



**UNITED NATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME  
ANNUAL REPORT 2020**

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## Did you know?

**The sunflower is a world within a world.**

Its head (pictured on the cover) is comprised of a thousand tiny flowers; each petal is a flower in itself. Reaching between 1 and 5 metres in height, the drought-tolerant sunflower will follow the sun from sunrise to sunset. And its seed has been cultivated as a healthy food source for over 8,000 years, longer than corn and beans. Native to North America, it is now harvested globally.

**UNDP works in much the same way: connecting detail to scale.**



# Foreword

## Development's Biggest Challenge

In 2020, a tiny virus humbled the human race and ignited a development emergency. Though its impacts were felt very differently, the COVID-19 pandemic was – and continues to be – a uniquely common experience for our generation, with no space for bystanders.

For the first time in 30 years, global human development declined. People everywhere struggled to stop the spread of the virus, save lives and respond to the unprecedented socio-economic trauma it created. The climate crisis deepened, despite a temporary dip in carbon emissions as the world hit the pause button. And as silent streets gave way to protests, inequality, racism and discrimination were laid bare as weapons of oppression that must be abandoned once and for all. It was in the eye of this perfect storm that the Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals began.

2020 was more than a year of tragedy. It was also the moment when people everywhere demonstrated what is possible when humanity strives to be the best version of itself, even in the face of complexity and deep uncertainty. And in the pages that follow, I invite you to explore what I saw in 2020: a UNDP, working hard as part of the UN family, to be the very best version of itself.

This UNDP Annual Report takes a look at the results we achieved with countries and communities through 12 intense months. It considers the role we played as the technical lead of the UN's socio-economic response to the COVID-19 crisis, providing in-country analysis to help 144 countries

better understand what action to take, deploying nearly US\$1 billion to over 170 countries and territories, helping government and health systems to function, protecting jobs and livelihoods and rapidly expanding social protection.

It takes a look at how we played this role, pushing the boundaries of how UNDP thinks, delivers, invests and manages. It illustrates how *#NextGenUNDP* institutional and financial investments – such as the People for 2030 strategy, the UNDP Digital Strategy, the Global Policy Network, the Accelerator Labs Network and the creation of the Crisis Bureau – made it possible to offer a more coherent, rapid response.

The report features UNDP's global ideas and research on building forward better, which we tabled in 2020 to lift the ambition of global policy responses. These ideas range from introducing a temporary basic income for all people living in poverty to launching a new, planetary pressures-adjusted Human Development Index – part of UNDP's 30th anniversary look at *The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene*.

These pages also capture how, throughout 2020, UNDP held the thread between the micro and the macro, addressing urgent local needs and advancing global systemic change: clearing over 400 football fields-worth of land of explosives in war-hit Yemen to enable humanitarian aid to get to those in most need, for example, while expanding the Climate Promise – the world's largest offer on enhancing Nationally Determined Contributions – to 115 countries.

Behind the results achieved are the day-to-day stories and determination of the millions of people with whom UNDP works. People like 25-year-old Khowla in Somalia, who runs an Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre and mediates community disagreements on everything from land theft to domestic violence. Or 13-year-old Wajalad from Iraq, who attends a repaired school that was shattered by war and dreams of being a doctor like his father. And Juana from Peru, who raises her voice in a male-dominated mining sector to call for healthier, more sustainable gold mining.

Their stories intertwined with those of our UNDP teams in a very personal way in 2020. During what was a difficult year for nearly everyone, one in which our colleagues lost friends and family members, people were separated, schools closed and lives upended, our teams proved something remarkable: that the United Nations stays and serves when it matters most.

Finding a way forward from COVID-19 will be the journey of our generation. And it starts with a choice: to make the pandemic the tipping point that leads to transformation for people and planet – or not. At UNDP (and at the UN), we have made our choice. I am convinced that if we commit to listening to and working with the people closest to the big issues of our day – from the climate crisis to inequality and conflict – then we will find a way forward together.

Thank you for taking a look at our work, which was made possible by the support, generosity and investment of our many partners. I encourage you to read on.



Photo: UNDP/Michael Atwood

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Achim Steiner".

**Achim Steiner**  
Administrator  
United Nations  
Development Programme



**9 OF UNDP'S 10**  
largest country programmes  
are in crisis settings



**3 MILLION PEOPLE**  
**43% women,**  
in 27 crisis-affected  
countries got a job or a  
better livelihood in 2020



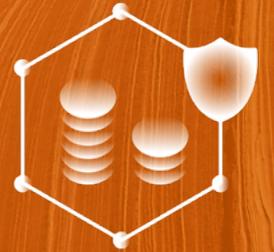
**115 COUNTRIES**  
covered by the UNDP  
Accelerator Lab Network



**62 COUNTRIES**  
have Integrated National  
Financing Frameworks in  
place for the SDGs



**82 COUNTRIES**  
supported to strengthen  
social protection during the  
COVID-19 pandemic



**US\$1 BILLION**  
to help countries prepare,  
respond, and recover  
from COVID-19



**6 DAYS**  
for UNDP to go digital  
during the pandemic,  
60+ countries supported  
to do the same



**RANKED NO.1**  
for transparency across the  
United Nations



**US\$5.4 BILLION**  
in revenue



**20,000 PEOPLE**  
working together across  
**170 COUNTRIES**  
and territories



**50:50**  
gender parity across  
UNDP's leadership



**US\$355 MILLION**  
more for development  
through efficiency and  
institutional performance



**118 COUNTRIES**  
are part of UNDP's  
Climate Promise, delivered with  
**35 PARTNERS**



**16 MILLION**  
people in 32 countries gained  
access to justice



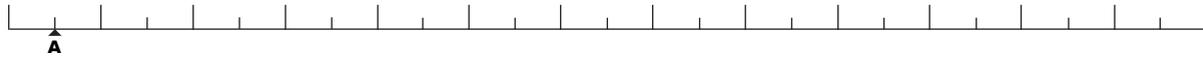
**62 MILLION**  
people had access to basic  
and financial services



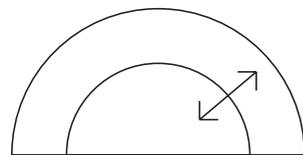
**74%**  
of 26 million new voters  
registered in 24 countries  
were women

# UNDP 2020

With UNDP support, millions  
of people improved their lives.



## When micro meets macro



UNDP's attention to detail at a global scale

Working with 170 countries and territories gives UNDP a vast perspective on the world.

It allows us to understand the relationships between local and global, between detail and scale, and how one impacts the other.

By collaborating with countries and local communities, we can find and create development solutions that are magnified through our global network.

Think of UNDP as the dash in “micro-macro”. This approach could not be more relevant, with COVID-19 – a disease caused by a microscopic virus – impacting the global economy and threatening lives and livelihoods everywhere. Whereas in terms of the climate crisis, each one of us has the power to push our planet to the brink – and also pull it back from it.

Through our development settings and Signature Solutions, UNDP is able to tackle the most complex, integrated problem from different angles. And always with the most macro-level objective in mind: the Sustainable Development Goals.

Because no challenge is too big nor too small when we work together.

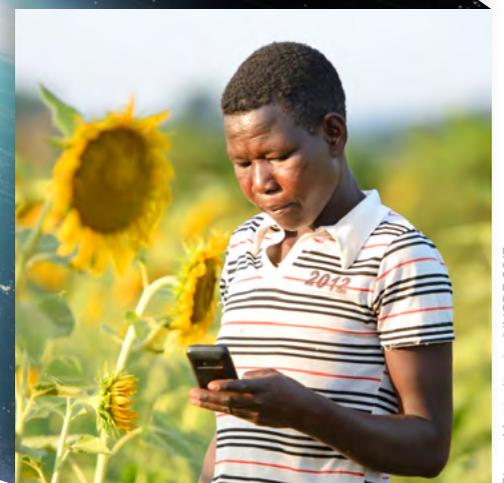


Photo: Martin Jjumba/UNCDF 2017

# The year we fought a virus

## Managing the COVID-19 crisis, building forward better

COVID-19 heightened awareness of connections between the pandemic and habitat loss, the climate emergency, growing inequalities, contested democratic values and protracted conflicts – and the need to act as one in response, taking a big-picture approach.

