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REPORT OF THE

MID-TERM EVALUATION OF THE UNDP REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR AFRICA (2018–2021)

**Submitted by:**

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# List of abbreviations and acronyms

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ADF | African Disability Forum |
| AfCFTA | African Continental Free Trade Area |
| AfDB | African Development Bank |
| AMV | Africa Mining Vision |
| APRM | African Peer Review Mechanism |
| AU | African Union |
| AUC | African Union Commission |
| AYWLFP | African Young Women Leaders Fellowship Programme |
| CEMAC | Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa |
| CEWARN | Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism |
| COMESA | Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa |
| CO | Country Office (UNDP) |
| COVID-19 | coronavirus disease 2019 |
| CSO | civil society organization |
| ECCAS | Economic Community of Central African States |
| ECOWAS | Economic Community of West African States |
| IAWP | integrated annual work plan |
| IBEI | Business Ecosystem Initiative |
| IDB | Islamic Development Bank |
| IGAD | Intergovernmental Authority on Development |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| KIIs | key informant interviews |
| LCBC | Lake Chad Basin Commission |
| M&E | monitoring and evaluation |
| MoU | memorandum of understanding |
| MTE | mid-term evaluation |
| NEPAD | New Partnership for Africa’s Development |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development |
| OECD/DAC | OECD Development Assistance Committee |
| OSAA | Office of the Special Adviser on Africa |
| PDNA | post-disaster needs assessment |
| PSC | Peace and Security Commission |
| PVE | preventing violent extremism |
| PWDs | persons with disabilities |
| RBA | Regional Bureau for Africa |
| RECs | regional economic communities |
| RF | results framework |
| RPD | regional programme document |
| RSCA | Regional Service Centre for Africa |
| RSF | Regional Stabilization Facility |
| SADC | Southern African Development Community |
| SDGs | Sustainable Development Goals |
| SECCCI | Support for Effective Cooperation and Coordination of Cross-border Initiatives |
| Sida | Swedish International Development Agency |
| SSC | South-South cooperation |
| SWOT | strength, weakness, opportunity and threat |
| ToC | theory of change |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNECA | United Nations Economic Commission for Africa |
| UNEP | United Nations Environment Programme |
| UNICEF | United Nations Children’s Fund |
| UNON | United Nations Office at Nairobi |
| UN Women | United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women |
| WHO | World Health Organization |

# Executive summary

This report presents the findings, lessons learned and recommendations of the mid-term evaluation conducted for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Regional Programme for Africa (2018–2021). UNDP commissioned the mid-term evaluation (MTE) to collect and provide evaluative evidence of its contributions to development results at the regional level. Aligned with the UNDP Evaluation Policy, the MTE uses the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC) evaluation criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. It assesses the strategic positioning of the Regional Service Centre for Africa (RSCA) and the impact of development assistance across major thematic and cross-cutting issues in the following three priority areas:

* **Priority 1**: The African Union (AU) and regional economic communities (RECs) deliver on their mandate, especially cross-cutting issues related to resilience-building.
* **Priority 2:** Regional growth is inclusive, transformational and sustainable, with reduced economic inequalities, and characterized by structural transformation.
* **Priority 3**: Regional institutions sustain peace and build resilience to crises and shocks.

**Key findings**

Table 1 provides a summary of the performance of the Regional Programme (RP), based on the evaluators’ views.

Table 1  
Summary of the performance of the Regional Programme

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *OECD/DAC criterion* | *Rankinga* |
| Relevance | A |
| Coherence | B |
| Effectiveness | B |
| Efficiency | B |
| Sustainability | B |

*a* OECD/DAC rankings are as follows: A=very good (100 percent), B=good (80 percent), C=inadequate (60 percent), D=serious deficiencies (40 percent), E=catastrophic (20  percent).

**Programme Relevance** is ranked ‘A’ or ‘very good’. The evaluation has shown that the RP is empirically well grounded. Its design is based on evidence and research, such as the 2017 study conducted by UNDP entitled ‘A continental coordination mechanism for development effectiveness’, which outlined the case for such a mechanism in order to link regional, subregional and national development planning processes for greater effectiveness and results. The RP has also applied the insights, good practices and lessons learned from the previous RP (2014–2017), as well as from other regional initiatives and global efforts. Furthermore, the MTE noted that the RP was consistent with the UNDP Strategic Plan, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) priorities (further discussed in the section entitled ‘Coherence’) and Agenda 2063 of the AU.[[1]](#footnote-1) One hundred percent of the respondents interviewed for the MTE agreed that the RP is relevant and responsive to the development challenges facing the continent.

The RP adequately addresses the needs of vulnerable groups, especially women. Interventions to advance gender equality and women’s empowerment demonstrate how gender inclusion has been achieved. In addition, some country offices (COs) have received the Gender Equality Seal at the gold level. The RP partnered with the Tony Elumelu Foundation to support young people in gaining entrepreneurial skills under youth initiatives in entrepreneurship, mentorship and fellowship. It also reaches indigenous communities living on the islands of Lake Chad and in borderland areas, as well as those at risk of radicalization (e.g. communities in the Cabo Delgado region of Mozambique and the Pygmies of the Congo basin). Furthermore, support provided to the African Disability Forum (ADF) promotes greater inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in development planning.

The RP is highly responsive to the changing social, economic and political environment in the region, as demonstrated by the various interventions addressing climate change, gender inequality, political instability, a lack of social protection, conflict, drought, food insecurity and violent extremism. Flexibility is built into the RP design, as evidenced by its quick and comprehensive response to the shock caused by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), for which the Programme mobilized and reallocated internal resources. Responsiveness was also achieved by conducting assessments, research and studies to gather relevant data prior to the outset of interventions. Approximately 90 percent of respondents agreed that the RP employed appropriate methods of delivery (i.e. policy and technical advice, capacity-building, training, quality research and data services).

In working primarily with regional and subregional bodies, the RP must adopt methodologies that will assist these institutions in fulfilling their mandates. Respondents agreed that the RP employs a regional approach to address common challenges across borders, such as violent extremism, climate change, gender inequality and migration. The Programme reinforces the African development agenda, thereby promoting and adding value to common interests across borders. All respondents said that the ‘theory of change’ (ToC) presented in the outcome models is a relevant and appropriate vision on which to base initiatives, as further discussed in this report.

**Programme Coherence** is rated ‘B’ or ‘good’. From the outset, UNDP made every effort to ensure coherence with other actors in the design, implementation and monitoring phases of the RP. Despite being unable to interview some individuals who had left the various organizations, the MTE found evidence of inclusivity in the design phase, which is well articulated in project documents. There is also evidence of continued collaboration, engagement and discussion during the implementation of the RP to ensure coherence. These processes sometimes result in project delays, as common ground must be found prior to implementation. The evaluation did not find any data or information that directly denied the existence of coherence with other actors during RP implementation.

In addition, the MTE found that the RP is consistent with global and regional frameworks, including Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Furthermore, interviews with respondents indicated that RSCA works closely with the AU and has worked with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the design and implementation of regional initiatives on disaster risk reduction, PVE and gender equality and women’s empowerment. Several of the RSCA project documents reference AU documents, particularly Agenda 2063. Nevertheless, some key informants expressed concern about the consistency and adequacy of engagement with the AU in all regional and subregional initiatives, and the majority of respondents indicated less engagement with RECs.

