Partners Engagements

• A virtual consultation on disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation was held on 17 June to inform the formulation of UNDP’s next Regional Programme for Africa, highlighting the multiple dimensions of risk and resilience-building across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Participants were independent researchers as well as representatives from UN agencies, civil society organizations, regional technical organizations and think tanks. They discussed the following avenues for building resilience to multiple shocks in the West and Central African region: i) Effective risk governance and risk-informed development; ii) Robust preparedness and early action; iii) Strengthening local coping capacities; and iv) Building a better future. The consultation identified specific priority actions in each case, where UNDP has a comparative advantage, and key recommendations that will contribute to the next Regional Programme for Africa.

• The Sahel Resilience Project is discussing with PeriPeri U, the university network that is hosted by Stellenbosch University in South Africa, the possibility of offering short courses on disaster risk financing and urban risk management.

• PeriPeri U continues to hold online talks with renowned experts in disaster risk and associated fields such as climate change, water sustainability, development, and...
associated issues such as climate change, water sustainability, development. Speaking at PeriPeri U Talks, Gatkuoth Kai, Disaster Risk Reduction Technical Coordinator for the African Union Commission facilitated a session on Disaster risk management and climate change adaptation (being) not informed by African indigenous knowledge, highlighting that there is untapped potential in traditional skills, and stressing the need to include indigenous perspectives in disaster risk management.

Watch the Talks | PERIPERI U on YouTube

Engagement with ECOWAS

- UNDP and ECOWAS Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs met on 24 June and examined the synergies and complementarities of the collaboration between the Sahel Resilience Project and the intergovernmental organization. It was agreed by ECOWAS and UNDP that for the proposed DRR/Resilience strategy to be endorsed by ECOWAS as a regional strategy, it should involve all ECOWAS member states and not just the ECOWAS countries covered by the Sahel resilience Project.
- Investing in better recovery preparedness and risk reduction rather than response is critical in the West African context, where recovery includes disasters caused by natural hazards/climate change as well as conflict, rehabilitation and reintegration actions. For ECOWAS, this requires further adaptation and dissemination of existing tools and guidelines on recovery assessments and planning, such as the post-disaster needs assessment.
- The forthcoming review of public expenditure and institutions on disaster risk reduction and climate change under the auspices of the project should be used as a resource mobilization tool at the annual Conference of the Parties (COP). Project countries such as Niger and Burkina Faso, and the Sahel region in general, could thus develop a common position by participating in the COP negotiating groups.

Engagement with other initiatives

- UNDP has recruited an international expert to carry out a capacity assessment of the AGRHYMET Regional Centre from early July, with the aim of identifying potential gaps in the capacity of the Niamey-based centre to function as a regional information platform on agrometeorological, hydrological and climatic data to support early warning and risk-informed development in the Sahel countries.
- The Sahel Resilience Project participated in discussions with the Liptako Gourma Authority from 14 to 16 June, to underscore disaster management and climate aspects in risk-based planning in the regional stabilization mechanism that UNDP will support through short-term stability interventions in strategic locations.
- The World Bank Group arranged on 22-23 June two consultative workshops about recovery planning and development practices in partnership with UNDP and ECOWAS, which objectives were to: (i) document experiences, gaps, opportunities and lessons learned from post-disaster needs assessments (PDNA) and recovery planning undertaken in West Africa since 2008, as well as recommendations for regional collaboration; and (ii) define next steps to establishing a pool of regional experts available to support recovery needs assessments and planning. These brainstorming sessions, in which the Sahel Resilience Project participated, aimed to contribute to better recovery preparedness in member states with the provision of tools and guidance as well as pre-identified experts, and clear mechanisms for their rapid deployment and funding.
- UNDP Sub-Regional Centre for West and Central Africa and the African Development Bank Group held on 16 June a regional consultation to explore areas of collaboration in addressing fragility, conflict and violence in the region. The ongoing collaboration between the Sahel Resilience Project and the Regional Stabilization Facility of the Lake Chad Basin Commission was cited as a concrete example of the application of a multi-risk approach in stabilization efforts as well as medium- and long-term recovery and resilience building solutions in the Lake Chad Basin. The aim is to respond to and recover from multidimensional crises while adapting to climate change. The African Development Bank Group recently unveiled its new strategy for addressing fragility and building resilience in Africa (2022-2026).
Disasters have a disproportionate impact on women and girls, and certain age groups including youth and the elderly. Integrating gender policies into disaster risk reduction helps reduce their vulnerability and build the resilience of these groups in society.

- In the area of disaster risk management, UN Women partners with UNDP, ECOWAS Directorate of Humanitarian and Social Affairs and its Disaster Risk Reduction Unit, the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC) and the PeriPeri U university consortium. UN Women also collaborates with the G5 Sahel and CADRI, and coordinates from Dakar the regional Gender in Humanitarian Action network, which brings together UN agencies, international organisations, NGOs and women-led organisations and women's rights organisations.

- UN Women recruited an expert to work on a guide for gender-age-disability disaggregated disaster data in risk-informed development planning and across sectors; the guide will build on ECOWAS Disaster Risk Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2030 that was supported by the World Bank Group and agreed upon by member states in 2020, to ensure that disaster management data and language are gender-sensitive.

