

REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR AFRICA

June 2021

Vol. 9

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# EDITORIAL Note

“Although every day is **#AfricaDay** at UNDP Africa, we recognize this day as a flagship for African development, past, present and future. We also seize this opportunity to thank our partners for the work we are doing together for Africa and African people.”

- Ahunna Eziakonwa,  
Regional Director for Africa,  
UNDP

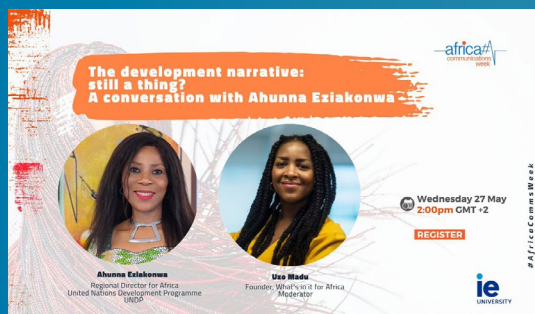
In May, the Regional Bureau for Africa celebrated **Africa Month** with a continental social media campaign and a number of engagements by the Regional Director during Africa Communications Week and the Africa Dialogue Series. For over 50 years, UNDP has invested and worked closely with 46 African governments to advance sustainable development. UNDP's Illustrated **Annual Report for 2020** showcases how nearly \$1 billion was deployed to over 170 countries and territories, helping government and health systems to function, protecting jobs and livelihoods and rapidly expanding social protection. In his foreword, UNDP Administrator Achim Steiner called COVID-19 development's biggest challenge and said, “finding a way forward from COVID-19 will be the journey of our generation.”

The Regional Programme for Africa also released a new Profile, which outlines the Regional Programme as a strategic tool for RBA to identify emerging challenges and invest in solutions towards transformational change in Africa. To maintain its agility in responding to new challenges, consultations for the development of a **new Regional Programme Document (2022-2025)** are underway. UNDP's sub-regional hubs are engaging a wide range of stakeholders to ensure the next RPD is informed by Africa's development priorities and needs, and shaped by the perspectives and priorities of regional actors, civil society, borderland communities (especially women and youth), academia, the private sector, international financial institutions (IFIs), other development partners, and internal stakeholders.

This edition of the newsletter features a number of highlights from regional projects and initiatives ranging from stabilization in the Lake Chad Basin to consultations to re-imagine and develop a new Africa governance and peacebuilding framework as well as cutting edge innovation aimed at boosting cross-border trade.

Thank you for reading.

# MONTHLY Highlights



African Communicators discuss the current narrative on Africa's development

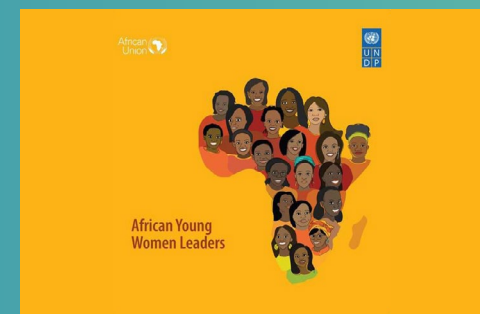
**26 MAY:** Marketing and communications experts from across the continent gathered for **Africa Communications Week**, a week of discussion to improve the current narrative on Africa and find the right stories that will not only highlight Africa's successes but also create stimuli for innovators and entrepreneurs from within Africa and the Diaspora. On 26 May, Ahunna Eziakonwa, Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Africa, highlighted that UNDP Africa's development narrative breaks the decade-long crisis in development communication by stepping away from the traditional single-story framework that focuses on the "donor-recipient" relationship. The stories we tell, and our work, are human-focused with greater dignity. African communications specialists should not minimize the role they bear in fostering African development. Changing perspectives on Africa will start by changing the perspective Africans, and especially youth, have of Africa.