UNDP's two COVID-19 response offers – *Prepare, Respond, Recover*, launched in March, and *Beyond Recovery, Towards 2030*, which followed in June – along with their accompanying rapid financing frameworks, kept the organization and its development investors focused on the urgent and the important. This supported a fast, scaled and coherent corporate response to the development emergency of the pandemic, as part of the overall UN system response.

When the virus hit, UNDP went digital in just 6 days so that it could stay and serve and help others to do the same. Its efforts delivered concrete local results, helping governments and health systems to keep functioning, protecting jobs and livelihoods and getting cash and basic services to those in need. All while helping to create the local and global conditions for countries to build forward better in line with Agenda 2030.

### UNDP leveraged its \$1B Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria partnership to:



Deliver  
**\$200M**  
IN PERSONAL PROTECTIVE  
AND MEDICAL EQUIPMENT AND  
DIAGNOSTICS TO 107 COUNTRIES



Train nearly  
**280,000**  
HEALTH CARE WORKERS IN  
PANDEMIC RESPONSE



Protect nearly  
**900,000**  
JOBS



Support almost  
**1.2M**  
INFORMAL  
WORKERS



Support  
**56,900**  
PRIVATE SECTOR  
COMPANIES the majority  
small and medium-sized  
enterprises (SMEs)

### In addition:



**1.8M**  
PEOPLE  
directly benefited  
from cash transfer  
programmes



**3M**  
PEOPLE  
got access to critical water  
and sanitation services,  
**HALF OF**  
THEM WOMEN



**788,000**  
PEOPLE  
benefited from  
psychosocial support

### As the UN's technical lead on its socio-economic response, UNDP worked with partners on critical analysis to help guide decision-making:

**144**  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
IMPACT ASSESSMENTS  
across 97 countries led by UNDP



**119**  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
RESPONSE PLANS  
prepared with UN partners



**HALF** included  
engagement and insight  
from the **WORLD BANK**,  
a **THIRD** from the **IMF**

Meanwhile, progress was made on UNDP, UN, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), and European Union efforts to develop Integrated National Financing Frameworks in 62 countries, 40% of which are now aligned with countries' COVID-19 response plans as a result.

These macro-level interventions – made possible through multiple partnerships – are helping to guide governments' public policy decisions amid unprecedented complexity. UNDP's ability to understand the details and to connect the dots with and for others allows us to create impact at a global scale.



**5,300**  
COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS  
received UNDP support to fight the pandemic and its  
"shadows", including gender-based violence, human  
rights abuses and racism and discrimination



UNDP helped  
**6,700**  
GOVERNMENT ENTITIES  
ACROSS 82 COUNTRIES  
to keep working  
(81% subnational entities)

# We cannot lose sight of the SDGs

Time for a decisive, integrated push

The devastating effects of COVID-19, the climate crisis and rising inequality are not evenly distributed. But they are interconnected – and so must our response be. To that end, UNDP is committed to strengthening and broadening its partnerships. Only then can we be at our best in helping to build more just societies that afford dignity to all people, ensure a healthy planet, and reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 through a determined Decade of Action.

The SDGs compel UNDP to solve big, systemic puzzles in new ways. We won't achieve all 17 through incremental change and individual projects. Tabling new research in 2020, UNDP recognized COVID-19 as a tipping point that poses a profound but predictable threat to SDG progress yet creates opportunities for change. Ambitious but feasible SDG investments across governance, social protection, the green recovery and digitalization – the four integrated areas of UNDP's second COVID-19 response offer – could lift an additional 146 million people out of extreme poverty by 2030. The majority of these people are in fragile, conflict-affected states, reinforcing the importance of investing in integrated SDG action now and the implications of not doing so.

This and other primary research by UNDP in 2020 suggests that while the next frontier for human development is complex and uncertain, it can be navigated with agility, innovation and an ambitious architecture of interconnected policy interventions and political choices.



# UNDP's leadership team

For Administrator Achim Steiner and the executive management team, it was “business uninterrupted” in 2020. With cameras and mics on, they ensured UNDP kept delivering across 170 countries and territories.



\* As of April 2021, **Usha Rao-Monari** has taken on the role of Under-Secretary-General and Associate Administrator.

\*\* As of February 2021, **Khalida Bouzar** has taken on the role of Assistant Secretary-General and Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Arab States.

**1. Achim Steiner** Administrator **2. Mourad Wahba** UNDP Acting Associate Administrator and ASG for the Regional Bureau for Arab States **3. Angelique M. Crumbly** Bureau for Management Services **4. Ahunna Eziakonwa** Regional Bureau for Africa **5. Abdoulaye Mar Dieye** Senior Adviser to the Administrator **6. Asako Okai** Crisis Bureau **7. Haoliang Xu** Bureau for Policy and Programme Support **8. Kanni Wignaraja** Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific **9. Sarah Poole** Officer-in-Charge of the Regional Bureau for Arab States **10. Luis Felipe López-Calva** Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean **11. Mirjana Spoljaric Egger** Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States **12. Ulrika Modéer** Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy

# People, purpose, progress

## Improving inside and out

From 2018, through UNDP's People for 2030 Strategy, we significantly stepped up efforts to attract, retain and develop top talent to help countries deliver on the SDGs. We introduced a new, entry-level programme for recent graduates, the first African Young Women Leaders Fellowship Programme, and a stipend for all interns.



Our 2020 Global Staff Survey figures show that UNDP's teams are pulling in the same direction – an important indicator for long-term success.

At the heart of the People for 2030 Strategy lies UNDP's commitment to a safe, inclusive working environment. This includes tackling all forms of discrimination and harassment, including all forms of sexual misconduct.

In 2020, we also introduced an improved performance management system, a new mobility policy and a new career management framework.



**80%**  
OF GLOBAL STAFF SURVEY RESPONDENTS

believe that all employees are treated with dignity and respect (23% above external benchmark)



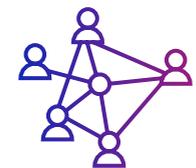
**UNDP HAS A 50:50 GENDER BALANCE**

across its Assistant Secretary-General, Resident Representative and Deputy Resident Representative groups



**33**  
UN VOLUNTEERS HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED

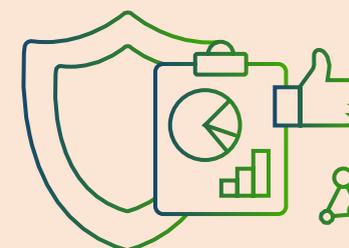
through the UNDP-UNV Young Professionals with Disabilities Programme (2019-2020)



**60%**  
OF COUNTRY OFFICES

have now completed the Gender Seal

The Gender Seal recognizes and incentivizes good performance of UNDP teams in delivering transformational gender equality results.



**UNDP ranks in the top 5% of all organizations**

according to the 2020 Global Health 50/50 report and its Gender and Health Index, "the world's most comprehensive index on gender in global health organizations".

# #NextGenUNDP

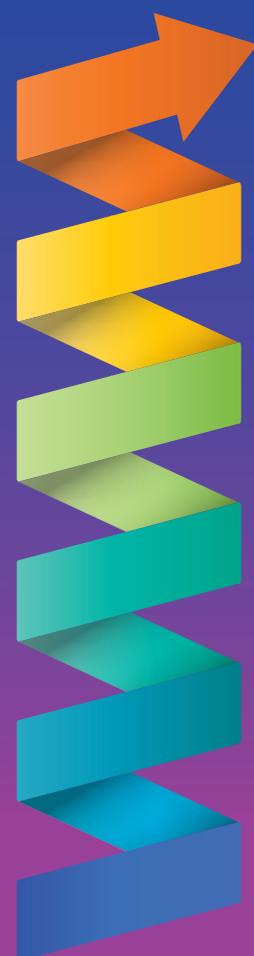
Smarter, faster, bolder than before

Since 2018, UNDP management and teams have endeavoured to take an organization that was built for a different generation and make it effective for this one and ready for the next, working hard to reorient its mindsets, strategies and capabilities. This required pushing the boundaries of how UNDP thinks, delivers, invests and manages.

