



REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR AFRICA

Profile

Driving innovation for Africa's growth and transformation



Overview

01



Context

02



Strategic Priorities

03



Flagship Projects and Emerging Initiatives

04



Knowledge Products

05



Comparative Advantage

06



Partnerships

01 Context

“Africa and African leadership are facing critical choices. Through its partnerships with regional actors, UNDP’s Regional Programme for Africa is well positioned to champion **inclusive and innovative development** towards the promise of a self-sufficient and prosperous continent.”

– Ahunna Eziakonwa,
Regional Director for Africa,
UNDP

As a strategic tool of UNDP’s Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA), the Regional Programme for Africa operates as an integrated continental mechanism that coordinates regional, sub-regional and country development planning for greater effectiveness and results.

To address high levels of poverty and youth unemployment and under-employment, meaningful and inclusive structural transformations must take place in African countries. Challenges to stability are exacerbated by the resurgence of violent conflict, including extremism and the adverse impacts of climate change within the region. Citizens across Africa are asking for their voices to be heard. Inclusivity, particularly the voices and needs of youth, women and vulnerable groups across the continent should be incorporated into all programming dimensions.

The regional spill-over of conflicts combined with the sub-regional and continent-wide effects of globalization, violent extremism, migration, disease outbreaks and the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and

exploitation of natural resources have underscored that siloed or state-centric approaches alone will not suffice.

The Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa is UNDP’s support to realizing Africa’s promise and addressing today’s challenges, such as inequalities, governance, climate change and rapid population growth. It also aims to strengthen UNDP’s position as Africa’s top enabler and integrator for the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the 2063 Agenda of the African Union (AU).

Based in Addis Ababa, the Regional Programme contributes to this offer by amplifying opportunities related to the priorities and aspirations defined by the AU and other regional entities to address common cross-border development challenges. Our work contributes to sustained peace and efforts to strengthen resilience to crises and shocks, contributing to inclusive, transformational and sustainable growth with reduced inequalities, and supporting the capacities of regional institutions to manage new and existing challenges.

Geographic Scope

Based at the Regional Service Centre for Africa (RSCA) in Addis Ababa, the Regional Programme works closely with the AU, Regional Economic Communities (RECs)/Regional Mechanisms (RMs) and other regional actors and partners across the continent. Supporting the Regional Bureau for Africa in New York, we also collaborate and coordinate with UNDP sub-regional hubs in Dakar, Nairobi and Pretoria, and their thematic mandates in stabilization, resilience and financing enabling us to engage directly with society, governments and partners on joint priorities.

We also work in partnership with other offices under the UNDP umbrella, such as the Global Policy Network (GPN), the Strategic Analysis and Research Team (SART), the Country Oversight Team (COST), the Inter-Practice Coordination Group (IPCG) and 45 UNDP country offices across the continent.

We collaborate with

14
regional
institutions

45
UNDP country
offices



02 Strategic Priorities

The Regional Programme is well-positioned to analyze the continent's dynamic environment and propose a new path forward to ensure that no one is left behind. Our 3 priorities are fully aligned with the six impact areas of the Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development towards the achievement of transformational change in Africa.

3 Priorities of the Regional Programme for Africa

Priority Area 1

AU and RECs deliver on their mandate, especially cross-cutting issues related to resilience-building



Priority Area 2

Regional growth is inclusive, transformational and sustainable with reduced economic inequalities, and characterized by structural transformation



Priority Area 3

Regional institutions sustain peace and build resilience to crises and shocks



6 Impact Areas of the Regional Bureau for Africa



Natural Resource Governance



Youth and Women's Employment and Empowerment



Structural Economic Transformation



Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation



Affordable and Sustainable Energy



Peace and Security

Africa mining governance project

- YouthConnekt Africa
- TEF-UNDP youth entrepreneurship programme
- AU-UNDP African Young Women Leaders' Fellowship
- Women in governance and political participation initiative (including the WANEP-ECOWAS-UNDP initiative)
- Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in Africa
- The Regional Project for Youth Empowerment in the Sahel (RPYES)

- AUDA-NEPAD-UNDP 100k SMEs initiative
- Accelerating the ratification and domestication of AU treaties
- Support to implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)
- Digital transformation – Africa Leading 4IR
- Social protection for sustainable development in Africa
- Public and private financing for the achievement of the SDGs
- Regional COVID-19 response
- Transforming the development cooperation landscape to implement SDGs through south-south cooperation

