About UNDP Namibia

UNDP works in 170 countries and territories, helping to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities and exclusion, and build resilience so countries can sustain progress. As the UN’s development agency, UNDP plays a critical role in helping countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNDP has been a trusted development partner of Namibia helping to achieve the eradication of poverty, reduction of inequalities and exclusion in areas such as governance, inclusive green growth, environmental protection, and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

UNDP provides relevant policy advisory support, technical assistance, and knowledge to help Namibia achieve its global commitment on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It advocates for and supports Namibia to achieve the SDGs through integrated solutions and cross-sectoral efforts to secure development gains and ensure every citizen benefits from and contributes to a society that leaves no one behind.
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As I reflect upon the year gone by, a time of great uncertainty, I am enthused by the positivity and resilience of the team. We came together tied by a common purpose to move to the frontlines to support the response to COVID-19. We were challenged to respond at lightning speed, refocusing programmes and resources to provide support where it was most needed. The true meaning of leave no one behind was brought home like never before.

It goes without saying that 2020 was truly a year that tested humanity in more ways than one. The COVID-19 pandemic questioned the strength and adaptive capacity of institutions and systems; it quizzed development paradigms; it challenged our resilience. It humbled us and gave us a whole new perspective: a blank canvas to rethink and redraw our boundaries; and an opportunity to experiment and create our own Moonshot Moments!

UNDP’s newest service offering, the Accelerator Labs came at an opportune moment to launch some of these Moonshots. Working with youth, academia, private sector, government, civil society and most importantly the people on the ground, the Acc Labs waded into uncharted territory. On the one hand, they challenged youth to develop innovative apps to monitor access to services for homeless people, conduct contact tracing for the pandemic and tackle misinformation. On the other, they digitally disrupted service delivery through the launch and piloting of Tambula - an e-commerce platform, connecting informal traders to new and virtual ways of trading. Making innovation inclusive, the lab piloted the development of disability accessible communication on COVID-19.

Unusual partnerships added magic to the moonshots for environmental protection. Partnering with the Gobabeb Research Institute, 11 Millennials were trained on climate action: a first for UNDP. In another first and to bring in the people at the forefront of adaptation a series of conservation conversations were initiated, highlighting the indigenous ways of addressing climate change.

Similarly, by setting up the Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilience Facility (CRRRF), UNDP provided immediate financial relief to Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) institutions affected by the pandemic. A state-of-the-art Kraal facility offered much-needed support to farmers to market and auction their livestock, thereby improving their livelihoods in times of crisis.

Innovation, Finance and Digitalization were the three disruptors in our response to the pandemic. UNDP used this opportunity to scale its support to the health sector; from installation of solar energy photovoltaic systems in clinics, to providing sanitation and handwashing solutions. We provided tippy taps to 26,000 households around the country and access to running water to about 300 informal settlements through the installation of communal water points.

The pandemic upended livelihoods and the economy. Unusual times called for unusual solutions such as the setting up of six satellite communication centers in different regions around Namibia to decentralize skills training. Another moonshot which resulted in financing 35 micro-small-medium enterprises (MSMEs) was the SDGIF, which bridges entrepreneurship, social innovation, and blended capital to create sustainable economic and social returns.

In conclusion, these moonshot moments reflect our resilience and persistence amidst challenging times. Our steadfast adherence to the pledge that “no one will be left behind” continues to guide us. Aiming for the moon would not have been achieved without the support and commitment of all our partners, the Namibian Government, Development Partners, Private Sector, Civil Society, the UN family under the leadership of the Resident Coordinator, and most importantly the beneficiaries who are at the center of our efforts. It is through the commitment, hard work and perseverance of UNDP Namibia staff that we are able to proudly share our story with you.
Chapter 1
UNDP Namibia in 2020
Facing the unprecedented pandemic and its accompanying challenges, UNDP offered strong project, technical, and financial support to the Government of Namibia throughout the year, striving to achieve economic recovery, governance improvement, environment protection and social transformation towards the SDGs.

Namibia’s positive economic trajectory since the 2008 financial crisis was reversed in 2016, with declines in commodity prices, fiscal consolidation policies and severe drought which engendered a recession that is still ongoing. This unfavorable socio-economic context has been worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, the country’s GDP is expected to have contracted by 7.3% in 2020 (World Bank), which would be the most severe shrink ever since 1990. Meanwhile, with a Gini Index of 56, Namibia is currently the third most unequal country in the world.

Facing the unprecedented pandemic and its accompanying challenges, UNDP offered strong project, technical, and financial support to the Government of Namibia throughout the year, striving to achieve economic recovery, governance improvement, environment protection and social transformation towards the SDGs.

In addition to providing PPE to the health facilities in Namibia to address emergencies caused by the pandemic, UNDP, partnered with other UN agencies and initiated numerous projects which supported the national economy to recover from the pandemic. By conducting the Socio-economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19, and developing the UN Namibia COVID-19 Socio-economic Recovery Plan, policy recommendations were produced to support the government to efficiently respond to the pandemic. In addition, UNDP successfully mobilised resources to implement the Namibian Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) - a tool for government and their partners to finance the SDGs at the national level. The framework has been used to analyse all financing sources and non-financial means of implementation available to a country and forms the basis for designing a financing strategy to mobilise resources, manage risks, and achieve sustainable development targets. Complementing the financial structure strategy of the INFF and its aim to accelerate the implementation on the SDGs, the CO launched the SDG Impact Facility (SDGIF) in November. The SDGIF is a multi-stakeholder financial and capacity building platform that provides grant funding to women and youth in business.

