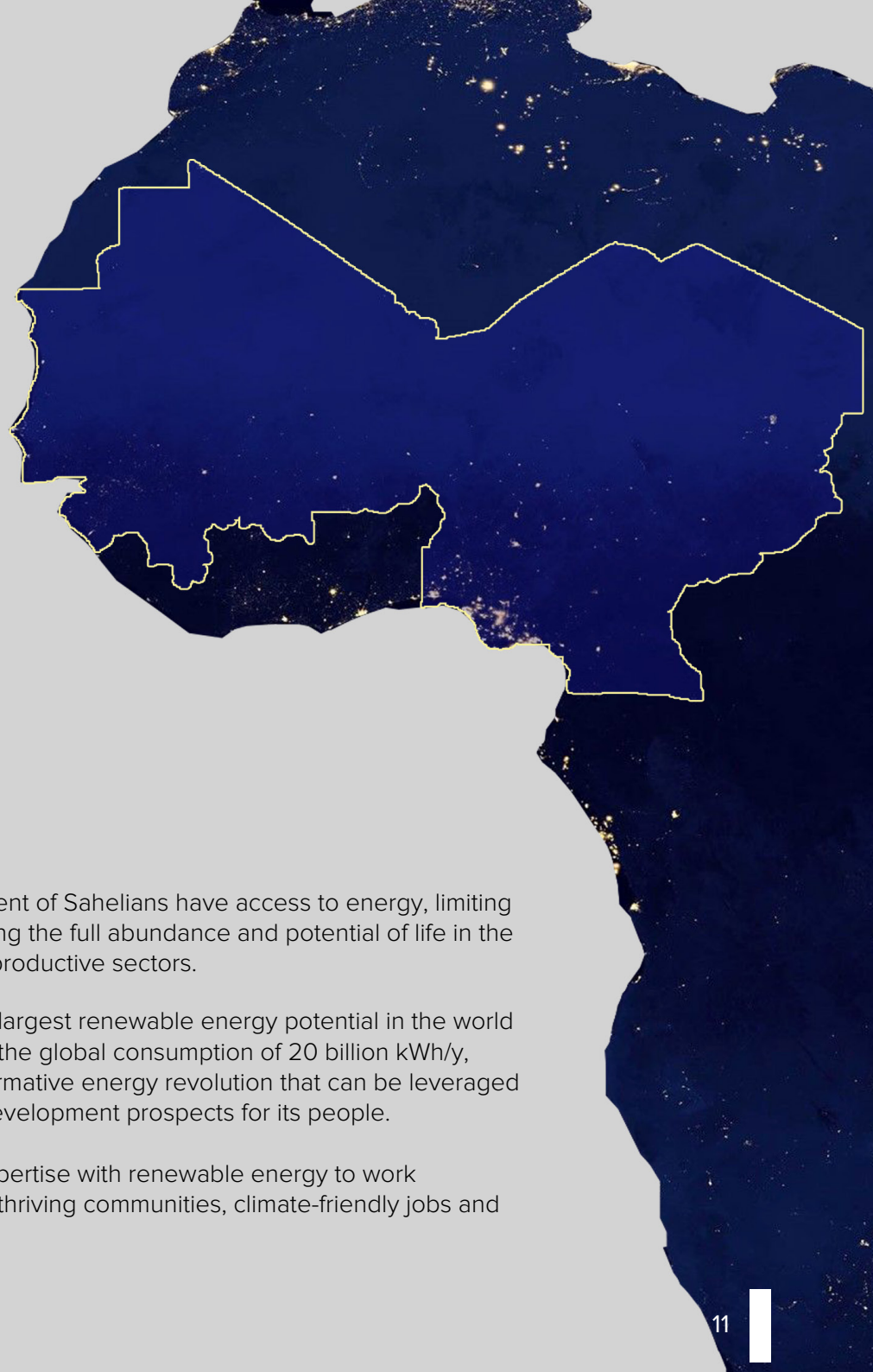
RENEWABLE ENERGY



Crisis: Only 30 per cent of Sahelians have access to energy, limiting possibilities for reaping the full abundance and potential of life in the Sahel on social and productive sectors.