- Strengthening climate change governance in Africa – Strengthening Africa's resilience and capacities for adaptation and disaster risk reduction – includes the DRR/resilience in the Sahel
- Southern Africa adaptation program for climate resilience and recovery of agricultural foods systems and livelihoods
- Implementation of the Paris Agreement

- Solar for Health multi-country program developed for GCF to enable provision of sustainable low-carbon energy services to public health facilities in Sub-Saharan Africa
- Regional energy project for Liptako Gourma Authority
- Public-private investment in renewable energy

- Support to Africa CDC
- Global Haven initiative with PanaBIOS
- Stabilization Facility for the Lake Chad
- Stabilization Facility for the Liptako Gourma Authority
- The Africa Borderlands Centre
- Preventing violent extremism
- Conflict prevention – Support to the African Union
- The Sahel Governance Promise

“Africa CDC is working with UNDP to implement the joint continental strategy for the COVID-19 outbreak. Our strategy is clear: we want to capacitate the Member States so they can quickly detect and mitigate the effects of the disease in Africa, and, if widespread transmission occurs, prevent severe illness and death.”

Dr. Ahmed Ogwell E. Ouma, Deputy Director of the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC)





03 Flagship Projects and Initiatives

The Regional Programme and its subsequent components, over 30 Regional Projects and Emerging Initiatives, are designed to respond to development challenges and emerging issues at the regional and sub-regional levels.

Anchored on the overall UNDP Strategic Plan and the six impact areas of the Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa, our programming aims to invest in innovation for Africa's growth and transformation as well as support homegrown solutions to political and socioeconomic challenges.

COVID-19 response

UNDP is working with the AU and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) in its overall response to COVID-19 to support the AU and RECs in implementing activities across five programmatic strands: regional coordination and operational support; capacity building through knowledge sharing and a virtual academy on response-to-recovery; public communications campaigns on COVID-19 prevention and response; peace, security and socio-economic impact assessments; and preparedness and response in cross-border areas.

Women in governance and political participation

Our partnership with the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) seeks to empower women at local and national levels as critical stakeholders in governance and political transitions in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Niger. This initiative aims to improve the capacities of current and emerging women leaders including young and marginalized women, accelerate the implementation of legislation on gender equality in leadership and elections, and sustain peace and violence prevention in electoral processes.

The Africa Borderlands Centre

The new Africa Borderlands Centre aims to ensure a coordinated and sustainable approach to borderlands development efforts, promote innovative borderlands programmes in Africa designed through consultative processes, and provide technical support to new and ongoing borderlands projects.

African Young Women Leaders' Fellowship Programme

The AU and UNDP are working to inspire a new generation of young African women leaders and experts to serve Africa and the world in designing and implementing development programmes in the context of Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With the first cohort of 21 fellows introduced in 2019, this initiative has created a network of talented African young women professionals and equipped them with the leadership skills and experience required to contribute effectively to decision-making in public, private and multilateral institutions at home and abroad. The fellowship programme is expected to scale further from 2021.

Preventing violent extremism

In response to the growing threat of violent extremism in Africa, UNDP aims to strengthen development responses and mitigate the growth of violent extremism in Africa. While

a security-centred approach to violent extremism is necessary, it needs to be complemented by a development approach that focuses on achieving long-term change at the structural level by: strengthening the respect for human rights and the rule of law; providing socioeconomic opportunities; increasing participation of excluded groups in decision-making, and engaging them in prevention and mediation efforts; and as working with the media, faith-based organizations and religious leaders to actively promote inclusion and tolerance. At the regional level, the project supports the capacity of the AU and RECs in addition to providing technical and financial support to 21 countries.

Accelerating the ratification and domestication of African Union treaties

This project is designed to address the challenges and bottlenecks associated with the ratification, domestication and implementation of six AU treaties. It will contribute to enhance the capacity of the AU in the medium to long term to manage the ratification process and provide tailored support to member states with domestication-related challenges.

Connecting and empowering youth

YouthConnekt is a multi-dimensional programme

that serves to connect youth to role models, peers, resources, technologies, skills and economic opportunities by filling the gap between youth and opportunities for an economically empowering environment. Our partnership with the Tony Elumelu Foundation, launched in 2019, focuses on youth entrepreneurship and empowerment in Africa, and plans to support 100,000 African entrepreneurs over ten years.