[Watch the conversation ►](#)



Arts and culture – our past, present and future

**27 MAY:** The 2021 edition of the **Africa Dialogue Series (ADS)**, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA)'s flagship event, took place throughout May (Africa month) and was a celebration of the continent's identity, culture, history and achievements. The series of events brought key stakeholders together to discuss challenges and opportunities for Africa. They showcased innovations that emanated from Africa in response to the COVID-19 pandemic through a **virtual exhibition** of UNDP Africa Innovates magazine. Other events featured documentary films about the continent's rich history and cultural heritage, virtual art exhibitions and engaging conversations with African academics, artists and filmmakers. Ahunna Eziakonwa was invited to participate in a conversation with key actors and thought-leaders on "Cultural transformation before economic transformation?" She highlighted the role arts and culture play in reconstructing the African mind and encouraging young people to believe in themselves and in their heritage.



A virtual career lab for the African Young Women Leaders

**18-19 MAY:** The Regional Bureau for Africa hosted a two-day virtual career lab for the talented young women who were part of the first cohort of African Young Women Leaders (AYWL) through the fellowship established by UNDP and the African Union. During the two days, UNDP provided fellows with guidance and support on mapping their next career steps and brought various stakeholders to share their experiences, including the Tony Elumelu Foundation, McKinsey, IOM and UNICEF.

## Using innovation to boost informal cross-border trade across Africa

**10 MAY:** A new 2021 Innovation Challenge, launched last month by the Africa Borderlands Centre, aims to curate, experiment and upscale home-grown solutions in an entrepreneurial-culture that can sustain Informal Cross-Border Trade (ICBT). Open to all Africa-based UNDP Accelerator Labs, the goal of the 2021 Innovation Challenge is to collaborate with the labs to bring innovation to development and fulfil the aspirations of RBA's "Africa Promise" for marginalized communities. Accelerator Labs have been challenged to examine current areas of programming and identify where further support can unveil durable solutions for barriers in ICBT, particularly through the expansion of livelihoods opportunities for women and youth.





### Trade for Peace project kicks off in Mali

**25-27 MAY:** The Japanese Supplementary budget funded UNDP ‘Trade for Peace’ project in the Liptako-Gourma region held its first national workshop in the Malian communities of Menaka and Anderamboukane along the border with Niger. The community-led workshop was attended by a dynamic group of local stakeholders including the governor of the Menaka region, Mayor of Menaka, six commune chiefs, seven youth association presidents, and four women’s cooperative coalitions representing artisans and dairy-products. The workshop aimed to promote trade volumes and facilitation, vocational upskilling of youth, and scaling up capacities and infrastructure in existing women cooperatives. The ‘Trade for Peace’ project is managed by UNDP’s Africa Borderlands Centre and the Stabilization Hub based in Dakar. A strong partnership with the UN Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), in particular its civil affairs section, is envisaged for the implementation of the project component related to peacebuilding initiatives in cross border areas.



### Political transition in Chad presents opportunity to widen democratic space

**15-22 MAY:** UNDP deployed a multi-dimensional team of experts to better understand the changing context in Chad, ascertain UNDP’s value proposition within an integrated UN support and identify entry points on how UNDP can work with regional institutions. Support by the international community will be required to accompany the people of Chad through the current transition, to avert a crisis, and to take advantage of the current situation to lay the foundation for an inclusive transition process. The mission concluded with a positive outlook for country, noting the broad good will among political stakeholders and some parts of civil society in Chad. UNDP will roll out a transition support package, within the framework of the recently established Regional Transition Facility for Africa, to support the ongoing time-sensitive processes in Chad.



### Employing local languages to promote social cohesion in the Lake Chad Basin

**MAY:** The Lake Chad Basin Commission established a new partnership with Radio Ndarason Internationale with the scope to continue regional, national and local communication initiatives in local languages. The partnership will promote social cohesion via radio programmes, contribute to developing space for peaceful discussions and interactions between communities, and nurture a deeper understanding of the Regional Stabilization Strategy’s on reintegration, reconciliation, rule of law and justice, and other associated topics. This regional radio network broadcasts in the principal languages of the Lake Chad region (Kanuri, Kanembu and Buduma), allowing guests to speak directly to the hearts of local communities.

