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THE SAHEL, PRIORITY OF THE UNITED NATIONS









SPECIAL EDITION ON THE UNITED NATIONS INTEGRATED STRATEGY FOR THE SAHEL

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CENTRAL SAHEL ADVOCACY BRIEF



Jan 2020

The surge in armed violence across Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger is having a devastating impact on children's survival, education, protection and development. The Sahel, a region of immense potential, has long been one of the most vulnerable regions in Africa, home to some countries with the lowest development indicators globally.

The sharp increase in armed attacks on communities, schools, health centers and other public institutions and infrastructures is at unprecedented levels. Violence is disrupting livelihoods and access to social services including education and health care. Insecurity is worsening chronic vulnerabilities including high levels of malnutrition.

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Mohamed Ibn Chambas

Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS)

There is a need for a holistic and coordinated approach that effectively acts in areas as diverse as security, governance, resilience and development

OPTIMISTIC FOR THE SAHEL

espite its enormous potential and abundant resources, the Sahel region still faces multiple challenges that hinder its progress towards peace and sustainable development.

Undoubtedly, the impact of the security situation on the stability of the region is most significant and worrying. But as we have already pointed out, to address this challenge, the security response, although necessary, is not and will not be sufficient to eradicate this scourge and move the Sahel in a dynamic of development.

There is a need for a holistic and coordinated approach that effectively acts in areas as diverse as security, governance, resilience and development, as the root causes facing the Sahel today are interconnected. And the reality of the Sahel reminds us of this regularly.

The United Nations has recalibrated the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS) in order to take into account the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union Strategy. A UN Support Plan has also been developed to enable agencies and programmes, and UN country teams, as well as resident coordinators, to work together and in close coordination with Sahel countries, regional organizations and partners to improve the living conditions of people in the Sahel.

Indeed, as part of the implementation of the Integrated Strategy, the work provided by the various UN agencies and programmes has been vital for thousands of people across the Sahel.

The countless on-going projects and initiatives which are reported in this UNOWAS Magazine special edition demonstrate the added value of the United Nations' work in strengthening the development and resilience of women, youth and men in the Sahel.

The projects carried out by the World Food Program (WFP) to reinforce resilience of the communities in the Sahel; United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), which is dispatching drinking water through solar energy to help communities in Mauritania cultivate their land; the United Nations High Commisioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Labor Organization (ILO), which jointly supported Malian refugees integrate into Mauritania through a training and employment assistance programme; UN Women, which mobilizes women and youth in the Sahel to intervene in peace processes; or the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) SWEDD project, which focuses on bringing the demographic dividend to sustainable development in the Sahel by reducing gender inequality; or the International Organization for Migration (IOM) work with United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in Niger helping communities affected by migration flows; or UNODC's active support to countries in the region in their efforts to combat security challenges - all of these and so many other projects demonstrate the effectiveness of the holistic approach and the coordinated and integrated action of the United Nations agencies and programmes with regional and international partners to consolidating development and peace in the Sahel.

The challenges are not insurmountable, and the Sahel region will be able to live in can envisage a future of peace and development. But this requires from us a multi-faceted approach and perseverance.

THE UN INTEGRATED STRATEGY, SUPPORTING SAHEL COUNTRIES



9th Meeting of the Steering Committee of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), 21 October 2019 in Dakar. Photo: UNOWAS

he implementation of the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel remains a priority. Despite its enormous potential and abundant resources, the Sahel region continues to face security, institutional, governance and economic challenges that impede progress towards lasting peace and sustainable development.

In addition, last year was marked by a sharp aggravation of the humanitarian situation in the Liptako-Gourma and the Lake Chad Basin area resulting from the resurgence of terrorist attacks.15 million people are in need, including over 4 million internally-displaced.

These unprecedented levels of displacements have put the capacities of national authorities, aid and development actors to the brink. Meanwhile, in both Liptako-Gourma and the Lake Chad Basin, the overall access to the population in need has diminished and relief actors are increasingly targeted by terrorist attacks.

Social, environmental and security challenges frequently intertwin.

In this context, developing concrete responses with a preventive outlook is the essence of the ongoing interventions of the UN through the Integrated Sahel Strategy.

The United Nations engagement in the Sahel encompasses many areas to support the countries of the region address multidimensional challenges, and foster peace and development.

Seven years after its launch, the objectives of the UN Sahel Strategy are still valid, and continue to be implemented through a preventive, integrated and concerted approach to strengthening governance, security and resilience of the countries of the Sahel.

In 2019, in the framework of the UN Integrated Strategy, the implementation of programmes in the region showed a strong cross-pillar focus, bringing UN entities and implementing partners together across borders. More than ever, our UN regional agencies are working closely with Resident Coordinators, UN Country Teams and external partners to support national governments and regional organizations. Our partnership with G5-Sahel and ECOWAS will be reinforced in 2020, echoing the strong regional commitment to overcome the current situations.

Our strategic priorities will remain: Inclusive/equitable growth, access to basic services; resilience to climate change, decreasing natural resource scarcity, malnutrition and food insecurity; prevention of violent extremism and crime; access to justice and human rights; access to renewable energy, and Empowering youth and women. This approach is fully illustrated by the significant number of important projects that the UN has been implementing as part of the Integrated Sahel Strategy to support the countries of the Sahel region.





In September 2019, the Government of Mali and UNHCR co- organized in Bamako the Regional Dialogue or Protection & Solutions in the context of forced displacement in the Sahel. I am proud that through this we were able to bring together a broad range of actors to review afresh the difficult situation in the Sahel and explore solutions for the forcibly displaced, people on the move and others at risk of statelessness. Actors pledged to do more to improve access by displaced persons to civil status and identity documents, prevent statelessness and increase access to education, jobs, housing and healthcare.

Millicent Mutuli

UNHCR Regional Director for West and Central Africa

We are very proud of our flagship program on women's economic empowerment through climate

More than ten thousand women were supported in the onion and potato value chains. In Chad, for example, over a 100 "train the trainers" women have been skilled in processing and value addition of shea products, and additional 3,000 will benefit from the creation of the national federation of shea producers. With the upcoming organic certification of their products, women cooperatives will have new opportunities to access lucrative markets in the EU and US. The program is empowering women and helping them access land, skills, financing and markets.

Oulimata Sarr

resilient agriculture.

UNWOMEN Regional Director for West and Central Africa



Working along with the MINUSMA peacekeeping operations and many partners, UNESCO, launched in 2013 a major initiative to reconstruct 20 mausoleums, 3 mosques, 6 ancient manuscripts libraries, safeguarding over 100 000 ancient manuscripts and bringing back Al-Farouk, the sculpture of the city protector. Community bearers of ancestral knowledge, unique to this World Heritage site, have led rehabilitation works over six years, with backstopping from international experts.

I am proud that our response to the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel helped save the collective memory and heritage, valuable pledges for the promotion of peace and living together in Mali.

Dimitri Sanga

UNESCO Regional Director for West Africa and Sahel

In IOM, we are proud of our contribution in reducing conflicts surrounding transhumance movements. We support the Liptako Gourma Authority (ALG) which is mandated to oversee transhumance interventions in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso, and the Governments of Mauritania, Chad and CAR in applying contextualized local conflict mitigation strategies and approaches, and the roll-out of early warning "Transhumance Tracking Tool (TTT)" to support local preemptive responses to potential conflict. This includes working with local governance structures in communities regularly affected by transhumance movements to define conflict mitigation and resolution methods

Richard Danziger

IOM Regional Director for West and Central Africa







in **ACTION**

The UNODC Sahel Programme has developed strong and fruitful partnerships to support the development of accessible, efficient, and accountable criminal justice systems to combat organized crime, terrorism, and corruption. With over 600 activities implemented, 15,000 direct beneficiaries reached, and numerous results achieved since the onset of the Programme in 2014, I am proud that our response to the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel is often considered one of UNODC's flagships programmes.

Antonio Mazzitelli

UNODC Regional Director for West and Central Africa



FAO's "1 million cisterns for the Sahel" initiative puts in place rainwater harvesting and storage systems for vulnerable rural communities, especially women, in arid and semi-arid regions of six countries aff ected by climate shocks (Burkina Faso, Chad, Gambia, Mali, Niger, and Senegal). I am proud that our contribution to the UNISS helps building the resilience of vulnerable people across the Sahel, giving them access to safe drinking water and water for agricultural production.