The result is #NextGenUNDP. In 2020, our organization faced the ultimate stress test, but we were ready, as a result of the investments made across this Strategic Plan period. UNDP continues to be a partner of choice as we move into the second year of our COVID-19 response.

## Milestones and results, financial and institutional

UNDP is on track to meet our four-year management efficiency target of 7.3%. Throughout this Strategic Plan, programme delivery has risen and related institutional expenditures have been reduced. Our other achievements include:



### Balanced budget

for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row



### \$4.5B IN PROGRAMME DELIVERY

in 2020, our 2<sup>nd</sup> highest in 6 years



Nearly  
**60%**  
OF **\$3.2B BUDGET**  
is in complex, fragile contexts

**\$1.2B**  
IN AFRICA REGION  
programme delivery, our  
highest ever



### \$355M IN ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

for development in 2018-2020 through stronger, more efficient performance



**15<sup>th</sup>**  
CONSECUTIVE UNQUALIFIED  
(CLEAN) AUDIT OPINION  
from UNBOA for year ending 2019

## Accelerator Labs Network

UNDP's Accelerator Labs Network taps into the power of wider, richer sources of innovations by exploring the inventions of the women and men closest to poverty, the impacts of climate change and, most recently, this global pandemic. Thanks to support from key partners like Germany and Qatar, we have:

a total of  
**91 Accelerator Labs** covering **115 countries**  
including 79% of Least Developed and Low-Income Countries  
and 66% of Small Island Developing States.

**60** ACCELERATOR LABS  
(UP TO 2020)

**31** NEW ACCELERATOR  
LABS LAUNCHED IN 2020



The network has increased our institutional agility and is helping to trigger a cultural economy of scale – shifting mindsets from projects to portfolios, and from experimentation to transformation and scale.

Our Labs teams worked in Nepal to help local government report quarantine data, with the Palestinian people, connecting small-scale women farmers to customers through web platforms, in Rwanda to support the roll-out of robots for COVID-19 treatment centres, and in Tanzania to help a 3D community design, produce and distribute personal protective equipment to health workers. Through initiatives like these, UNDP's Accelerator Labs Network epitomized just how central digital interventions were to our results in 2020 and will be to the future of development.

## Helping the world go digital

“Digital by default” has become part of the UNDP family’s DNA, driven by government demand. 2020 saw a surge in e-everything – from accelerating the reach of telemedicine in Indonesia and creating digital IDs for migrants in Turkey to expanding social protection platforms in Belize and fighting fake news in Guinea-Bissau, India, Morocco and beyond.

During COVID-19, UNDP’s support has helped 82 countries to keep functioning remotely, moving essential public services and business continuity online. We obtained 12,900 Zoom licences for partners at 40% below cost and supported approximately 290 entities in their digital transitions, including the offices of Heads of State, Parliaments and ministries.

To support evidence-based insights, we launched the Data Futures Platform. Drawing on data sources from across the UN system and partners, the platform builds on UNDP’s long-standing commitment to leveraging technology and innovation in responding to development challenges.

The pace at which UNDP went digital in 2020 was enabled by the organization’s new Digital Strategy. Establishing the policies, norms and standards that guide and accompany an inclusive digital transformation will be a central development challenge in the immediate years ahead.

### Saving a planet load of paper

UNDP rolled out an electronic signature platform in 2020, increasing organizational efficiency, saving the equivalent of **5 million** sheets of paper and reducing our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by **154 metric tonnes**.



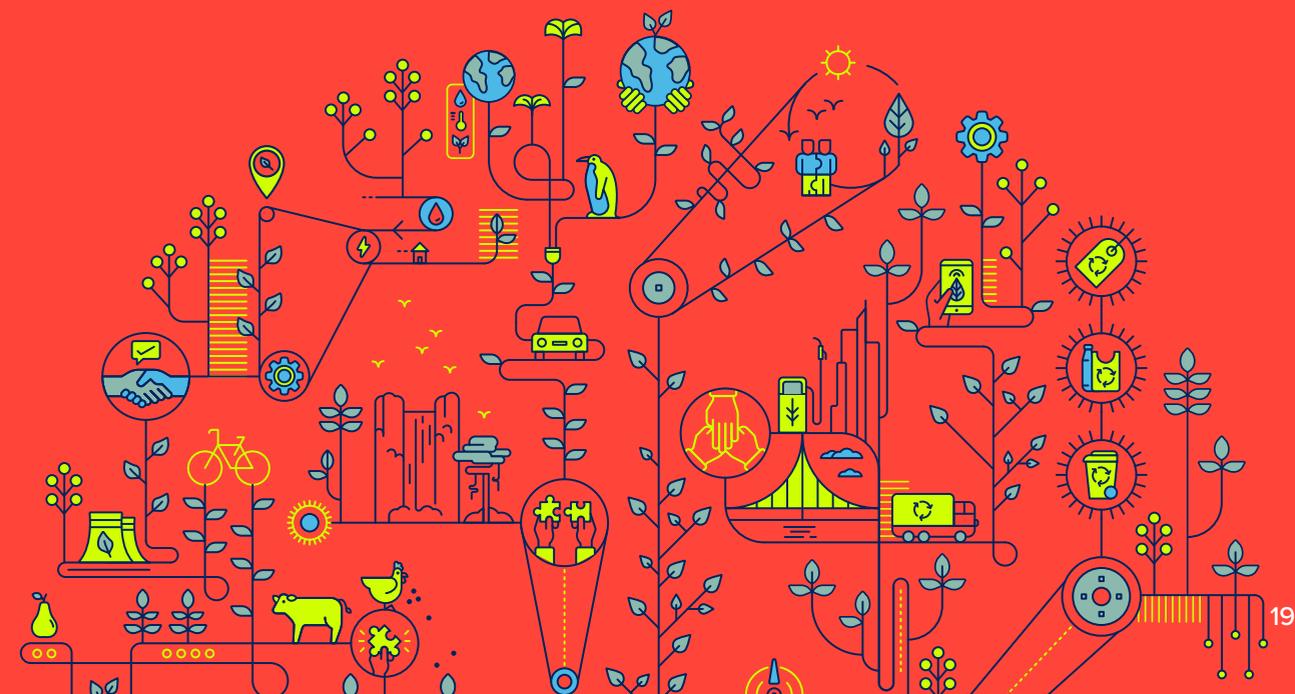
# Human Development Report 2020

## The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene

UNDP’s 2020 HDR marked the second in a trilogy of reports looking at different aspects of inequality and related crises facing the world, the latest being the COVID-19 pandemic. It took COVID-19 very little time to expose and exploit overlapping inequalities as well as weaknesses in social, economic and political systems, threatening to reverse human development by 30 years.

Though humanity has achieved incredible progress, we have taken Earth for granted, destabilizing the very systems upon which we rely for survival. The 2020 HDR advocates that while no country in the world has yet achieved very high human development without putting immense strain on the planet, ours could be the first generation to manage this. That’s why UNDP is striving to rethink and reset the relationship between people and the planet in the Anthropocene, or the Age of Humans.

Nothing short of a great transformation in how we live, work and cooperate is needed for human development to continue for everyone while we also ease planetary pressures. The HDR explores ways of doing so, with one clear message: “humans, for your own survival, release your grip on nature”.



