United Nations

THE AFRICA REGIONAL
UNITED NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

REPORT 2020

United Nations

THE AFRICA REGIONAL UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

REPORT
2020

Table of
Contents

Executive Summary

This report covers the period of February 2020 to February 2021 of the activities of the Regional United Nations Development System (UNDS) in Africa. The Regional UNDS, focused on, among others, operationalizing the nascent Regional Collaborative Platform (Africa RCP) in a year of transition. Several processes were formalized against the challenging background of the COVID-19 pandemic, which presented a severe toll on people, livelihoods and economies in Africa. Despite these challenges, the UN entities that constitute the regional UNDS provided coordinated and proactive support, playing a critical role in strengthening the capacity of African countries to respond to the pandemic, and charting pathways for continued recovery. These efforts are aimed at getting back on track in implementing the 2030 Agenda and SDGs; and the African Union's Agenda 2063, with renewed urgency in the Decade of Action.

The UNDS engaged in concrete joined-up action, which contributed to the attainment of some of Africa's key sustainable development priorities such as the historic African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCTFA); and a joint publication with the AfCFTA Secretariat: The Futures Report: Making the AfCFTA work for Women and Youth. The group mounted a regional COVID-19 response, including the regional pharmaceutical pooled procurement, "African Medical Supplies Platform;" several COVID-19 strategic policy briefs and studies; a COVID-19 Knowledge Management Hub – the latter offering a one–stop point on system-wide resources in support of combatting the pandemic. Work on Debt Management and Restructuring shored up resources, supporting countries to deal with complex and pressing fiscal pressures.

The UNDS deployed its resources to finalize its arrangements for the operationalization of the Africa RCP and its seven Opportunity-Issue Based Coalitions (O/IBCs) and three Task Forces on Recommendations 2 (Knowledge Management Hub), 3 (System-wide Reporting) and 5 (Common Back Offices) of the Secretary-General's Report on the Implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for the development of the United Nations system. Foundational documents, including Terms of Reference, Results Frameworks, Workplans and Guides, were finalized, laying the ground for the successful launch of the Africa RCP on 22 December 2020, and paving the way to a stronger focus on implementation in 2021 and beyond.

The RCP

Following the successful Operational Activities Segment of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in May 2020, Member States adopted ECOSOC Resolution 2020/23 on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) of operational activities for development on the United Nations system in July 2020.

The resolution endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendations to harness the regional assets of the United Nations, including the creation of a "UN Regional Collaborative Platform (RCP)," which would absorb existing, duplicative coordination mechanisms to foster collaboration on sustainable development across UN development system entities operating at the regional level.

Under the leadership of the UN Deputy Secretary-General as Chair of the RCP and strategic guidance from the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa and ASG and Director of the UN Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Bureau for Africa, as co-Vice Chairs, the Africa RCP was launched in December 2020.

Introduction

At the turn of 2019, Africa's future was promising. Average rates of economic growth over the past two decades between 2000 and 2016 had led to a 25-per cent increase in gross domestic product (GDP) across at least 27 African countries at middle- and high-income status. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) had predicted that between 2019 and 2023, six of the 15 fastest-growing economies would be from Africa[1]. According to the 2019 Human Development Report (HDR), African countries witnessed important improvements in human development – in living standards, a rise in life expectancy (by more than 11 years between 1990 and 2018) and more people having access to health and education. African countries joined the very high human development group (Seychelles) and the high human development group (Botswana, Gabon, Mauritius and South Africa), while others were in the medium human development group[2]. The promise of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) was unleashing Africa's innovative potential with creations like the "M-Pesa" digital financial tool, which widened the scope for financial inclusion in far-off rural areas.

The UN spotted this promise and rallied the system to invest in a final push for the Sustainable Development Goals – the Decade of Action. Then came a COVID-19 pandemic. The spread of the virus across Africa exposed the fault lines in

impressive growth rates, stressing the importance of attention to key basic services. With Africa's pre-existing under-development conditions, a health pandemic quickly turned into humanitarian, socioeconomic and development crises all at once. The Africa UNDS was well-positioned to support Africa in this very difficult process by implementing actions on the UN Framework for the Immediate Socioeconomic Response to COVID-19. The framework focuses on support to meet the most urgent needs tackling Health First: Protecting Health Services and Systems during the Crisis; Protecting People: Social Protection and Basic Services; Economic Response and Recovery: Protecting Jobs, Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises, and Informal Sector Workers; Macroeconomic Response and Multilateral Collaboration; and Social Cohesion and Community Resilience[3].