Robert Guei

FAO Sub-regional Coordinator for West Africa

I was particularly pleased to learn about the results of the joint UN regional project to scale up Resilience, operationalizing an integrated resilience programmes in G5 Sahel countries. We contributed to addressing the drivers impacting social stability aligned to food and nutrition insecurity while ensuring that vulnerable people meet their food needs. Moreover, while strengthening resilience in focusing on water management, the restauration of land, the support to farmers and the social cohesion, we also achieve keeping young girls in school- and that gives me great hope about the sustainable impact on the lives of the people we serve.



WFP Regional Director for West and Central Africa



In UNICEF, we are proud of joint UN interventions with WFP and FAO in food security and nutrition including collaborating in data gathering and analysis. In 2018, this led to shifting and redesigning our programme locations to identified vulnerability hotspots which contributed to avoiding worst-case nutrition crisis scenarios. Success in prevention is not making headlines but shows the power and relevance of the UN focus on prevention. UNICEF contributed to this by reaching about 1.7 million children under five with severely acute malnutrition for treatment using therapeutic food.

Marie-Pierre Poirier

UNICEF Regional Director for West and Central Africa

In 2019, through the UNISS, we reached out to the most affected populations in the Sahel and engaged deeper even with regional institutions while telling our stories better. Most exciting was our efforts to invest more to expedite delivery on the ground in 2020 through innovative approaches that foster accountability for enhanced support to the Sahel communities.

Mabingue Ngom

UNFPA Regional Director for West and Central Africa



Interview



Maman SIDIKOU Permanent Secretary of the G5 Sahel

"I am optimistic for the future, we owe it to our people"

At almost two years at the head of the G5 Sahel, the current Permanent Secretary, the Nigerien Maman Sambo Sidikou, displays serene optimism despite the multiple challenges facing the G5 Sahel countries. Without hesitation, he agreed to answer our questions and share with us his view on the cooperation with the United Nations, and on the future of the region. Interview.

In 2019, you had two meetings with the regional agencies of the United Nations system. How do you assess the quality of cooperation with the United Nations? Are there areas that need improvement?

In fact, in 2019, we had two major bilateral meetings between the agencies of the United Nations system (UNS) and the G5 Sahel, the last one being held in Dakar, in September. These two meetings have allowed us to take stock of the relations between the UN and the G5 Sahel, to note the diversity and the quality of the interventions of the agencies of the UN in the G5 Sahel area, to also pinpoint the points to be improved as the challenges to be met are enormous in a region currently facing many difficulties. At the G5 Sahel level, we are particularly pleased that the United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel, considers the specific concerns of the G5 Sahel countries as stipulated in our Priority Investment Program (PIP), including the current phase which covers the period 2019-2021.

In our cooperation with the United Nations, and beyond the programs executed on the ground by the various agencies, we think in particular of FAO, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNODC, UN Women, etc.., it seems important to me to salute the additional efforts made by the agencies of the UN with a view to strengthening the capacities of the Permanent Secretariat of the G5 Sahel. In this case, I will cite two examples, the provision of an employability expert for peace and resilience, responsible for supporting the implementation of the decent job creation component of the PIP (among other things through labor-intensive investments) and the secondment of a human rights expert who contributes to improving practices in this area within all of the G5 Sahel structures, including the Joint Force. This is in line with the requirement to respect the "compliance framework" established following the tripartite agreement signed between the United Nations, the EU and the G5 Sahel in early 2018.

In terms of training, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and other partners have offered a pilot course on human rights and international humanitarian law, based on different scenarios and intended for senior officers of the G5 Sahel Joint Force. Our Defense College based in Mauritania is now responsible for providing this training.

We also recall with gratitude that the UNDP supported us in the organization of the Donor Coordination Conference of December 6, 2018 on the funding of our PIP.

Despite the existence of several initiatives, the Sahel continues to struggle against challenges that are divers and complex. Do you think it is a lack of coordination between these initiatives or an inadequacy of the objectives to the reality of the Sahel ?

Admittedly, the situation in the Sahel is generally worrying, in deterioration, especially in terms of security and, unfortunately, this reality largely obscures all the efforts undertaken in recent years to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in the countries of the region. When it comes to initiatives, quality is more important than quantity. Also, we have with other It seems important to me to salute the additional efforts made by the agencies of the UN with a view to strengthening the capacities of the Permanent Secretariat of the G5 Sahel.

partners, such as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and the African Union, engaged in high-level discussions level between several organizations active in the region in order to achieve greater synergy in action for more efficient results. The priority must be that of highlighting the comparative advantages of each initiative / organization active in the Sahel, of identifying the convergences, of defining the complementarities and thus of establishing a working framework in a more constructive partnership which will have fundamentally more positive impacts for our populations.

The security situation in the Sahel is omnipresent. What do you think of regional and international military cooperation? We must remain optimistic because our populations expect their leaders to find solutions to problems, as difficult as they may be. It is a question of responsibility and, I can assure you that with regard to the G5 Sahel in particular, all of our heads of state are fully aware of the gravity of the situation and are working to find the answers, in concert and coordination with their peers in the other countries concerned, but also with our partners outside the continent. In this perspective, the ECOWAS + G5 Sahel Summit in Ouagadougou last September was a highlight illustrating the firm determination of our countries to face this security crisis by counting first on the mobilization of our endogenous resources and better coordination of our actions on the ground. Our external partners are also made aware of the need for more effective action, based on a constant strengthening of local capacities and on a multidimensional approach to solve this problem, the security aspect of which is only the result of other ills. This is an opportunity to recall that the G5 Sahel exists precisely in the perspective of an action to be carried out according to the famous nexus "Security and Development", to promote peace, stability and progress in the countries of the G5 Sahel area.

You have been leading the permanent secretariat for almost two years. What do you think of the role of the G5 Sahel?

In almost two years at the head of the G5 Sahel, I must say that, faced with the multiple challenges that we all know, here is a young African sub-regional organization which illustrates quite well the firm will of our countries to pool their resources, even limited, to lead together the battle for peace and development. We have thus recorded several very positive advances, the beneficial effects of which will gradually be felt, especially when we will succeed to curb the security crisis. I am thinking in particular of the launch of certain projects of the Emergency Development Program (PDU), which comes from our PIP and is dedicated specifically to supporting the resilience of vulnerable populations and social cohesion, notably through the increase access to water in the most fragile regions of the G5 Sahel countries. We should also mention the Trans-Sahelian railway project, the feasibility study of which is under way; the very advanced process of canceling roaming charges in telephone communications between G5 Sahel countries; the signing of the implementation agreement for the Integrated Territorial Development Project (PATI) with the local authorities of the G5 Sahel, which will improve socio-health infrastructure and the pastoral economy (at the border between Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger). We believe that, in addition to long-term structural projects, the emphasis must be placed in certain areas of the G5 Sahel, on the implementation of quick-impact projects that take into

In addition to long-term structuring projects, the emphasis must be placed in certain areas of the G5 Sahel, on the implementation of quickimpact projects that take into account the needs of the populations at the base, and which are carried by local authorities.

account the needs of the populations at the base, and which are carried by local authorities.

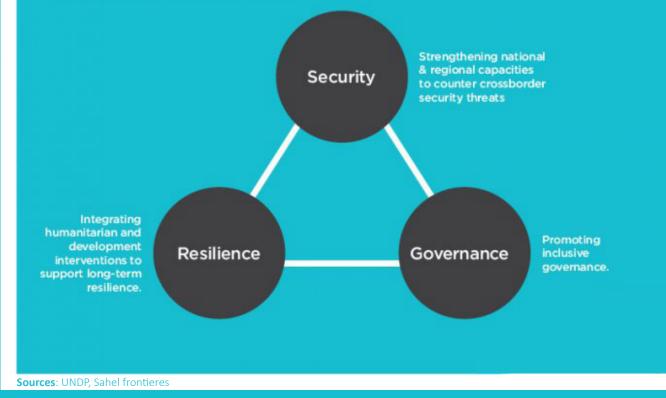
Achievements in training are also a part of the G5 at work, including the establishment of quality structures for example as the Sahelian Security College in Mali, the Defense College of the G5 Sahel in Mauritania, the Academy G5 Sahel Police Force in Chad and also, the Sahelian Center for Threat Analysis and Early Warning in Burkina Faso which serves our countries in the field of security advice and monitoring.