SDG financing and private sector

The African Finance Sector Hub (AFSH), based in Pretoria, provides opportunities for dialogue and collaboration on innovative finance and private sector finance, such as Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs). In partnership with the European Union and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNDP is currently taking the technical lead in supporting more than 30 countries in Africa to put in place INFFs. This support includes enhancing both public and private finance from domestic and international sources for a transition to stronger, more resilient and inclusive sustainable development towards COVID-19 recovery and SDG achievement.

The AFSH's work also aligns with the Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa, or the Africa Promise. Private sector work initiatives include: i) green regional value

chain development, ii) business ecosystems, iii) MSMEs and informal firms development, financial inclusion and digitalization, iv) AfCFTA implementation for SMEs, v) SDG Investor Maps and their operationalization, and vi) private investment for the Climate Promise. These initiatives directly contribute to the Africa Promise objectives of Structural Economic Transformation and Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation.

Stabilization

The aim of the Regional Stabilization Facility for the Lake Chad is to provide a new approach, calibrated to respond to the challenges of governance, insecurity, rule of law, human security and livelihoods in the Lake Chad Basin region. It responds to the need for a step change in the scale and nature of intervention, in speed of response, increased territorial coverage, and improved regional cooperation in the region.

The borderlands between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger have become a hotspot of terrorist attacks and community violence over the past years. Building on best practices from the Lake Chad Basin, UNDP is supporting the Liptako Gourma Authority in developing a stabilization strategy and setting up a regional stabilization mechanism that will support national authorities to implement short-term stability interventions in strategic locations.



When I came across the African Young Women Leaders' Fellowship opportunity, I knew that it would be an unparalleled possibility to gain the insights I was seeking and a momentous stepping stone for my career development. I am a young woman leader, engaged and deeply rooted in African and global realities and part of the next generation of leaders and experts to drive the SDGs and Agenda 2063.

Pezu Catherine Mukwakwa, inaugural African Young Women Leaders' Fellow (AYWLF)

04 Knowledge Products

The Regional Programme's knowledge products demonstrate how the priorities of the Regional Bureau for Africa result in impacts on the ground. We aim to make research findings accessible, relevant and accurate to create links between needs and solutions in the lives of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups across the continent.

These publications are tailored, context-specific and produced to fulfill client needs and knowledge gaps among development practitioners, policymakers, decision-makers and academia. We also use these products to contribute to thought leadership in development and to communicate to a global audience the different issues and trends emerging from the region.

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

The Futures Report: Making the AfCFTA Work for Women and Youth (2020)

The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is a significant milestone on the road to African integration and development, and a catalyst for new ways of doing business, producing, working and trading within Africa and with the rest of the world. This report demonstrates that, beyond the numbers and negotiations, concrete policy measures and investments are needed to ensure that women and youth, who account for the majority of the population, business owners and workforce, can be better integrated into the value chains, jobs and opportunities stemming from the AfCFTA.

Partners: UNDP, African Union, AfCFTA Secretariat



COVID-19 prevention and response

The Impact of the COVID-19 Outbreak on Governance, Peace and Security in the Horn of Africa (2020); The Impact of the COVID-19 Outbreak on Governance, Peace and Security in the Sahel (2020)

These reports assess the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis on societies, economies and vulnerable groups and are fundamental to informing and tailoring the responses of governments and partners to recover from the COVID-19 crisis and ensure that no one is left behind in this effort. Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, these reports detail the opportunities for African governments, regional institutions, civil society and citizens to support grassroots solutions for conflict prevention, strengthen rapid and collective fundraising for interventions, and explore the potential for intra-African trade among other innovative and context-specific solutions.

Partners: UNDP, African Union, Africa Centres for Disease Control

Analysing long-term socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 across diverse African contexts (2021)

This study examines the long-term dynamics of COVID-19 at the country level in Africa through a macro-economic lens, and provides evidence-driven insights on the first, second and third order of effects of COVID-19. Specifically, it examines how today's effects on country-level mortality, GDP growth and international monetary flows of trade, aid, foreign direct investment (FDI) and remittances will shape long-term patterns of mortality, economic growth and international trade, by 2030 and 2050. The study also unravels how these macro-economic changes affect socio-economic indicators and human development by quantifying the outcomes for child mortality and poverty over the next decades.