Political stability in Namibia has contributed substantially to the country’s strong growth in the past. Similarly, a renewed emphasis on strengthening effective governance contributes to its inclusive development. UNDP has provided support to the public service through capacity development interventions focused on improved accountability. The newly established and functional Accelerator Lab has worked with both the Office of the Prime Minister and the Anti-Corruption Commission to find ways to embed user and citizen-centered initiatives to supplement current projects. Using a combination of behavioral insights, form re-design and crowd-sourcing of ideas through hackathons, the Lab experimented with ways of sharing knowledge gained from the insights of these initiatives. UNDP also provided support towards enhancing transparent elections, as well as the evaluation of the National Anti-Corruption Strategy.

Due to the long-lasting extreme aridness, the ecosystem in Namibia is persistently vulnerable. One of the priorities for UNDP is to support the government to address environmental challenges, to ensure sustainable environmental management and enhanced resilience. In 2020, UNDP provided technical support to government to design measures to proactively address human-wildlife conflict and wildlife crime in hotspot landscapes, and to strengthen Namibia’s capacity to meet the enhanced transparency requirements defined in the Paris Agreement. Furthermore, it provided financial support to the revision of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the global fight against climate change, particularly in the Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU) and Waste sectors.

Social transformation is one crucial pillar under the Fifth National Development Plan (NDP 5). To meet the urgent needs, in partnership with the NPC, UNDP finalized the Namibia Human Development Report 2019 which focused on reducing severe nation-wide inequalities. Additionally, the National Disability Forum was launched to draw cross-sectional attention to the rights of persons with disabilities. Moreover, UNDP initiated the Solar for Health (S4H) project to increase access to electricity and quality health services by installing solar energy photovoltaic systems.
Working From Home During the Pandemic

Prior to the Corona virus disrupting our routine workplace practices, colleagues at UNDP Namibia took their daily journey to the office for granted. There was nothing extra-ordinary about waking up in the morning, completing household chores, and setting off for the office. Since COVID-19, much has changed and the norm of a daily trot to the Office seemed so far removed from our current reality, that many question whether work as defined by the hours spent physically planted in an Office in UN House will ever return. If there is one lesson, we have all learnt is that productivity and results are not umbilically linked to reporting to the Office daily.

Since the 2020 onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, UNDP undertook many adjustments to accommodate the workforce. Employers, including UN Agencies rose to the realization that staff had to be facilitated to provide ongoing and continuous care to members of their families whilst not compromising results related to employment obligations. At UNDP Namibia, we quickly introduced a telecommuting policy which allowed staff to work from home, maintain high performance levels, remain safe, and provide care to members of their families. The ongoing support to staff fundamentally pivoted our work culture and brought about changes to the workplace particularly in reducing the number of personnel in the Office at any given time. UNDP Namibia implemented measures to observe COVID-19 protocols, and since the second quarter of 2020, our team has had to adjust to the new normal of working from home.

The results of a mini survey conducted by the country Office in September 2020 revealed that whilst staff welcomed the flexibility of working from home, many colleagues missed the connectedness with their workmates. Some enjoyed being able to spend more time with their families whilst others faced inconveniences such as inadequate structural support, namely quiet and well-equipped spaces, and reliable internet services at home. Coming to gripes with the changing circumstances of balancing personal safety and wellness, work obligations, career progression and the future of the workplace is an ongoing debate and some of our team members took time out to share their thoughts with us.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic has come as a threat, it has taught us to be innovative, such that it has led us into modes of operation that we now consider to be normal. We were so much used to working from the office from 8 am to 5 pm; however, in the pandemic era, we can work from home. All that is needed is just a laptop and reliable internet connection. Even with signing documents, there is no need to print them first, DocuSign has made things easier for us. When it comes to meetings, we were used to attending them physically; however, with technology in place, we mainly attend them virtually. Nevertheless, despite the changes in the way we operate, we are still winning and have not lost focus on our work.

Working from home due to COVID19 made me smarter, as I was alone most of the times, instead of asking for help from my colleagues should I have been at the office, I figured things out myself. It taught me to be more flexible and adaptable, be grateful for every little thing in life and to be positive always, because COVID19 negatively impacted those that responded to it negatively and responded positively to those that were positive always.

The beginning was a challenge, as one needed to adjust between family and work, but as time passed by, it became a new World to adjust to. It has both good and bad experiences, but we are grateful that technology has empowered more flexible working conditions through virtual meetings and online platforms. With technology with fellow colleagues we have a great opportunity for collaboration and communication. We are encouraged to be attentive and take care at all time.

For the first 3 months of my contract, I only ever met my colleagues online. My biggest challenge with adjusting to COVID-19 has been the unpredictability of planning events, as social distancing regulations frequently change.