# Our Strategic Plans

Delivering on today's, investing for tomorrow's

With the pandemic in focus, progress on UNDP's Strategic Plan remained largely on track in 2020. Designed to be flexible, the Plan enables UNDP to respond to countries' long-term goals and urgent needs in times of crisis. It sets out the 3 macro-level development settings across which UNDP works: eradicating poverty, supporting the growth of sustainable economies, and strengthening resilience to shocks and crisis. Ever-determined to raise the results bar, UNDP will put the "how" of development at the core of its next Strategic Plan.

# Signature Solutions

All six working as one

Our six Signature Solutions (pictured below) represent integration in action. They connect in multiple ways: between each other, up to our 3 development settings, and across all 17 SDGs. This helps us to tackle the world's most complex problems from every angle, creating impact at a greater scale.



### Safeguarding the most vulnerable first

With support from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the Bangladesh government, UNDP rolled out \$1.5M in emergency support for 50,000 poor urban families. The project recruited 1,200 community workers to install thousands of handwashing facilities and also sensitized and built the capacities of health officials and volunteers in 20 cities.

Photo: UNDP Bangladesh/Fahad Kaizer



## SIGNATURE SOLUTION: POVERTY

# Because no one should be left behind

As the pandemic laid bare the deep impacts of inequality, UNDP prioritized those most left behind, with increased focus on informal, self-employed, domestic and unpaid care workers, people with disabilities as well as migrant and internally displaced populations.

Extensive, rapid national and subnational analysis was a hallmark of 2020, with UNDP as the technical lead of the UN's socio-economic response. UNDP's COVID-19 Data Futures Platform was launched to aid countries' strategic decision-making. Its Temporary Basic Income simulator shows how much it would cost to lift vulnerable people out of poverty in each of 132 countries.

UNDP significantly stepped up its research and advocacy on the fight against poverty and inequality, bringing compelling data and insight to global policymakers and the public, reinforcing the case for multilateralism and investing in the SDGs.

UNDP supported 82 countries from India to Nigeria to top up or expand social assistance programmes. Technical support from UNDP, UNICEF and GIZ contributed to the Cambodian Government's first cash transfer for all Cambodians living below the national poverty line, reaching over 670,000 households. The multidimensional poverty index tool developed by UNDP and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) helped to identify vulnerable homes in El Salvador.

UNDP's systemic approach to livelihoods delivered on jobs, entrepreneurship and crisis-relief. In Turkey, nearly 3,000 Syrian refugees and host community members found jobs as a result of UNDP interventions. In Iraq, more than 1.2 million people benefited from the rehabilitation of over 300 public infrastructures. To date, 4.6 million people have returned to Iraqi towns and districts with support from the UNDP-led Funding Facility for Stabilization.

We will keep delivering until "no one left behind" means no one.



**35 MILLION**  
people around the world got access to basic services (2018-2020)



**27 MILLION**  
people gained access to financial services with UNDP support



**144 IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**  
carried out with **97 COUNTRIES**

UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Poverty in 2020



### Justice for one of many

Josefa's community and the municipality were profoundly affected by the internal armed conflict in Guatemala over more than three decades. In a fundamental step towards achieving recognition and justice for Maya-Ixil women survivors of sexual violence, she has received legal and psychosocial assistance from specialists, working in coordination with State institutions and organizations supported by UNDP's Transitional Justice Accompaniment Program (PAJUST, in Spanish).

Photo: UNDP Guatemala/Caroline Trutmann



## SIGNATURE SOLUTION: GOVERNANCE

# Because good governance thinks big

In 2020, the largest share of UNDP's Signature Solution investment focused on strengthening inclusive, effective and accountable governance. Our work is anchored in SDG 16 and the fundamental role that governance and the rule of law play in peaceful, just and inclusive societies, especially when crisis hits.

UNDP responded rapidly to the need for national and local e-governance systems to ensure the continuity of essential public services. Working with its UN partners, we supported Bangladesh, Cameroon, Kenya, Honduras, Malawi, Tajikistan, Vanuatu and Zambia in strengthening national identity management systems, supporting people's rights to services and equitable social protection roll-out through a legal identity lens.

We supported people across 46 countries from Bolivia to Vanuatu in exercising their right to vote in spite of the pandemic. As part of election preparations in Niger, 6 million people attained civil status through mobile court hearings.

UNDP helped government systems to be more transparent, accountable and responsive. We worked with countries including Albania, Ethiopia and Kyrgyzstan to meet a growing demand for free legal aid, and with 40 countries in crisis contexts to strengthen the rule of law. In the Republic of Congo, UNDP trained 100 journalists to enhance their capacity to work with international human rights instruments.

And as 'information pollution' spread in 2020, UNDP worked with multiple countries to map disinformation and strengthen national responses, including in Chile, Samoa and Ukraine. We worked with over one third of all countries to tackle hate speech.

These examples are all evidence of UNDP's full support of good governance throughout the world.



**36%** of UNDP's **PROGRAMME EXPENDITURE** was invested in governance (in 2020)



**33% OF PARLIAMENTS** throughout the world received UNDP support



**740,000+ PEOPLE** were registered to vote through a new electoral system in Niger, 55% women (in 2020)

UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Governance in 2020





**Stabilization meets education**

13-year-old Wajalal Bassem is from Sinuni, Iraq. His school – Beirut Mixed Secondary – has been rehabilitated with the support of UNDP’s Funding Facility for Stabilization. He is now working towards a brighter future and has plans to become a famous doctor like his father.

Photo: UNDP Iraq/Claire Thomas

**SIGNATURE SOLUTION: RESILIENCE**

# Because resilience goes beyond toughness

UNDP believes in building resilience for today and tomorrow. From 2018 to 2020, we worked closely with other development, humanitarian and peace partners to help societies tackle immediate development emergencies, prevent new problems from escalating and build resilience to navigate the challenges yet to come.

In Yemen, 1.43 million people had better access to justice after justice institutions, courts and police stations were rehabilitated. Over 400 football fields-worth of land was cleared of explosives, enabling humanitarian aid to get to those in most need and freeing the land for farming and other productive uses.

Meanwhile, 50,000 people affected by cyclones Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique were able to produce and buy sufficient food with support from UNDP.

Our resilience work in the Democratic Republic of the Congo showed positive signs: following mediation efforts, young people formerly involved in conflict were nearly 40% more likely to want to pursue vocational training or employment.

UNDP joined with partners to build reconciliation and reintegration into peace agreements in countries such as Colombia and the Central African Republic. We also helped 79% of countries build social cohesion into their COVID-19 socio-economic response plans.

This all goes to show how the risks facing people and planet – climate change, conflict, rupturing inequalities, disease – are increasingly systemic, sustained and connected. So too, therefore, must be our response.



**3 MILLION PEOPLE**

43% women, across 27 crisis-affected countries got a job or a better livelihood (in 2020)



**40 COUNTRIES**

in crisis contexts had stronger rule of law and human rights systems



**34 COUNTRIES**

were better positioned to prevent violent extremism

UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Resilience in 2020





### Saving water with innovation

Around 14,000 farmers from provinces in east and west Azerbaijan are participating in a joint initiative between the governments of Iran and Japan and UNDP to restore Lake Urmia through the use of modern irrigation techniques. To date, water usage has decreased by 35% in pilot sites as a result of this project.

Photo: UNDP Iran/Sadaf Nikzad

## SIGNATURE SOLUTION: ENVIRONMENT

# Because we owe our planet everything

The pursuit of balance between people and planet is a thread that runs through all of UNDP's work. Our 2020 Human Development Report included a new planetary pressures-adjusted Human Development Index, which offers a future-focused way to quickly assess a country's progress that places the planet's well-being at the heart of advancing human development.

From 2018 to 2020, UNDP partnered with environment and climate vertical funds – including the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund – and with sister UN agencies to promote an inclusive green economy approach to building forward better from COVID-19.

UNEP, UNCDF, Germany, Morocco, Sweden and UNDP together launched the Global Fund for Coral Reefs, an innovative blended finance mechanism with the ambition to mobilize \$500M for conservation and reef-dependent communities.