The RP was aligned with the following:

* Agenda 2063 (see alignment areas in table 4 in ‘Coherence’)
* The Kagame report on the need for regional integration and the peace and security pillar
* Agenda 2063, aspiration 3: An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law
* Agenda 2063, aspiration 4: A peaceful and secure Africa
* The Africa Mining Vision (AMV) and the Agenda 2063 call to action to “transform, grow and industrialize [African] economies through beneficiation and value addition of natural resources”[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Agenda 2063, aspiration 7: Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner
* Agenda 2063, aspiration 6: An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children
* The Sendai Framework, the Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework in Africa and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change

**Programme Effectiveness** is ranked ‘B’ or ‘good’, measuring current progress against the performance indicators. For each contributing project, the MTE assessed progress towards achieving planned results. While some projects had made good progress, such as the project entitled ‘Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Africa’ (Gender project), others had just begun, like the project entitled ‘Strengthening National Climate Finance Governance Systems to Reduce Poverty, Inequality and Vulnerability in Africa’(Climate Change project). Some were pilot projects in the process of developing project documents, such as the African Young Women Leaders Fellowship Programme (AYWLFP). Overall, 87 percent of respondents rated progress towards achieving planned results as ‘high’.

It is also evident that, during the implementation phase, women and youth were targeted more than other vulnerable groups such as PWDs and displaced and indigenous communities. All respondents agreed that the RP must ensure gender mainstreaming, hence the emphasis on targeting women and youth through dedicated projects such as the ‘UNDP Africa Regional Programme for Upscaling the YouthConnekt Initiative’ (YouthConnekt initiative), AYWLFP and the Gender project. Many projects also sought to target countries facing instability, such as the Central African Republic, Chad, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan, thereby targeting displaced and indigenous communities. Interventions under the ADF project must be scaled up to ensure adequate inclusion. The United Nations programming principles are well articulated in the RP and identified as ‘leave no one behind’, gender, human rights, South-South cooperation, the hybrid continental and subregional model and support for African agendas and institutions. In this regard, the RP scored highly in effectiveness. It was clear that more could be done in terms of horizontal and vertical bridging to improve aid effectiveness, scale up innovative and transformative national development initiatives and promote comprehensive policy-oriented research and advocacy. In this connection, the RP was rated ‘medium’ in effectiveness. Approximately 67 percent of respondents felt that South-South and triangular cooperation and knowledge management contributed to the results attained by the RP during the evaluation period (2018–2020). Such contributions were made effectively through online platforms such as the YouthConnekt Africa hub; webinars held by the AYWLFP and social protection interventions; the African trainers, consultants and experts participating in various RP activities and interventions; and peer networks and communities of experts in certain technical areas. The MTE also identified areas in which RP interventions should be scaled up, particularly digital transformation to support the increasing need to use Internet-based modules for RP intervention, social protection for communities and the informal sector, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) and free movement, and entrepreneurship for women and youth. Approximately 73 percent of respondents said that the RP had contributed to improving the capacities of regional implementing partners, especially the African Union Commission (AUC), to advocate and deliver results in priority areas. Such support was provided through training and capacity-building, quality research data, the development of AUC policies, technical advisory services and financial support. In order to leverage results, the RP has formed and maintained partnerships with the AUC, RECs and regional civil society organizations (CSOs) such as Equality Now/SOAR and the Tony Elumelu Foundation, as well as other United Nations agencies like the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

**Programme Efficiency** is ranked ‘B’ or ‘good’. The MTE sought to establish how the RP utilized the resources available (e.g. funds, human, time) to achieve results, measuring the overall performance of the Programme against the activities implemented.

UNDP facilitated the establishment of project steering committees and project boards to provide overall programme management, coordination and strategic direction; oversee project implementation and ensure that project objectives are achieved. The RP has raised over 85 percent of its total budget of US$235 million. Where there were limited financial resources prohibiting the hiring of project staff, the RP utilized existing employees to manage and implement projects. Efforts have been made to generate additional resources, with results expected in 2021. However, the RP has not created links between catalytic funding to COs and additional funding mobilized by COs as a means of creating a sustainable pathway for project implementation. The use of expert consultants to deliver on some of the outputs was also a strategy used to achieve results efficiently.

According to respondents, the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) unit is very active in defining RP indicators, ensuring timely reporting and sending notifications about expenditures. For example, under the project entitled ‘Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) in Africa: A Development Approach’ (PVE project), activities in Tunisia focused mainly on monitoring and evaluating the PVE activities prioritized by the National Counter-Terrorism Commission. UNDP provided continuous M&E expertise to the Commission and the project’s civil society partners.

Partnership has been employed as a strategy to ensure the sustainability of interventions and enhance participation and inclusivity. During the implementation and monitoring phases of the RP, partnership was a noted hallmark of UNDP, helping to identify demand-driven initiatives that respond to actual challenges facing the continent. Partnerships have been established and strengthened between national, subregional and regional government institutions, including state line ministries.

The MTE found understaffing in some core areas of the Programme. A system is therefore needed to monitor human resource capacity, staffing requirements and progress towards achieving the desired human capacity in the region. Another serious concern regarding staffing in the RSCA is the imbalance in the personnel’s expertise and experience; the majority are senior officers (P-5s) and United Nations volunteers. Despite this significant staff shortage, the RP registered impressive results in some initiatives in the region, including the project entitled ‘Accelerating the Ratification and Domestication of African Union Treaties’ (AU Treaties project), under which Sao Tome and Principe ratified several treaties, and the African Mining Governance Project, which strengthened the capacity of the African Minerals Development Centre . The RP could therefore achieve and exceed its objectives with adequate and appropriate staffing.

**Programme Sustainability** is rated ‘B’ or ‘good’. Across the sustainability scoring matrix developed by the evaluation team, the RP received an average rating of 72.4 percent in terms of the projects’ continuation beyond the Programme, based on the likelihood that benefits from the previous and current RPs will continue. This was considerably high, notwithstanding the fact that some projects were far from completion, while others, like the ‘Africa Borderlands Center’ (Borderlands project), were in the implementation phase. This high rating is attributed to the strengths of UNDP in building capacity and strengthening regional and subregional institutions. Capacity-building efforts targeted national and grass-roots institutions as well.

Other contributory factors that may have influenced this rating include:

* Stakeholder willingness to participate and efforts to ensure a sense of ownership for partners at the regional and subregional levels.
* The inclusive, consultative and participatory process, coupled with the UNDP principle of ‘leaving no one behind’, which engenders ownership and acceptance among participating partners and target beneficiaries.
* The strong potential for sustainability for most results across the outcome portfolios. A number of characteristics enhance sustainability, which include building capacity for various actors on technical advisory services; exchanging good practices and experiences; developing policies, systems and guidelines; and promoting partnerships, networks and collaborations.
* The proactive and reactive capacity of the ‘Economist Programme’, which ensures that a project will receive capacity support related to the SDGs in order to build capacity at the country level and provide policy and programmatic support in that regard.

In addition, the RP has produced sustainable results by strengthening institutional capacities and developing systems and processes at the AUC and a number of RECs. In implementing the RP, RSCA sought to consolidate alliances and partnerships with the AU, RECs, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), CSOs, philanthropic foundations and the private sector, which the evaluation found had good potential for sustainability. The RP has consolidated these relationships to support achieving outcomes, particularly with the AU (the Peace and Security and the Trade and Industry Commissions), the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), ECOWAS and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). The Programme also worked closely with CSOs, the private sector, academia and think tanks in Africa to implement various priority initiatives. Partnerships were established with the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). Good potential for sustainability is also provided by collaborations with RECs and regional entities (e.g. ECOWAS, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC), the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON), NEPAD and APRM). By ensuring that the Regional Programme document (RPD) is relevant to the region and addresses the needs of beneficiaries, including vulnerable groups such as women and PWDs, RSCA fostered ownership of the Programme, which is critical to sustainability. Nevertheless, there are concerns that RSCA has not fully institutionalized relationships with the AU, RECs and other partners across all areas of engagement and, in a number of instances, depended on one-time contracts and the good will of programme focal points in partner organizations.

Furthermore, no concrete exit strategy has been established as the Programme nears an end. This may not bode well for the institutions that have been created and strengthened, as disengagement always requires ample time.

The MTE has documented several lessons emerging from the implementation of the RP, which include the following:

* UNDP has continued to interact with the AU and RECs to deliver a wide range of interventions with a view to addressing the many interlinked challenges facing the continent.
* There are good indications of ownership and sustainability in instances where regional interventions are based on extensive consultations with key partners during project initiation, design, implementation and monitoring.
* In order for UNDP to deliver results as expected, there must be strong coordination and communication at the regional level with United Nations agencies, the AU and RECs, of which the MTE found no evidence.