My top tip for making working from home effective is developing a disciplined, flexible and good routine. In my case, I can work from home or in the office without impinging my productivity. I keep the distractions to a minimum and I remain focused on the important things that need my attention. I think the Country Office will one day return to normalcy with most colleagues working from the office.
Chapter 2

Our Focus in 2020

Governance and Partnerships

The Accelerator Lab engagement facility offers innovative ways of addressing development priorities and is a recent addition to the cutting edge offers of the UNDP. Through the services of the lab, the Country Office combines experimentation, exploration and sense-making with its traditional approach to address development priorities captured in the CPD. Throughout 2020, the lab initiated several interventions which contributed to development results, such as partnering with local universities, the National Statistics Agency and other non-traditional partners. A significant achievement was the integrated and intraoperable design of the National Spatial Data Index and the Leave No One Behind standards which were gazetted in 2020. Among the interventions were initiatives on Governance and Partnerships, and Social protection.

Words of 2020:
To summarise the Accelerator Lab’s activities and equally to focus on what we have learnt, we generated a word cloud which captures most of the work we ventured into.
The Focus of UNDP Accelerator Lab Namibia

The Network of 91 Accelerator Labs across the globe are set up as a collection of engagement facilities with globally defined outcomes curated to address national-level priorities. The cumulative global impact is expected to result in a shift from the business-as-usual approach to a more agile application of experimentation to address global development priorities.

In order to capture lessons that cut across geographic boundaries, country development status, and/or digitisation level, the network has centralised reporting and communication of results, oversight, governance, monitoring & evaluation, quality assurance, strategic risk management & portfolio fund management. Each lab is fully accountable for disaggregated resources and results at the country level.

While 2020 was a year that to many, was fraught with challenges and uncertainty due to COVID-19, the Accelerator Lab faced challenges and converted threats into opportunities. Reporting for the year, the Accelerator Lab used the Country Programme Document and the United Nations Partnership Assistance Framework to map their frontier challenge.

To ensure alignment and integration with the programmes set out for 2020, the Accelerator Lab identified ‘Effective Governance’ as a frontier challenge. It began the sensemaking process by procuring the services of a governance expert who worked with the Lab to unpack and find a chapeau of governance solutions. The Lab’s first learning cycle led us on a journey to explore why the process of decentralization was so slow to take off in Namibia. The Lab embarked on a journey to ask the questions for how to introduce participatory planning and open government as key tools and ingredients to present different approaches to improve and enhance civil society engagement and strengthen governance, starting with regional councils and local authorities.

The Lab began planning for several vital experiments to test whether there would be appetite for a hefty ministry to make a significant impact through the work and methodology of the Accelerator Lab. The initial ideas were to work with the Ministry of Urban and Rural Development to co-design and co-develop a new rural development strategy, converge of local economic development initiatives and revisit the decentralization strategy. Mid-plan, and at the end of March 2020, COVID-19 up-ended the work, forcing the team into their homes coupled with the need to mask up, wash hands, constantly sanitize and work remotely while adjusting to curfew hours.
Challenges in Governance, Now and Future

While in lockdown and maneuvering various remote working online tools, the Namibian Accelerator Lab were fortunate to connect with our fellow Accelerator Labs worldwide. In designing the learning cycle on governance, the Lab collaborated with the Ethics Office at the Office of the Prime Minister to make sense of why public officials do not complete declarations on work engagement outside the public service. In the process, the Lab assisted the Anti-corruption commission in exploring how to support them to develop a communication campaign that is both citizen-centered and participatory. The Accelerator Lab was also called upon to improve customer feedback, a short experiment run with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Immigration, Safety, and Security using a QR code and digitalising the experience. This collaboration resulted in an additional request from the Ministry for a rapid assessment of their systems integration. This project received financial backing and technical support from UNDP’s head office of Digital Identity.

In unraveling our frontier challenge, the Lab learned that governance is complex, and in order to improve service delivery, it is necessary to venture into the worlds of those most underserved and those who were experiencing financial exclusion. The Accelerator Lab worked with the Namibia Informal Economy Organization (NISO) to conduct a diagnostic study of the informal economy.

Covid-19 Response

The Accelerator Lab ran a Service Innovation Hack (ISIH), an online Hackathon which took place in August 2020. It resulted in three potential solutions, which will be tested in collaboration with a local private Sector Tech Solutions Company - Green Enterprise Solutions. In addition to these solutions, the Lab also facilitated the launch and piloting of Tambula, an e-commerce platform, connecting the informal traders to new and virtual trading and delivery methods. An app was also developed in collaboration with Namibia University of Science and Technology to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness. The Homeless Peoples App and the COVID-19 General Information App, which the Ministry of Health and Social Service are using, have both received the Accelerator Lab’s support. The Accelerator Lab also facilitated the design, development, and launch of the SDG Hub, which is currently being hosted and moderated with the Namibia Statistics Agency. The Lab is also involved in contributing to an annually hosted event known as the Tech Innovation Bazaar. This event is driven by one of the UNDP’s partners, MTC Namibia, a mobile telecommunications company, in partnership with the NUST Tech Hub and other partners who are interested in investing in Namibian Digital Talent and Innovators.
Environmental Response
Protecting People and Planet 2020

- Supporting community-based natural resources management entities (conservancies, community forests, associations and national parks) during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Improving community resilience and reducing poverty in rural areas through the establishment of 5 landscapes for sustainable nature-based livelihoods, protecting and restoring forests as carbon sinks, and promoting Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN).
- Enhancing the integrated management of transboundary marine resources in the Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (BCLME).
- Supporting Namibia to increase the country’s ambitions on climate change adaptation and mitigation targets in line with the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC.
- Reducing pressure on forest resources by gazetting the official designation of Community Forests and increasing the capacity for the uptake of improved agriculture, livestock, and forestry management practices in the community forests.