- UN Women also collaborates with ECOWAS country gender focal points to identify women-led organizations in the region and prepares the participation of ECOWAS in the regional high-level forum on the resilience of women and girls in the LCdLi region, to be held in Cameroon in September 2021, including specific sessions on disaster risk reduction and the participation of identified women-led organizations.
The project re-programmed disaster management activities to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic at the regional level and in the seven project countries in June 2020. Total resource envelope is $1,442,000 US dollars to date (initially for 6 months in 2020, extended to 2021).

Regional Activities

Allocation of $742,000 for regional activities initiated in the third quarter of 2020; the following activities were continued in the first and second quarters of 2021:

- Comprehensive assessment of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 and the role of disaster risk governance in the Western Sahel and Lake Chad Basin region by Data-Pop Alliance. Key national stakeholders are being consulted in the seven project countries in order to validate the preliminary findings of the assessment and to enable national ownership of the findings and recommendations. The consultation series started on 29 and 30 June, respectively in Burkina Faso and Nigeria. The UN Resident Coordinators are supporting these national consultations which will continue in July, ensuring the participation of the UN system and government agencies.

- The concept note earlier shared with the African Union’s Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment for a COVID-19 Recovery Framework for Africa resulted in a formal request on 20 April from AUC to UNDP to further support the development of this framework in the continent; the framework will emphasize the importance of ensuring that core public health functions and emergency and disaster risk management for health are in place to prevent future similar crises. Following a stakeholder mapping exercise, the assessment of UNDP and UN system support is underway.

- Comprehensive assessment of the status of multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWS) by CIMA Foundation for the African Union Commission. Following the initial assessment of the current state of multi-hazard early warning at continental, regional and national levels, CIMA presented the institutional arrangements and operational concepts of the MHEWS at two workshops with member states and representatives from RECs in early June. Their comments were incorporated into the draft institutional and operational framework, which has been circulated for consultation. Stakeholders are invited on 14 July to discuss the roadmap and next steps for the framework’s implementation, as well as an upcoming simulation exercise. The implementation phase will then be funded by the Italian government.

National activities

A budget of $100,000 has been allocated for each of the seven project countries. Disaster management agencies also received two laptops – in some countries with modems and subscriptions for online meeting platforms – to support data collection and exchange. Activities initiated in the third quarter of 2020 continued through the first and second quarters of 2021 and are nearing completion.

Read more | COVID-19 response in the Sahel region
Our agenda in July

- **5 July onwards** – Capacity assessment of AGRHYMET, the Niamey-based centre of excellence in agrometeorology, hydrology, and climate data, will be carried out from 5 July onwards.
- **12-13 July** – 14th Consultation of the Regional Committee for Disaster Management in West Africa currently chaired by Niger, bringing together representatives of five member states, partners of the Sahel Resilience Project, will be held in Niamey, Niger under the auspices of ECOWAS and UN OCHA.
- **14 July** – Comprehensive assessment of the status of multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWS), consultation of African Union’s Members States and Regional Economic Communities to discuss the roadmap and next steps, as well as a simulation exercise.
- **July** – Comprehensive assessment of the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 and the role of disaster risk governance in the Western Sahel and Lake Chad Basin region by Data-Pop Alliance; remaining policy consultations in five out of seven project countries and with regional stakeholders will continue in July.
- **July** – Disaster and Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional review will be launched in two countries in July.

Flagship Studies

The Sahel Resilience Project has initiated three ongoing foundational studies; two are related to the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic. Findings from these studies will shortly help establish i) a baseline for the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the AU’s Programme of Action by ODI, ii) the status of multi-hazard early warning systems in Africa by CIMA Foundation, and iii) COVID-19 socio-economic recovery needs for building the resilience of those most impacted by the pandemic by Data-Pop Alliance, which will be pivotal to plan recovery and building back better from crises. See the above snapshot of our COVID-19 response.

- 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 by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) under the auspices of the African Union Commission is expected in September. Following a series of virtual and in-person consultations in project countries – Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal – during the first quarter, ODI finalized the country chapters, and integrated feedback from all stakeholders in May. The translation of the study in French and the creation of infographics to illustrate the results are expected shortly.

National Activities

- The project held monthly coordination meetings with Disaster Risk Reduction focal points in UNDP Country Offices in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal to review the implementation of project activities in 2021 and monitor the completion of specific activities in response to COVID-19 from July 2020 onwards.
- UNDP DRR Teams in Country Offices are processing the recruitment of national UNVs – one in each of the seven project countries – to help implement project activities and coordinate with national stakeholders (continued).
• **September** – High-level regional forum on the resilience of women and girls in the Lake Chad Basin will be held in Cameroon, including specific sessions on disaster risk reduction and the participation of identified women-led organizations

• **Ongoing** – Drafting of a guide on gender-age-disability disaggregated disaster data in risk-informed development planning and across sectors by UN Women

• **Ongoing** – Scoping of UNDP/UN support for AUC to develop the COVID-19 Recovery Framework for Africa.

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### Our Partners

The Sahel Resilience Project is funded by Sweden and UNDP with an overall budget of $7.5 million US dollars over three years (2019-2022).

The project is based on partnerships between UNDP regional, and national institutions working in the area of disaster risk reduction and COVID-19 response:

- African Union Commission (AUC)
- Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)
- UN Women
- Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC)
- PeriPeri U/WASCAL (Secretariat hosted by Stellenbosch University)
- AGRHYMET Regional Centre

The project focuses on the transboundary dimensions of disaster risk and climate pressures in the Western Sahel, aiming to strengthen national commitments to the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in the African Union’s Programme of Action in Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal.

### 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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