The MTE draws the following conclusions:

* The RP is highly relevant to ongoing development challenges facing the continent and RECs and has responded to emerging issues, including the current COVID-19 pandemic in Africa.
* The pandemic continues to impede the achievement of results in most areas, thus requiring RSCA to be agile and adapt to the ‘new normal’. This has affected many aspects of RP implementation, including coordination, monitoring and evaluation of current activity.
* The RP has delivered on most of the planned activities and outputs during the period under review. These achievements are documented in various reports (e.g. annual reports, progress updates, review reports).
* Delayed funding and institutional constraints in managing and directing projects’ inception phases have been a major factor, which is likely to affect project implementation timelines.

**Recommendations**

* Revise and/or update the RP results framework indicators to evaluate outcomes and outputs using measurable data. This should include providing baseline data and SMART indicators to facilitate progress monitoring. Knowledge management should be systematized in order to capture, package and disseminate knowledge.
* Consider concentrating on fewer core projects and initiatives and dedicate more funds to fundraising, communication, outreach capacity and innovation, which could in turn attract donors and partners.

# Introduction and overview

## Purpose, scope and objectives

RSCA commissioned this evaluation of the RP to document and provide evaluative evidence of its contributions to development results, as articulated in both the UNDP Strategic Plan (2018–2021) and the RPD.[[3]](#footnote-3) The MTE was carried out in accordance with the overall provisions of the UNDP Evaluation Policy and Terms of Reference. Consistent with the evaluation plan of the Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA), the MTE was conducted to assess the impact of RSCA development assistance across major thematic and cross-cutting issues in three priority areas:

**Priority 1**: The AU and RECs deliver on their mandate, especially cross-cutting issues related to resilience-building.

**Priority 2**: Regional growth is inclusive, transformational and sustainable, with reduced economic inequalities, and characterized by structural transformation.

**Priority 3**: Regional institutions sustain peace and build resilience to crises and shocks.

Building on the mid-term review conducted in May 2020, the evaluation sought to collect evaluative evidence of the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and sustainability. of current programming, which could be used to strengthen existing programmes and inform new initiatives under the next programming cycle.

The evaluation also serves as an important accountability tool, providing stakeholders and partners with an impartial assessment of results.

The MTE of the RP assessed:

* The relevance and strategic positioning of RSCA support for the region in the three priority areas
* The RSCA frameworks and strategies devised to provide relevant support, including partnerships, and whether they are well conceived for achieving planned objectives
* The progress made by specific projects and advisory services in achieving the three outcomes, including contributing factors and constraints
* The potential lessons learned for future regional support

The specific objectives of the evaluation were to:

* Provide evidence of UNDP contributions to Africa’s development effectiveness through achievements in the three priority areas, including contributory factors and constraints.
* Provide development partners and stakeholders in the RP, Member States and RECs with an objective assessment of the development contributions made by RSCA support and partnerships with other key players during the period under review.
* Determine the strategic positioning and relevance of UNDP in terms of its strengths, weaknesses and gaps, especially with regard to the ToC and the partnership strategy (including choice of beneficiaries), as well as assess any need for mid-course adjustments to achieve outcomes.
* Clarify lessons learned to inform future programming, as well as higher-level evaluations and decision-making and planning for the remainder of the programme cycle.
* Contribute substantively to measuring the UNDP Administrator’s accountability to the Executive Board.
* Facilitate learning to inform current and future programming at the regional level and in the private sector and evaluate measures to strengthen the rights-based approach and mainstream gender in development efforts.
* Highlight the lessons, best practices and recommendations drawn from project implementation, coordination and partnerships.

## Criteria and questions

To assess the overall RP progress and performance, the MTE was conducted in accordance with United Nations evaluation guidelines using the OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability, around which the evaluation questions were developed. As per the Terms of Reference, the evaluation was imperative to adequately assess project design, the ToC, management and implementation, monitoring and evaluation procedures, and coordination among stakeholders during the Programme’s implementation. Given the broad scope of the RP, a mixed methods evaluation and methodology were adopted to evaluate the implementation process and performance, the relevance of the ToC and the appropriateness of the Programme’s vision. The assessment was informed by the evaluation criteria outlined in annex III, which provides key questions for each criterion (strategic positioning, programme design and implementation, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, coherence, partnerships and coordination, sustainability and impact), as well as the relevant data sources.

## Theory-based approach

**Theory of change**: A theory-based evaluation was undertaken to assess the Programme’s progress in accomplishing the three priority outcomes. This approach helped to evaluate the contributions of each implementing partner and stakeholder in terms of their own ToC and the overarching ToC of UNDP. In order to base the MTE on rich data, the evaluation team held initial meetings with RP senior management staff to develop a common understanding and concretize the approach. These meetings also allowed the team to evaluate the appropriateness of partnerships, the complementarity of existing and potential implementing partners, the technical assistance and follow-up provided to projects, and the Programme’s status in results-focused interventions across the three priority areas, as shown in the ToC of the RP, provided in annex IV.

**Process evaluation**: In addition to the theory-based evaluation, the evaluators conducted a process evaluation to assess re relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. The process evaluation included three components.First, a content evaluation assessed what the Programme has achieved compared to the objectives in the original RPD. Second, an implementation evaluation assessed the extent to which the RP has delivered activities in the intended quantities and quality, whether activities and services are being optimized and whether programme management arrangements are facilitating the delivery process to the best possible extent. The evaluation team also assessed quality assurance documents. To strengthen the credibility and validity of MTE findings, triangulation techniques were used to ensure technical quality. Results from data analysis were verified by comparing them to information obtained through other data collection methods, such as the desk review and interviews with UNDP project managers, stakeholders and project beneficiaries. Third, the evaluators assessed the key drivers of and barriers to delivery that intentionally or unintentionally impacted RP performance by reviewing previous implementation reports to discover the challenges and success stories of the RP, its projects and initiatives. For triangulation, the evaluators used primary data elicited from structured checklists, key informant interviews (KIIs) and a modified strength, weakness, opportunity and threat (SWOT) analysis tool administered to partners, stakeholders and beneficiaries.

## Methodology

The evaluation methodology followed five interlinked steps.

**Step 1:**Desk review and initial consultations. The evaluation team undertook a thorough review of secondary data, various programme documents and other relevant documentation, including annual reports from 2018 and 2019, all project progress reports, monthly programme updates, project evaluation reports and reviews. The desk review was continuous throughout this evaluation to review and confirm information and triangulate findings. A list of the documents under review is attached (see annex VI). The team also held initial consultations with RP management and M&E staff. The Regional Programme Coordinator provided a broad overview of the RP, its design, challenges and risks, as well as the mitigation strategies employed. These consultations allowed the evaluation team to gain important insights into the Programme’s design, the structure of RSCA and the overall RP outcome and to seek clarification on the methodology and ToC. It was clear from the discussions and the desk review that much had changed since the inception of the RP, which needed to be considered during the evaluation. The RP had also been highly ambitious in the design stage and had not achieved all that was envisaged, necessitating a review of the ToC (see annex IV).

**Step 2:** Development of detailed data collection tools (see annex VII). These tools were aligned with the OECD/DAC criteria and explored other areas of concern and focus for the MTE, as follows:

* The relevance and strategic positioning of RSCA support for the region in the three priority areas
* The RSCA frameworks and strategies devised to provide relevant support, including partnerships, and whether they are well conceived for achieving planned objectives
* The progress made by specific projects and advisory services in achieving the three outcomes, including contributing factors and constraints
* The potential lessons learned for future regional support

The tools included: (a) a semi-structured questionnaire based on the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, (b) a SWOT analysis tool to determine the strategic positioning and relevance of UNDP in terms of strengths, weaknesses and gaps and (c) a results-based matrix to analyse programme progress based on identified outcome indicators.