Opportunity: The Sahel has the largest renewable energy potential in the world — 13.9 billion kWh/y compared to the global consumption of 20 billion kWh/y, offering opportunity for a transformative energy revolution that can be leveraged to strengthen socio-economic development prospects for its people.

UNDP's Offer: Put our global expertise with renewable energy to work throughout the Sahel to support thriving communities, climate-friendly jobs and good governance.



UNDP HAS WORKED IN ALL OF THESE AREAS BEFORE

SO WHAT IS NEW ABOUT THIS OFFER?

UNISS: *The renewed momentum in UNISS operationalization through both the UNISS Support Plan and the appointment of the Special Coordinator for the Sahel in 2021 has galvanized action for greater impact.*

Our value proposition aims to strengthen UN-wide efforts in the Sahel for a coherent and coordinated delivery of the UNISS strategic goals of Governance, Security and Resilience and the Support Plan priority areas of energy and youth.

FOCUS: *We'll focus on the three areas that are prioritized in the UNISS and the Support Plan and where UNDP is most effective: governance, youth and energy.*

In our decades of work throughout the Sahel, UNDP has amassed development experience in all areas: from infrastructure to climate to jobs to gender equality and beyond. We've learned what works best and why, how to spot opportunities for change and take full advantage of them. We can't do everything in the Sahel, but we can do what we do best — and where the most support is needed. This work will trigger broader change in sustainable development throughout the Sahel.

SCALE: *By dramatically scaling our work in these three pillars, we'll not just multiply our impact but grow it exponentially.*

Over the course of many years, UNDP has invested in the Sahel and had an important impact. Critical as the situation is in the Sahel, it would be worse were it not for UNDP's, and the support of other UN entities and partners. And yet, we need to vastly expand our work in the region. UNDP can continue to do good at our previous levels of investment, but by going to scale with our UNISS partners, we can help propel the Sahel to a whole new level of regeneration. For example, In the Liptako-Gourma region, UNDP works in partnership with UNOPS and other UN Agencies to extend electrification and energy access to rural communities.