In addition, aware of the essential role and place of women and young people in the G5 Sahel area, our organization supports the efforts to organize women's structures within the framework of a G5 Sahel Women's Platform and, for our youth, after extensive consultations, we are currently finalizing the integrated G5 Sahel Youth strategy which will serve as a guide in order to carry out concrete actions responding to the concerns of our young people who must be more than ever, at the heart of the ambition of the G5 Sahel.

All in all, the G5 Sahel is therefore promised for a bright future, a work to structure it to make it more efficient is underway, so I am optimistic for the future. We owe it to our people!

UN INTEGRATED STRATEGY FOR THE SAHEL

Following the political and security crisis in Mali, the countries of the Sahel region took the lead to address their outstanding challenges, supported by the UN which developped an integrated strategy focusing on boosting governance, security and resilience. The result of a comprehensive consultative process, the strategy is articulated around 3 pillars:



UNHCR and ILO facilitate the integration of Malian refugees in Mauritania

Within the framework of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) are joining hands to improve the livelihoods of Malian refugees and host communities whole live in and nearby the Mbera refugee camp in Eastern Mauritania.



ore than 55,000 Malian refugees who fled the war in their country in 2012, are living in the Mbera camp in eastern Mauritania, roughly 60 kilometers from the border with Mali. With little or no opportunity for socio-economic integration into the local labour market, they survive mainly on humanitarian aid.

To meet their economic needs, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) joined efforts to improve living conditions of refugees and host communities through an ambitious project aiming at promoting decent employment and refugee integration in Mauritania.

Thus, in December 2018, the ILO, with the support of UNHCR, started to implement the project "Strengthening the empowerment of refugees and host populations through improved employability of young people in the construction sector".

UNHCR supports the empowerment of refugee women in Mberra camp (Mauritania), especially through literacy classes as well as by providing significant support to vegetable gardening and other income-generating activities. Photo: UNHCR.



In their Joint action, ILO and UNHCR combine humanitarian and development approaches to achieve refugee empowerment and peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities. This project which marks the start of an ILO-UNHCR partnership in Mauritania is an operationalization of the Memorandum of Understanding and the Joint Action Plan between the two organizations. The agreement highlights the importance of the right to work for displaced population in the world, through concrete actions on the field in order to improve the living conditions of refugees and local communities.

These activities are also undertaken under the Partnership Framework with the government of Mauritania for Sustainable Development (CPDD) 2018-2022.

In their Joint action, ILO and UNHCR combine humanitarian and development approaches to achieve refugee empowerment and peaceful coexistence between refugees and host communities.

The project specifically aims to provide young refugees in the Mbera camp and the host community youth with the opportunity to have access to certified quality training in several trades of the building and public works sector and in sectors that boost local economic development. For this reason, a polyvalent vocational training center was built in the Mbera camp, providing a learning framework that will promote the development of new skills, and the qualification and certification of young people by the national monitoring and validation learning system under the auspices of the Technical and Vocational Training Department.

So far, more than 565 young Malian refugees and Mauritanians have been trained by the project in various trades of the building and public works sector, of which 200 are already employed in the private sector. In addition, 5 cooperatives and 25 micro-enterprises have been created and strengthened since the end of 2018.

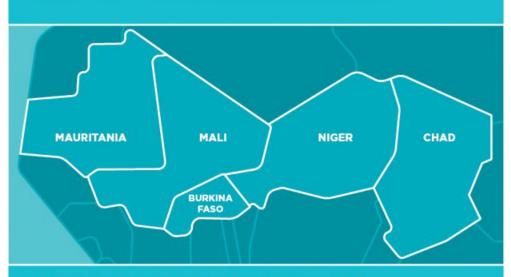
In the long term the center will train more than 6,000 refugees and young members of the host population.

Within this joint partnership UNHCR-ILO framework to support the implementation of UNISS, new projects are being implemented with support from Japan and the Bureau of Populations, Refugees and Migration (BPRM) of the United States whose focus will be on a training program in the dairy, tailoring and automobile mechanic value chain. These projects will complement other interventions such as the construction of two primary schools, two mini-dairies, a livestock and craftsmen center, and an access road to Mbera camp to facilitate the movement of people and to foster socio-economic interactions and exchanges between the different communities that live in the area.

The partnership between UNHCR and ILO constitutes a major realization that facilitates socio-economic integration through the strengthening of the entrepreneurial tissue, the development of new skills demanded by the labour market and the empowerment of the youth in the Sahel.



SAHEL PLACING BORDER AREAS AT THE HEART OF OUR RESPONSE



With porous borders in vast and sparsely populated areas, Sahel countries face many crossborder challenges: irregular migration, drug trafficking, arms and human trafficking, violent extremist networks.

A new approach is needed to secure the improvement of border management and human security in border regions of the Sahel, combining national and transnational interventions.

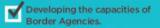
Sources: UNDP, Sahel frontieres

BORDER MANAGEMENT AND HUMAN SECURITY

As part of its efforts to operationalize the UN integrated strategy, UNDP conducted field surveys to shape future programming, with a particular focus on small arms proliferation and cross-border communities and communities. With Japan's support, a new project dedicated to managing border areas and strengthening human security has been developed:

Developing national policies for involvement of border communities in border management.

- National policy makers & civil society have better understanding of the importance of informal cross-border trade.
- Support for inclusive strategies and border management policies placing communities at their core.





World Food Programme reinforces the resilience of the population in the Sahel

The World Food Programme Regional Bureau for West and Central Africa (WFP RBD), is scaling-up its integrated resilience package for the G5 Sahel countries.

igh levels of food insecurity, limited and unequal access to basic services, poorly integrated markets, recurrent climate shocks and increased insecurity constitute the daily reality of the people across the G5 Sahel countries.

In response to these complex challenges, and as part of its contribution to the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), WFP has been active across the five countries.

From mid-2018, WFP has been able to reach 1,3 million people in 1,400 villages through integrated packages across the five countries, working with over 70 partners, government institutions and nine Sahel universities involved in planning, technical support and monitoring and evaluation systems.

In early 2019, WFP launched an integrated resilience programme that aims to build community assets and restore degraded ecosystems, promote education, improve nutrition, and create jobs for young people.

Planned for five years (from 2019 to 2023), the programme will help more than two million people to benefit from a minimum package of three to five integrated resilience interventions such as food and cash assistance for asset creation, school feeding, nutrition assistance, smallholder and farmer support and capacity strengthening, all layered and sequenced depending on the local context and priorities, as identified in the Three-Pronged Approach (3PA). The 3PA is a multi-level (national, sub-national and local) programming and planning approach to strengthen the design, planning and implementation of programmes in resilience building, safety nets, disaster-risk reduction, and preparedness. It rests on context analysis, participation of the most vulnerable, and partnerships building.

In Burkina Faso, WFP has been working with the government to strengthen social cohesion and increase access to food in the site of Bissighin (Centre Nord region). 1,160 community members participated in asset creation activities, rehabilitating in total 85 hectares of land, with more than 55 tons of yield expected. 2,000 kg of okra and cowpea were produced, leading to an estimated income of USD 850, strengthening women's livelihoods and diversifying families' meals.

More than 100 internally displaced people are currently being hosted in Bissighin, and the community has given 20 hectares of rehabilitated land to displaced families. With the harvest from their land, families are expected to have food stocks for 6 months to cover their needs and strengthen their self reliance.

In Chad, in Chaouir village (Guera region), WFP has been focusing on scaling-up gardening capacity, including through the installation of a high-capacity solar-water pump, increasing agricultural production, and integrating garden production with the school and resilience activities at household level.

200 families were provided with equipment and training to establish a vegetable garden to supply the local school canteen and increase families' access to nutritious and diverse food.