The Africa RCP's seven O/IBCs continue to be valid interventions in supporting the continent's recovery, given their strong alignment to priorities in the African Union/ United Nations Development Frameworks. They focus on (i) strengthened integrated data and statistical systems for sustainable development; (ii) ensuring effective and efficient macroeconomic management and accelerated inclusive, economic transformation and diversification; (iii) harnessing demographic dividends through investments in youth and women's empowerment (health, education and

---

1 *These are Ethiopia, Rwanda, Cote d'Ivoire, Tanzania, Senegal and Ghana. See the IMF's 2019 Regional Economic Outlook.*
2 *Angola, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Sao Tome and Principe, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.*
3 *Online available: https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/2020-04/UN-framework-for-the-immediate-socio-economic-response-to-COVID-19.pdf.*

employment) for sustainable development; (iv) leveraging new technologies and enabling digital transitions for inclusive growth and development; (v) fostering climate action and resilience; (vi) towards peace, security, and the respect of human rights; and (vii) displacement and migration. The three Task Forces of the Africa RCP keep a pulse on results to ensure the reforms are on track. Below is a representation of how O/IBCs and Task Forces serve as thematic vehicles used for joined-up collaboration of UN entities:

In keeping with the character of collective UN action, the process of producing the 2020 report has benefitted from inputs from UN entities, including the Agency, Funds and Programmes (AFP), partners and the Regional Economic Commission.

Opportunity-Issue Based Coalitions (O/IBCs)

O/IBC 1[4] — Strengthened integrated data and statistical systems for sustainable development

O/IBC 2[5] — Ensuring effective and efficient macroeconomic management and accelerated inclusive, economic transformation and diversification

O/IBC 3[6] — Harnessing Demographic Dividends through investments in Youth and Women's Empowerment (Health, Education, and Employment) for Sustainable Development

O/IBC 4[7] — Leveraging new technologies and enabling digital transitions for inclusive growth and development

O/IBC 5[8] — Fostering Climate Action and Resilience

O/IBC 6[9] — Peace, Security, and the Respect of Human Rights

O/IBC 7[10] — Forced displacement and migration

Task Forces

Task Force on Recommendation #2: Africa Regional Knowledge Management Hub
Task Force on Recommendation #3: Enhancing transparency and RBM at the regional level
Task Force on Recommendation #5: Common Back Offices

---

4 *UNFPA, ECA, FAO, ILO, IOM, ITU, OCHA, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNDRR, UNESCO, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNWOMEN, WFP and WHO.*

5 ECA, UNCTAD, UNDP, FAO, ILO, IOM, OCHA, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDRR, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNV, UNWOMEN, WFP and WHO.

6 UNFPA, ILO, WHO, ECA, FAO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNV, UNESCO, UNWOMEN, and WFP.

7 WHO, UN-HABITAT, ITU, ECA, FAO, ILO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, and WFP.

8 UNEP, FAO, UNESCO, UNDP, ECA, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNDRR, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNIADS, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNV, WFP and WHO.

9 UNODC, OHCHR, UNOAU, UNDP, ECA, ILO, IOM, OCHA, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNV, UN-WOMEN and WHO

10 UNHCR, IOM, UN Women, OHCHR, UN Habitat, ILO, ECA, FAO, ILO, OCHA, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF and UNV.