Partners: UNDP, Institute for Security Studies, University of Pretoria, University of Denver

Social protection

Informality and Social Protection in African Countries:

A Forward-looking Assessment of Contributory Schemes (2021)

This report aims to provide an overview of the significant efforts made by African governments to develop a range of contributory social protection schemes that cover workers in the informal economy. Seven country case studies were selected to illustrate the range of emergent design practices, including the extension of legal and effective coverage; improvements in the quality of benefits and the services provided, alongside the introduction of new schemes; efforts to make informal workers' contributions more sustainable and flexible; and leveraging digitalization to simplify administrative procedures.

Partners: UNDP, International Labour Organization

The State of Social Assistance in Africa (2019)

Drawing on quantitative data contained on our data platform, national laws as well as national and regional policy documents, the report aims at improving understanding about state-run social assistance systems in Africa to inform policy and practice. The report makes a case for strengthening the national architecture for social assistance in Africa as a pathway to reducing vulnerability and poverty while promoting social inclusion.

Partners: UNDP, African Union, International Labour Organization, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, United Nations Children's Fund

Migration

Scaling Fences: Voices of Irregular African Migrants to Europe (2019)

This ground-breaking report explores the perspectives and experiences of 1,970 individuals who migrated through irregular routes from Africa to Europe, originating from 39 African countries. A growing number of educated and driven young Africans opting to migrate irregularly demonstrates that the nexus between migration and development must be addressed as a global challenge.

Prevention of violent extremism

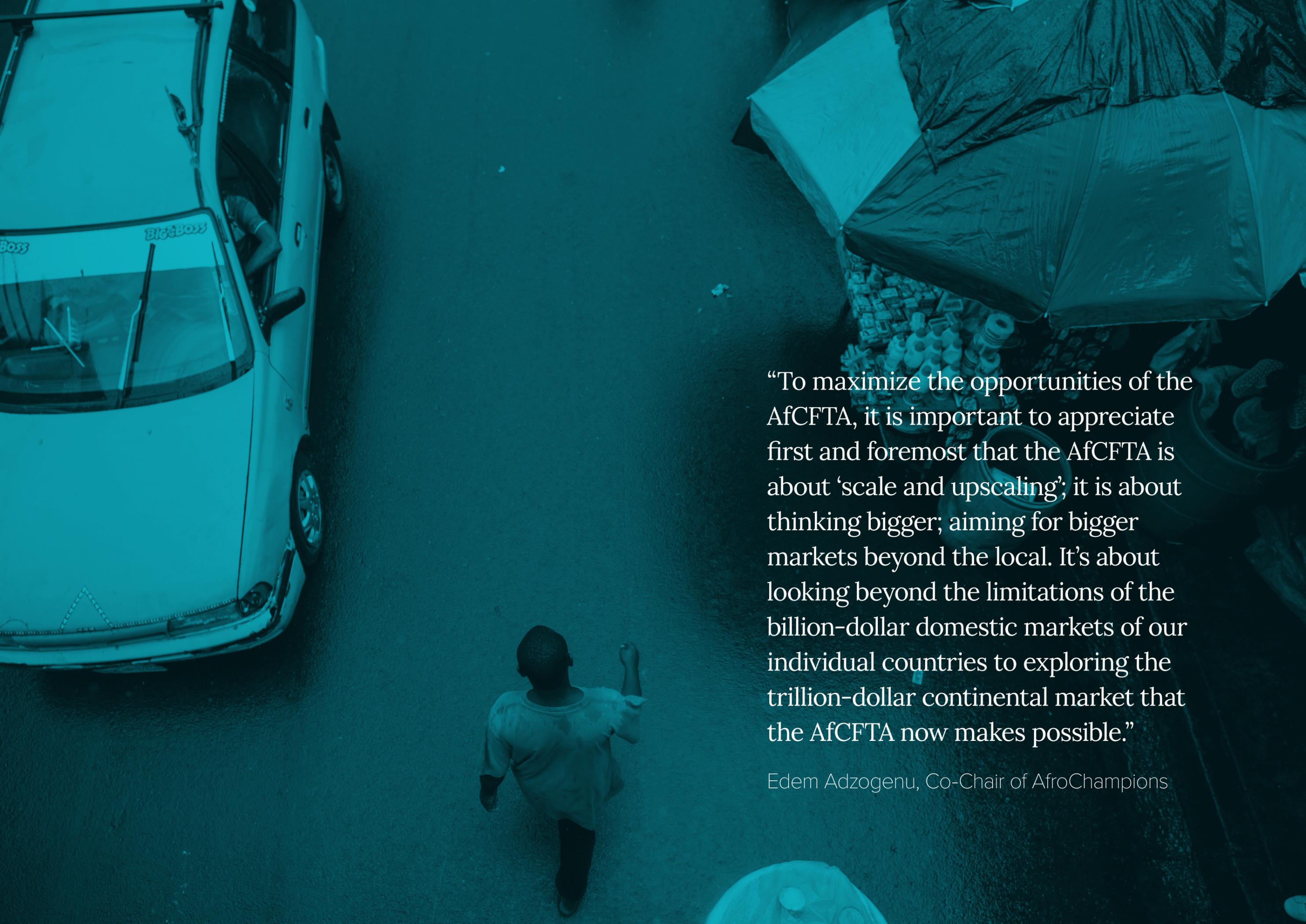
Measuring the Economic Impact of Violent Extremism Leading to Terrorism in Africa (2020)