Since 2018, the garden has been expanded to 4 hectares, and is currently producing nearly 30 varieties of vegetables, yielding at least 24 tons of fresh vegetables and more than 10 tons of staples (mostly sorghum and millet) per year. This helps to diversify local diets and address widespread micro-nutrient deficiencies.



200 families were provided with equipment and training to establish a vegetable garden to supply the local school canteen and increase families' access to nutritious and diverse food. In Mali, in the rural commune of Sio (region of Mopti), WFP has been implementing an integrated package of resilience-building activities, including through rehabilitating and creating key assets, nutrition-specific and sensitive activities and supporting smallholder farmers' businesses and access to markets.

Other achievements by WFP were also critical and contributed to the improvement of the life condition of the community of Sio: the rehabilitation of a key bridge which has re-established physical access for villagers to neighbouring rice fields, health centres, schools and markets, the restoration of a 3-hectare pond provided access to fresh water year-round, allowing for different uses such as irrigated gardening, livestock/ animal watering, fishing and brick-making, the newly rehabilitated and equipped dairy factory has improved the quality and quantity of dairy products, supporting and providing jobs for approximately 150 households, including local youth and women.



Amadou Billa, 56 years old, a vulnerable member of the Toya community, plants "bourgou" (aquatic fodder – Echinochloa stagnina specie) in readiness for the rainy season. Although he is blind, he has participated in training that helps him provide for his family. Bourgou is used for livestock and fish feed, protecting rice cultivations, and as a major source of revenue. WFP/Katia Oslansky.

In Gvava site (Assaba region), in Mauritania, WFP has been working together with the community and partners for integrated action for nutrition, education and livelihoods.

These interventions helped improve water and soil management: some 130 women and men participated in the completion of a dike for rainwater retention, increasing water availability for crops and livestock and improving production on some 30 hectares with an estimated yield of 15 tons sorghum. The interventions also helped improve nutrition behaviour and awareness in the community nutrition centre, where some 50 pregnant women and mothers benefitted from the monthly sessions and learned about good maternal and child feeding practices, hygiene, health and nutrition.

In Niger, in Wacha (Zinder region), WFP with the Romebased agencies (RBAs), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Government have been implementing a multi-sectorial, community-based integrated resilience approach.

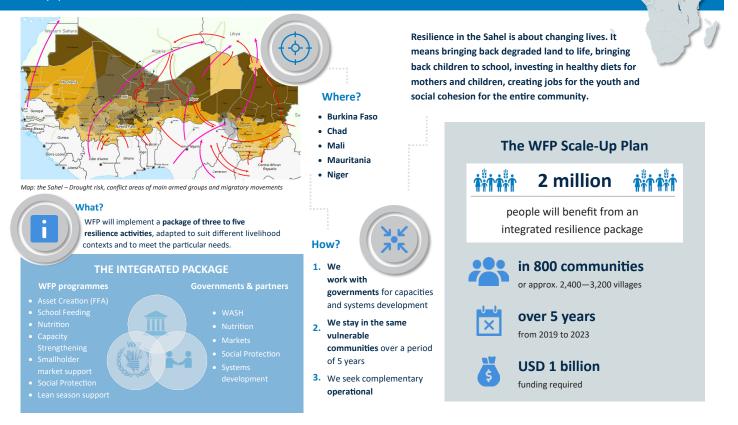
Activities directly benefitted 385 households (2,680 beneficiaries), through facilitate increased and sustainable access to water through rehabilitation of 16 ponds, allowing to restore 204 hectares of land. The joint interventions helped also improve productivity through irrigation for gardening and winter production on more than 30 hectares, and strengthened community ownership and social cohesion: in 2018, of the vegetable produce, 50 percent was used for consumption and 50 percent was used to finance activities of community interest. The community further organised mutual support structures and a cereal bank.

The above show that transformation is possible in the Sahel. To achieve transformative results, community participation and operational partnership through effective coordination are critical to leverage complementary action and support the G5 Sahel countries improve living conditions of the population.

As part of its engagement in the implementation of the UNISS, WFP with UN agencies, G5 Governments institutions, NGOs and other partners are redoubling their efforts to support agricultural development, livelihoods, nutrition, education, smallholder farmer support, capacity strengthening, and social protection.

Resilience Scale-Up Plan in the G5 Sahel countries

An integrated vision and approach to resilience building.





Achievements 2018/19

Operational Update & Results

Based on promising results in Sahelian countries since 2013/14, WFP has been scaling-up integrated resilience interventions across the G5 Sahel countries since 2018:

Ш

Working with partners and governments

- Agreements with government institutions were signed.
- Equipment, training and capacity building was provided to authorities from national to community level.
- WFP is working with more than 70 NGO partners on the ground to ensure an effective implementation capacity.
- Complementary efforts are ongoing with UNICEF, FAO, IFAD, NGO and development partners, and dialogue with the World Bank on joint efforts for social protection is in progress.
- Agreement between WFP, FAO and G5 Sahel Permanent Secretariat was signed to support operationalize the G5 Sahel Investment Plan Resilience pillar
- Agreements with nine Sahelian universities were signed, and 70 Master and PhD students were deployed to resilience sites to develop their theses.





ה 1,3 million

people benefitted from a WFP integrated resilience package

In more than 1,400 villages

in the five countries.

650,000 FFA beneficiaries

Communities rehabilitated and improved some 35,000 hectares of land restored natural resources, created or rehabilitated 250 wells and 500 ponds, provided jobs and improved production.

300,000 children at school

in over 2,000 schools benefitted from nutritious meals to encourage school attendance and retention.

500,000 children and women

reached through malnutrition treatment/prevention and were sensitized on nutrition.

17,000 smallholder farmers

supported or trained. Further, trainings were provided to partners, government, community committees, etc.

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UNICEF provides WASH services to improve the nutrition and health status of communities in Mauritania

The Sahel is one the most water scarce regions in the world. Increasing water scarcity across the region lowers the water levels in traditional wells, forcing people to travel long distances to collect limited quantities of water, UNICEF as part of the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), is supporting wash and nutrition programmes in priority areas in Mauritania.

water demand and population growth. The impact of climate change in recent decades has been evident in the form of increased variability of rainfall, temperatures and wind speeds contributing to water scarcity, droughts, floods, sandstorms and heavy rain events. Increasing water scarcity also has wider implications on the livelihood options of families, and increases the risk of migration, urbanization and conflict. Water scarcity and poor water quality increases also the risk of diarrhea amongst young children. When young children have repeated bouts of diarrhea, this impedes their ability to absorb nutrients, and irreversibly impairs physical and mental development of young children, increasing the risks of stunting and malnutrition. The burden for water collection falls mainly on women and girls, who have to spend long time to collect and queue for water, in addition to the physical burden of carrying water long distances and the increased safety risks they are exposed to. More time collecting water also reduces the time and energy available to go to school, affecting children's enrollment, attendance and participation, and consequently their future opportunities.

Sustainable source of water

To address this situation in Mauritania, UNICEF is working to support WASH and Nutrition programmes, with joint programming undertaken in priority areas. One of the key interventions in the WASH programme, has been to support the Government of Mauritania through an innovative programme to reach the most vulnerable villages with a sustainable source of water.

In Mauritania, approximately 80 per cent of the country's villages have populations of less than 500 people, and most of these are in remote locations. Owing to the remoteness of these villages, UNICEF has coupled manual drilling with solar powered water systems. The manual drilling approach enables boreholes to be drilled in very remote areas, at low cost. The low level of technology involved allows water sources to be drilled in areas that would otherwise be inaccessible.

The conditions in Mauritania make it an ideal location for solar powered systems, due to the high levels of solar irradiation levels in the country (2099-2284 kWh/ m2) and an average of 8 hours of sunshine per day). The solar systems offer a very efficient, cost effective, low maintenance and sustainable alternative to diesel powered systems, particularly for rural areas. In support to the government of Mauritania, the intervention has focused on providing water to those small villages with less than 150 inhabitants

To support to the Ministry of Water Resources to increase the access to safe water in verv remote areas, UNICEF and the project partner PRACTICA Foundation, developed a manual drilling toolkit to give technical guidance to the water sector in Mauritania on the application of the technology in the country. In response to this, five local construction firms are now operating to drill boreholes using solar technology, and to install solar panels. It has been estimated that the manual drilling approach is four times cheaper than drilling with conventional drilling rigs, and the local production of the tools has reduced cost by an additional 10%. Once installed, the solar powered water system cost an estimated 30 per cent less than diesel-powered systems.