**Step 3:** Collection of primary data (both qualitative and quantitative). Interviews were conducted with 30 respondents, primarily via telephone or using online methods such as video conferencing or email. There were no field visits, owing to the travel restrictions and containment measures in place as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. UNDP project managers were interviewed, followed by RP stakeholders and partners, including representatives of the AU, certain RECs, donors and CSOs. The data collected were used to triangulate the initial data collected from the desk review and the RP managers’ interviews.

**Step 4:** Data analysis. Quantitative data were synthesized and keyed into SPSS software to produce tabulations for data cleaning and analysis. Outputs included tables, charts and graphs used to interpret findings. Qualitative data were examined using content analysis, although where necessary, the data were transcribed and transferred to pivot tables for analysis.

**Step 5:** Reporting. The data analysis was carried out concurrently with the reporting phase. Simple statistical methods were used to analyse quantitative data from the structured questionnaire, used to determine progress and trends. The OECD/DAC scoring system is illustrated in table 1.

Table 2  
Scoring system used by the mid-term evaluation

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Evaluation criteria* | *Scoring system* |
| **Relevance:** The extent to which the intervention’s objectives and design respond to the needs, policies and priorities of beneficiaries, the world, States, partners and institutions and will continue to do so if circumstances change. | Nine questions were asked.  Answers were allocated a ‘yes’ or ‘no’ value.  The ‘yes’ value earned one point; the ‘no’ value earned no points.  Yes = the RP responds to all or almost all significant development objectives and/or challenges facing the continent, as outlined in Agenda 2063.  Each response was accompanied by an explanation from the respondent to qualify the preferred rating.  The total points scored for each value were then converted to a percentage based on the number of respondents who selected that value**.** |
| **Effectiveness:** The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and results, including any differential results across groups. | The analysis evaluated the importance of processes and actual delivery of outputs and outcomes.  Nine questions were asked.  Answers were rated as either ‘high’, ‘medium’ or ‘low’, equivalent to ‘highly satisfactory’, ‘satisfactory’ and ‘unsatisfactory’ in the OECD/DAC operational guidelines for classifying evaluation findings.  High = the project has achieved over 50 percent of intended activities/outputs.  Medium = the project has achieved at least 50 percent of intended activities/outputs.  Low = the project has achieved less than 50 percent of intended activities/outputs.  Each response was accompanied by an explanation from the respondent to qualify the preferred rating.  The findings for each project’s performance were then aggregated to determine the overall performance of the outcome. |
| **Efficiency:** How well resources are being used. The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economical and timely manner.  The conversion of inputs (funds, expertise, natural resources, time, etc.) into outputs and outcomes, in the most cost-effective way possible. | Ten questions were asked in total.  Five questions with ‘yes’ and ‘no’ variables.  The ‘yes’ value earned one point; the ‘no’ value earned no points.  Yes = almost all RP inputs (time, staff, finances, technical expertise, etc.) were timely and well utilized to achieve current outputs.  Five questions with ‘high’, ‘medium’ and ‘low’ variables.  Answers were rated as either ‘high’, ‘medium’ or ‘low’, equivalent to ‘highly satisfactory’, ‘satisfactory’ and ‘unsatisfactory’ in the OECD/DAC operational guidelines for classifying evaluation findings.  Answers were scored on a scale of 1 to 3, with 3 being the highest.  Each response was accompanied by an explanation from the respondent to qualify the preferred rating.  The overall score for efficiency is expressed as a percentage of the number of points earned for each basic evaluation question. |
| **Coherence:** The extent to which the intervention is compatible with other interventions in a country, sector or institution. | Two questions were asked.  Answers were rated as either ‘high’, ‘medium’ or ‘low’, equivalent to ‘highly satisfactory’, ‘satisfactory’ and ‘unsatisfactory’ in the OECD/DAC operational guidelines for classifying evaluation findings.  The overall score for coherence is expressed as a percentage of the number of points earned for each basic evaluation question. |
| **Sustainability:** The extent to which the intervention’s net benefits continue or are likely to continue. | Two questions were asked.  Answers were rated as either ‘high’, ‘medium’ or ‘low’, equivalent to ‘highly satisfactory’, ‘satisfactory’ and ‘unsatisfactory’ in the OECD/DAC operational guidelines for classifying evaluation findings.  The overall score for sustainability is expressed as a percentage of the number of points earned for each basic evaluation question. |

Once the data had been organized and analysed, the evaluation team prepared the draft report, which was shared with the client for review and comments in order to incorporate the client’s views in refining and producing the final report.

**Respondents**

A total of 30 respondents made up of 21 UNDP staff and 9 representatives of stakeholders were interviewed (see **annex V**)*.*

## Limitations and mitigation strategies

In the absence of a comprehensive monitoring framework with indicators and baseline figures, it was difficult to assess the effectiveness of the RP (i.e. the extent to which programme goals, objectives and activities had been achieved). To mitigate this limitation, the evaluation relied on KIIs with the sampled respondents. These primary data were useful in triangulating secondary data from the various reports reviewed, including the annual reports of the RP from 2018 and 2019, progress reports and project evaluation reports.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the evaluators were unable to access beneficiaries on the ground for ground truthing and triangulation of some project-specific interventions, such as community involvement in PVE or entrepreneurial support for youth under the YouthConnekt initiative. The evaluation therefore had to rely on other evidence, including KIIs, secondary data and other completed project evaluations (e.g. the evaluation of the project entitled ‘Support for Effective Cooperation and Coordination of Cross-border Initiatives in Southwest Ethiopia-Northwest Kenya, Marsabit-Borana & Dawa, and Kenya-Somalia-Ethiopia’ (SECCCI project)).

The MTE also relied on a small sample of external respondents, given the scope of stakeholders involved in RP implementation at the regional and subregional levels. The evaluators triangulated data from monitoring reports, evaluation reports and other secondary sources to complement the information provided by external partners.

# Description of the Regional Programme

The UNDP Executive Board launched the RP in 2018, at a time when Africa had registered a decade of progress on many fronts, including economic growth, macroeconomic stability, an expanded private sector, communications technology and multiparty democracy.[[4]](#footnote-4) The RP sought to address the vast challenges facing the continent and accelerate transformational change to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. In particular, the RP sought to consolidate previous gains in quality leadership, maintain sound macroeconomic and sectoral policies, and increase investments in physical infrastructure and institutional development.

However, Africa faces a number of persistent interlinked challenges that could derail its growth aspirations. There are multiple pressing challenges at the regional and subregional levels, such as a surge in armed conflict, violence and disasters.[[5]](#footnote-5) In early March 2019, Tropical Cyclones Idai and Kenneth hit Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, leaving a trail of destruction in their path, with over 600 people dead and approximately 2.2 million in need of humanitarian assistance.[[6]](#footnote-6) Internal displacements continue to escalate on the continent; approximately 19.2 million people are currently displaced as a result of conflicts and disasters linked to climate change.[[7]](#footnote-7) Five African countries account for nearly 24.2 percent of total global displacements: the Democratic Republic of the Congo (1.9 million), Ethiopia (1.5 million), Somalia (0.7 million), South Sudan (0.55 million) and Burkina Faso (0.5 million). Additionally, the continent continues to face widespread poverty, gender inequality, youth unemployment and poor governance. Exclusionary political and socio-economic priorities are additional drivers of tension and conflict.

The Jihadist groups operating in the Sahel region and Al-Shabaab in Somalia continue to carry out attacks and trigger mass displacements and mobility. The poor are the most vulnerable and hardest hit by these crises, which are aggravated by economic stagnation, poverty, competition over scarce resources and climate change. While its effects are felt globally, climate change disproportionately impacts the continent, owing to a heavy reliance on agricultural, pastoral and land-dependent livelihoods that exposes millions to unpredictable variations in climate. Adaptation measures are therefore urgently needed. In order for Africa to adapt to climate change by 2030, an estimated $10 billion to $30 billion are needed annually.[[8]](#footnote-8) These challenges highlight the continent’s increasing vulnerability to crises, and sustained efforts are required to bring about transformational change and bolster economic growth to achieve the SDGs.