The report strengthens the case for a development approach to addressing violent extremism with a strong focus on prevention, because investing heavily in security response measures diverts funding from key sectors such as health and education. Fully mainstreaming prevention in regular development planning and implementation will address underlying grievances and feelings of marginalization, both real and perceived.

Partners: UNDP, Institute for Economics and Peace, Government of Japan

Journey to Extremism: Drivers, Incentives and the Tipping Point for Recruitment (2017)

This report, based on a two-year study, aims to generate improved understanding about the incentives and drivers of violent extremism as expressed by former recruits to the continent's deadliest groups. Understanding the patterns and root causes of violent extremism through this report led UNDP to include a more sustainable and human-centred development approach in its efforts to combat violent extremism.



“To maximize the opportunities of the AfCFTA, it is important to appreciate first and foremost that the AfCFTA is about ‘scale and upscaling’; it is about thinking bigger; aiming for bigger markets beyond the local. It’s about looking beyond the limitations of the billion-dollar domestic markets of our individual countries to exploring the trillion-dollar continental market that the AfCFTA now makes possible.”

Edem Adzogenu, Co-Chair of AfroChampions

05 Comparative Advantage



Anchored on a principle of regionality the Regional Programme informs and shapes interventions to advance development across different sectors in Africa at a strategic level.

We are **flexible** and **demand-driven**, responding to specific requests for support raised during extensive consultations with regional and sub-regional bodies in the process of formulating and implementing initiatives across multiple countries, sub-regions, or the continent as a whole.

The Regional Programme positions UNDP as a **thought leader** on critical development issues such as cross-border initiatives, South-South cooperation, governance, innovative financing, resilience, the nexus between migration and development, and preventing violent extremism.

5 comparative advantages

- Partnerships based on trust
- Technical capacity
- Presence in strategic regional hubs (Addis Ababa, Nairobi, Dakar, Pretoria)
- Strong collaboration with the AU and RECs/RMs
- Investment on development priorities at scale.



“The Africa Borderlands Centre will establish a new paradigm for borderland development, representing our most promising chance to achieve the 2030 Agenda in Africa. UNDP will strive to elevate borderland communities, majority of whom are women and youth, to increase their access to jobs and social protection, thereby supporting them through post-COVID-19 socioeconomic recovery. We must build forward better.”

