

Voices from Africa

United Nations Development Programme



Achim Steiner takes office as Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme

Achim Steiner began a four-year term as Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on 19 June. Mr. Steiner brings more than three decades of leadership experience in global development issues and international

cooperation. He is a passionate advocate for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the need for unprecedented global cooperation to deliver on this ambitious agenda. Read more [here](#).

Ocean Conference: Countries agree on decisive and urgent actions to restore marine world



The 5-9 June [Ocean Conference](#) concluded with UN Member States unanimously agreeing to a set of measures that will begin the reversal of the decline of the ocean's health. In the outcome [Call for Action](#) countries committed to reduce the use of plastics, address ocean and coastal acidification, sea-level rise and increase in ocean temperatures, and to target the [other harmful impacts](#) of climate change on the ocean.

Several African countries also made voluntary commitments that aim to contribute to the

implementation of SDG 14 – [Life below water](#). Among them, Cote d'Ivoire committed to Como Grand Bassam River embankment works, Kenya and Madagascar focused on sustainable fishing, São Tomé and Príncipe on addressing ocean contamination. South Africa will undertake to generate oceanographic, biodiversity and all other relevant data and metadata about the Indian Ocean. For more commitments by African countries, [click here](#).

DRC, Cote d'Ivoire, Rwanda, Uganda and Zimbabwe awarded gold in the Gender Seal Awards



UNDP country offices in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Côte d'Ivoire, Rwanda and Uganda received the highest level of certification – gold – in the organisation's Gender Seal Awards, held on 5 June. The awards recognize country offices' work in advancing gender equality.

Since the last Gender Seal Awards in 2015, 18 countries from the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa undertook the voluntary UNDP Gender Seal certification exercise, including 5 of the 10 countries currently in crisis or post-crisis

situation. UNDP Country Offices in Benin, Senegal, Tanzania and Zimbabwe achieved silver certification, while those in Burkina Faso, Guinea, Lesotho, Niger, Madagascar, Sierra Leone and South Sudan were awarded bronze certification. Read more [here](#).

Unlock the potential of African entrepreneurs to accelerate industrial transformation, says the African Economic Outlook 2017



The [African Economic Outlook \(AEO\) 2017](#), released in May by the African Development Bank (AfDB), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and UNDP, calls on African governments to integrate entrepreneurship more fully into their industrialisation strategies. According to the Outlook, Africa has high untapped potential for entrepreneurship. In 18 African countries for

which statistics are available, 11% of the working-age population set up their own firms to tap specific business opportunities. This level is higher than in developing countries in Latin America (8%) and in Asia (5%). However, few of them invest in high-growth sectors, grow to employ more workers, or introduce innovations to markets. Read more [here](#).

First Africa Data Revolution Report maps data ecosystem

UNDP, the African Centre for Statistics at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the World Wide Web Foundation and the Open Data for Development Network launched in May the [Africa Data Revolution Report 2016](#), a biennial report highlighting developments in African national data ecosystems.

This first report focuses on mapping the data ecosystem in Africa with reference to the production, distribution and use of data by public, private and civil society actors, as they relate to the 17 SDGs. It draws from in-depth case studies of national data ecosystems in 10 African countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Swaziland and Tanzania. The report identifies



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challenges to the data revolution in the legal, legislative and policy frameworks or principles; financial investments; technology and infrastructure; and data governance areas. Read more [here](#).

US\$12 million in loans to support thousands of small businesses quarrying 'Development Minerals' in Africa



5000 micro, small and medium scale 'Development Minerals' operators will now have access to more affordable finance as a result of a partnership between the African Guarantee Fund for Small and Medium-sized Enterprises Ltd (AGF), the African Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP), the European Union (EU) and UNDP.

The AGF will make available US\$12 million in credit guarantee facilities to financial institutions in Cameroon, Guinea, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia in connection with loans they provide to small and medium-size

enterprises (SMEs) working in the 'Development Minerals' sector. Read more [here](#).