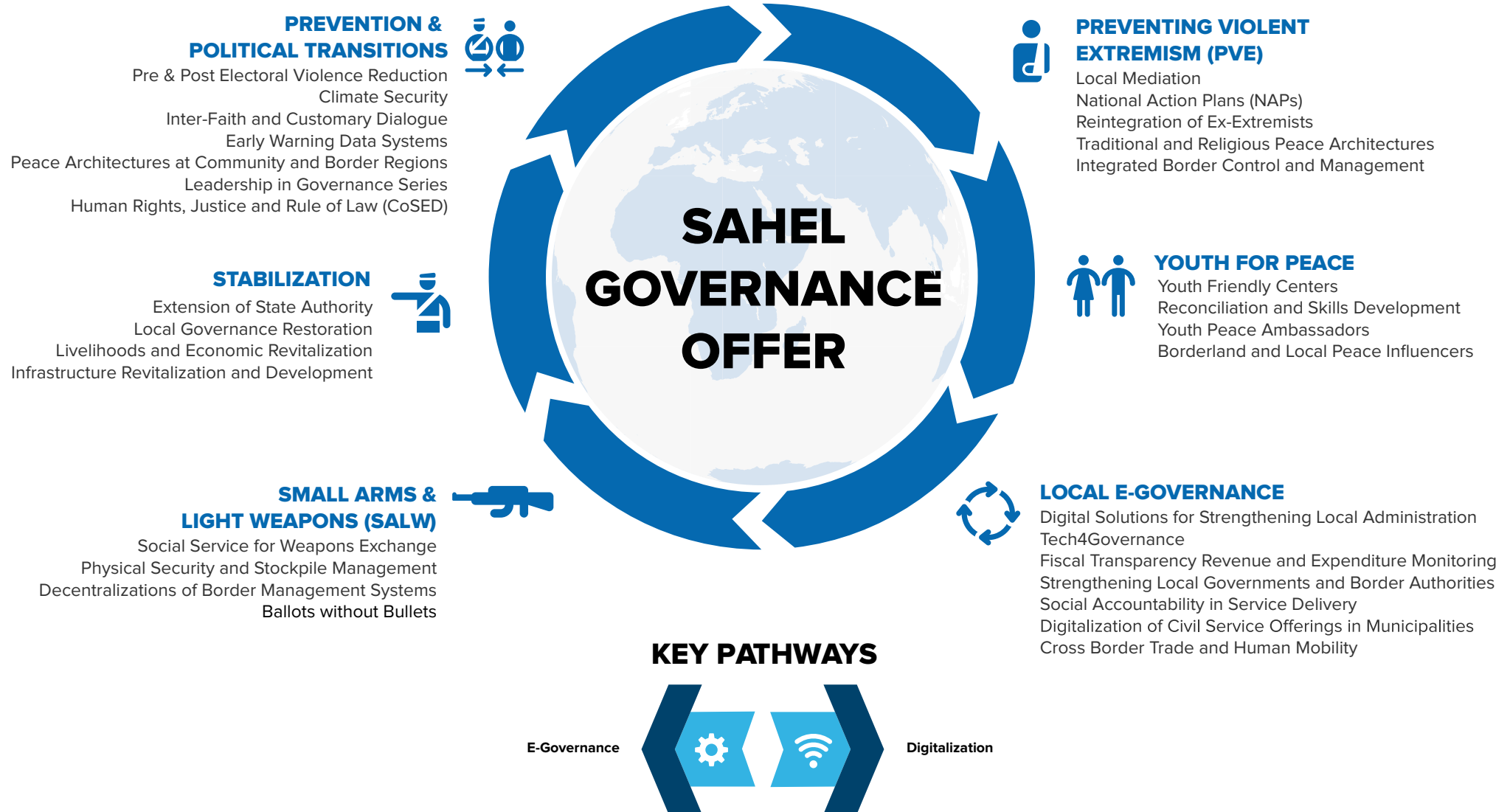
INTEGRATION: *By ensuring that our areas of work are more closely integrated than ever before, we will achieve vastly greater impact.*

Each of these pillars reinforce not only each other but also the priority areas of the Support Plan such as inclusive growth and climate action. When **government** works and people trust it, then youth are supported and energy sources can be effectively tapped. When **youth** are empowered, then they will drive the government and energy sectors from the inside as employees, managers and owners, and from the outside as voters, activists and consumers. When the renewable **energy** sector runs at its potential, it will power homes, schools, shops, offices, farms, factories, transportation, and all the other things that are needed for good governance and thriving youth. All of these investments, strengthen prospects for peace, **security** and build **resilience**.

RECOVERING FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC:

In all three pillars of work, UNDP is addressing the urgent need for a strong socioeconomic recovery from COVID-19. The people of the Sahel — especially women and youth — have been battered by the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic: food insecurity multiplied, millions of children out of school, and a surge in domestic violence against women. UNDP is a technical leader in the UN's socioeconomic response to COVID-19. We're helping the people of the Sahel not only recover, but also set a course for long-term prosperity.

UNISS GOVERNANCE OFFER



THE OPPORTUNITY: Progress in the Sahel requires new forms of partnerships between citizens and governments on upholding human rights and providing basic services, especially to rural areas and ungoverned spaces. Public trust in government can be built or renewed through community dialogues, social accountability platforms, cross-border governance initiatives, and holding officials accountable through local and national elections. Governance has been made more complicated by COVID-19, which pushed people already living in extreme poverty even further to the margins. Those most excluded must have a voice in governing, and this starts in their communities, including through local governance and traditional community social structures. This work is not merely an act of charity for poor people; when government works well for the excluded, it works better for everyone. It is one thing to be included and have a voice, but being heard is the beginning of a renewal of the social contract.