Advancing the SG's reforms at the regional level

The Africa RCP seeks to strengthen impact-driven action on the ground, optimizing regional assets by rallying agencies to deliver joined-up activities in support of Africa's development priorities. The vision of the Africa RCP is encapsulated in the Africa Inception report, and it entails the following guiding principles:

- Bringing the power of the regional UNDS collective strength and collaborative potential to bear on catalyzing and accelerating actions towards the achievements of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063;

- Making the UNDS more efficient through streamlined operating practices and consolidation of back offices resulting in both efficiency gains and higher quality services;

- Foster cross-pillar collaboration and joined-up interagency strategies and actions through the seven O/IBCs;

- Harnessing the large body of existing knowledge and practice within the regional UNDS in an integrated and holistic manner to provide optimal solutions to address Africa's transformational goals;

- Engendering lasting transformational change and ensuring effective linkages between regional, sub-regional and national dimensions, including regional and sub-regional integration and transboundary actions;

- Avoiding duplication of efforts and upscaling collaboration to achieve greater country-level impact;

- Enhancing transparency and results-based management at the regional level; and

- Promoting and effectively implementing a regional efficiency strategy through regional common back offices.

The Africa RCP is chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General with two co-Vice Chairs: the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa. The Joint Secretariat is functional and consists of the regional UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) for Africa, UNECA and UNDP. Terms of Reference of the Africa RCP were approved by the Africa RCP alongside its Work Plan and Working Arrangements.

Highlights of system-wide results at the regional level

Highlights of system-wide results at the regional level

i. Propelling the AfCTFA Take-Off

The UNDS Africa was instrumental in supporting ratification, domestication and implementation strategies for the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) in 34 African countries. UNECA, UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and UNDP worked with the African Union Commission (AUC) and Regional Economic Communities (RECs) towards this. When effectively implemented, the AfCFTA could stimulate Africa out of pandemic impacts, and could generate welfare gains exceeding US$ 16 billion and boost intra-African trade by over 52 per cent. The bulk of this expansion will be driven by trade in food and manufactures. This will support industrialization, value addition, structural transformation and the sustainable development of Africa.

The UNDS and partners, including the AUC, fast-tracked the implementation of the regional pharmaceutical pooled procurement project and launched the African Medical Supplies Platform (AMSP) – a digital platform enabling African countries to purchase certified medical equipment with increased cost-effectiveness and transparency. In support of effective COVID-19 response, the regional pharmaceutical pooled procurement, AMSP, was supported to source critically needed supplies in response to the pandemic. It revealed glaring gaps in productive capacities on medicines and medical-related products, raising the need for investments.

This, coupled with the progressive implementation of the AfCFTA, will facilitate more value-added production and trade across Africa, fostering quality jobs including for women and youth, which, as revealed in "The Futures Report: Making the AfCFTA work for Women and Youth[11]," are urgently needed.

ii. Stepping up the War on Corruption

The UNDS support to the anti-corruption fight was led by key UN entities, including the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), advancing work for capacity support in recruitment and placement of dedicated UN Anti-Corruption resources at the AU to advocate for the implementation of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) and the Common UN Position against Corruption in Africa.

Fighting corruption in the private sector: 500 top private sector companies have joined the UN-supported "Blue Company" initiative in Kenya seeking to generate a network of anti-corruption oversight and compliance officers to fight private sector corruption. UNDS efforts, led by UNODC, have undertaken critical institutional capacity-building initiatives on the use of the legal and institutional instruments available in the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). Building on the progress made in 2020, it is expected that Kenya will serve as an "anti-corruption champion" to scale up public-private sector partnerships to fight corruption in the region.

Supporting the Young Parliamentarians network in fighting corruption: The Kenya Young Parliamentarians Association (KYPA) is a body that was formed in the year 2004 as an

---

11 *Contributed to by UNECA, ITC and UNDP.*

association of the ninth Parliament with the goal of building the capacity and enhancing the participation of young leaders in Parliament. The Association's membership is drawn from young Parliamentarians in both the National Assembly and the Senate. The 11th Parliament (current) got the highest number of young parliamentarians and revived the Association to be vibrant and active in championing the voice of the youth in Parliament and beyond. The caucus has, over the years, collaborated to achieve common legislative agenda, conduct civic education, empower young people and represent youth voices in Parliament. In February 2020, the UNDS supported members of KYPA to sponsor a draft Whistleblower Protection Bill through a private members' bill as provided for by Article 109 (5) of the Constitution of Kenya 2010. Furthermore, UNODC, UNOAU, UNDP, and entities supported the Kenyan Young Parliamentarians Network and the African Young Parliamentarians Network in the fight against corruption. Both networks had a strong representation in the 2020 edition of the Global Youth Leadership Forum in Santander, Spain.