Namibia has built its conservation practices on a people-centered approach, referred to as community-based natural resource management (CBNRM). CBNRM entities were negatively impacted by COVID-19. In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, the Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism (MEFT) partnered with UNDP Namibia to establish the Conservation Relief, Recovery and Resilience Facility (CRRRF), which is managed by the Environmental Investment Fund of Namibia (EIF). The CRRRF has rapidly catalysed significant financial support from development partners including the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), KfW Development Bank, and GIZ; private sector (NEDBANK Namibia); and NGOs such as Community Conservation Fund of Namibia (CCFN), Namibian Association of Community-Based Natural Resources Management (CBNRM) Support Organisations (NACSO), Integrated Rural Development and Nature Conservation (IRDNC), Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF), and The Nature Conservancy. The CRRRF was established to provide immediate financial relief and initiate recovery interventions within the CBNRM institutions. Further, a multi-disciplinary task force with state and non-state actors was established to mobilize additional partners and ensure quick disbursements to reach remotely based-beneficiaries. Through CRRRF, the multi-stakeholders sought to facilitate medium to long-term recovery while building resilience for the CBNRM entities to safeguard the environment. In the long run, this secured tourism and other natural resource-based enterprises to ‘pay for conservation efforts’ and to ‘generate livelihood benefits,’ In 2020, the CRRRF achieved the following:

- CRRRF provided relief to 84 conservancies to ensure continuation of essential CBNRM activities such as anti-poaching, mitigation of human wildlife conflicts, monitoring and management of wildlife.
- UNDP’s CRRRF support directly benefited 19 conservancies with a total of NAD 2,503,069. In total, CRRRF supported 439 beneficiaries (i.e. 205 community game guards, 112 conservancies’ staff, and 122 conservancies’ committee members).
- UNDP’s CRRRF supported beneficiaries came from 6 out of the 14 regions in Namibia: Oshana, Zambezi, Kunene, //Karas, Otjozondjupa, and Hardap.
- Among these was the Kyaramacan Association, which directly supports the indigenous Khwe community within the Bwabwata National Park.
Besides the CRRRF, UNDP Namibia in partnership with the Crisis Bureau Digital Unit and the UNV Tandem Unit supported the Government with the socio-economic impact assessment (SEIA) of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism sector in Namibia. In keeping with the ‘new normal’, UNDP adopted digital platforms covering i) Namibia Tourism Assessment; ii) Namibia Nature-Based Enterprises Assessment; iii) Namibia National Parks, Conservancies and Community Forests Assessment (which targeted Namibia’s 20 National Parks, 86 Conservancies and 43 Community Forests). In addition to the digital platforms, support was provided to ensure coverage in hard-to-reach remote areas with little to no internet connectivity. The iv) Namibia Tourism Exit Survey is to be concluded later as tourists were not active due to the COVID-19 lockdown situation in 2020.

The findings of 2020 analyses will provide strategic guidance and create evidence leading to the development of a Tourism Recovery Strategy for Namibia. Besides the findings will be produced in visual formats and a multidimensional vulnerability index (MVI) will be developed as part of the assessments.

A survey of 485 tourism enterprises produced the following key findings:

- 24.1% of female workers were retrenched due to COVID-19;
- 63% of enterprises closed temporarily due to COVID-19;
- 3% of businesses filed for insolvency;
- 66% of businesses were able to adapt. Wage subsidies, cash transfers for businesses and loan repayment relief were listed by the enterprises as the three most requested solutions to the crisis.

**Related publication**

**Namibia COVID-19 Conservation Conversations 2020**

UNDP Namibia released the first edition of the publication titled “Namibia COVID-19 Conservation Conversations,” featuring the voices, experiences, and hopes of the CRRRF beneficiaries.

[Download](#) (Download it from UNDP Namibia official website)

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**Improving community resilience by promoting nature-based livelihoods**

In July 2020, the MEFT and UNDP Namibia launched the Namibia Integrated Landscape Approach for Enhancing Livelihoods and Environmental Governance to Eradicate Poverty (NILALEG) Project. The NILALEG Project is co-financed by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and is designed to promote an integrated landscape management approach that assimilates sustainable practices for key agricultural and forest landscapes. In so doing, the project aims to reduce poverty through sustainable nature-based livelihoods, protect and restore forests as carbon sinks, and promote Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN).