Work also continued on the ground, from ridge to reef, to tackle the climate-nature crisis with a growing number of partners. UNDP's Climate Promise is helping 118 countries to enhance their national climate pledges under the Paris Agreement.

In Comoros, programmes co-managed with communities nearly tripled fish catches, while support for the law on protected areas led to the creation of the National Parks Agency, which is illustrative of UNDP's integrated approach across Signature Solutions.

We also worked with conflict-affected communities, including in Lebanon, Libya and Sudan, to restore people's access to critical environmental services, including water and solar energy.

Given how infinitely indebted we are towards our damaged planet, ignoring our environmental responsibilities is no longer an option.



**\$1.9B  
BILLION**

in climate finance accessed by 150 countries with UNDP support (2018-2020)



**56,000  
FARMERS**

and family members adapted to climate change in Bhutan



**73  
MILLION ACRES**

of protected areas in 57 countries were managed more sustainably (equivalent to 60 Grand Canyon National Parks) in 2018-2020

UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Environment in 2020



### A lesson in energy efficiency

The huge energy retrofit at the University of Sarajevo was made possible through UNDP's Green Economic Development (GED) Project, funded by Sweden, with many local and national partners involved. This kind of profitable investment provides short- and long-term benefits for students and faculty, increases green jobs, and reduces energy consumption, heat loss and air pollution.

Photo: UNDP BiH/Sulejman Omerbasic



## SIGNATURE SOLUTION: ENERGY

# Because sustainable energy will fuel the future

With more than half of humanity on lockdown during 2020, a decline in energy demand was inevitable. But as economies get back to work, the danger is that they will get back to normal, stimulating fossil fuel industries. These non-renewable energies are a short-term band-aid that will reinforce the collision course with nature. Instead, we should be investing in the future and pursuing a more resilient recovery, powered by renewable energy.

UNDP recognizes that the age of fossil fuels has peaked and the energy transition has begun, so it worked hard with governments throughout this strategic period to create better energy options and choices and to de-risk the political, social and economic paths to taking them.

We helped countries to identify and establish policies and regulations for large-scale clean energy investments. In Tunisia, UNDP modelling identified more than \$500M worth of savings over 20 years in solar and wind energy investments. From São Tomé and Príncipe to Turkmenistan, UNDP supported countries in preparing national energy policies. For example, in Armenia, UNDP and the European Investment Bank supported regulatory changes to increase the energy efficiency of buildings.

UNDP is also focused on closing the energy gap, having helped over 5 million rural households to get access to clean, affordable energy since 2018. In communities affected by conflict, including in Somalia and Yemen, almost 350,000 people in crisis-affected countries had energy access re-established.

To fuel the energy response further, UNDP's Peoples' Climate Vote (PCV) affirmed the public appetite for change: most respondents want governments to invest in sustainable energy.



**290 MILLION TONNES**

of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will be avoided (equivalent to emissions from nearly 4 million tanker trucks' worth of gasoline)



**91 COUNTRIES**

that are part of UNDP's Climate Promise are planning increased energy action



**5 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS**

gained access to clean, affordable energy (2018-2020)

UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Energy in 2020



### Accelerating career prospects for all

Through our Accelerator Lab in Kaya, Burkina Faso, UNDP sought solutions to increase the employability of young women and men. With UNDP intervention, this initiative is also developing the leadership and advocacy capacities of entrepreneurial young women through training and work experience.

Photo: UNDP Africa/Aurélia Rusek



## SIGNATURE SOLUTION: GENDER

# Because gender equality is irrefutable

UNDP is committed to shattering the glass ceiling of gender inequality.

In 2020, we launched the COVID-19 Global Gender Response Tracker with UN Women, tracking over 3,100 socio-economic, leadership and political participation measures across 219 countries and territories. Its findings reveal systemic inequalities, such as the fact that only 8 countries in the world have a 50-50 gender balance in their COVID-19 task forces, despite women making up over 70% of health and social workers globally.

As the technical lead for the UN's socio-economic response framework, UNDP helped to integrate gender across all its key areas and worked with 41 countries on gender-responsive social protection – twice the number supported in 2019. UNDP also doubled the number of countries we worked with to fight gender-based violence in 2020, including with the European Union and UN partners through the Spotlight Initiative, and applied its gender marker in selecting initiatives to support through its COVID-19 Rapid Finance Facility. UN Women was our primary partner, with collaboration across 101 country offices in 2020.

In Kyrgyzstan, UNDP helped to establish the Council on Women's Rights and Countering Violence, the country's first institutionalized body to monitor and inform policymaking on gender-based violence. Meanwhile in Bangladesh, UNDP supported 1.2 million women – 1 in 43 – to gain access to financial services.

We also worked with 114 of our Climate Promise countries to integrate gender into their workplans, and with 81 countries to advance women's leadership in natural resource management.

Despite this progress, the remaining gaps are clear, and the need for universal gender equality and women and girls' empowerment remains without question.



**80 COUNTRIES**

supported by UNDP to tackle gender-based violence



**50% OF ALL VOTERS**

registered through UNDP electoral support were women (2020)



**3,100 POLICIES**

on COVID-19 tracked across 200+ countries and territories for gender impact

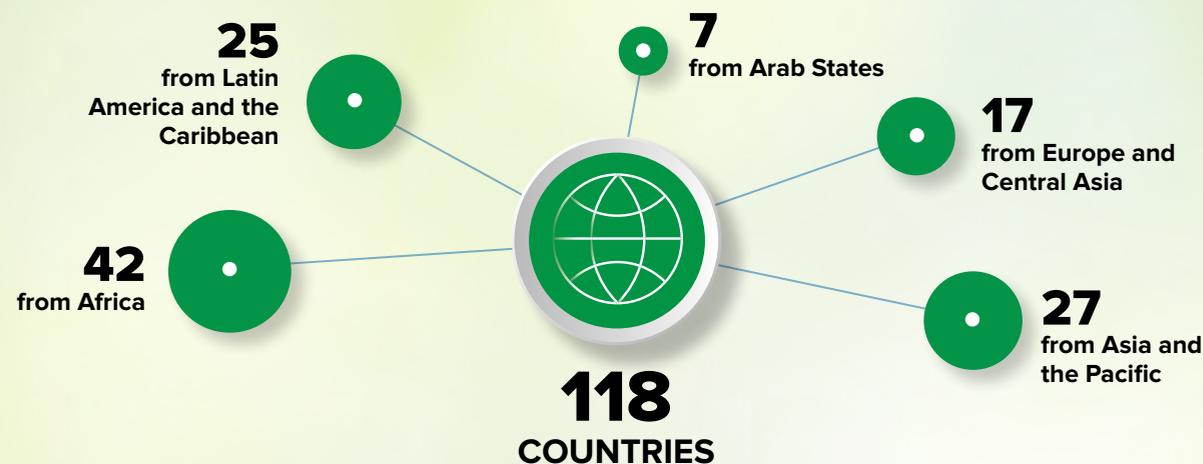
UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Gender in 2020



# Delivering on our Climate Promise

The consensus on climate has gone from crisis to emergency. UNDP's Climate Promise now stands as the world's largest offer of support for countries to revise and enhance their national climate pledges (Nationally Determined Contributions, or NDCs) under the Paris Agreement.

Working with over **35 partners**, UNDP is currently supporting:



## Energy response

Energy continues to be the most common sector in countries' national climate pledges. Within the Climate Promise, **91 countries** (79%) are updating or adding energy-related actions and/or targets to their updated NDCs. These targets provide the blueprint for making economies cleaner and safer and ensuring energy access for all.

## Greater integration

**COVID-19:**  
Over **80 COUNTRIES** are leveraging our support to guide government efforts to build back better from the pandemic.

**Gender:**  
**97% OF ALL COUNTRIES** (114 out of 118) participating in UNDP's Climate Promise are working to integrate gender into their NDC revisions.

**Youth:**  
**75% OF COUNTRIES** are including or increasing child and youth-related priorities in their revised NDCs, compared to 40% of first-generation NDCs.