Increasing anti-corruption prosecution capacities: The Fast-Tracking UNCAC project funded by the UK government and supported by UNDS has dedicated critical resources in 2020 in scaling up solutions focusing on public procurement, whistleblower protection, financial investigations, and international cooperation in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia – resulting in a 37-per cent increase in the prosecution of anti-corruption cases.

Reaching universal ratification of the UN Convention against Corruption in Africa: UNODC, as the custodian of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, has tripled legal advisory services to assist Somalia in the ratification of the UNCAC in 2021. If Somalia and Eritrea ratify the UNCAC in 2021, Africa will become the only continent with universal ratification of the UNCAC.

iii. Collective Response to COVID-19 and build back better

In an effort that brought together all UN regional entities, the Knowledge Management Hub on COVID-19 was created to share dynamic, cutting-edge information on resources, data trends, assessment and impact studies, regulations/policy pronouncements and new guidelines on COVID-19. This information, which is provided after validation by key stakeholders such as the Member States, UN agencies, research institutions, and NGOs/CSOs, offers the Member States the knowledge needed in tackling the pandemic at all levels. For example, Kenya and South Africa have utilized trend data and impact study results from the Knowledge Management Hub on COVID-19 to make policy decisions on COVID-19, including lockdowns, programmes to cushion the vulnerable people in the society, determining school reopening calendars, etc. The activation was launched just one month into the official declaration of the pandemic, showing important evidence of system-wide collaboration at the regional level.

iv. The Emergency Regional COVID-19 Action plan

The UNDS in Africa worked collaboratively to mount a joint response to COVID-19 in the Emergency Regional Action Plan on COVID-19, under which regional UN entities delivered the

SPOTLIGHT ON EDUCATION IN COVID-19:

UN entities led by UNESCO and UNICEF contributed to the e-Education Africa Strategy through the launch of the Regional Distance Learning platform, "ImaginEcole," for French-speaking West and Central African countries. Launched in December 2020, and currently covering ten countries of the sub-region, it provides training modules for educational staff and teachers to create distance learning tools and courses.

Ministries of health and of education led consultations in eight countries on a West and Central Africa Commitment for Educated, Healthy and Thriving Adolescents and Young People, making progress towards an enabling environment to implement evidence-based multi-sectoral measures to prevent drop-out of most vulnerable children from schools.

Furthermore, ILO, UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO contributed to the relevance, quality and perception of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in five Eastern Africa countries through analysis and reporting on the labour market situation to highlight the relevant youth's skills in line with economic needs in EAC, development of curriculum and of TVET teacher and manager training programme, entrepreneurship programme and career guidance and counseling to prepare youth for self and salaried employment, and improvement of TVET's perception by implementing skills competitions and creating comprehensive platforms to exchange and transfer knowledge.

following broad areas of support for African countries.

- COVID-19-related procurement practices were collated, which allowed for a sharing of good practices among the World Health Organization (WHO), World Food Programme (WFP), UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNFPA and UNDP. This improved coordination amidst limited global stocks and weak supply chains.

- Support was provided to governments for continuity to lead in the COVID-19 era. A prototype Business Continuity Plan for Governments was shared by the RCP with UNDP in the lead, encouraging AFPs to join and continued work at the country level on e-governance, e-justice, e-commerce for livelihoods, etc.

- The Africa e-Education Strategy – Emergency Education for more than 100 million African children out of school was advanced by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and UNICEF, and introduced to 17 Resident Coordinators, with continued follow-up support.

- An analysis on impact of COVID-19 in cities, which was led by UN Habitat and UNECA, was finalized to guide policy and interventions during the pandemic, taking into consideration the rapid urbanization trend in Africa; and the fact that cities have been most affected. Local governments were involved in this initiative through the United Cities and Local Government of Africa (UCLGA).