UNDP and GSMA partner on mobile technology for global development goals



UNDP and the GSMA are joining forces to harness the power of mobile technology to accelerate implementation of the SDGs. The GSMA represents the interests of mobile operators worldwide, uniting nearly 800 operators and 300 companies across the broader mobile ecosystem.

Under the partnership, UNDP and the GSMA will consider new business models and mechanisms, and engage governments and mobile industry leaders to increase the social impact that mobile technologies can deliver. Read more [here](#).

Regional judges meet to promote law as a tool to strengthen the HIV response in Africa



High and Supreme Court judges from across Africa gathered in Johannesburg, South Africa during 20-22 June for the annual Africa Regional Judges Forum on HIV, Human Rights and the Law. The judges shared experiences, compared cases across different jurisdictions, learned about the latest medical and science developments, and discussed ways to advance the use of law as a tool to respond to the HIV epidemic. Organised by UNDP through the [Africa Regional Grant on HIV: Removing Legal Barriers](#), this year's meeting

focused on transgender persons and their lived realities, HIV and tuberculosis in prisons, criminalization of HIV transmission, people who use drugs, and adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights, including an in-depth discussion on child marriage in Sub-Saharan Africa. Read more [here](#).

UNDP Africa presents latest knowledge products to the African Group of Ambassadors to the UN

More than 100 participants, including 16 Permanent Representatives of African countries, participated in a high level knowledge building and sharing event convened on 16 May by UNDP's Regional Bureau for Africa and hosted by the African Union Permanent Observer Mission to the UN in New York. The event included a presentation of the Regional Bureau's latest policy brief "[Strengthening the Strategic Alignment for Africa's Development: Lessons from the SDGs, Agenda 2063 and AfDB High Fives](#)" by Ayodele Odusola, UNDP Africa's Chief Economist and Head of Strategy and Analysis. Read more [here](#).



COUNTRY OFFICE SPOTLIGHT

13 years of conflicts and serious human rights violations documented in the Central African Republic



In May, the [Report of the Mapping Project documenting serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law committed within the territory of the Central African Republic between January 2003 and December 2015](#) was launched in the country's capital, Bangui.

UNDP worked closely with the peacekeeping UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on

the Mapping Report. It documents horrific cases of sexual violence, extrajudicial killings, looting, large-scale destruction of homes and property (a scorched earth policy), kidnappings, arbitrary arrests and detention, torture and the recruitment of child soldiers. Pursuant to UN Security Council [Resolution 2301 \(2016\)](#), the goal of the mapping is to contribute to the efforts of the future Special Criminal Court and to the development of additional transitional justice mechanisms, such as a Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission. Read more [here](#).

Our blog series

Setting sail to achieve SDG 14 - Life below Water - in Africa

by Saskia Marijnissen, Regional Technical Adviser - Ecosystems & Biodiversity, and Akiko Yamamoto, Regional Technical Adviser - Water & Ocean Governance, UNDP Africa



The 5-9 June Ocean Conference in New York raised global consciousness of ocean problems ranging from marine pollution to illegal and over fishing, from ocean acidification to lack of high seas governance – all highly relevant themes for Africa, with its 38 coastal and island states, and estimated 13 million km² of ocean territories collectively.

Forty-one voluntary commitments were submitted by African countries, outlining concrete actions they will take towards the achievement of SDG14, including on

improving governance of the fisheries sector, pollution control, and management of marine-protected areas (MPAs). Read full blog [here](#).



Nature to the rescue: using ecosystem services to reduce flood risks

by Saskia Marijnissen, Regional Technical Adviser, Ecosystems and Biodiversity, UNDP Africa

With climate change, continuing urbanization trends and demographic growth – especially also in coastal areas, the impacts of floods are expected to increase dramatically in the next decades. Finding innovative and sustainable ways to work together with, rather than against, nature for effective flood risk reduction will be critical. Read full blog [here](#).