## Deeper understanding

After the launch of the Mission 1.5 on-line game, which collected players' votes on the climate policies they wanted their country to enact, UNDP worked with UN agencies and NGOs to develop a learning module to elevate people's understanding of solutions to the climate crisis.



## Peoples' Climate Vote

In 2020, UNDP and the University of Oxford conducted the world's biggest poll on climate change: the Peoples' Climate Vote (PCV). Survey data was collected through the Mission 1.5 online game. This new, unconventional approach to polling prompted a loud and clear response from the global public.

The majority of people – **64% of respondents** – agreed that climate change is a global emergency.

The most popular climate policies were: conserve forests and land; use solar, wind and renewable power; climate friendly farming techniques; and invest more money in green business and jobs.

This research puts the public at odds with government spending. For example, according to UNEP and Oxford University research, only **18% of COVID-19 recovery** spending is going towards green investment.

With the support of UNDP, its Climate Promise and its partners, it's time to close the gap between ambition and action.



## Ambition into action



Based on the immense impact of its Climate Promise, UNDP is helping countries turn their ambitious pledges into action at speed and scale. This includes a bigger focus on net-zero and climate-resilient pathways, while mobilizing people to ensure they remain included in the development process.

# Future partnerships today

## Working with the private sector

2020 saw significant strategic private-sector engagement in pursuing the SDGs, including through UNDP partnerships. We continued to develop new partnerships for existing initiatives, such as The Lion's Share, the Connecting Business Initiative, and Youth Co: Lab, and also built new ones, including the COVID-19 Private Sector Global Facility, partnering with the United Nations Global Compact and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) to develop innovative public partnerships for COVID-19 recovery.

With support from private-sector actors like Boston Consulting Group and UPS, the joint UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and UNDP Connecting Business Initiative have been assisting business networks with over 50,000 member companies in a worldwide COVID-19 response, including guidance for the private sector in 4 continents. Meanwhile, the Connecting Business Initiative (CBI) and its partner business groups raised over \$30M to fund the distribution of grocery vouchers to over 1 million urban residents in the Metro Manila Area.

Since 2018, UNDP supported governments and the private sector to finance the SDGs, including through its Finance Sector Hub. The Tax Inspectors Without Borders programme, a joint effort by UNDP and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), helped 45 countries to collect \$775M in revenue in 5 years.



In 2020, SDG Impact helped investors, bond issuers and enterprises make significant, measurable contributions towards the SDGs. Standards have been set to codify and confirm the best practices for these groups to contribute to the goals.

The SDG Investor Platform, co-created by UNDP's flagship SDG Impact initiative and the Secretary-General's Global Investors for Sustainable Development (GISD) Alliance, makes the market intelligence generated through the SDG Investor Maps available to investors interested in SDG-enabling investment opportunities. The platform currently provides insights into 207 investment opportunity areas in 15 countries, with each country involved expected to mobilize approximately \$50M towards the Goals.

### SAMSUNG

The Samsung Global Goals app, jointly developed with UNDP, is now installed on over 100 million devices worldwide. This partnership has generated \$1.5M and engaged new audiences with the SDGs. With the #Generation17 initiative, visionary young leaders from around the world are raising awareness about how they are helping to solve some of the world's most urgent problems.

### THE LION'S SHARE

The Lion's Share Fund added Gucci and Cartier to its partnership roster in 2020. The fund also launched the COVID-19 Response: Resilience in Wildlife Community Grants to support communities dependent on wildlife-based tourism that have been severely impacted by the pandemic.

### HEART 17

In 2020, HEART 17 built its digital platform and began testing its functionality with youth drawn from UNDP's networks. The purpose of HEART 17 was deepened to focus on amplifying the voices of youth leaders on topics related to the environment and inequality. Brands supporting the initiative include H&M, Spotify and Mojang (Minecraft).

### MICROSOFT

UNDP advanced its digital transformation partnerships for environmental sustainability and innovative data management solutions for the COVID-19 response. We are working with Microsoft to facilitate access to sustainable energy, biodiversity and ecosystem benefits in countries challenged by climate change. As part of the partnership, the GEF Small Grants Programme is collaborating with Project 15 at Microsoft to create opportunities for community-based initiatives to accelerate innovation and scale up impacts on species conservation, sustainable fisheries and agriculture.

### CITI FOUNDATION

Co-led by UNDP and Citi Foundation, Youth Co:Lab establishes a common agenda to empower and invest in youth, so that they can accelerate the SDGs through leadership, social innovation and entrepreneurship. Since 2017, the programme has been implemented in 25 countries across Asia-Pacific, reached over 75,000 participants, benefited over 7,120 young social entrepreneurs, helped launch or improve over 1,000 youth-led social enterprises, and collaborated with over 192 ecosystem partners.

### COVID-19 PRIVATE SECTOR GLOBAL FACILITY

The aim of UNDP's new facility is to foster and enhance public-private partnerships and solutions at both the global and national levels. UNDP joined forces with the ICC, UN Global Compact, PwC, Microsoft and DHL to develop the facility, which is tailored to countries' specific needs and supports small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to advance green and digital technologies. Its work directly supports the progress of SDG 8, SDG 13, SDG 17 and the COVID-19 response.

### DIGITAL GIVING

UNDP has also revitalized opportunities for individuals to mobilize resources through crowdfunding campaigns that provide tangible support to the most vulnerable. Over 15 campaigns were launched in 2020 alone.



HEART 17



Citi Foundation



# UN family stays strong

Delivering as one in a one-off year

Throughout 2020, UNDP invested in deepening its UN partnerships. These included joining forces with UNICEF on innovation, youth and entrepreneurship; the International Labour Organization (ILO) on work, both present and future; the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on livelihoods and digital solutions for people on the move; the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) on finding a balance between people and planet; the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Broadband Commission to advance inclusive digital nations; and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the UN Development Coordination Office (DCO) to advance a human rights-based approach in COVID-19 response plans.

Our unified efforts to help countries tackle the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts are another example of UN Reform in action. UN country teams serving 162 countries and territories came together in an unprecedented way in 2020, supporting authorities to address the multiple impacts of the pandemic. As the UN's socio-economic technical lead, UNDP was part of a critical triad with OCHA and WHO and worked more closely than ever with its development system counterparts. We co-led the development and implementation of socio-economic assessments and contributed to developing and costing response plans.

Looking ahead, UNDP will work alongside WHO and other UN entities to support equity, resilience and sustainability in COVID-19 vaccination programmes.

UNDP also delivered services to the wider UN and administered funding on its behalf:



Our top 10 UN partners working together across our Signature Solutions and beyond were:



# Proactive presence throughout the pandemic

UNDP Goodwill Ambassadors and celebrity advocates



Photo: Emmanuel Oyeleke

A “remote” UNGA week saw the appointment of Afropop artist Yemi Alade (top left) as UNDP Goodwill Ambassador, building on her work as an advocate for equality, women’s empowerment and a sustainable planet.



Photos: Justin Wu

When life went virtual in March 2020, our influencers were able to spread awareness in new ways, first by helping to clarify misinformation around COVID-19. UNDP’s #HalfTheWorld celebrity campaign exposed the growing inequalities caused by the pandemic and climate change for those many millions lacking social protection. Led by Goodwill Ambassador Padma Lakshmi (pictured centre, left of actor David Oyelowo), it attracted 237 media outlets with an audience of over 152 million, plus 21 million on social media.