- Supporting the design of Programme Criticality and Business Continuity for all UN Country Teams.

v. Rapid Socioeconomic Impact Assessment to save lives

Countries were supported through socioeconomic impact assessments by the UNCTs and regional UN offices, and to operationalize assessments/impact studies of COVID-19 on various sectors, scenario modeling and recommendations/strategies for action. In Africa, a tracker on the rollout of the Socioeconomic Response Plan (SERP) indicated that 47 RCs/UNCTs (87 per cent) in the continent have completed their SERPs. In addition, 45 RCs/UNCTs (83 per cent) developed their Socioeconomic Impact Assessments (SEIAs) with 38 RCs/UNCTs (70 per cent) that developed both their SEIAs and SERPs and the rest with advanced drafts to be finished in 2021.

vi. Debt Management and Restructuring Advocacy

The UNDS in the region offered virtual technical support to countries with Debt Management and Restructuring due to COVID-19. Of the 39 African countries eligible for the COVID-19 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI), as of 12 January 2021, the following 31 are participating: Angola, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo,

Republic of the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Gambia, The Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Togo, Uganda, and Zambia. In this context, UN agencies – notably UNCTAD, UNECA and UNDP – continue their advocacy and policy analysis, calling for further improvements to the DSSI by extending its temporal horizon and country coverage and ensuring participation of private creditors. More broadly, they will continue to call for debt cancellation initiatives, where required, and for the establishment of a debt workout mechanism that could reduce the socioeconomic costs of the current ad-hoc negotiations in case of default. A number of UN institutions will continue to work with African governments to strengthen capacities for debt management, data collection and transparency, and supporting the Integrated National Financing Framework for sustainable development.

The UNDS, led by the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNDP and other UN entities under the Global Framework for Action to support the UN System-wide Socioeconomic Response to the COVID-19 crisis, built pathways for a sustainable and inclusive recovery, joint advocacy and programmatic planning in 34 African countries.

vii. Accelerating SDGs implementation for results

The UNDS in Africa advanced strategic interventions for the SDGs through the Africa UN Development Data Gateway; the Africa data and statistics strategy; mapping of key policy interventions to speed up progress towards SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth). The efforts of some O/IBCs with the participation of ECA, UNFPA, UN Women and UNDP resulted in the following:

- Use of quality data for successful integration

SPOTLIGHT ON UN NETWORK ON MIGRATION (UNNM)

Under the lead of IOM and Other entities the UNNM worked together with the aim of finding solutions to the growing migration challenges and dynamics caused by COVID-19. Issues tackled included the state-and-trends related to migration in Eastern and Southern African countries, including forced repatriation of migrants by neighboring countries, which informed programmatic responses by UN entities. Second, technical and policy support was provided to the ESA Member States for the drafting of Voluntary Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) Review Reports, currently submitted by three Member States in the ESA region (Malawi, Zambia and Comoros).

Through the National Coordination Mechanisms and in coordination with the UNNM, the governments of Ethiopia and Kenya were supported to develop GCM Action Plans. Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho and Namibia were supported to advance their voluntary national reports, following their respective consultative processes that drew stakeholders from UN partners, government, civil society and private sector, where both documents were validated. Capacity building workshops were held for Malawi's Migration Focal Points with the participation of the UN agency members of the National Networks on Migration, academia and civil society between 9 and 11 December 2020.

In the West African region, the UN Network released a joint statement in July 2020, committing to support all partners in pursuit of the implementation of the GCM and calling on governments to make every effort to address and reduce migrants' vulnerabilities by incorporating their health and other vital needs in national and local responses and recovery to COVID-19.

of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 into the national development plans of Angola, DRC, Kenya, Mozambique and Sierra Leone.

- Support to Burkina Faso, Eswatini, Ethiopia, DRC, Kenya, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Zambia on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics. This will complement the SG's policy on the UN legal identity agenda of ensuring that every person has a legal identity and that there are no stateless persons.

- The Africa UN Data and Statistics Strategy (currently under development) will ensure coherence, better coordination and efforts on quality and timely data and minimized duplication by UN agencies in Africa. It will also leverage technology to ensure the interoperability of systems in real-time to permit sharing of data. Data generated based on the strategy leads to Joint UN/AU planned implementation and rollout of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Toolkit on Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda at country and sub-regional levels, particularly with regional economic communities.

viii. Evidence-based Policy Support and partnership

The UNDS in Africa promoted evidence-based policy formulation, equipping countries with policy briefs, strategic information sharing such as through the UN Women, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Joint Study on the Role of Women in AU Peace and Security Processes, including in mediation and preventive diplomacy to address the root causes of forced displacement; adoption of a first continental treaty on the eradication of statelessness (UNHCR, AUC, the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights, the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and civil society organizations); accession to African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, and others.