The NILALEG Project is designed to benefit 20,818 beneficiaries, half of whom will be women. Besides that, the project intends to support the implementation of locally-adapted integrated and sustainable landscape management approaches, targeting five focal landscapes: Omaopianga, Ruacana, Okongo, Nkulivere, and Zambezi. These are located in five different administrative regions: Kunene, Omusati, Ohangwena, Kavango West, and Zambezi. Furthermore, the project design has taken into consideration the principle of ‘Leaving No One Behind’ and targets vulnerable groups and beneficiaries, such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

The project, which is nationally implemented by the MEFT, receives USD 10 million in GEF funding and is expected to run until 2025.
Sustainable management of marine resources

Sustainable fishing is beneficial to national economies and yields positive benefits for small-scale fishers who rely on fish stock to sustain their livelihoods. In partnership with the Benguela Current Convention (BCC) as the implementing partner, UNDP Namibia continued its support to a regional project for Angola, Namibia, and South Africa (BCLME III). The project aims to improve resource management in the abundant Benguela Current Large Marine Ecosystem (BCLME), shared by the three countries. One significant milestone was the Namibian hake fishery being certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) in 2020, thus becoming the second fishery sector in Africa (after South Africa) to receive certification by the MSC. One major element of certification and a requirement for re-certification is the joint management of stock with South Africa. With the support of the BCLME project, officials from the two countries have agreed on an integrated regional approach that will guarantee continuous sustainable management of the hake resource.

In an effort to continuously promote youth involvement in sustainable environmental practices, the Country Office supported the BCLME project to launch an initiative to engage young people as ambassadors of the environment. In November 2020, twelve Youth Ambassadors - four from each of the three countries, were selected as advocates to raise young voices, increase awareness and engage young people on ocean governance issues. Despite being launched late in 2020, the ambassadors successfully organised beach clean-up days, and participated in theme days on top predators in Swakopmund and Walvis Bay (hosted by the Project Management Unit), which raised public awareness around these issues. The BCLME III project receives approximately USD 11 million in GEF funding, and the UNDP serves as the GEF Implementing Agency. The GEF remains an extensive and long-standing partner in the journey of the BCLME. Previous rounds of GEF funding for the project resulted in establishing the Benguela Current Commission, thus formalising the collaborative platform for the three countries.

Supporting Namibia to achieve its climate change commitments

In response to the Paris Agreement commitment to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, UNDP supported Namibia through the Climate Promise to update its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). Through Climate Promise support, Namibia is ambitiously committed to reduce emissions by 91% in the Updated NDCs, compared to 89% previously committed. To raise awareness on how climate change can be addressed in Namibia, UNDP adopted the Mission 1.5 online game, which was promoted through flash mob events and the use of social media influencers. Namibian citizens were enabled to give their opinions (in the form of votes) on how the government can limit global warming to 1.5°C, thus bridging the gap between the average Namibian citizen and the government.

In addition to the Climate Promise and Mission 1.5 game, UNDP pursued collaborative arrangements and partnered with the Gobabeb Namib Research Institute (Gobabeb) to initiate the Climate Action for Millennials Programme (CAMP), which will be running from 2020 to 2023. The CAMP aims to train young Namibian graduates to become climate ambassadors.

Reducing pressure on forest resources

On the 5th of March 2020, UNDP Namibia officially handed over the Talismanus Auction Kraal and Marketing Facility to the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry (MAWF). The facility was constructed as part of the Sustainable Management of Namibia’s Forested Lands (NAFOLA) Project. The facility provides an opportunity for farmers to trade their livestock sustainably. It also contributes to the prevention of overgrazing and helps curb livestock morbidity and death during droughts. The objective of the NAFOLA project was to reduce pressure on forest resources by facilitating the official designation of Community Forests through gazetting and increasing the capacity for the uptake of improved agriculture, livestock, and forestry management practices in areas designated as community forests. The project was initiated in 2014 in different regions across Namibia and came to an end in December 2019. Through the implementation of the NAFOLA Project, nine community forests were gazetted, ten Integrated Forest Management Plans were developed, and a National Forest and Veld-fire Management Policy & Strategy was prepared. The NAFOLA project also supported the thinning of three bush encroached sites, covering twelve hectares. It received USD 4,446,000 of GEF funding, complemented by USD 500,000 of UNDP funding, USD 4,500,000 of GIZ funding and USD 17,500,000 of government co-financing.
Besides officially handing over the Talismanus Auction Kraal and Marketing Facility, UNDP Namibia, jointly with the MEFT, officially inaugurated the Otjiu-West and Oshampula Community Forests and Community Conservancy Office Facilities in the Kunene region on November 13th, 2020. This historic event was held approximately 89 km from the nearest tarred road and about 800 km from Namibia’s capital, Windhoek, at one of the most remotely located places in the country.

Through consultation with the primary beneficiaries, it became clear that to fully realise the objective of community forests in Namibia, the official designation had to be supplemented by institutional support (provision of office premises). Therefore, a multi-purpose facility with office, meeting, and workshop space, was established for the 16 member Management Committee of the Otjiu-West Forest Management Body (FMB). In the Otjiu-West Community Forest, beneficiaries participated in various training programmes designed to empower them to manage their community forest. The training programmes have equipped them with skills and competencies in Roles and Responsibilities of a Forest Management Committee (FMC), Financial and Procurement Management, and Permit Issuance. Efforts are also being made at the local level to mainstream gender and increase women representation. The FMB currently consists of 11 men and 5 women, which is good progress towards gender equality. Furthermore, through the NAFOLA project, the Otjiu-West Community Forest conducted a comprehensive assessment of marketable forest and non-forest tradeable products and other income-generating options, which has contributed to a reduction in poverty and hunger in beneficiary communities.

It is expected to be used for scaling of the 54H intervention to 89 additional public health facilities.