2020 also featured the star-studded launch of the Eyes on the Goals event to kick off the Decade of Action. Organized in collaboration with Sustainable Partners, it included digital videos by celebrities and influencers from the world of film, music and sport that helped boost global support for the SDGs. (Left: comedic actor, writer and producer Rainn Wilson)

# Investing in development

## Our invaluable partners

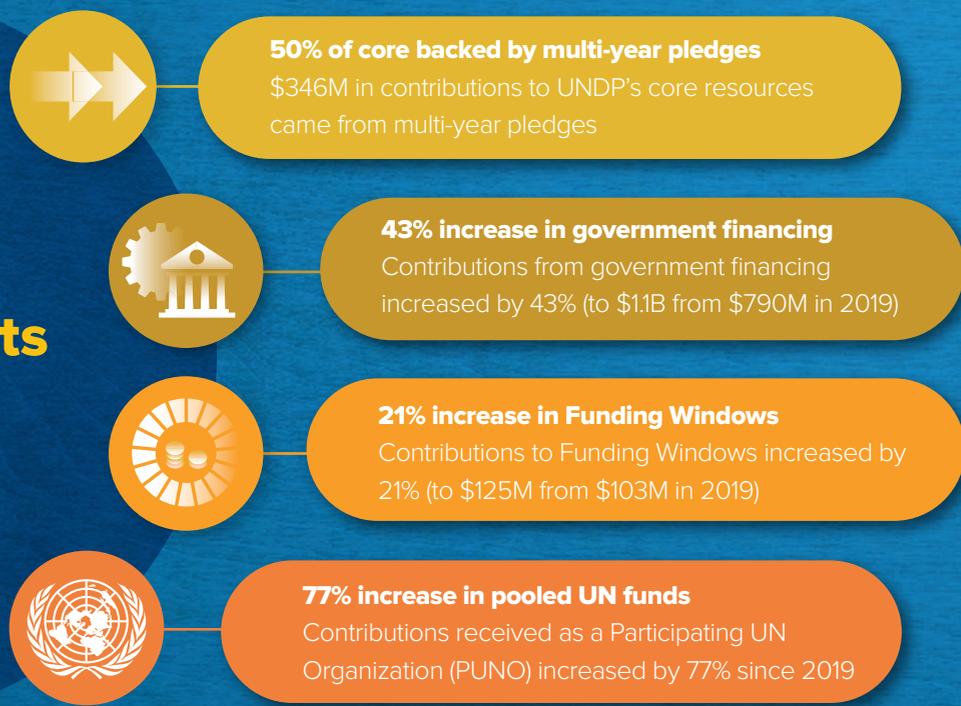
We rely on the support of our partners more than ever as we help lift the world out of the pandemic and build forward better to the future of development.

### Top partners

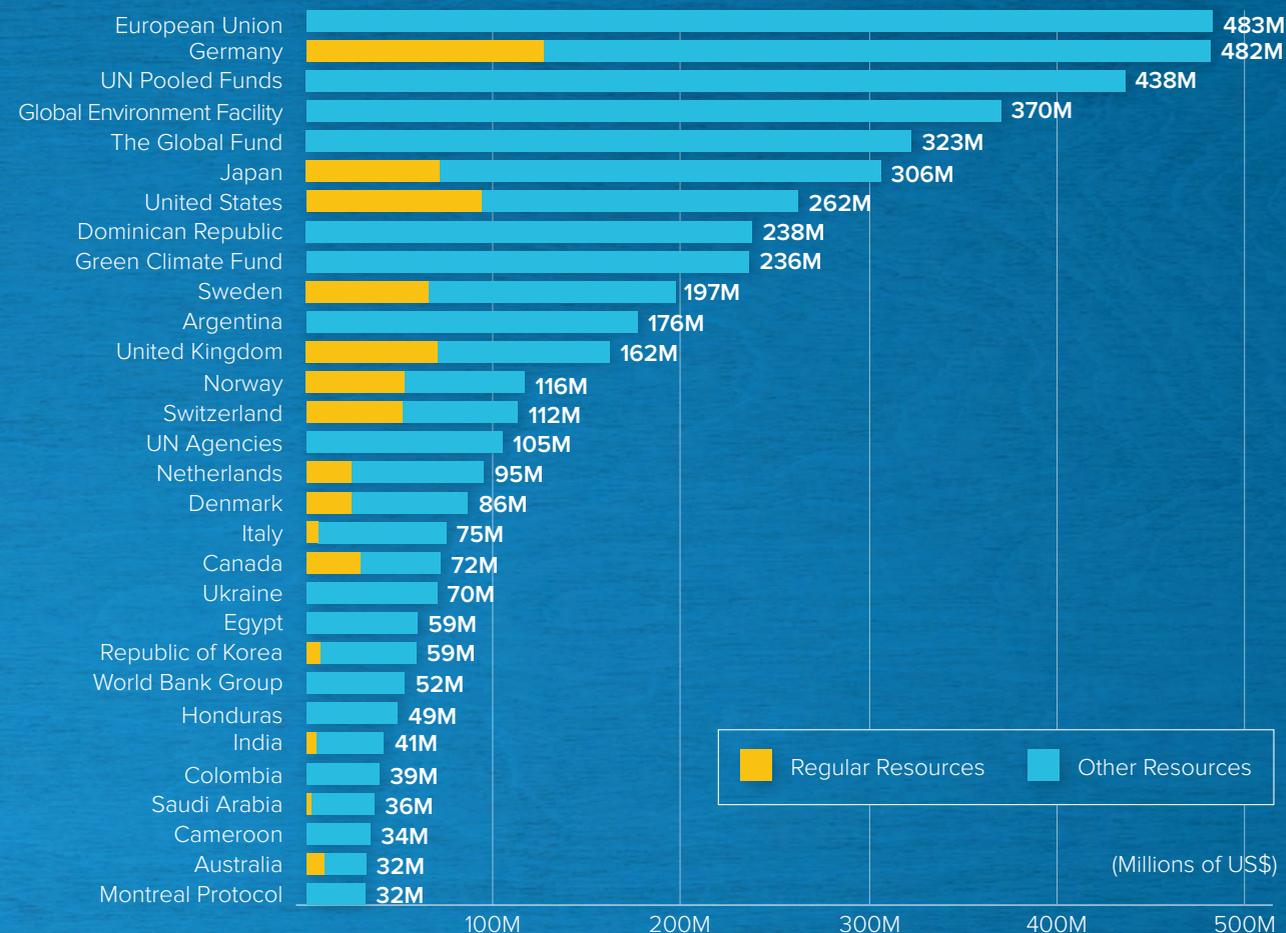
We wish to thank all our partners, beginning with the top 15:



## Highlights in 2020

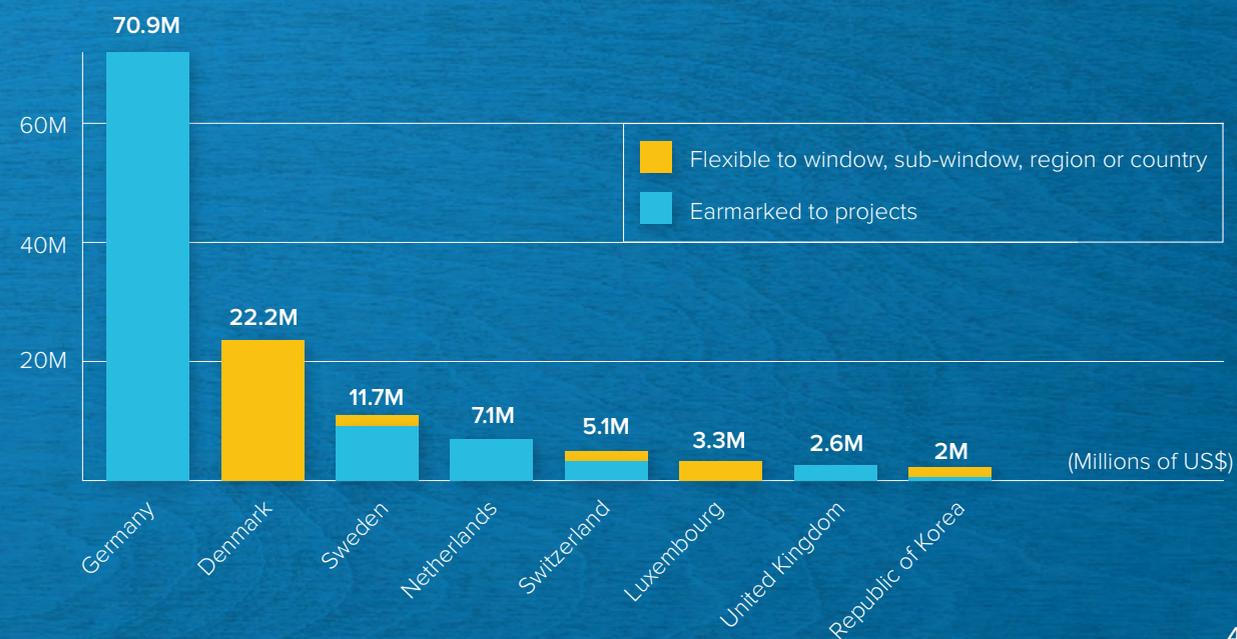


### Top 2020 UNDP partners



### Funding Windows

UNDP's Funding Windows are a pooled funding mechanism for partners to provide thematic support for the SDGs. Special thanks go to our top 2020 Funding Windows Contributors:



All financial figures are provisional as of April 2021 and subject to change until the completion of audited financial statements.