Response to sub-regional contexts

Response to sub-regional contexts

The regional UN development system was deployed to support emerging situations, including the oil spill in Mauritius, the crisis in Ethiopia's Tigray region and the emergency in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado. Regional Directors, based on their sub-regional mandates, mounted effective responses by creating regional response plans, strengthening collaboration between humanitarian and sustainable development, which enabled the system to have more coordinated delivery, including prepositioning supplies and managing the complexity of delivery, to the appreciation of the African countries in question. This work remains ongoing.

The regional UNDS, led by UNDP, played a key role in mobilizing regional actors to institutionalize the Regional Strategy for the Stabilisation, Recovery and Resilience of the Boko Haram-affected Areas of the Lake Chad Basin (RSS). A functional RSS Secretariat for the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) was established through the implementation of the RSS with the Regional Stabilisation Facility for Lake Chad. The UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS), UNOCA and UN Resident Coordinators of Cameroon, Niger, Nigeria and Chad are members of the RSS Steering Committee, providing strategic direction to implementing the RSS. The LCBC, which made progress in developing a draft policy related to the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of persons associated with Boko Haram, has received robust support from various UN entities. The draft policy will be presented at the third Governors Forum in the second quarter of 2021.

With regards to the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), the regional UNDS made significant investments by developing three integrated offers, aligned with the priorities of the UN Support Plan: (i) a Governance Offer, (ii) Resilience Offer and (iii) Renewable energy Offer. The three offers are currently being unpacked by the United Nations, championed by the three pillar working groups – governance, security and resilience – under the Regional Directors. In addition, the regional system intervened in capacity building to adopt climate-resilient agricultural production practices, scaled up resilience programmes for the Sahel, particularly for Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger, known as the Group of Five for the Sahel (G5 Sahel), and advanced initiatives that aim to promote economic opportunities with a renewed focus on women and youth economic empowerment, including through diverse resilience programmes, and investments in social cohesion, such as confidence-building between authorities, security institutions and communities, and integration of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

The UNDS regional entities also supported the implementation of sustainable development-related components of the UN Comprehensive Regional Prevention Strategy for the Horn of Africa and its action plan, particularly on resilience and socioeconomic development; inclusive and responsive governance; sustainable natural resources development; and climate resilience. For instance, the support included conducting diagnostic strategic studies, such as "the impact of COVID-19 on governance, peace and security in the Horn of Africa," commissioning a sub-regional human development report (HDR) for the Horn of Africa; initiating the development and design of the Human Security Index for the Horn and a report on the Socioeconomic Impact and Consequences of COVID-19 in the region of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD).

The system is also involved in the implementation of the UN Strategy for peace consolidation, conflict prevention and conflict resolution in the Great Lakes region of Africa.

Support was also provided to regional and sub-regional intergovernmental organizations; regional NGOs; regional private-sector networks, in particular, the African Union, Africa Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, AfCFTA Secretariat, Regional Economic Communities; and local NGOs. These partnerships will continue to lead the way in delivering system-wide support for the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, and Agenda 2063.

Conclusion

The UNDS in Africa worked collaboratively and demonstrated its value in many respects, as demonstrated above. The tremendous efforts invested for the smooth Africa RCP transition, though in formative stages, have demonstrated value. More will be done to move from the formative stages into an impact-oriented focus on implementation. In the context of priorities for the workplan 2021, and pending completion of member states engagement, each of the O/IBCs has set itself an ambitious programme of work, including but not limited to, the following:

For O/IBC 1[12] on Strengthened integrated data and statistical systems for sustainable development, its flagships will include a robust online SDG data platform; transforming national statistical systems; Africa UN data and statistics strategy; and promoting the culture of data use.