UNDP'S WORK: UNDP implements governance programming in about 170 countries, including all 10 Sahel countries. UNDP has worked to transform governance by substantially expanding the space for citizen engagement and contributing to restoring the social contract between the state and its citizens. For example, in the Lake Chad Basin, UNDP is providing essential services and basic infrastructure, restoring livelihood opportunities, and facilitating security in conflict settings. UNDP takes a “whole-of-government” and “whole-of-society” approach — meaning that it's impossible to isolate good governance from everything else that makes a good society. Whether it's needs assessments, policy research and analysis, financial de-risking, technical capacity development, or platforms for youth and women to take part in the life of their societies, UNDP is a global leader in governance.

UNDP'S NEW OFFER: To implement the UNISS Governance Offer, UNDP will produce results in three areas of governance: state-society relations; governance norms, systems and institutions; and conflict prevention and peacebuilding. In the area of governance, UNDP has typically worked with national governments and institutions; with our new offer, we will expand our partnerships to all facets of society, including non-state actors. UNDP will enhance state-society engagement at all levels of government, and directly with communities through NGO partners, village councils, traditional rulers and other structures like traditional systems. At the local level, we will leverage governance and digital tools as a way to create more accountability, integrity, transparency and to strengthen social contracts and social cohesion, contributing to effective governance by municipalities and cross-border authorities. Further, we will strengthen core governance institutions, norms and regulations to enable basic services, protect property rights, and expand the inclusion of women and youth in decision-making. The results will create trust with state and society, strengthen social contracts and social cohesion, tackle conflict and promote peace building. They will also support more effective service-oriented and people-centered governance in the Sahel.

Governance will be leveraged by:

- Strengthening national and local governance institutions/capacities, democratic processes, and rule of law to adequately respond to crises including community engagement, peace infrastructures and volunteer corps;
- Fostering conditions necessary for sustainable development and long-term stability and resilience;
- Safeguarding human rights, respect for democratic principles and protecting the rights of vulnerable groups, including within the context of COVID-19;
- Promoting representation, voice and political participation of vulnerable groups, youth and women;
- Strengthening resource planning and management including accelerating SDGs achievement;
- Tapping innovation for development including deploying Accelerator Labs for democratic systems, e-governance, local technology development;
- Deploying stabilization packages to assure service delivery, citizen security, core government functions and rule of law in conflict and post-conflict settings;
- Investments in strengthening economic governance through leveraging opportunities in the African Continental Free Trade Area.

Those most excluded must have
a voice in government.



UNISS RENEWABLE ENERGY OFFER



THE OPPORTUNITY: The Sahel has huge renewable energy potential. Tapping even some of that potential could transform the region, powering great progress on jobs, education, healthcare, the environment and more, in both rural and urban areas. Renewable sources such as wind and solar are reliable and affordable. Increasingly, they can be put to use on a large scale for transportation, agricultural production, technology and heavy industry, and even export income. These sources can also be put to use off the energy grid, making them adaptable for small-scale utilization in individual schools, farms, boreholes, businesses, homes and villages. As the countries of the Sahel embark on their effort to secure access to energy and fuel economic growth, the world has a unique and urgent opportunity to help the region get on a green pathway.

UNDP'S WORK: UNDP is a trusted partner on global energy transitions, working with others such as the World Bank, IFC, AfDB, EU, and USAID on national energy strategies, de-risking private investments, and delivering major off-grid renewable solutions with local governments and communities. Currently, UNDP implements close to 200 sustainable energy projects in more than 100 countries, mobilizing \$1 billion in grants and leveraging another \$6 billion in co-financing from public and private sources. In Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, UNDP introduced a platform to provide modern and affordable energy in rural areas. UNDP's Solar for Health initiative has provided tailored solutions in the Sahel, including at 150 healthcare facilities in Chad, and we help establish mini-grids in remote areas in 11 countries across the continent, serving those otherwise left behind.