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

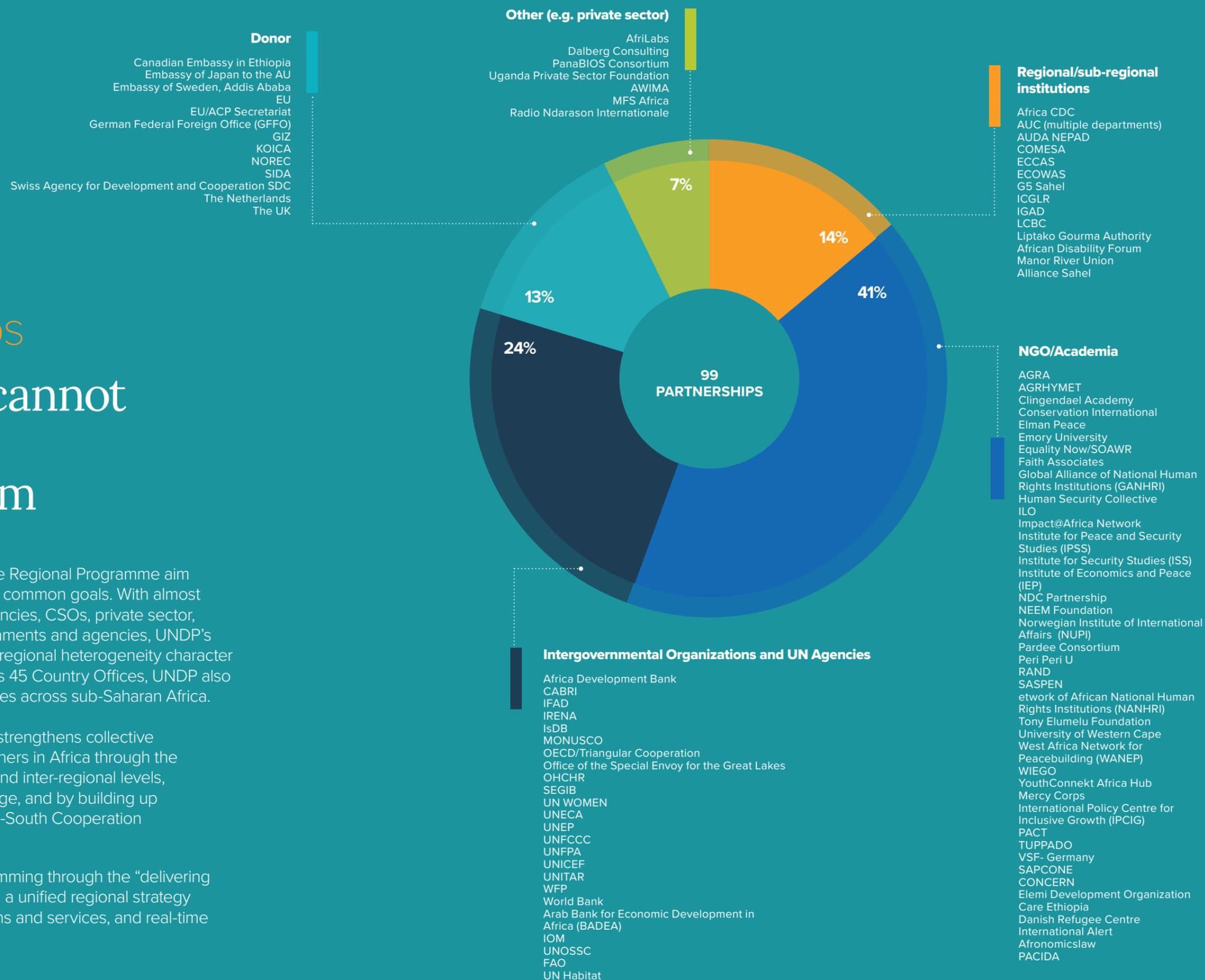
06 Partnerships

Development cannot occur in a political vacuum

Partnerships for the implementation of the Regional Programme aim to build alliances around clearly specified common goals. With almost 100 partners including AU, RECs, UN agencies, CSOs, private sector, philanthropic organizations, donor governments and agencies, UNDP's regional offer recognizes the unique sub-regional heterogeneity character of Africa's regional institutions. Through its 45 Country Offices, UNDP also works with national partners in 46 countries across sub-Saharan Africa.

The Regional Programme promotes and strengthens collective self-reliance among all development partners in Africa through the exchange of experiences at continental and inter-regional levels, the sharing and use of technical knowledge, and by building up complementary capacities through South-South Cooperation partnerships.

We also go beyond multi-country programming through the "delivering as one" approach, which involves utilizing a unified regional strategy underpinned by integrated policy positions and services, and real-time monitoring through joint work plans.





“Africa is the continent with the most promising, resilient and innovative young minds. The youth have such a hunger to learn and create business and solutions even amidst the most violent and volatile conflicts.”

Ifeyinwa Ugochukwu, CEO, Tony Elumelu Foundation

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.

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