The current RP is meant to address these challenges in partnership with the AU, RECs, member States and their partners. Its design was guided by lessons learned, past and ongoing assessments and the independent evaluation of the UNDP Strategic Plan and Global and Regional Programmes (2014–2017). Several African institutions are essential to implementing the RP, including APRM, NEPAD, the Continental Early Warning System, the Panel of the Wise, the African Union Peace Fund, AfDB and national human rights institutions. However, these institutions face challenges, particularly a lack of technical and financial capacities. Past lessons learned have demonstrated the need to provide targeted institutional capacity support to regional and subregional organizations, such as IGAD, ECOWAS and the East African Community, to allow them to fulfil their mandate and accelerate regional and subregional integration and sustainable development.

The RP was designed in response to three interrelated development challenges that impede Africa from achieving the aspirations of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda. The Programme is grounded in the seven principles of UNDP, particularly the principle of ‘leaving no one behind’, as well as its global experience, expertise and priorities**.** Aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan, the RP is based on comprehensive regional analysis, the UNDP comparative advantage and other vital global agreements and processes, such as the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. The Programme seeks to strengthen regional coordination to avoid duplication and deepen partnerships with African institutions, civil society actors and bilateral partners. The key RP activities were informed by close consultations with the AU, CSOs and bilateral partners and are consistent with United Nations priorities.

The heart of the UNDP global mandate focuses on transforming conditions for poor and marginalized people, which is why ‘leave no one behind’ is the first principle. Gender equality and the needs of women, girls and youth are prioritized in all initiatives, as it is well understood that the continent can only be integrated, prosperous and peaceful when women and youth are empowered and supported in achieving their potential.

**Programmatic areas**

The RPD provides integrated support for three priority areas and outcomes that are aligned with the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018–2021.

**Priority 1:** The AU and RECs deliver on their mandate, especially on cross-cutting issues related to resilience-building (contributing to Outcome 2 of the UNDP Strategic Plan). Building on the global expertise, knowledge and experience of UNDP in capacity development, the RP sought to strengthen institutions’ capacities to fulfil their respective mandates, including commitments made under Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework, the Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Since 2018, UNDP has strategically focused its efforts on strengthening the AUC, IGAD, ECOWAS and LCBC. It has provided support to the AUC to oversee the ratification and domestication of AU treaties, upgrade its ‘horizon scanning’ process and legal framework on terrorism, and implement the AMV. With regard to IGAD, UNDP supported the Authority in strengthening its early warning systems for droughts and floods and in developing and implementing a regional framework for the development-humanitarian nexus in the Horn of Africa.

**Priority 2**: Regional growth is inclusive, transformational and sustainable, with reduced economic inequalities, and characterized by structural transformation (contributing to Outcome 2 of the UNDP Strategic Plan). To achieve this outcome, the RP focuses on social protection schemes, gender equality and empowerment, value chain development and greater resilience to vulnerabilities such as climate shocks. It supports inclusive, risk-informed growth that responds to the most pressing challenges. Strong partnerships were established with the AUC, RECs, ILO, UNICEF and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). The RP also provided support to YouthConnekt Africa, the Africa Adaptation Initiative and the African Volunteer Corps. In addition, the Programme works to develop the private sector and promote greater inclusion of PWDs in development planning.

**Priority 3:** Regional institutions sustain peace and build resilience to crises and shocks (contributing to Outcome 3 of the UNDP Strategic Plan). This initiative focuses on supporting APRM in fulfilling its mandate, strengthening PVE initiatives and scaling up early warning mechanisms to respond to emerging armed conflict risks and situations in Africa. This work is undertaken in collaboration with the AU, the International Organization for Migration, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNECA.

The RP also directly contributes to the four ‘signature solutions’ of the Strategic Plan: strengthening effective, accountable and inclusive governance; enhancing prevention and recovery for resilient societies; closing the clean energy gap; and strengthening gender equality. Furthermore, the Programme is expected to support the implementation and scaling-up of the UNDP Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa, often referred to as Africa’s Promise.

# Mid-term evaluation findings

This chapter presents the findings, lessons learned and recommendations of the MTE, with regard to the three priority areas of the RP. For each priority area, the analysis was consistent with the five evaluation criteria: relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

## 3.1 Relevance

The MTE sought to determine the extent to which the RP responds to the needs and priorities of Africa, as expressed in Agenda 2063. The evaluation also assessed the institutional capacity of RSCA, in terms of staffing, local knowledge and experience in the region, to conduct a relevant and appropriate response.

Figure II illustrates the overall perception of the extent to which the RP responds to the needs and priorities of Africa, as expressed in Agenda 2063, based on five assessment criteria.

Figure II. Respondents’ overall perception of the relevance of the Regional Programme

Source: Author.

### Consistency with the needs and priorities of Africa, as expressed in Agenda 2063

The evaluation found that the RP is highly relevant to regional development challenges and global development frameworks, as it is well aligned with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063. The RP seeks to support an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa, which demonstrates its relevance and alignment with the aspirations and vision of Agenda 2063. The MTE finds that all three RP priorities are relevant to the needs and priorities of Africa, as well as the development challenges facing the continent. For example, the eight outputs under Priority 1 were supported by 14 regional initiatives.[[9]](#footnote-9) Building on the long-standing partnerships, experience and knowledge of UNDP, these initiatives were designed to strengthen the capacities of the AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, SADC and LCBC to fulfil their respective mandates. In fact, the impact of these initiatives went beyond the intended goals, given the interlinking nature of the challenges facing the continent.

Respondents agreed that the RP addresses the development needs and priorities of Africa. A majority of respondents (90 percent) believed that the RP is addressing these needs and priorities within the limits of its mandate. Table 3illustrates the alignment between the RP priority areas and the region’s corresponding priority areas, as expressed in Agenda 2063.

Table 3   
Relevance of the Regional Programme to Africa’s needs and priorities, as expressed in Agenda 2063

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Regional Programme priority areas* | *Corresponding priority areas in Agenda 2063* |
| Priority 1: The AU and RECs deliver on their mandate, especially cross-cutting issues related to resilience-building | * Framework and institutions for a united Africa * Institutional structure for AU * Participation in global affairs * Partnership * Poverty, inequality and hunger * Social security and protection, including for persons with disabilities * Climate resilience and natural disaster preparedness and prevention * Youth and child empowerment * Women and girls empowerment * Violence and discrimination against women and girls * Renewable energy * Manufacturing driven by science, technology and innovation * Industrialization and value addition * Agricultural productivity and production * Sustainable and inclusive economic growth * Human rights, justice and the rule of law * Maintenance and preservation of peace and security |
| Priority 2: Regional growth is inclusive, transformational and sustainable, with reduced economic inequalities, and characterized by structural transformation |
| Priority 3: Regional institutions sustain peace and build resilience to crises and shocks |

Additionally, the MTE found that Priority 1 was consistent with Outcome 2 of the UNDP Strategic Plan, Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda, particularly SDG 10 (reduced inequalities), SDG 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) and SDG 17 (partnerships for the Goals). The relevance of the RP was further confirmed by the 30 respondents, who affirmed that the development challenges facing Africa are increasingly regional in nature, as are many of the interventions of the RP. The extent to which the RP was relevant to the needs and priorities of RECs and their member States was unclear, particularly with regard to the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and country programme documents.