[More Information](#) ►



### AU launches platform to address the impact of climate change on vulnerable populations

**11 MAY:** With climate change increasing the frequency, intensity and unpredictability of extreme weather events in Africa, it becomes imperative that disaster risk reduction efforts address the issue of gender for sustainable adaptation and resilience. To ensure the integration of gender equality and women empowerment issues in the disaster risk management (DRM) landscape, the African Union and the African Risk Capacity launched a Gender and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) platform. The new platform is expected to contribute to the development and management of knowledge on the issues of gender and DRM by addressing the disproportionate impacts of weather-related and other natural disasters on vulnerable populations.

[Press Release](#) ►



### Facilitating greater trade opportunities for women through the Protocol on Women in Trade

**17 MAY:** In partnership with UN Women and the AfCFTA Secretariat, UNDP is supporting the preparatory phase toward the development of the Protocol on Women in Trade. This support includes the roll out of an online survey and national and regional consultations aimed at capturing and documenting experiences and interrogating critical issues that should be included in the Protocol. On 17 May, a joint webinar sensitized and updated 104 UNDP and UN Women staff on the planned national consultations and other ongoing activities for the preparatory phase. UNDP also led the development of a Guidance Note for National Consultations, which outlines the key issues that countries should address during the national consultations.



### Sharing best practices to mainstream human rights-based approaches in PVE

**17 MAY:** A Community of Practice Session, featuring the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UNDP's Crisis Bureau, introduced UNDP's Human Rights Framework and other relevant tools such as the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy to address human rights violations as one of the drivers to violent extremism and a root cause of radicalization.



### AU signs agreement with Guinea to host the African Minerals Development Centre

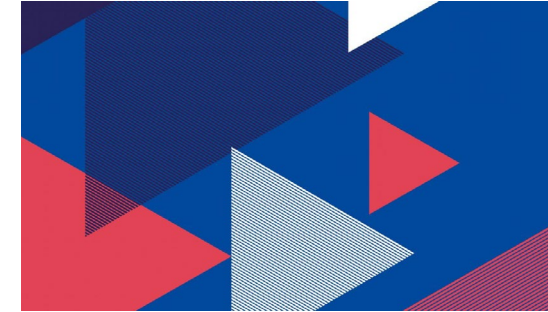
**27 MAY:** The AU and the Republic of Guinea signed a Host Agreement for the African Minerals Development Centre to be headquartered in Guinea. Minerals and other natural resources contribute towards inclusive growth and sustainable development through job creation and poverty reduction, leading to structural transformation in African economies. Facilitated and supported by UNDP, the Centre will implement the African Mining Vision by ensuring Africa's interests in the lucrative minerals sector are properly articulated for the prosperity of the continent. The Statute of the African Minerals Development Centre was adopted by the 26th AU Summit in January 2016.

[Read the Statute](#) ►



### Senior policy group organizes first meeting on UN Action Plan for the Great Lakes Region

**20 MAY:** A Senior Policy Group met to discuss the Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Strategy for Peace Consolidation, Conflict Prevention and Conflict Resolution in the Great Lakes Region. Huang Xia, UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, said the Action Plan will focus on “building trust and dialogue in the region; promoting non-military measures to neutralize armed groups; fighting the illicit exploitation of natural resources; promoting women, peace and security and youth, peace and security issues; and investing in cross-border projects.