UNDP'S NEW OFFER: To implement the UNISS Resilience Offer, UNDP will help unleash the vast potential of renewable energy to trigger sustainable socioeconomic growth for families, villages, communities, industries, economies and, ultimately, the entire Sahel. The potential is great, but so are the financial, social and political obstacles. To implement this offer, UNDP will work closely with partners on three levels: the enabling conditions for renewable energy solutions; the deployment of sustainable energy solutions and basic services; and the productive use of sustainable energy. With this offer, UNDP and our partners will help drive the growth of economies, especially rural, by deploying a renewable energy value-chain — from production to distribution to marketing and use. The results will include whole new kinds of livelihoods for youth and women, mitigation of climate change, and progress across the Sustainable Development Goals.

Currently, UNDP implements close to 200 sustainable energy projects in more than 100 countries.



UNISS YOUTH & WOMEN EMPOWERMENT PRIORITY

The UNISS Support Plan prioritizes the empowerment of women and youth to unleash their full potential as custodians of peace and development. With over 190 million people under 25 years, initiatives supporting their inclusion, representation and participation in the sustainable development agenda are critical for reaping the demographic dividend of the Sahel. UNDP's offer seeks to advance this objective by strengthening the responsiveness of development programming to youth in the Sahel.



THE OPPORTUNITY: For all this hardship, the young people of the Sahel have as much energy, talent and drive as can be found anywhere in the world. Imagine how their lives, and that of the whole Sahel, could be transformed if that energy were properly fed and directed. Nearly two-thirds of the Sahel's population is under the age of 25, and yet young people are largely shut out of public life in their countries. Without the investment, they will remain targets for recruitment into violent extremism. Many are unable to get a proper education or participate in government or business, and they cannot expect to receive healthcare. COVID-19 has made things worse, disrupting school and jobs and daily life, especially for girls and young women.

UNDP'S WORK: UNDP takes a uniquely comprehensive approach to youth empowerment. We collaborate with young people and women as equal and essential partners in the work of creating a sustainable future. UNDP has youth programmes in all 10 Sahel countries. In some of these projects, we provide training in leadership and business skills, targeting especially youth in rural, cross-border and host communities and other marginalized groups or areas. For example, in 2019 alone, UNDP's regional youth entrepreneurship initiative provided leadership and business training to 5,000 youth as well as seed funding for 2,000 youth. A Mali chapter of the same programme was launched in November 2020. We aim to build on such initiatives, scaling to additional countries in the Sahel.

UNDP'S NEW OFFER: To implement the UNISS Youth and Women Empowerment priority, UNDP will produce results in three areas of youth development: employment and eco-entrepreneurship with a focus on green and digital-technology-related jobs; political, peacebuilding, socio-economic development and climate resilience; and resilience to shocks, stress, and household and community vulnerability. One such initiative that will be deployed as part of the offer will be to mobilize for transformation by combining youth and climate action, getting 10 million youth in 10 countries to plant/restore 10 billion trees over 10 years. Thanks to its power to rally youth across Sahelian borders, this initiative will also offer dividends in economic empowerment, social cohesion and peace building. We believe that youth become ever more empowered change-agents when they can participate in decision-making structures and processes; have access to entrepreneurship, skills development, and employment opportunities; and are equipped as partners, leaders, and owners in sustainable development. Marginalized young people, including young women and those with disabilities, must and will be included robustly in our work on youth. To implement this bold new structural approach to transforming and regenerating the Sahel, we will draw on our invaluable partnerships and platforms in all sectors, most especially with young people themselves building on progress with the African Union-endorsed YouthConnekt Africa Initiative which is already present in The Gambia, Senegal, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, and Mali. Together with our partners we will marshal the resources needed to help young people fulfil their immense promise and that of the Sahel.