The MTE noted the high ambitions of the RP and the need to make some adjustments, given the changing socio-economic environment, particularly with regard to regional economic blocks (e.g. free trade areas). The evaluation finds a number of areas that would enhance the relevance of the RP and better align with the needs and priorities of the continent:

* The Climate Change project and the Output 2.3 on climate change (RECs and the African Group of Negotiators have strengthened technical capacities to promote the implementation of the Paris Agreement). Climate change governance inadequately addresses critical challenges. Given the significant challenges Africa faces because of its high vulnerability to climate change, the RP should scale up innovative regional projects on adaptation and mitigation to enhance resilience and support the achievement of the SDGs.
* Governance and democracy. The continent is facing serious weaknesses in governance and political uncertainties characterized by a lack of accountability and, in some instances, elusive democratic transitions. While the purview of UNDP includes strengthening governance globally, the regional approach of the RP is insufficient to support the advancement of democracy in Africa. Nevertheless, many of the projects could be linked to governance, such as PVE, the ‘African Mining Governance Project’ (Mining project) and AU treaties. The RP having initiated the ‘Africa Governance Programme’, and recognizing that governance is one of the pillars of the UNDP Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa, the evaluators are optimistic that the RP will sufficiently address and be more relevant to many of the governance and political challenges in Africa.
* Regional integration and intra-African trade, as encapsulated in the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). The RP has accorded insufficient attention to strengthening regional integration and intra-African trade, as a means of reducing poverty and achieving the SDGs in Africa. While the UNDP Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa has a relevant proposal for boosting intra-African trade to bolster economic growth and achieve the SDGs, it could be more relevant to the priorities and needs in Africa by improving and increasing engagement with the AU, RECs and partners “not as mere recipients of development assistance, but as valued hosts and development agendas with inherent strengths and assets that can be strategically leveraged towards shared goals”.[[10]](#footnote-10)
* Partnerships. Although there is evidence that the RP works with a multitude of partners to implement various interventions, the extent to which the RP has strategically leveraged such partnerships to achieve critical results is generally wanting. In the long term, the RP would achieve greater results and enhance sustainability in Africa by deepening partnerships in the following critical pillars of the Renewed Strategic Offer: support the digital transformation of African economies, mobilize financial resources from African countries to implement RP interventions and strengthen democracy and governance.

### Relevance and appropriateness of delivery mechanisms

The RP uses various mechanisms to achieve and deliver results, including technical and policy advice, advocacy efforts, partnerships, coordination and consensus-building, training and research. Strategic projects and interventions address three interrelated priorities through a regional lens. New projects are also designed around emerging issues to guarantee responsiveness.

The regional projects have been designed and tailored to respond to specific identified needs. For instance, the borderlands projects employ a consultative approach to address cross-border challenges, which cannot be surmounted by individual countries. Technical and policy advice, advocacy efforts, partnerships, coordination and consensus-building increase efficiency in service delivery. Stronger partnerships yield dividends in sustaining and expanding gains made in capacity-building. In PVE, for example, a stronger partnership with the AU Peace and Security Commission and additional technical support has improved the regional capacity to ensure that conflict early warning systems are in place. This evaluation further noted that the consultative process espoused by UNDP aims to build consensus, its transaction costs notwithstanding. This service delivery approach also has a positive impact on promoting South-South and triangular cooperation and ensuring that essential initiatives catalyse institutional capacity and develop partnerships to address related challenges. Moreover, the advocacy and collaboration efforts of UNDP are appropriate. UNDP; UNICEF; ILO; the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime; the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women); and UNECA are implementing a joint programme, to be funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), to demonstrate a new way of working fragile contexts, such as in the Sahel region.

These positive impacts could have attributed to the high rating given to service delivery, as 90 percent of respondents felt that the RP delivery methodology was appropriate and relevant to the context in Africa. Collaborating with the AUC, RECs and national Governments on policy issues requires strategic delivery methodologies that have transformative results. Working through regional and pan-African CSOs, like Equality Now/SOAR and the Tony Elumelu Foundation, ensures that policies are implemented with real people at the grass-roots level. The Economist Programme provides another example. It was established to build capacity at the country level in order to provide policy and programmatic support in achieving the SDGs and to create knowledge management hubs across the continent. However, the evaluators did not find evidence of joint project implementation modalities at RSCA and expressed concerns about the partnership strategy employed with implementing partners, such as the AU and RECs.

### Responsiveness to the changing social, economic and political environment in Africa

Respondents had mixed perceptions of the responsiveness of the RP to the changing socio-economic environment and context. Approximately 54 percent of respondents interviewed agreed that the RP is well designed to address changes, as it had recently adapted to the social and economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. One respondent said: “While the world is seeking a medical solution to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNDP is seeking a social response.”[[11]](#footnote-11) On the political front, the RP was quick to respond to the crisis in Mali, working closely with the new Government to ensure that gains made under RP interventions were not lost.

The evaluation notes the various assessments carried out at the beginning of each individual intervention to ensure responsiveness to emerging issues. Notable reports included ‘Journey to Extremism in Africa’, which identified the changing face of violent extremism, and ‘The State of Social Assistance in Africa’, which provided detailed, current data on all African countries. The needs assessments conducted by the gender teams prior to providing training on the use of the Gender Equality Seal also demonstrate responsiveness and efforts to remain relevant during implementation. There is evidence that technology had been embraced by RP interventions, which demonstrates responsiveness to the digital era. Furthermore, the RP was responsive to the cyclical extreme weather conditions that impact the lives of people in Africa through interventions in climate change and food security across States, such as the SECCCI project.

Three of the critical challenges that impede the achievement of the SDGs are violent extremism, natural hazards and a weak legal and policy environment. The SDGs cannot be achieved without addressing these challenges in a coherent and collaborated manner, as mentioned in the Quadrennial comprehensive policy review.[[12]](#footnote-12) For example, violent extremism and its devastating socio-economic impacts in Africa not only reverse development gains but also curtail prospects of economic growth for decades to come. The Boko Haram insurgency in the Lake Chad region resulted in the displacement of approximately 2.3 million people,[[13]](#footnote-13) while tourism in Kenya, a vital sector that provides decent jobs and income, dropped by approximately 25 percent owing to Al-Shabaab.[[14]](#footnote-14) Violent extremism therefore weakens economic performance, increases unemployment rates, destroys cross-border livelihoods, reduces school enrolment and transition rates and exacerbates poverty and inequality. The RP focused on strengthening capacities to prevent and respond to violent extremism in Africa through a regional lens by strengthening the AUC, RECs and a number of States, thus ensuring regional growth is inclusive, transformational and sustainable. The MTE finds this approach highly relevant to the needs of African countries and the region.

The MTE also notes that the challenges hindering Africa’s development, as analysed in the RPD, continue to exist, and the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic served to expose existing systemic and structural weaknesses. Consequently, a regional approach to addressing Africa’s development needs and priorities should strengthen Africa’s institutions, AU member States and regional CSOs, as intended by the ToC. These institutions, mandated to transform Africa, require as much technical and financial assistance as possible to surmount these challenges.

### Relevance and appropriateness of the theory of change

The ToC is highly appropriate and remains relevant; a long-term vision is integrated into its logic. The Programme’s ToC contains explicit assumptions and a clear pathway of change that describes how the RP would contribute to outcomes in the three priority areas and is backed by credible evidence of effective strategies in this context. The RPD clearly explains why the project’s strategy is currently the best approach, which was confirmed by all project managers interviewed.

**IF** the RP works with the AU, RECs, member States, CSOs, private sector actors and philanthropic organizations to build their capacities and provide technical and financial support to fulfil their mandates

**THEN** poverty in all its forms will be eradicated, structural transformation for sustainable development will be accelerated and resilience will be built to crises and shocks

The majority of the project managers and stakeholders interviewed (94 percent) felt that the ToC is relevant, appropriate and a good basis upon which to develop the RP initiatives. Respondents did not see the need to change the ToC at this stage but stated that any future change should include a realignment of the outcomes. In particular, the 21 RP projects should be strategically and logically aligned and synchronized with the UNDP Strategic Plan, focusing on two outcome areas: accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development (Outcome 2) and build resilience to shocks and crises (Outcome 3).