### Regional Dialogue on Accelerating Social Protection Coverage and Sustainable Financing in Africa

**8 APRIL:** Organized by the AU, ILO and UNDP, discussions centered on challenges and good practices for the extension of social protection to informal workers; and possible policy options and fiscal opportunities for extending social protection to workers in informal economies. UNDP was represented by Dr. Joy Kategekwa, Strategic Advisor to the RBA Director. Dr. Kategekwa's presentation, based on the recent UNDP report on **'Informality and Social Protection in African Countries'**, demonstrated the importance and feasibility of extending social protection to workers in informal economies. Participants included representatives of workers' and employers' organizations at continental and national levels, government ministries (social security and finance), the AUC, development partners, UN agencies, social security agencies, civil society, research and academia.



### Call for proposals: UN Peacebuilding Fund - Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI)

**Deadline: 18 JUNE**

The Gender and Youth Promotion Initiative (GYPI) is an expression of the Peacebuilding Fund's commitment to inclusive peacebuilding. It supports the empowerment of women and the advancement of gender equality and recognizes the important and positive role young people play in peacebuilding. This year's GYPI will focus on promoting meaningful participation of women and youth in local peacebuilding and calls for proposals from both CSOs as well as from UN agencies, funds and programmes, in PBF eligible countries.

[Apply Now](#) ►



### UNDP launches consultative process on Reimagining Governance and Peacebuilding in Africa

**27 MAY:** UNDP's Regional Service Centre for Africa (RSCA) launched a consultative process on Reimagining Governance and Peacebuilding in Africa, which aims at guiding UNDP's future work on governance and peacebuilding. With a keynote address from Kenya's former Chief Justice David Maraga and presentations from experts, the meeting highlighted the need to take a fresh look at UNDP's programmatic interventions in light of the changing context in Africa. These changes include stalling economic progress; discontent with political and economic exclusion; fraying social contract; persistence of conflicts; rise in terrorism and extremism; and contestation of electoral outcomes. Participants underscored that COVID-19 had exposed several governance challenges and thus the need for a new approach to governance anchored on a new social contract and people-centred approaches to development. A team of experts, which has representation of all Africa's sub-regions, has gender parity and includes the youth will embark on subregional and thematic consultations in June and July. The outcome of the consultations will be used as contributions to the Regional Programme, the UNDP Strategic Plan and to develop a new RSCA Governance and Peacebuilding Framework.



# SOCIAL



**MALI** | With support from the Sahel Resilience Project and the government of Japan, UNDP Mali subsidized 15 cooperatives of SMEs to produce half a million protective masks locally, and 116,000 handcrafted protective masks have been produced so far. This assistance has critically helped maintain approximately 100 jobs in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.



# KNOWLEDGE Products

The Regional Programme aims to make research findings **accessible, relevant and accurate** in how they reflect the conditions affecting vulnerable and marginalized groups across the continent.

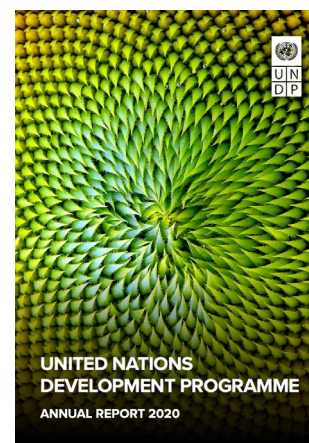
Profile of the Regional Programme for Africa



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UNDP Annual Report 2020



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RSS Quarterly Newsletter / LCBC



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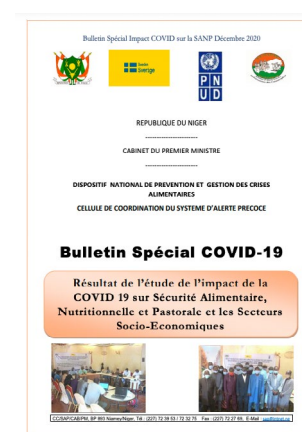
The Sahel Resilience Letter



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Sahel Resilience Project / UNDP Niger



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# CALL FOR Papers

## 2021 African Economic Conference

The 2021 African Economic Conference (AEC), jointly organized by UNDP, the African Development Bank (AfDB), and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) will be held in Cabo Verde, as well as virtually, from 2 to 4 December. This year's conference will focus on "Financing Africa's post COVID-19 Development" and interested authors can **submit papers** to [rba.aec@undp.org](mailto:rba.aec@undp.org) by 15 July.