We collaborate with young people and women as equal and essential partners in the work of creating a sustainable future for generations to come.

INVESTING IN THE SAHEL

UNDP has launched the new Sahel Offer with an investment of \$250 million for the first year, and now, we propose to scale up our work to realize the opportunities in the region.

UNDP's Sahel Offer will be implemented over a period of five years, from 2021 to 2025, requiring a total investment of \$3.62 billion.

This is big money, because the work is big. But now is not the time for half-measures.

You are invited to join us in our bold new approach to transforming the Sahel.

To our partners who have already funded our work in the Sahel, we thank you. We count on your continued support, and we encourage you to increase your investments.

To the many Development Assistance Committee (DAC) partners in the Sahel, we urge you to boost your support.

To those who have not partnered with us before, we invite you to become part of this work. You will be joining a vital effort to confront some of the greatest challenges on Earth.

Everyone can play a part. Civil society. Businesses and foundations. Governments in any country, including those where UNDP carries out programmes. International financial institutions, development finance institutions and banks in the Sahel.

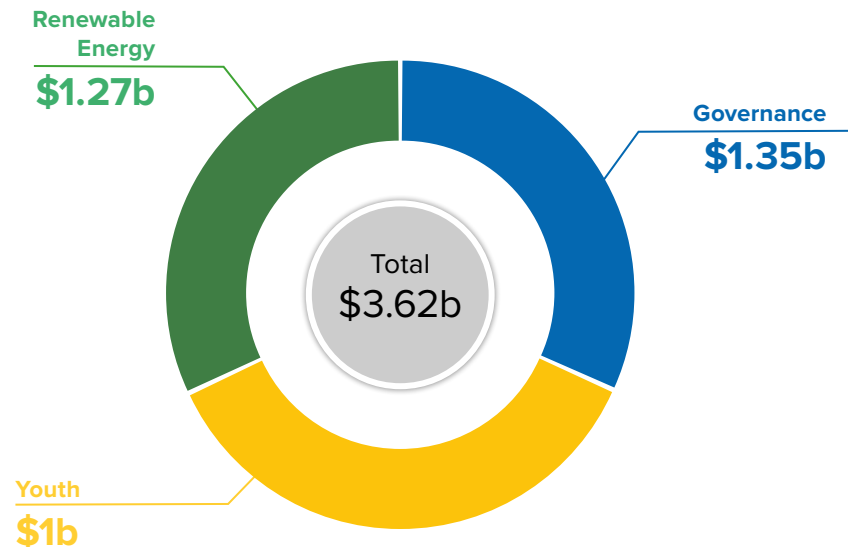
On the ground in all countries at all levels, we help national government entities, local governments, institutions such as the Liptako Gourma Authority and community groups to transform and deliver for development, using a framework for development partners to make investments and create the biggest impact.

However you invest, you can rest assured that your support will be wisely used. Funds are disbursed through our most trusted channels. We collaborate with other UN agencies and with host governments to identify opportunities for co-financing and in-kind support.

The work is arduous. But it is a necessary and historic endeavour.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES: Total investments required for scale in ambition we are looking for in the Sahel Offer for 2021-2025 are broken down according to the three pillars:

Financing the Offer 2021-2025





THE SAHEL OF TOMORROW

The Sahel we so often hear about is a place of endless crisis, a place with no hope.

At UNDP, we know as well as anyone the depth of the problems in the region. We see them every day. We see the poverty and the violence.

But we also see something else. We see the boundless creativity and love of the people of the Sahel. We see this in our partners. Climate-smart farmers. Forward-thinking scholars. Big-hearted businesspeople. Women peacemakers. Young entrepreneurs. Dedicated public servants. Caring neighbours.

We see a future for the Sahel. We see prosperity and peace flowering in all corners. UNDP is working shoulder to shoulder within UNISS and with partners throughout the region to realize that vision.

Join us.



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

Learn more at undp.org or follow at [@undp](https://twitter.com/undp).

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