Land degradation and migration: Will restoring the land keep people at home?

by Phemo Kgomotso, regional Team Leader, Regional Technical Specialist, Ecosystems and Biodiversity, UNDP-GEF

‘Would forced migration end, if people knew that they could thrive and survive in their homeland?’ The links between land degradation and migration have not always been boldly stated, but they are certainly there, and we need more nuanced research and analysis to better inform responses. Read full blog [here](#).



Saint-Louis, Senegal: the challenge of sustainability

by Abdoulaye Mar Dieye, Regional Director, UNDP Africa

As the Ocean Conference is in full swing in New York, we mark World Ocean Day. Throughout this week, we were reminded of two essential truths: life below water, with its rich fauna and flora is precious and the livelihoods that depend on it are in danger. This is true especially in Senegal, where at least two thirds of the population lives near coastal areas which are receding at an alarming rate (on average 1 to 2 metres per year) due to rising sea levels, and rapid urbanization. Few places illustrate the compounded effects of these predicaments with greater urgency than Saint-Louis, Senegal (also known as *Ndar*), the island city I am proud to call my hometown. Read full blog [here](#).



Can the SDG target to industrialise be achieved in resource-rich Africa countries?

by Degol Hailu, Senior Advisor and Chinpihoi Kipgen, Research and Data Analyst, Extractives Industries, UNDP Africa

SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure has among its targets to promote “[inclusive and sustainable industrialization](#)”. The indicators selected to measure the achievement of target 9.2 on industrialization are: 1) Manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP and per capita; and 2) Manufacturing employment as a proportion of total employment. To see how far this SDG target will be achieved, we have analysed the performance in Angola, Botswana, Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Mauritania, Nigeria and Zambia. Read full blog [here](#).



The food situation in Ethiopia is also of great concern

by David das Neves, South-South Cooperation & Development Effectiveness Officer, UNDP Africa

In Ethiopia, whilst the country was still trying to recover from the 2015-2016 drought, low levels of rainfall led to yet another crisis situation. In a country with one of the highest levels of cattle ownership on the continent, the loss of herds to thirst severely affects families who depend on



Funding the SDGs in resource-rich countries

by Degol Hailu, Senior Advisor and Chinpihoi Kipgen, Research and Data Analyst, Extractives Industries, UNDP Africa

UNDP's [Extractives Dependence Index \(EDI\)](#) measures a country's dependence on its oil, gas and mineral resources. The Index is a composite index made up of three weighted components – the extractive sector's contribution to export earnings, fiscal revenues and GDP, and is helpful

livestock as a food source, a livelihood or both. Since 2003, Ethiopia has already had to deal with five very serious droughts affecting millions of people. Read full blog [here](#).

in crafting the right policies for diversification to achieve successful resource-based development. Read full blog [here](#).

Upcoming events

7-8 July: [G20 Summit](#) 2017, Hamburg, Germany
10-19 July: [UN High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#), New York, USA
18 July: [Nelson Mandela Day](#)
19-21 July: [Africa Youth Connekt Summit](#), Kigali, Rwanda
12 August: [International Youth Day](#)
19 August: [World Humanitarian Day](#)
5-11 September: [Second Regular Session of the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS/UNICEF/UN Women and WFP Executive Board](#), New York, USA
12-27 September: [72nd Regular Session of the UN General Assembly](#), New York, USA
15 September: [International Day of Democracy](#)
17-18 September: [Social Good Summit](#), New York, USA
21 September: [International Day of Peace](#)
13-15 October: [Annual Meetings of the World Bank/IMF](#), Washington D.C., USA
17 October: [International Day for the Eradication of Poverty](#)
6-7 November: [The 23rd Conference of the Parties \(COP 23\) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(UNFCCC\)](#), Bonn, Germany
28-29 November: [5th Africa-EU Summit](#), Abidjan, Ivory Coast

Feedback

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