The banner features a central orange background with a decorative geometric pattern in the corners. At the top center is the AEC logo, which includes a map of Africa and the text 'AEC AFRICAN ECONOMIC CONFERENCE'. Below the logo, the main title 'Call for Papers - African Economic Conference 2021' is displayed in white, followed by the subtitle 'Financing Africa's post COVID-19 Development' and the dates 'Cabo Verde, 2-4 December'. The submission information 'Please submit your paper to [rba.aec@undp.org](mailto:rba.aec@undp.org)' and 'For more information: [bit.ly/AEC2021\\_papers](https://bit.ly/AEC2021_papers)' is provided in white text. At the bottom, the logos for UNDP, AfDB, and ECA are shown.

**AEC**  
AFRICAN  
ECONOMIC  
CONFERENCE

**Call for Papers - African Economic Conference 2021**  
*Financing Africa's post COVID-19 Development*  
**Cabo Verde, 2-4 December**

Please submit your paper to [rba.aec@undp.org](mailto:rba.aec@undp.org)  
For more information: [bit.ly/AEC2021\\_papers](https://bit.ly/AEC2021_papers)

UNDP AfDB ECA

# JUNE 2021 Calendar

JUNE

Regional Programme Document 2022-2025 consultations

JUNE

Comprehensive assessment of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 and the role of disaster risk governance in the Western Sahel and Lake Chad Basin region by Data-Pop Alliance

1 JUNE, 7 JUNE

Comprehensive assessment of the status of multi-hazard early warning systems (MEWS) presentation by CIMA Foundation to AU Member States and RECs

2 JUNE

Journey to Extremism 2.0 reference group meeting

2-4 JUNE

Preparatory meetings with Clusters of the Regional Task Force

3 JUNE

Development Dialogue on Advancing the Climate and Environment Agendas in Fragile States

4 JUNE

Regional CIMIC Advisors meeting

5 JUNE

World Environment Day

WEEK OF 7 JUNE

Ndjamena, Chad | CSO Territorial Platform Meeting

7-11 JUNE

Training Programme on Information Operations, training related to Plan of Action on Stratcom on PVE

10 JUNE

First regional online session of the RBA Youth Community of Practice

10 JUNE

Briefing to the Inter Agency Task Force on Boko Haram



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UNDP's Regional Programme for Africa contributes to regional development by addressing challenges facing Africa and amplifying opportunities related to the priorities and aspirations defined by the African Union (AU) and other regional entities.

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14 JUNE  
**Regional Task Force Third Virtual Meeting**

14 JUNE  
**Security & Protection Cluster Preparation Third RSS Regional Task Force Meeting**

14-16 JUNE  
**Third Oslo Conference on the Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE)**

15 JUNE  
**Launch of a policy brief on the interlinkages between climate change and PVE at the Third Oslo Global PVE Conference**

16 JUNE  
**Progress update on EU-funded Joint Regional Peace and Security Programme implemented by UNDP-UNFPA-UN Women**

17 JUNE  
**World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought**

20-25 JUNE  
**Regional CIMIC Advisors meeting**

5 JUNE  
**Ndjamena, Chad | Kofi Annan Training Needs Assessment Mission**

WEEK OF 21 JUNE  
**2020 Steering Committee Meeting**

WEEK OF 28 JUNE  
**Maroua, Cameroon | CSO Territorial Platform Meeting**

JUNE (TBD)  
**Abuja, Nigeria | Hybrid launch of civil society network on Screening, Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (SPRR) in the Lake Chad Basin**