In support to the government of Mauritania, the intervention has focused on providing water to those small villages with less than 150 inhabitants while the Government has focused on larger sized villages. Typical UNICEF systems in these villages comprise solar panels, water storage tanks (7 to 10 m3) with a chlorination system installed a water standpipe with two or three taps. Importantly, the systems have been designed to ensure that the maximum distance of any household to the water point is less than 500m, dramatically reducing the time required to collect water.

To ensure the sustainability of these water systems, userfees are collected to fund the operation and maintenance of the systems. For larger villages, privately run start-up companies are responsible for maintaining the solar powered water systems.

To further support the water sector in Mauritania, UNICEF collaborated with PRACTICA to build the capacity on solar in the country through the publication of a technical guide for solar pumping in Mauritania.

Safe water

As a result of the supported interventions between 2015 and 2017, 23,000 people have gained access to safe water, within 500m of their homes. Over this period, 19 mini solar drinking water networks and 40 solar powered water stations have been constructed.

The solar programme is being scaled-up at a national level. From 2019, all new rural water supply projects in Mauritania which target individual villages or groups of two to three villages with boreholes will only be powered by solar systems. For UNICEF, this has already increased the number of solar systems installed per year from 20 in 2017 to 53 in 2019, with further support anticipated under a forthcoming UNICEF-WFP (World Food Programme) partnership for resilience. Meanwhile, old diesel-powered systems are being progressively replaced by solar systems, either by the Ministry itself or the private operators managing large-scale rural water supply systems (70 in total).



Contribution to improve health and nutrition outcomes

The availability of safe water supply thanks to solar power directly contributed to improved health and nutrition outcomes for children in the Guidimakha region of Mauritania. In support of the Government, UNICEF first identified 20 villages with high rates of Severe Acute Malnutrition among children, secondly it constructed solar powered water supply systems and sanitation facilities at health center level, connecting them to the newly constructed water system, thirdly it promoted community-led total sanitation and hygiene across the region providing Hygiene Kits and training health personnel and community workers on Hygiene promotion, water treatment and safe storage. Mothers and children were provided with WASH Kits (Soap, hand washing utensils, water transport and storage container), and sensitized on essential family practices. As a result of these interventions:

6000 persons obtained sustainable access to safe drinking water,

15,000 persons ended open defecation

20 Health/Nutrition centers obtained access to adequate water and sanitation facilities.

As a result, the initiative contributed to reduce diarrhea prevalence in the target area from 20.6% in 2017 to 9.1% in 2019 and that of stunting from 26.3% to 25.2%.

The above-mentioned initiative provides one example on how UN agencies, as part of their UNISS engagement took up the challenge of responding to the ever increasingly harsh climate conditions in the Sahel.

To continue to support the solar sector for the region, UNICEF is in the process of establishing a Regional Solar Hub to strengthen West and Central African countries through the provision of technical advice on solar systems, developing solar materials (courses and resources in French and English, building on what has already been done) and visiting countries to offer in situ technical advice and to assess the bottlenecks for scaling up solar in the respective countries, while sharing knowledge on good practices and innovations from the region with the broader sector.

A Plot Of Land: Hope Restored In Agadez

Mohamed, Issouf, Moussa, and Aghali are members of communities that are affected by migration flows in Niger. A community stabilization project recently launched by IOM, the UN Migration Agency, is giving them and 26 other Nigeriens in Agadez reason to dream of a better future in their communities. The group of 30 is made up of returnees from Libya, ex migrant smugglers and youth at risk; their lives are all guided by a mix of ambition, uncertainty, and most importantly hope. They are now looking to the agricultural sector for opportunities to improve their lives.



hen he talks about Libya, Mohamed, 45, speaks with the melancholic tone of a man who has seen better days. For Mohamed, things are simple: life is better when he doesn't have to worry about tomorrow. "Life used to be beautiful in Libya. I could work for a day and feed myself for three," he says. Just as thousands of Nigeriens each year, Mohamed left for Libya in order to earn some money; his plan was to then come back home, feed his family and do it all over again. The European dream was never his ambition.

During his time abroad, Mohamed worked in a garage where Sudanese friends taught him how to weld. He came back to Niger in 2005 when the security situation in Libya started deteriorating, and tried finding a job back home. Back in Niger, he wanted to practice the craft he had learned in Libya, but when he took stock of the taxes he would have to pay and the lack of clients, he quickly realized that he needed to look for a different line of work.

"I left Niger over and over again, and I came back just as many times." — Mohamed

Since he came back, Mohamed has participated in a few small income-generating activities like selling camel milk, but steady work is elusive. "I haven't had a stable job since '87 when tourism was booming in Agadez and the Paris– Dakar Rally was popular," he says.

Mohamed is one of the 30 Nigerien beneficiaries that have been selected by a designated committee of local leaders in Agadez, to participate in IOM's new community stabilization I left Niger over and over again, and I came back just as many times



project. Supported by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the project focuses on migrant reintegration and on countering the radicalization in the region through the creation of jobs related to the restoration of degraded lands and their productive base.

Each beneficiary has received from the authorities one hectare of land to use for income-generating activities. Vegetable farming is very much dependent on season, some seasons not being as profitable as others. With that in mind, and until the end of the project, each of them receives a monthly allowance of 60,000 FCFA.

Like many of his compatriots, Mohamed has done his fair share of agricultural work over the course of his life — it is one of the main livelihood sources in Agadez — so he isn't worried about picking it up again, as long as it guarantees that he can put food on the table for his family. When Mohamed asked his future parentsin-law for their daughter's hand in marriage, he promised he would take care of her. "I intend to keep that promise," he says.

On paper, Issouf, aged 24, meets the criteria for being considered a youth at risk: an unemployed person without formal education, aged 18–35 years old, who can barely find the means to feed himself and his family, but is willing to find a way — whether through regular means, or by engaging in criminal activities. While the risk is present, at first glance, Issouf strikes you as a young man who was raised to know better than to shame his parents by engaging in petty crime.

Issouf's household, comprised of his parents, ten siblings, numerous aunts, nephews and nieces, is about three kilometers away from Agadez town. Together with Mohamed's family and about 80 other families, they make up a very tight-knit community. Issouf takes any work he can get and often gardens with his father and brothers. His brother-in-law left for Libya a while back and never came back. It was no surprise, then, that Issouf jumped at the opportunity to take part in a new agricultural project when he heard unemployed youth in his village were being sought out. His parents were overcome with joy upon hearing that he had been selected and that he would have a stable income, which would allow him to support his extended family.

"At the end of the day, we all help each other out to make ends meet." — Issouf

The community stabilization project is not meant as a reconversion plan for ex-smugglers, but as an inclusive approach to engage all community members. The UNCCD project appeals to ex-smugglers like Moussa. Several years ago, the 48-year-old was approached by friends in the

At the end of the day, we all help each other out to make ends meet





smuggling business who seemed to be doing well. Young and unemployed, Moussa decided to give it a shot and join their business. If there were migrants looking for a means of transportation, he was there to give them a lift. Little by little, the business expanded and so did his earnings. Ten years later, once the law n° 2015–36 (criminalizing the smuggling of migrants) started being implemented in Niger, he gave up the business.

"I used to gain a lot as a smuggler, but it wasn't worth the risk." — Moussa

Before he ever pictured himself as a smuggler, however, Moussa used to garden for a living. His entrepreneurial spirit shines through as he talks about his plans for the plot of land he was allocated through the project. He wants to cultivate not only vegetables, but also orange, mango and date trees. During the month of April, when the prices are lower for sheep, he aims to buy a few and build an enclosure for them on his plot of land. Later on he can sell them at a higher price. He often talks with the other beneficiaries about how they can make this land more lucrative for everyone.

IOM staff in Niger help the beneficiaries make decisions about what to do with their plots of land and choose the right plants to cultivate if they want to start gardens.