Solar 4 Health

UNDP’s Solar for Health (S4H) initiative financially supported the government to increase access to quality health services by installing solar energy photovoltaic systems in order to secure reliable access to electricity, while mitigating the impact of climate change and advancing multiple SDGs. Through the S4H, UNDP contributed to collective efforts by placing highly technical international solutions on combating climate change at the disposal of local partners. UNDP’s engagement resulted in enhancing the resilience of public health systems through the S4H regional programme. Low carbon energy solar systems were commissioned for installation in six clinics/facilities in the Kunene, and Kavango East/West regions to improve delivery of health services to people living in these rural areas. Additionally, UNDP provided the facilities with energy-efficient equipment to optimize the operation of the solar systems. Furthermore, capacities of government were enhanced through technical support provided by the UNDP to develop an innovative financial structure that is expected to enable the scaling of the S4H intervention to 89 additional public health facilities.
When the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared COVID-19 a global pandemic, the UNDP Namibia Country Office sprang into action and designed interventions to address crisis prevention and increased resilience. Through its COVID-19 Rapid Response Facility, the Namibia CO crafted a response which focused on the three UNDP corporate offers of prevention, recovery, and response. In the initial stage, the Country Office provided direct support to the government of Namibia through the provision of PPEs, sanitation, and hand washing solutions. Up to 26,000 households in the Khomas, Erongo, Kavango East & West, and the Zambezi regions were provided with Tippy Taps. About 300 homes in informal settlements received access to water through the installation of communal water points. As part of its support to the Ministry of Health and Social Services, UNDP deployed technical and financial resources to curb the spread of COVID-19. Risk communication material, including material prepared to target visually and hearing-impaired individuals, were designed and distributed throughout selected communities. These interventions built capacities on recovery through permanent solutions in water access in one informal settlement. We undertook analyses to help the government and other actors have access to up-to-date information for building back better.

**Tippy Taps**  
**Innovative solutions for hand-washing tools in rural areas**

Primarily used in remote and rural areas with no running water, a Tippy Tap is made with locally-sourced materials for little to no costs. The tools required to set up a Tippy Tap include sticks, a string, soap and a container for the water.
During this challenging time, the Country Office staff collected voluntary contributions from team members and donated food and toiletries to Windhoek’s local communities through a volunteer-led community food drive called CoFeed Namibia, which aimed to put food on the tables of those who suffered most from the negative effects of the pandemic. The staff contribution included non-perishable food items, cleaning products and toiletries that were much needed during these times. This staff initiative largely benefited women who were the ones most disproportionately affected at the household level.

In July 2020, a massive fire swept through Twokololo, an informal coastal settlement in Walvis Bay located in the Erongo Region, leaving over 100 households without shelter and exposed to contracting the COVID-19 virus. The UNDP and UNICEF contributed to the Humanitarian Development effort by jointly supporting a community of approximately 98,837 people through risk communication and providing immediate relief through a COVID-19 Cash for Work programme. Seventy-six volunteers (59 F, 20 M) were recruited over four months to support COVID-19 risk communication activities in selected neighbourhoods thereby reducing the respective communities’ risks of contracting COVID-19.

$ 60,000 was contributed by UNDP and UNICEF. reached 98,837 people in this community.
Economic Inclusion

I. Analyzing the 2020 Challenges

Namibia entered the pandemic in a weakened economic state having experienced four years of weak growth or economic contractions. Furthermore, the COVID–19 pandemic has been a hard hit to Namibia’s economy. The impact of the pandemic has been deeply felt across various economic sectors and has negatively affected GDP growth, production sectors, and poverty and inequality levels particularly among vulnerable groups.

According to the World Bank, the Namibian annual GDP contracted by 8% in 2020. This is the highest contraction that the country has recorded evidenced by time series data for 1981 – 2020 (of which -1.6% in 1993 is the second largest decline). The Bank of Namibia (BoN) estimates that the country’s export of goods in 2020 contracted by 7.4%, whilst import of goods increased by 11.4% (BoN, 2021), causing a substantially exacerbated the trade deficit for the period. In real terms, final consumption expenditure declined by 7.2%. Similarly, the gross fixed capital formation (investment) also registered a decrease of 15.9%.

Declines have been witnessed across virtually all the main sectors and industries.

- The Secondary industries (Manufacturing etc.) were under the most enormous impact, posting a decrease of 14.4% (NSA, 2021).
- Followed by the Primary industries (Mining, Agriculture etc.) with a contraction of 6.1% (NSA, 2021).
- Despite experiencing a major production growth in 2020 due to good rainfalls after the drought of 2019, the Namibian agricultural sector is still expected to take a hit due to the adverse impact of the pandemic. The closure of farmers’ markets has led to limited access to retail markets for fresh fruits and vegetables; exports of live cattle, sheep; and Swakara pelts, which have declined by 52.8%, 80.7% and 90%, respectively (NAU, 2020).
- Furthermore, the Tertiary industries (Services sector etc.) recorded a decline of 5.6% (NSA, 2021). Among which, a catastrophic blow was suffered by the tourism industry. The State of Emergency that was put in place from April to August 2020 to contain the COVID-19 spread, entailed closure of borders which adversely impacted 96.5% of businesses in the sector. Particularly hard-hit sub-sectors are the conservancies and the wildlife economy, which represent a considerable 20.3% of employment in the tourism sector (NSA, 2020).

The poverty and inequality levels among the vulnerable groups have been exacerbated.