Nevertheless, the evaluators felt that the assumptions and risks captured in the ToC required further review in light of the weaknesses in partnerships with the AU, RECs and other partners, as well as the changing socio-economic environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Institutional capacity of the Regional Service Centre for Africa

The evaluation assessed the strengths and weaknesses of RSCA to determine whether there is sufficient capacity to deliver on the RP. Assessment parameters included regional presence, local knowledge and experience in the region, as well as staffing capacity.

**Regional presence, local knowledge and experience in the region**: RSCA has over a decade of experience working in Africa with a comparative advantage and good partnerships based on trust and technical capacity. The office in Addis Ababa is the main interface with regional and continental bodies, such as the AU and RECs. The strategic positioning of subregional hubs further strengthens its presence on the continent. These include offices in Nairobi, covering the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa, and Dakar, covering West and Central Africa. There is also a proposed office to cover Southern Africa, to be located in Pretoria. This positioning helps to foster strategic partnerships, advocacy and coordination with subregional institutions and other partners in the context of the RP. RSCA also utilizes UNDP COs to deliver on common agendas. The Centre also coordinates other areas of work across the continent beyond the RP, with a view to achieving the SDGs, improving States’ public finance management, mitigating the impact of HIV and AIDS, building capacity for disaster risk management and climate change mitigation and adaptation, enabling access to sustainable energy and the sustainable use of natural resources, promoting gender equality and empowerment and enhancing food security in the Sahel region. RSCA also provides support to countries to improve aid and development effectiveness and South-South cooperation (SSC). These initiatives confirm existing in-house capacity and the Centre’s presence on the continent. The RSCA Country Support Team is the principal point of contact for COs with regional and headquarter teams. PVE interventions in the IGAD member States were implemented in collaboration with UNDP COs, further confirming the Centre’s capacity.

**Staffing capacity**: The evaluation confirmed that RSCA has deployed staff of high calibre with the necessary technical skills and expertise. From discussions with project managers, it was evident that the staff had a clear understanding of the technical dimensions of their sectors, which provides confidence that RSCA will deliver on the RP. The Centre also provides strategic support by embedding technical experts in RECs and the AU to fill gaps in human capacity. It was also clear from this evaluation that, when projects had not mobilized adequate funding, RSCA could mobilize internal staff or procure external experts to deliver on the projects.

## 3.2 Coherence

To analyse coherence, the MTE examined the extent to which the policies and practices of various actors in the region were complementary, adding value while avoiding duplication of effort.

### Internal coherence

There are strong links between the goals, objectives, modalities and protocols in the three priority areas of the RP.

The overall objective of all RP interventions is to address the persistent and interrelated challenges facing Africa by amplifying opportunities that support the priorities and aspirations in Agenda 2063. This coherence is well articulated in the ToC, according to which Africa’s challenges will be addressed if the RP works with the AU, RECs, member States, CSOs, private sector actors and philanthropic organizations to build their capacities and provide technical and financial support to fulfil their mandates. RP interventions are all interlinked and seek to improve the institutional capacity of the AU, RECs and member States in order to address the challenges facing the continent, which include conflicts and violent extremism, weak trade and industry, gender inequality, climate change, a lack of social protection, youth unemployment and cyclical shocks such as droughts and floods.

The evaluation notes coherence with the UNDP Strategic Plan (2018–2021). The priorities of the RP logically contribute to those of the Strategic Plan, the primary goal of which is to support country-led efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. Priorities 1 and 2 of the RP are coherent with Outcome 2 of the Strategic Plan: “Accelerate structural transformations for sustainable development”.[[15]](#footnote-15) Priority 3 of the RP is coherent with Outcome 3 of the Strategic Plan: “Build resilience to shocks and crisis”.

The RP is also coherent with the work of other United Nations agencies through the following five key areas of collaboration:

* Adhering to the principles of ‘leaving no one behind’ and ‘reaching the furthest behind first’
* Eradicating poverty
* Addressing climate change
* Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls
* Emphasising that development is a central goal in itself and that the work of United Nations development system entities can contribute to building and sustaining peace in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations, in accordance with national plans, needs and priorities and with respect for national ownership

According to the evaluation, the RP worked closely with UN Women on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and with ILO on social protection.

### External coherence

There are synergies and linkages between RP interventions and interventions carried out by other actors on the continent.

The MTE found that the RP is coherent with global and regional frameworks, including Agenda 2063, the 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Framework. Furthermore, interviews with respondents indicated that RSCA works closely with the AU and has consolidated relationships with RECs in the design and implementation of regional initiatives. Several of the RSCA project documents refer to AU documents, particularly Agenda 2063. See table 4 for details of the coherence analysis.

Table 4  
Analysis of the coherence of Regional Programme outcomes with other interventions

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Output** | **Findings**a | | |
| **Aligned with Agenda 2063 (Horizontal)** | **Aligned with the 2030 Agenda (Vertical)** | **Aligned with other interventions** |
| **Outcome 1: African Union and RECs deliver on their mandate, especially cross-cutting issues related to resilience-building** | | | |
| Output 1.1: The AUC Legal Office has strengthened technical capacity to oversee the ratification and domestication of the African Union treaties | Aspiration 3: An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law | SDG 16.6: Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels  SDG 16.8: Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance  SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development | Kagame report on the need for regional integration and the peace and security pillar |
| Output 1.2: The AU Peace and Security Commission has strengthened operational capacity to identify conflict hotspots and undertake in-depth scenario planning | Aspiration 3: An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law  Aspiration 4: A peaceful and secure Africa | SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels |  |
| Output 1.3: The AU Peace and Security Commission, ECOWAS, IGAD and LCBC have strengthened technical capacities to coordinate the continental and subregional PVE agenda | Aspiration 4: A peaceful and secure Africa |  |  |
| Output 1.4: The AU Trade and Industry Commission has adequate technical capacity to implement the Africa Mining Vision | Aspiration 2 (para. 24): Africa shall be a continent where the free movement of people, capital, goods and services will result in significant increases in trade and investments amongst African countries rising to unprecedented levels, and in the strengthening of Africa’s place in global trade | SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss | Africa Mining Vision and the call for action to “transform, grow and industrialize [African] economies through beneficiation and value addition of natural resources” |
| Output 1.5: RECs and member States have the adequate technical capacities to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and share knowledge on lessons learned that are gender responsive from the implementation of continental and global development agendas | Aspiration 7: Africa as a strong, united, resilient and influential global player and partner | SDG 17.6: Enhance North-South, South-South and triangular regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology and innovation and enhance knowledge sharing on mutually agreed terms, including through improved coordination among existing mechanisms, in particular at the United Nations level, and through a global technology facilitation mechanism |  |
| Output 1.6: AUC and RECs have the technical and operational capacities to promote an inclusive growth model in the continent | Aspiration 6: An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children |  | African Continental Free Trade Area Agreement |
| Output 1.7: IGAD has strengthened technical capacities to develop gender sensitive and inclusive early warning systems on droughts, floods and rangelands and pasture, and develop strategic actions to address these issues |  | SDG 1.5: By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters | Sendai Framework, Paris Agreement, Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework in Africa |
| **Outcome 2: Regional growth is inclusive, transformational and sustainable, with reduced economic inequalities, and characterized by structural transformation** | | | |
| Output 2.1: AUC, RECs and member States are enabled to design, implement, monitor and coordinate delivery of social protection to those excluded or marginalized | **Aspiration 1:** A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development | SDG 1.3: Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable  SDG 10.4: Adopt policies, especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies, and progressively achieve greater equality |  |
| Output 2.3: RECs and the African Group of Negotiators have strengthened technical capacities to promote the implementation of the Paris Agreement | **Aspiration 1 (para. 10):** Africa’s unique natural endowments, its environment and ecosystems, including its wildlife and wild lands are healthy, valued and protected, with climate resilient economies and communities | SDG 1.5: By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters  SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts | Sendai Framework, Paris Agreement, Programme of Action for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework in Africa |
| Output 2.4: The AUC, the African Volunteer Corps and the YouthConnekt Africa initiative have enhanced operational and technical capacities to increase youth participation in political and economic development initiatives | Aspiration 6: An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children | **SDG** 8.6: By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training |  |
| Output 2.5: The AU, RECs and member States have enhanced technical capacities to promote gender equality | Aspiration 6: An Africa whose development is people-driven, relying on the potential of African people, especially its women and youth, and caring for children | SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls |  |
| Output 2.6: Member States are enabled to deliver on Nationally Determined Contributions commitments and encourage public-private investment in renewable energy | **Aspiration 1 (para. 10):** Africa’s unique natural endowments, its environment and ecosystems, including its wildlife and wild lands are healthy, valued and protected, with climate resilient economies and communities | **SDG 7:** Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all  SDG 12.6: Encourage companies, especially large and transnational companies, to adopt sustainable practices and to integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycle |  |
| Output 2.7: African Union and RECs are enabled to support regional value chains to implement the multi-country Agribusiness Supplier Development Programme, the Global Environment Facility and the Africa Impact Investment Action Plan | **Aspiration 1 (para. 10):** Modern agriculture for increased production, productivity and value addition contributes to farmer and national prosperity and Africa’s collective food security | SDG 2.4: By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality |  |
| Output 2.8: The African Disability Forum is enabled to promote greater inclusion of people with disabilities in development planning | Aspiration 3: An Africa of good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law | SDG 10.2: By 2030, empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status |  |
| **Outcome 3: Regional institutions sustain peace and build resilience to crises and shocks** | | | |
| Output 3.1: The APRM has enhanced technical capacity to track the implementation and oversee the monitoring and evaluation of key governance areas, including the M&E and reporting of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda |  | SDG 17.18: By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts |  |
| Output 3.2: Security actors and communities are able to reduce recruitment into violent extremism and support reintegration efforts of diverse ‘returnees’ | Aspiration 4: A peaceful and secure Africa | SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels |  |
| Output 3.3: The African Union Peace and Security Unit and national and subnational actors are enabled to establish vertical and horizontal partnerships with other critical actors to set up and support peace infrastructures | Aspiration 4: A peaceful and secure Africa | SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels |  |
| Output 3.4: African Union and RECs have enhanced technical capacities to strengthen effective governance of labour migration and mobility in Africa |  | SDG 10.7: Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies |  |