"Cucurbits," announces Fiza, IOM Community Stabilization Assistant in Agadez. "This is what they should be planting this season: cucumbers, pumpkins, watermelons." During the course of the project, each beneficiary will participate in an agricultural training and receive a seed kit appropriate for the current vegetable farming season. Once they start making a profit, they can diversify the products they cultivate.

The obvious challenge to practicing agriculture in the middle of the desert is finding water. As Abdoul, 35, puts it: "If there is no water, there is no work." With support from the local committee and providers, and following an in-depth feasibility study, the land has been leveled and the drilling has begun in the quest for water.

Given that the newly designated plots of land will no longer benefit the herder community in the area, 200 hectares of land in the vicinity have also been restored. Because of Agadez's difficult terrain, more than 100,000 half-moons (water catchments) have been created to harvest and conserve rain water, and to create a favourable environment for plants. More than 150 people were engaged in cash-for-work activities during the rainy season to create the half-moons and to plant more than 60,000 trees. This newly created space and the water towers on the land are made available for use to all the four different villages in their surroundings.

The project also aims to organize weekly trainings in agriculture for close to 500 West African migrants staying at IOM's transit centre in Agadez, as they wait for their travel documents to be ready. The migrants will be learning new skills on the land allotted to the UNCCD beneficiaries, and they can thus all interact not only on a professional level, but also on a personal one since many of them have similar migratory experiences.

Aghali, 25, used to earn his living as a motorcycle taxi driver in Agadez. When his bike was stolen, he decided that the only option was to leave for Libya. Once he arrived in Libya, he found a job in agriculture outside of the capital Tripoli. Since he barely got paid for his work, he went back to Tripoli where he got kidnapped and imprisoned for five months. He never called his parents to ask for money to pay the ransom because he didn't want to worry them.

"The kidnappings, the slavery, it was all too much to endure, so I came back." — Aghali

Aghali came back in 2017, but he still hasn't heard any news from the friends he left behind in prison. He has seven brothers and sisters, and shares an especially close bond with his brother Rhissa. Since he came back, Aghali hasn't been able to find a stable job. On a good day, he earns about four euros working on his neighbours' land. While Aghali was away, Rhissa wanted to follow in his brother's footsteps and leave for Libya, but his parents feared for his future. Aghali now hopes that having a plot of land of his own and being able to work alongside his brother will lead to a positive new chapter in his life.

The Community Stabilization "Projet de réintégration des migrants et de lutte contre la radicalisation grâce à la céation d'emplois liés à la restauration des terres dégradées et de leur base productive" is funded by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). IOM's Community Stabilization programme aims to support governments and civil society in reducing factors that lead to irregular and forced migration, integrating the needs of marginalized groups and host communities, and responding to the impact of migratory flows on communities.

Women in the Sahel work for Peace and Security

As part of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), UN Women has implemented the women's peace and security agenda. 1,542 women mediators have been trained to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.



Training session for women from the Working Group, Women, Youth, Peace and Security in West Africa and the Sahel. June 24, 2019 in Dakar. Photo: UNOWAS CPIO

n view of many challenges that are facing the Sahel region, the challenge of security is obviously the most decisive. It was necessary to engage the different categories of the population of the Sahel in order to play a role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

Women and youth, in particular, represent an important category in the Sahel countries, and their intervention in the political and economic spaces among others, is no longer a mere option, it is a strategic priority which is now increasingly integrated into the development programs of the countries in the region.

In order to promote this approach, UN Women, in close coordination with the Sahel countries and regional organizations, has launched a "Program to accelerate the implementation of the women peace and security agenda for better conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the Sahel region". The participation of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding is also conducted through raising awareness among the security forces.

Beyond its ambition to invest in peace and prevention, the program aims to enhance the intervention of women in the peace process through partnerships with governments, and regional organizations such as the G5 Sahel, the Liptako Gourma Authority, the Lake Chad Basin Commission and ECOWAS. 1,542 women mediators have been trained in several countries of the Sahel. They are already involved in the prevention of community conflicts and contribute actively to the rapprochement and reconciliation of communities. They also contribute to raising awareness on peace among beneficiaries of other United Nations agencies programs.

The women *peace and security* agenda program provides technical and institutional support to the main regional organizations, including the G5 Sahel Women's Platform, the Peace and Security Network for Women in the ECOWAS region, which have initiated ambitious actions, particularly in the cross-border regions between Mali and Niger and in the Lake Chad region. Similar initiatives will be carried out in the Liptako-Gourma region this year, where women will play an active role in the management of community conflicts from "the perspective of local peace to global peace".

The participation of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding is also conducted through raising awareness among the security forces. Meetings between women and security actors including the defense forces, administrative and judicial officials have been regularly organized by UN Women in the border regions between Mali (in Gao and Ménaka) and Niger (Diffa) as part of a project funded by the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). These initiatives based on a cross-border approach will continue in 2020 and will also touch on the management of conflicts related to access to natural resources.

The demographic dividend for sustainable development in the Sahel

Through the SWEED project, UNFPA in partnership with the governments of the region, and other regional and international partners, has enabled thousands of young women and men to contribute to the economic growth and sustainable development in the Sahel.

In most countries of the Sahel region, remarkable efforts to stimulate economic growth of around 5% per year over the past two decades have been engulfed by rapid population growth, which exacerbates poverty levels: In some countries, thousands of women die each year from preventable causes related to pregnancy, millions of children are deprived of education and end up on the streets due to poverty and early marriage. To respond to these challenges and improve the well-being of people in the Sahel region, UNFPA, as part of the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), has undertaken several initiatives focused on contribution of the demographic dividend, the empowerment of women and young people, and the resilience of communities in the face of radicalization and violent extremism.

Increasing the access of women and adolescent girls to sexual and reproductive health, in particular voluntary family planning and maternal health, is one of the objectives of the Sahel Women's Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD) project which is currently operating in seven countries, namely Burkina Faso, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Niger, Chad and Benin with the financial support from the World Bank, technical support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the West African Health Organization. This initiative is also part of the commitment made by the governments of the Sahel countries to accelerate the demographic transition, capture the demographic dividend and reduce gender inequalities in the Sahel region.

Launched in November 2015, for an initial period of three years, the SWEDD was due to end on 31 December 2018, but because of the achievements, the potential of beneficiaries change revealed by studies and the wide interest generated by the project in other countries, the World Bank, in agreement with involved countries, has decided to extend its financial and technical support until 31 December 2023.

With the support of UNFPA, the implementation strategy of the SWEDD project is based on the principles of empowerment and active participation of partners, with a management focused on results and action. The SWEDD project was conceived following an analysis of the situation in the Sahel region, characterized by low levels of education, especially among girls, high levels of poverty, food insecurity, gender disparity, low levels of contraceptive use, persistently high levels of fertility, and multiple constraints that negatively impact on security and development.

The SWEDD project focuses on three major actions: creating demand for reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and nutritional health commodities and services by promoting social and behavioral change, empowering women and adolescent girls, and building regional capacity to improve the supply of reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and nutritional health commodities as well as skilled personnel.

10,154 midwives have been trained in new technologies and their numbers have increased by 15.2%. In its four years of existence, SWEDD has led to an increase in contraceptive prevalence with more than 4,302,000 women using modern contraceptive methods and a rise of the secondary school completion rate for girls from 35.1% to 40.3% between 2015 and 2018. It has also led to an improvement in the average income of women and a decrease in the number of child marriages.



The impact of SWEDD, which primarily targets women, girls and adolescents, is concrete and visible in various areas Its implementation is reflected in concrete actions on the ground in several regions of the countries covered by the project: awareness-raising campaigns have reached more than 627 million people on reproductive, maternal and child health; training activities have enabled 106,263 girls and adolescents to benefit from support for school enrolment and retention. 99,704 girls and young women have been trained in income-generating activities, and 102,600 out-of-school girls now have a second chance thanks to the establishment of 3,420 safe spaces.