According to the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation, more than 12,000 workers were retrenched in 2020, due to the struggling business impacted by the pandemic. In addition to significant job loss, the World Bank (2021) estimates that reduced income has pushed an additional 200,000 people into poverty. The number of Namibians now living in poverty is estimated to be 1.6 million (measured by the upper middle-income poverty line - $5.5/person/day in 2011 Purchasing Power Parity terms). The pandemic mostly affected already vulnerable people and threatens to further widen social gaps and increase already extremely high inequality (WB, 2021). Specifically, only 34% of the country’s population has access to good sanitation facilities, a value that drops to 14% in rural areas. In addition, rising food prices and the loss of school feeding programmes due to the closure of schools have aggravated food insecurity in Namibia, especially amongst poor households.

The fall in production, consumption, employment, income and overall welfare of the country during 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic has strained progress in the attainment of the SDGs and highlighted the importance of UNDP’s impact in Namibia. In 2020, UNDP led a series of COVID-19 impact assessments and the recovery plan development, conceptualized the Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) to identify alternative funding sources for recovery and development, as well as launching the SDG Impact Investment Facility (SDGIIF) to support MSME growth and value chain’s upgrading. UNDP was at the forefront in supporting Namibia’s response to and recovery from the impact of the pandemic, and was a key player in supporting Namibia’s efforts to achieve long-term sustainable development.

"The fall in production, consumption, employment, income and overall welfare of the country during 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic has strained progress in the attainment of the SDGs and highlighted the importance of UNDP’s impact in Namibia."
II. Developing response and recovery plans based on comprehensive impact assessments

Undertaking the SEIAC-NAM to assess the general impact of the pandemic

On 14 March 2020, Namibia reported the first case of COVID-19 in the country. On 17 March 2020, a State of Emergency was declared, which was followed by a national lockdown. In order to support the GRN to effectively design and implement measures to protect the country from irreversible effects of the COVID-19 pandemic that had begun to claim lives and destroy livelihoods, the UNDP led the UN system to undertake a comprehensive Social-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in Namibia (SEIAC-NAM). The SEIAC-NAM was premised on the five pillars of the United Nations Framework for the immediate socio-economic response to COVID-19, and highlighted the early signals of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Namibian society, especially its economy, its social sectors, and the populations most at risk. Based on the comprehensive impact assessments, the government of Namibia was presented with systematic policy recommendations to build back better.

Conducting specific assessments to support the most impacted sectors and groups

Following the recommendations emerging from the SEIAC-NAM, UNDP assisted the GRN to conduct two sectoral diagnostics and assessments which focused on the most impacted sectors. The National Diagnostic Study of the Informal Sector in Namibia, and the Namibia Tourism Assessment were undertaken to provide deep insights of the impact of the pandemic on the sectors.

In addition, UNDP also undertook the Rapid Assessment of the impact of COVID-19 on Vulnerable Groups and the Informal Sector in Namibia. The assessment focused on vulnerable groups, namely women and girls; elderly persons; youth; low-income households; MSMEs and the informal sector. Policy recommendations were developed to support the government to strike a balance between health risks and economic fallout, and to efficiently and effectively aid and protect the vulnerable groups and sectors.

Developing the Socio-Economic Recovery Plan to support the building back better

Following the key findings from the SEIAC-NAM, UNDP led the UN system to develop a Socio-Economic Recovery Plan (SERP), as the UN’s contribution to the GRN’s COVID-19 Recovery Plan. The SERP provides key strategic interventions that the UN system in Namibia will implement over the period of 12 to 18 months to assist the GRN in its response to and recovery from the impacts of the pandemic. The key interventions include, strengthening efficiency in the health system, enhancing WASH for vulnerable households and children, developing a tourism sector rebuilding strategy, and providing support for its recovery, and leveraging opportunities of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).
III. Establishing the INFF to match resources for recovery and sustainable development

The Integrated National Financing Framework (INFF) is a country-owned financing frameworks which brings together financing and related policies most relevant to addressing a country’s financing challenges in accordance with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA). As one of the 16 pilot countries that expressed willingness during the UN General Assembly, the Namibian Cabinet has endorsed the establishment of an INFF, to serve as an entry point financing framework to leverage the potential of varying sources of development finance to support the country’s long-term vision (Vision 2030) being implemented through the National Development Plans and the Harambee Prosperity Plan II, as well as the economic recovery, and ultimately the realization of the SDGs by 2030.

Starting in 2020, the establishment of the INFF covers a two-year span. In 2020, UNDP as the leading UN agency, focused on supporting the GRN to design the governance structure and plan the INFF. As a result, the first SDG oriented governance structure in Namibia was designed and has resulted in strengthened partnerships amongst parties committed to sustainable development. Furthermore, broad commitments have been secured by the governance structure, including those from international financial institutions (IFIs), bilateral development partners, the private sector, civil society organizations, and the academic and research institutions. Additionally, the thoroughly developed Work Plan, with the country’s key recovery and development demands covered, has offered practical programmatic support to the government to secure transparent, gender responsive and cost-effective implementation.