O/IBC 2[13] on ensuring effective and efficient macroeconomic management and accelerated inclusive economic transformation and diversification will focus on Effective implementation of the AfCFTA by the Member States; Debt Management by the Member States and the COVID-19 Response and Recovery.

Concerning O/IBC 3[14], which covers Harnessing Demographic Dividends through investments in Youth and Women's Empowerment (Health, Education, and Employment) for Sustainable Development, will focus on the following flagship initiatives: Demographic Dividends, Health, Employment, and Education.

O/IBC 4[15], which concerns leveraging new technologies and enabling digital transitions for inclusive growth and development, will cover home-grown sustainable and scalable technologies and digital solutions; infrastructure to facilitate the implementation of emerging technologies and digital solutions; and policy and regulatory frameworks for investment-friendly and inclusive innovation ecosystems.

On O/IBC 5[16], which covers Fostering Climate Action and Resilience, the flagship initiatives will cover Water-Energy-Food Nexus; Just Energy Transitions; Sustainable Management and Restoration of Natural Capital; and Building Climate and Disaster Resilience.

On O/IBC 6[17] on Peace, Security, and the Respect of Human Rights, flagship initiatives will cover coordinated and targeted support for enhancing AU, Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) and Member States capacity and capability development in conflict prevention; improved compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law and support to the AU's flagship initiatives including the roadmap for "Silencing the Guns."

---

12 UNFPA, ECA, FAO, ILO, IOM, ITU, OCHA, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNDRR, UNESCO, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNWOMEN, WFP and WHO.

13 ECA, UNCTAD, UNDP, FAO, ILO, IOM, OCHA, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDRR, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNODC, UNV, UNWOMEN, WFP and WHO.

14 UNFPA, ILO, WHO, ECA, FAO, IOM, ITU, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNDP, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNV, UNESCO, UNWOMEN, and WFP.

15 WHO, UN-HABITAT, ITU, ECA, FAO, ILO, UNAIDS, UNDP, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIDO, and WFP.

16 UNEP, FAO, UNESCO, UNDP, ECA, ILO, IOM, OHCHR, UNDRR, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNIADS, UNICEF, UNIDO, UNV, WFP and WHO.

17 UNODC, OHCHR, UNDP, ECA, ILO, IOM, OCHA, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNV, UN-WOMEN and WHO.

7 O/IBC 7[18], which covers displacement and migration, will have the following flagship initiatives: Promotion of human rights-based approaches meeting the Rights and Needs of Forcibly Displaced and Migrant Population in Africa; Protection of children on the move; Prevention and mitigation of violations faced by displaced and migrant populations subject to human trafficking; and Joint UN Responses Advancing Labour Mobility and Socioeconomic Integration of Forcibly Displaced and Migrant Populations.

The Taskforce on Recommendation #2:

Africa Regional Knowledge Management Hub will focus on flagship initiatives to assess and standardize; connect and expand; build and operate and work towards the continued improvement of knowledge product management. Additional input on how the Knowledge Management Hub will be used as a platform for peer-to-peer exchange, thematic communities of practice, pooling of policy expertise (knowledge assets and thematic expertise)

The Taskforce on Recommendation #3:

Enhancing transparency and Result-Based Management at the regional level will cover flagships on Africa RCP results framework and theory of change; developing a focal points system; guidelines, tools and templates for planning, monitoring and reporting; concept note and guidance for regional reporting; and knowledge products, e.g., on lessons learnt, with a view to disseminating UNDS collective results and impact to the Member States and using them as a basis for the annual regional report.

The Taskforce on Recommendation #5:

Common Back Offices will cover three main flagships: A coordinated, efficient and effective common operational support agenda at the regional level in Africa to UN Country Teams (UNCTs) implemented; enhanced visibility of SG's Efficiency Agenda among country offices across the region and Business Operations Strategy (BOS), the Common Back Office (CBO) and Common Premises and application of the Mutual Recognition developed and implemented by UNCTs and Operations Management Team (OMT).

---

18 UNHCR, IOM, UN Women, OHCHR, UN Habitat, ILO, ECA, FAO, ILO, OCHA, OHCHR, UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNFPA, UN-HABITAT, UNICEF and UNV.

THE AFRICA REGIONAL UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM

REPORT 2020