# Core brings more

## Short-term flexibility, long-term results

Regular or core resources are funds provided to UNDP that are not earmarked for a specific project or theme.

In the best of times, development requires a clear, strategic long-term focus as well as the ability to tackle emerging challenges and opportunities, COVID-19 being an extreme example. Core funding makes both possible.

 **Core resources underpin UNDP's operational capacity, networks and presence at the global, regional and country levels, across 170 countries and territories**

This allows us to provide on-demand support for governments as part of the broader UN System support.

Being the most flexible funding modality, core enables UNDP to lay the foundational work in programme design that will help attract more resources from other sources. Core's flexibility allowed us to quickly repurpose existing core funds to provide direct support for the needs of countries, including those in crisis settings.

### Our core strength is growing

Core funding has declined since the last global financial crisis, and some countries have announced deep cuts in their funding for development, also known as Official Development Assistance. But UNDP's trusted partners are bucking that trend.

In 2020, we received  
**\$696 MILLION in core contributions**  
(a 13% increase of \$79M from 2019)



This included a record 126% increase from Germany, with increases also from Denmark, Japan, US, Finland, Czech Republic and Israel. Antigua and Barbuda, Cuba, Iran and Latvia returned as contributors or began contributing to UNDP's core resources.

## Top core contributions

Thank you to our top 10 core contributors of 2020:



## Core, COVID-19 and beyond

### Responding to a development crisis

Core funding is central to UNDP's long-standing relationship and trust with governments before, during and after a crisis hits. Across regions, UNDP worked with donors and partners in 2020 to reprogramme core resources to jump-start COVID-19 response actions on the ground and catalyse more, much-needed resources.



#### TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The introduction of a COVID-19 Project Marker enabled UNDP to report on the contribution of core resources and its impact on our integrated response.



#### WHERE THE NEED IS GREATEST

UNDP continues to ensure that the majority (at least 85%, as mandated by its Executive Board) of core is spent on programmes in the poorest countries, while also addressing pockets of poverty and vulnerability in middle-income countries, particularly when these impact women and marginalized communities.



#### PROMOTING UN NORMS AND PRINCIPLES

Core resources enable UNDP's global presence and operations: present and actively engaging with governments, building trusted relationships to promote UN values, including human rights and the principle of leaving no one behind.

# How the world views us

Recognition, whether external or internal, helps UNDP stay on track and keep improving. Below are some of the awards and acknowledgements we received in 2020.

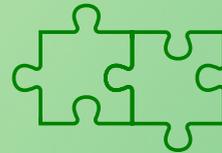
## UNDP Partnership Survey



**80% OF 3,100+ PARTNERS** surveyed across 140 countries see UNDP as a valued partner



**75% OF RESPONDENTS** believe that UNDP advocate a common UN position on important development issues



**71%** see UNDP as providing integrated solutions in collaboration with its partners



Ranked UNDP as **THE MOST TRANSPARENT** of UN agencies

## MONTREAL PROTOCOL

**HIGHEST PERFORMANCE** by UNDP among all Multilateral Fund implementation agencies

## Samsung Global Goals app

Global Goals app on over **100 million smartphones**. Partnership generated **\$1.5M in donations** for UNDP's development work



Consumer Electronic Show (CES) **2020 Innovation Award Honoree**



Honorable Mention



Shortlisted for **SDG Impact at Responsible Business Awards 2020**

## CSO 50 AWARDS

CSO50 annual award for outstanding innovation and business value in cybersecurity, **THE 6TH TIME UNDP HAS WON** (more than any other organization)

## UNDP-DCO survey

**73% OF RESPONDENTS** consider UNDP services to be "satisfactory" or "very satisfactory" (based on 131 countries and 3 regional offices)



**172 OF UNDP'S 249 DECENTRALIZED EVALUATIONS** completed in 2020 were reviewed by the IEO as being **84% "satisfactory" or "moderately satisfactory"** (a 10%+ increase since 2019)



Ashden Award for Humanitarian Energy recognized **UNDP's work to boost entrepreneurship for Yemini women** and communities' access to affordable energy

# Global, regional, local

UNDP's network brings the world together, driving sustainable impact and results for people and planet.

## Latin America and the Caribbean

- **Panama Regional Hub**
- Argentina
- Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean (covering Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines)
- Bolivia
- Brazil
- Chile
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Cuba
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- El Salvador
- Guatemala
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Honduras
- Jamaica (covering The Bahamas, Belize, Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Jamaica, Turks and Caicos Islands)
- Mexico
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Suriname
- Trinidad and Tobago (covering Aruba, Curacao, Sint Maarten, Trinidad and Tobago)
- Uruguay
- Venezuela

## Africa

- **Addis Ababa Regional Service Centre**
- Angola
- Benin
- Botswana
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cameroon
- Cape Verde
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Comoros
- Congo (Dem. Republic of)
- Congo (Republic of)
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Eswatini
- Ethiopia
- Gabon
- Gambia
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Kenya
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mali
- Mauritania
- Mauritius and Seychelles
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Rwanda
- São Tomé and Príncipe
- Senegal
- Sierra Leone
- South Africa
- South Sudan
- Tanzania
- Togo
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

## Europe and Central Asia

- **Istanbul Regional Hub**
- Albania
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Belarus
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Cyprus
- Georgia
- Kazakhstan
- Kosovo (as per UNSCR 1244)
- Kyrgyzstan
- Moldova
- Montenegro
- North Macedonia
- Serbia
- Tajikistan
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Ukraine
- Uzbekistan

## Arab States

- **Amman Regional Hub**
- Algeria
- Bahrain
- Djibouti
- Egypt
- Iraq
- Jordan
- Kuwait
- Lebanon
- Libya
- Morocco
- Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People
- Saudi Arabia
- Somalia
- Sudan
- Syria
- Tunisia
- Yemen

## Asia and the Pacific

- **Bangkok Regional Hub**
- Afghanistan
- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- Cambodia
- China
- Democratic People's Republic of Korea
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Lao PDR
- Malaysia (covering Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Singapore)
- Maldives
- Mongolia
- Myanmar
- Nepal
- Pacific Office in Fiji (covering Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu)
- Pakistan
- Papua New Guinea
- Philippines
- Samoa (covering Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau)
- Sri Lanka
- Thailand
- Timor-Leste
- Viet Nam

## North America

- New York headquarters

## Representation Offices

- Brussels Representation Office (covering European Union)
- Geneva Representation Office
- Nordic Representation Office (covering Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden)
- Tokyo Representation Office
- Washington Representation Office

## Policy Centres

- Nairobi Global Centre on Resilient Ecosystems and Desertification
- Oslo Governance Centre
- Istanbul International Center for Private Sector in Development
- Seoul Policy Centre for Knowledge Exchange through SDG Partnerships
- Singapore Global Centre for Technology, Innovation and Sustainable Development



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