Our engagement for the West Sahel Region

In March 2021, the Sahel Resilience Project engaged with its partner organizations as follows:

- On 31 March, the Project held its first Board meeting (online) under the auspices of the African Union Commission (AUC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) acting as Co-Chairs.
- Some 40 representatives from partner organizations (list below) alongside officials from disaster management agencies and gender affairs departments from the Governments of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal discussed the progress and way forward for the Project in 2021.

Formally composed of AUC, ECOWAS, UNDP, UN Women, AGRHYMET, PeriPeri UK
The Sahel Resilience Project extends its support at the regional and national levels to respond to COVID-19 pandemic from June 2020 onwards. Total resource envelope is $1,480,000 US dollars.

Regional level

Allocation of $730,000, activities initiated in the third quarter of 2020 continued through the first and second quarters of 2021.

- Regional Assessment of the Socio-economic Impact of COVID-19 and Disaster Risk Governance in Western Sahel: for this ongoing baseline assessment in the seven project countries from a regional perspective by the Data Pop Alliance, the study methodology was revised with inputs from UNDP technical advisory team; discussions were held on data collection methods and tools to capture COVID-19 impacts at the household level.
- The Concept Note on COVID-19 Recovery Framework for Africa, developed as part of UNDP’s support to the African Union’s Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Development for COVID-19 Recovery was presented to the participants of the Africa Working Group on DRR; revision of the Concept Note based on comments received from the participants and development of the Recovery Framework will be supported by UNDP through the Africa Regional Programme and in collaboration with other partners.
- Multi-sectoral coordination for COVID-19 recovery at the continental and regional level by AUC and ECOWAS (HR support from the project for a duration of four months) – A consultant has now joined the African Union Commission; a second round of outreach to potential candidates for ECOWAS occurred in early April.
- Risk communication to support effective COVID-19 response and recovery at the continental and regional level by AUC and ECOWAS (HR support from the project for a duration of four months) – Two communications consultants have joined AUC and ECOWAS respectively, in early April.

Other meetings this month:

- Participation in the Africa Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction, co-organized by UNDRR and AUC on 25 and 26 March; on this occasion UNDP presented the Concept Note prepared for AUC on the COVID-19 Recovery Framework for Africa.
- Meeting with UN-HABITAT on resilience-building in urban areas in the Sahel, including an upcoming regional urban risk assessment with national analyses and city case studies in the seven project countries.
- Meeting with the Regional Stabilization Facility of the Lake Chad Basin Commission on joint conflict and disaster risk analysis in the Lake Chad Basin.
- Participation in UNDP West Africa Hub’s dialogue with The Netherlands to explore partnership and collaboration in Sahel activities.
National level

Allocation of $750,000 in total: this support initiated during the third quarter of 2020 in all seven project countries is reaching the completion phase. A final report is expected end April 2021.

- **Burkina Faso**: Risk communication, community engagement and information management capacity building for COVID-19/crisis response.
- **Chad**: Establishment of a disaster information management system at the national level for effective crisis/COVID-19 response, support for the Directorate of Civil Protection for COVID-19 response and a disaster risk management framework.
- **Nigeria**: Sound management and disposal of health care wastes in collaboration with UNDP Accelerator Lab.
- **Mauritania**: Assessment of technical and operational needs of the different services involved in the response, as well as the needs of populations and communities. Support the establishment of multi-sectoral coordination mechanism at the level of each wilaya (region) of Mauritania for effective crisis management.
- **Mali**: Training of focal points to raise awareness in schools about respect for barrier measures, provision of reusable masks to 5,000 pupils from disadvantaged communities, support for SME cooperatives to preserve existing jobs, with the production of masks, and to prepare these businesses for the post-Covid-19 recovery; provision of two laptops to the National Civil Protection Directorate for the data collection on COVID-19.
- **Niger**: Study of the impact of COVID-19 on the food security and socio-economic sectors, and provision of two laptops for the data collection.
- **Senegal**: Establishment of an operational Early Warning System collecting disaster data, including sectoral data with an "epidemic" window to integrate COVID-19 data, disaster risk and COVID-19 advocacy by women’s groups on community radios, multi-sectoral coordination of COVID-19 response and recovery at the national and sub-national levels.
What happens in April?

In April, we will:

- Follow-up on discussions with partner organizations (AUC, ECOWAS, UN Women, Periperi U, AGRHYMET) on 2021 work planning (endorsed by the Board on 31 March) and project implementation.
- Facilitate the transfer of project funds to AUC, ECOWAS and AGRHYMET to start implementing their project activities for the year.

Project Activities

Regional level

- Identification of an expert to conduct the capacity needs assessment of AGRHYMET towards the establishment of a regional information platform for the analysis of disaster statistics.

National level

- Monthly discussions with Disaster Risk Reduction focal points in UNDP Country Offices in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal to discuss the implementation of project activities in 2021 and the response to COVID-19.
- Terms of Reference for a national UNV to support project implementation (one in each project country) have been developed and shared with the UNDP Country offices.
• Capacity building of ECOWAS and its Member States in disaster preparedness, response and recovery through external expertise (the consultant started in March).
• Capacity building of AUC in urban risk management, Terms of Reference and identification of an expert consultant.

Knowledge products

• Annual Report 2020 (April)
• Report on COVID-19 Response (May)
• Assessment of challenges faced by the Sahel countries in the implementation and domestication of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction /AU Programme of Action and post-disaster recovery (June/July)

Our partners

Sweden and UNDP support the Sahel Resilience Project with an overall budget of $7.5 million US dollars over three years.

Partners

Anchored in a partnership for disaster risk management with the African Union Commission (AUC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), UN Women, and UNDP, the Sahel Resilience Project coordinates with regional bodies and institutions – the Lake Chad Basin Commission, the university consortium PeriPeri UWASCAL (Stellenbosch University), and the specialized agency AGRHYMET – and with national disaster management agencies.

At the national level, the Sahel Resilience Project aims to enhance disaster risk reduction strategies and resilience-building, implemented by Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal. The project puts a strong focus on data collection and their commitments to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Africa Programme of Action for the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the Africa Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Five areas of action

1. Data for decision-making: Increased capacity of tracking the domestication of Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the implementation of the African Union’s Programme of Action in the Sahel region through enhanced data collection, analysis and reporting systems.
2. Risk governance: Strengthened regional and multi-country regulatory, policy and budgetary frameworks for translating disaster and climate data into risk-informed development.
3. Preparedness for recovery: Enhanced regional recovery and resilience-building processes that address underlying disaster and climate change risks and restore pathways to sustainable development in the Sahel countries.
4. Resilient urban areas: Enhanced regional capacities for urban risk management
5. Regional engagement: Enhanced innovations and knowledge of risk-informed development through regional dialogue and South-South exchanges.

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