Through the establishment of 1,640 clubs for husbands and husband-to-be in Niger, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Burkina Faso and Chad, the participation of men and boys for better gender equality is promoted. This transformative approach to gender can create an enabling environment for women's empowerment within the family as well as in the community at large. By promoting gender-equitable attitudes and behaviors) and encouraging normative change through community mobilization, the project addresses some of the root causes of early marriage and early childbearing. The impact of SWEDD, which primarily targets women, girls and adolescents, is concrete and visible in various areas. Indeed, SWEDD contributes to improving children's health and nutrition, strengthening girls' education and fighting against scourges such as early marriage, harmful socio-cultural practices, female genital mutilation, levirate, and clandestine abortions. to improve the level of empowerment of women and adolescent girls and their access to quality reproductive, child and maternal health services through education and increased knowledge of nutrition and reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health of the female population.

SWEDD holds great promise for reducing adolescent and young women's vulnerability and gender inequalities in Africa. The project lays the foundation for capturing the demographic dividend. By helping to improve opportunities for women and girls, they will play a greater part in the economic growth and sustainable development of the Sahel and the continent.

UNODC's active role to help address security challenges in the Sahel

As part of its contribution to the implementation of the United Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), major activities are being carried out by UNODC to support the efforts by the countries to address the security challenges.

he security challenges faced by West Africa and the Sahel countries are immense, but the activities of UNODC to tackle these challenges are equally immense and significant. Countering corruption, strengthening law enforcement and border control, combatting illicit trafficking in firearms, trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, preventing terrorism, countering terrorism financing and money laundering are, among others, the areas where UNODC is playing a major role in partnership with the countries of the region.

Since 2014, UNODC has implemented over 600 national and regional activities, reaching around 15,000 beneficiaries.

Fighting illicit activities

Some concrete examples of UNODC work in the Sahel over the years include the support provided to Sahel countries to strengthen their fight against the proliferation of firearms and the focus on creating a culture of integrity, which supports all other actions aimed at strengthening criminal justice systems in the Sahel to effectively combat drug trafficking, illicit trafficking, organized crime, and terrorism in the region. Moving forward, UNODC and other partners are looking at ensuring the role of women and girls are promoted as agents of peace and development in the Sahel.

Illicit trafficking of firearms represents a serious threat to security in the Sahel. Weapons illegally acquired by armed groups or terrorist organizations enable them to undertake activities further destabilizing the already precarious security situation in the region. Raising awareness, ensuring an adequate recordkeeping of firearms in the national stocks, and encouraging populations to hand over firearms has become crucial for governments to fight firearms trafficking. As of January 2019, more than 71,500 firearms had been marked and registered in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal.

UNODC is providing technical assistance, expert advice and financial support to countries in the Sahel to support the marking, registration, physical stockpiling and security management as well as destruction of firearms, particularly illicit firearms, at the capital city level but also throughout the wider national territories. The work carried out helps countries meet the international and regional requirements, including under the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol) and the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW).

To better support control of weapons diversion from licit to illicit use trough the national stocks, UNODC supports technically and financially the building of weapons transit sites. These stocks aim to collect and centralize all illicit, seized or surrendered weapons throughout the national territory and to secure weapons that serve as evidence in cases.



The Minister of Interior of Niger H.E. Mr. Mohamed BAZOUM receiving the weapons voluntarily surrendered by elements of armed groups in Agadez. Photo: UNODC

As of January 2019, more than 71,500 firearms had been marked and registered in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal.

Fighting impunity

With the accession of Chad to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) on 26 June 2018 further to work of UNODC with all countries in the region, the number of States Parties to the Convention was brought to 186, thereafter including all States Members of the G5 and all West and Central African countries. This provided a sound basis to expand the work to specific implementation assistance, but also to working with investigative journalists and universities to reach all layers of society.

UNODC has supported the Cell Norbert Zongo for Investiga-

tive Journalism in West Africa (CENOZO), headquartered at the Norbert Zongo National Press Centre in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso since its launch in 2015. CENOZO aims to promote investigative journalism in the areas of corruption, bad governance, organized crime and human rights violations in the region.

Through CENOZO's expansive network of more than 50 journalists across the region, the organization trains, supports, and coordinates with investigative journalists in West Africa promoting greater collaboration and strong partnerships.

CENOZO has notably partnered with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ) to create the largest collaborative network of journalists in West Africa, by connecting 13 journalists from This master aims to build the capacities of future professionals who will be in charge of fighting corruption.



Supporting cross-border community dialogue initiatives with security and justice sector actors for peace-building to rebuild trust through a gender approach. 11 countries in the region. They sifted through millions of leaked documents and conducted investigations that ultimately uncovered and exposed the depth and devastating effects of offshoring by elites, government officials and large multinational corporations at the expense of the population.

This series of investigations was published under the hashtag #WestAfricaLeaks in 2018 and has received so far four international awards from the New York State Society of Certified Public Accountants (NYSSCPA), the Professional Association of Journalists of Washington DC, the Society for the Advancement of Business Editing and Writing (SA-BEW), and the National Association of Black Journalists. Some of these reports have succeeded in triggering the interest of national investigative bodies.

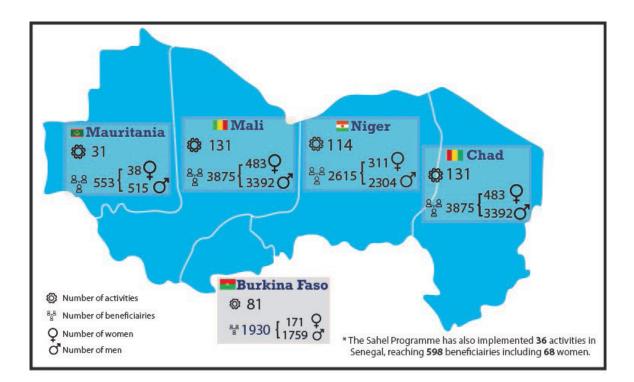
Another initiative, includes the official launch in Burkina Faso of the country's first Master's programme on anti-corruption in January 2019 the Ouaga II University. This achievement is the result of several years of commitment, dedication and discussions between partners. The first steps were taken in 2015, at a regional meeting in Doha, Qatar, gathering representatives of universities from West and Central Africa, who called for the universities in the region to strongly commit to introducing anti-corruption courses and curricula in their teaching and research programmes.

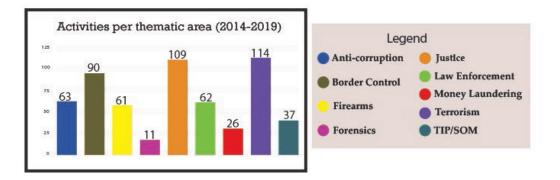
The Master's project was developed with technical support from UNODC and Tunisian academics, who shared their own experience with Burkinabe academics, in a South-South cooperation perspective. Following the approval of the Scientific Council of the Faculty of Social Science and Economics, the Master's host and the Council of the University, the Master's programme was officially launched in January 2019, bringing together 25 professionals with various background. In addition to promoting a culture of integrity, this Master's Programme aims to build the capacities of future professionals who will be in charge of fighting corruption. Work is on-going, most recently a module on Ethics and anti-corruption was developed and added to the curriculum. The objective is also to ensure that through a south-south cooperation perspective, the Burkinabe experience with anti-corruption education can be replicated in other countries in the region.

Women and girls, agents of peace and development in the Sahel

To further strengthen the implementation of the UNISS, UNODC together with OHCHR and UNWOM-EN have cooperated to ensure women and girls are taken into consideration as agents of peace and development in the Sahel. The three agencies supported the G5 Sahel in developing a gender strategy and has supported the integration of gender mainstreaming in G5 security-related activities. A study on gender and security sector reform has been carried out in the five G5 Sahel countries. Military and security chiefs of the G5 Sahel discussed solutions to better integrate and promote women in defense and security forces of the Sahel, leading to an action plan and the promotion of identified female officers of the region.

In addition, innovative discussions between vulnerable communities, defense and security forces, and the criminal justice system have been supported by UNODC and UNWOMEN in border areas of Mali and Niger targeting women as peacemakers. Supporting cross-border community dialogue initiatives with security and justice sector actors for peace-building to rebuild trust through a gender approach, this project promotes cross-border dialogue initiatives, peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms, and awareness raising on criminal procedures.