IV. Enhancing the local value chain through boosting the development of the MSMEs

Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have been a crucial subset of national economies the world over. In comparison with other African countries, the MSME sector in Namibia is relatively small. One main obstacle to its growth and development is the barrier to financial access. According to the estimation made by the International Finance Corporation (IFC) in 2017, the annual financing gap to MSMEs in Namibia is $1.8 billion. In order to reduce the gap limiting the MSMEs’ growth in Namibia, and to enhance Namibia’s role in the AfCFTA value chain, UNDP and the Ministry of Industrialization and Trade (MIT) jointly established and launched the Sustainable Development Goals Impact Investment Facility (SDGIIF) in November 2020.

The overall SDGIIF is valued at N$ 8 million initially. In partnership with Standard Bank Namibia, it is designed to provide mentorship grants and debt financing to women and young people in business, social enterprises and MSMEs, to address the challenges of the financing gap. The mentorship grants are distributed through three windows. The economic sectors being promoted are: Window 1 - Sustainable Agriculture (climate smart/ conservation agriculture), and Nutraceuticals (use of sustainably sourced natural resources); Window 2 - Sustainable Tourism; Window 3 - Information Technology (digitalization initiatives to address a need) and Renewable Energy.

By the end of 2020, the initiative achieved significant results. A total of 35 fledging and aspiring entrepreneurs (of which 18 were female) received support to the tune of N$ 2.5 million in grant funding. Recipients came from a wide cross section of regions including Khomas, Oshana, Erongo, Otjozondupa, Karas, Zambezi and Kavango East and West. The grants were allocated to support innovative and value-added businesses such as climate smart hydroponic feedlot, and a processed food production establishment.
Chapter 3

Programme, Income and Expenditure

Budget vs Expenditure

Note: figures are in USD

2019
Total Budget 5,785,087

86.92% of the total budget

2020
Total Budget 6,123,668

94.44% of the total budget

Contribution from donors

- Expense $3,820.7K, Budget $3,600K
- Expense $1,453K, Budget $1,434K
- Expense $289K, Budget $344K
- Expense $215.5K, Budget $208.3K
- Expense $128K, Budget $149K
- Expense $135K, Budget $143K
- Expense $119K, Budget $120K
- Expense $83K, Budget $63K

$ 5.735M Total Contribution
Note: figures are in USD

**2020 Top 10 Projects**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Expenditure Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>PIMS S313 Improving Ocean Governance and Integrated Mgt</td>
<td>1,739,434</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Namibia Integrated Landscape Approach for Enhancing Live</td>
<td>1,732,608</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Enhancing Entrepreneurship Development in Namibia</td>
<td>1,366,672</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Improving Hepatitis E Response Namibia</td>
<td>1,367,235</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Namibia’s Fourth Biennial Update Report</td>
<td>994,360</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Accelerator Lab Namibia</td>
<td>994,360</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Sustainable Environmental MGT and Enhaced Resilience</td>
<td>618,497</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Programme Support CPD 2019-2023</td>
<td>624,846</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Support to Inclusive Governance</td>
<td>221,792</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Namibia’s Fourth National Communication (NC4)</td>
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*Note*:
Some projects have more than one project sites.
Future Forecast and 2021 Priorities

Since the approval of its new Country Programme Document (CPD), the CO has made significant strides in expanding its programme portfolio. Not only have we mobilized additional resources, we have also been successful at allocating and delivering an increased amount year-by-year. In 2021, the Country Office is poised to increase its programme resources by 68% over 2020. We also envision that our delivery will increase from USD6,829,441.00 in 2020 to USD7,600,523.00 in 2021, representing an 11.3% increase in the amount spent to achieve development results in Namibia.

COVID-19 has unfolded some new areas of engagement causing the Country Office to prioritize interventions in inclusive growth, SDG Financing, and livelihoods promotions in the informal sector. In all the proposed priority areas, the Country Office will emphasize digitalization and innovation as methods for achieving development results.

Recognizing the need to expand its programming footprint, the Country Office has formalized the establishment of three portfolios, designed to structure programmatic interventions in line with the 2019-2021 CPD and the UN’s Development Assistance Framework for Namibia. The portfolios are:

- Diversified Employment, Pro-poor Income and Sustainable Livelihoods for women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalized populations (SIGG)
  - contributing to UNPAF/CPD Outcome “By 2023, institutions upscale efforts to implement policies for inclusive development and poverty reduction for vulnerable groups.”

- Sustainable Environmental Management and Enhanced Resilience (SEMER) to shocks and crises
  - contributing to UNPAF/CPD Outcome “By 2023, vulnerable populations in disaster prone areas and biodiversity sensitive areas are resilient to shocks and climate change effects.”

- Improved governance for accountable, responsive institutions and civic engagement (GRICE)
  - contributing to UNPAF/CPD Outcome “By 2023, government institutions at national and regional level are accountable and transparent, engaging citizens in participatory decision-making processes.”

The Country Office will also align its staffing structure and enhance its human resource capacity to respond to the growing demands.

Armstrong Alexis
Deputy Resident Representative
UNDP Namibia

Namibia’s Top 5 Projects 2020/2021 comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
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<tr>
<td>NILALEG</td>
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<td>BCLME</td>
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<td>EMPRETEC</td>
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<td>1,026,585</td>
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<td>Namibia Pharmaceutical Supply Chain</td>
<td>537,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity Building for Transparency (MRI for Climate Change)</td>
<td>466,225</td>
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</tbody>
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Note: Figures are in USD.