Implementation statistics since 2014. Photo: UNODC

Hugues Fabrice Zango The Sahel bat bat wints

He is a young Sahelian and he wins medals. He symbolizes the Sahel which takes the momentum to jump better. He represents the Sahel that wins. His name is Hugues Fabrice Zango. He is from Burkina Faso, an athlete specialized in triple jumping. UNOWAS Magazine went to meet him. Portrait.

n Sunday 29 September 2019, Hugues Fabrice Zango makes history. That evening, in Doha, Qatar, he performed an exceptional jump of 17.66 m which enabled him to win the bronze medal in the world triple jump and thus set a new African record. This feat made him the first Burkinabe and Sahelian athlete to win a medal at the World Athletics Championships. "It was something extraordinary," says Zango. "And I hope that this performance will push the young people of my country to change their mentality. Even for me, achieving it comforts me in my ability to see higher," he adds, with a touch of pride. Hugues has much to be proud of as he brings to the African continent the world triple jump medal he has been waiting for since 1983.

Born in Koudougou, Burkina Faso, in 1993, Hugues Zango crossed paths with athletics at the age of 17, when he was in 1st class. It was during his first participation in the competition of the Union of School and University Sports of Burkina Faso (USSUBF) that he was spotted by his coach at the time, Christian SANOU. "My international career started in 2013 with my participation in the Universiades in Russia in triple jump where I finished 6th,"says the athlete.

Hugues Zango's life is not easy, but it is very exciting. The bronze medalist combines high level sport and high studies. He spends his days in the research laboratory and his evenings training at the athletics stadium. Yes, our champion is also a doctoral student in his second year of his thesis in Béthune, France, where he currently lives: "I study electrical machines and everything around them, from design to control". He is thus fulfilling a childhood dream for electronics and has the ambition to complete his PhD and obtain the title of Professor.

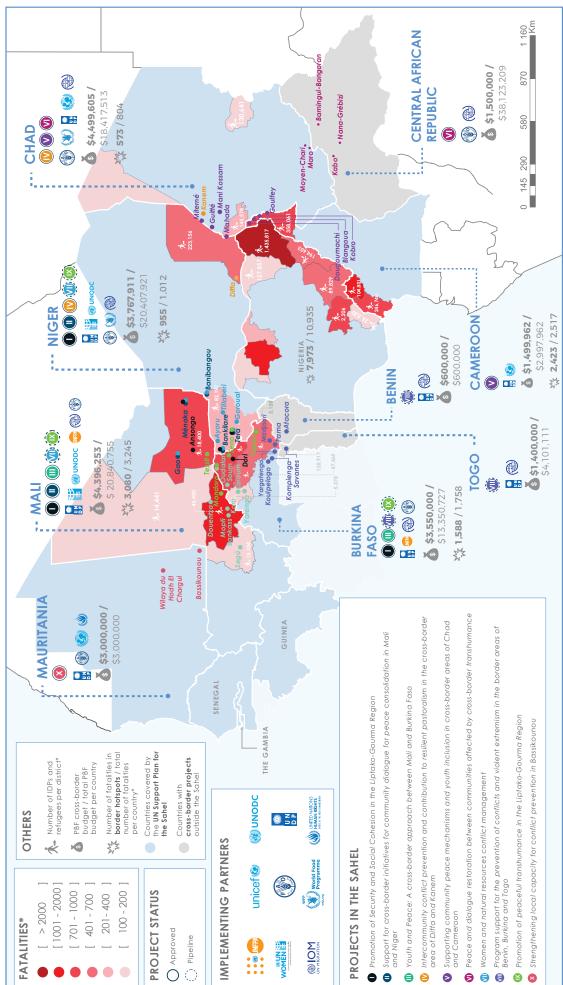
And Burkina in all this? It is with a touch of sadness that Hugues Zango tells us about his country. For the past few years, Burkina Faso has been facing security problems that continue to proliferate with their procession of death and destruction. For the athlete, "if we don't fight terrorism effectively, it's because we don't know the real and deep-rooted causes. "I seriously believe that terrorism has arisen because of our modern society, which is increasingly greedy, deepening social inequalities and ruining the hopes of millions of people," Hugues Zango insists, with great certainty. Before expressing the wish to see his country and all the other states of the Sahel region recover from the scourge of terrorism, he believes that "it will certainly give hope to all to find their place in our societies. Solidarity will be a weapon to fight this evil at its roots".

As a young African living in France, the bronze medalist is sensitive to the debate on illegal immigration. "I strongly advise young people against it, because it is playing with their own lives by using rigged dice," he says. However, he is not against legal immigration which "can allow you to grow up", as the African proverb he quotes reminds us: "A young man who has lived in 100 villages is wiser than an old man who has lived 100 years".

Hugues Fabrice Zango is very sensitive to all the suffering that Africa, and more particularly the Sahel, is going through. He has big plans for his country and the Sahel: "I tell myself that we must act. I will help and I will bring my energy to a better well being". In the long term, he plans to write books based on his sports and university experiences in order to change mentalities.

In the meantime, the Burkinabe athlete still dreams of a podium and of winning the Sahel. He promised us a show for the Olympic final of the triple jump that will take place in Tokyo on August 6th. Rendezvous taken to celebrate the Sahel that wins!





Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED), acleddata.com, January 2018 – September 2019 & OCHA HDX Sahel Countries 2019; Population Movement Data, data.humdata.org/dataset/sahel-population-movment, May 2019 The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nation

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Recipient UN Agencies	⊗ <mark>2 ª</mark> ⊃ 0							WEP WORLD Food		w unicef 🔇				D P								UN UNICEF C UNICEF
Budget	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,746,253	\$1,267,911	\$1,650,000	\$1,350,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,499,605	\$1,499,962	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	TBC	TBC	\$1,200,000	\$1,400,000	\$600,000	\$1,300,000	\$850,000	\$850,000	\$3,000,000
Region	Ansango, Menaka	Tera, Bankilare	Dori	Menaka (Anderabukane and Menaka Communes) Gao (Ouatagouna and Tessit Communes)	Tillabéry (Téra: Gorool , Bankilaré: Bankilaré Commune, and Banibangou Department: Banibangou Commune)	3 circles in Mopti Bankass, Koro and Douentza region, and 1 circle in Segou	Nord region (Yatenga and Lorum) and Sahel Region (Soum and Oudalan)	Diffa	Kanem	Guitté, Miteriné, Mahada and Mani Kossam	Dougoumachi, Blangoua, Goulfey and Kobro	Moyen Chari Region (Sarh), and Department of Grand Sido, (Maro)	Prefectures of Bamingui-Bangoran, Nana-Gribizi and sub-prefecture of Kabo	Gao region (Ansongo: Tessi, Ouatagouna, Tin-Hama) and Menaka (Ménaka: Anderamboukane,	Tillaberi, Bankilare, Ayerou, Banibangou, Téra, Goroual	Kompienga Province, Madjouari, Pama, Koulpelogo Province, Soudougui, Sangha and Yargatenga	Savanna region in Togo (Prefectures of Cinkassé, South Oti, Tone, Kpendjal, West Kpendjal (West Naki))	Atacora in Benin (Matéri, Cobly, Boukoumbé and Natitingou)	Ansango, Menaka	Tera, Bankilare	Tinakof (Oudalan), Seytenga (Senol) and Kantchari (Tapoa)	Wilaya du Hodh El charg and Bassikounou district
Countries	Mali	Niger	Burkina Faso	Mali	Niger	Mali	Burkina Faso	Chad	Niger	Chad	Cameroon	Chad	CAR	Mali	Niger	Burkina Faso	Togo	Benin	Mali	Niger	Burkina Faso	Mauritania
Project	Promotion of Sacurity and Social	Promotion of Security and Social Cohesion in the Liptako-Gourma Region			Support for cross-border initiatives for community dialogue for peace consolidation in Mail and Niger		 Youth and Peace: A cross-border approach between Mali and Burkina Faso 		Intercommunity conflict prevention and contribution to resilient pastoralism in the cross-border area of Diffa and Kanem		Supporting community peace mechanisms and youth inclusion in cross border areas of Chad and Cameroon		Peace and dialogue restoration between communities affected by cross-border transhumance		Women and natural resources conflict management		Program support for the prevention of conflicts and violent extremism in the border areas of Benin, Burkina and Togo					Strengthening local capacity for conflict prevention in Bassikounou