a All Regional Programme priorities are consistent with SDG target 17.9: Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all SDGs, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

### Complementarity of policies

The evaluation’s findings indicate that the policies of various actors in the region highly complement the RP in adding value while avoiding duplication. Approximately 63 percent of respondents rated this complementarity as ‘high’. The consultative and participatory process adopted by the RP in the design and implementation stages has resulted in an integrated approach to addressing programmatic priorities in the region while avoiding duplication. The RP works with different actors, including the AUC, RECs, national Governments, CSOs and the private sector.

At the design stage, UNDP conducted extensive consultations with the AU, RECs, civil society, individual experts and other crucial stakeholders and practitioners to ensure that coherence and complementarity were addressed from the outset. The RPD contains evidence of synergies to be created among various actors on the continent. However, some of the officials who participated in the design stage have either moved or left the organizations. For example, the African Union Department of Social Affairs underwent a change of staff, and new personnel were just beginning to work with the RP.

### Harmonization and coordination

In the implementation stage, there is evidence of joint planning between the RP and the AU and RECs on the development of policy frameworks and project design and implementation. It was clear that the AU or REC had communicated demand for the project and received support from UNDP. The idea or concept for an intervention, proposed by an outside actor, spoke to the needs and priorities but had to be consistent with the ToC of the RP. Joint work plans and common implementation frameworks, under which different partners focus on different RP outputs, were developed to ensure coherence. As an REC, IGAD confirmed that it had been given the opportunity to articulate its aspirations when negotiating for the Gender intervention supported by the RP. The evaluation also probed areas of conflict with the AU and RECs. While there were challenging aspects and difficult working relationships, both sides acknowledge the need for coherence and have the good will necessary to approach Africa’s priorities and needs coherently.

The RP also worked closely with other United Nations agencies in delivering capacity trainings to various actors and institutions. ILO participated in the initiative ‘Social Protection for Sustainable Development in Africa’ (SP4SD Africa). Demand-driven capacity development events were organized to improve the ability of African countries to report on the SDGs and Agenda 2063, in partnership with UNECA, the AUC and the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA). The evaluation probed areas of possible conflict between United Nations agencies (e.g. UN Women on gender equality and ILO on social protection). The consensus was that gender and social protection are cross-cutting issues and represent a shared burden that requires shared responsibilities, as opposed to rigid, isolated mandates. It was argued that issues of non-coherence were more philosophical in nature and usually centred on sources of funding and associated politics rather than synergies and complementarity.

There is also evidence of joint decision-making to determine the approach to common problems, with the participation of Member States and Governments across borders. For example, the Lake Chad Regional Stabilization Facility (RSF) has a strong policy component at the regional level. The key issue is how to defeat Boko Haram insurgents but also how to ensure local involvement in order to enhance the integration, reinsertion and rehabilitation of displaced persons. The project has also developed community-based policies in that regard. Community involvement in policy preparation ensures that those impacted are part of the process, that their concerns are addressed and that the real beneficiaries—women, children, and youth—are targeted. It also helps to manage stigmatization.

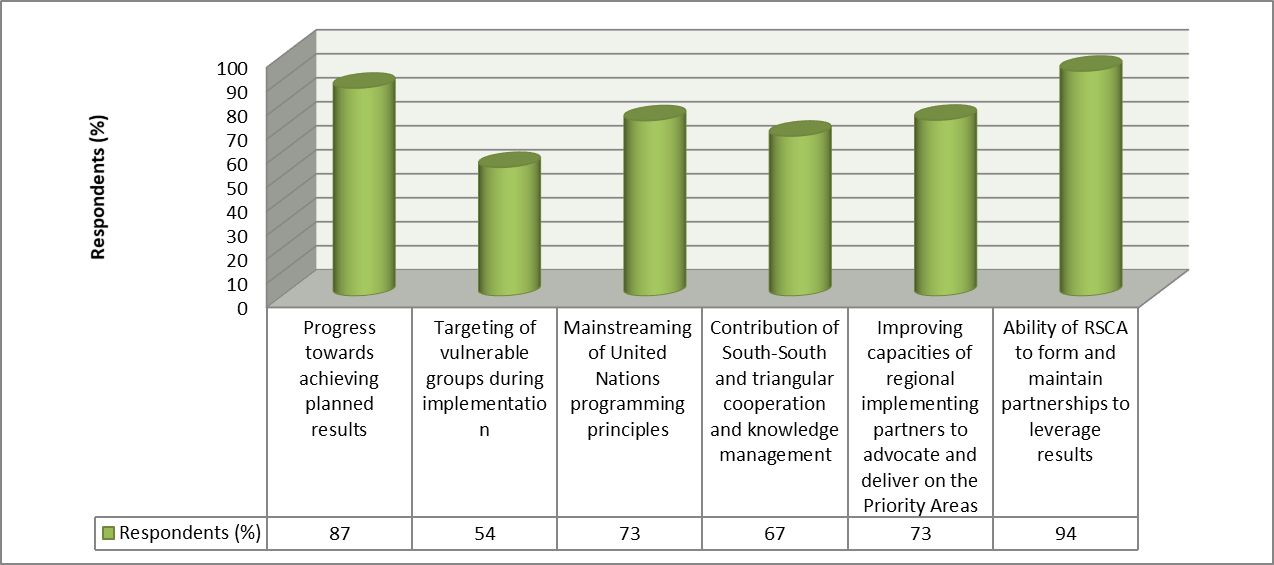
The MTE confirmed evidence of similar synergies, approaches and coherence in engaging with civil society actors on the continent. The Tony Elumelu Foundation has worked closely with the RP on youth entrepreneurship engagement and in other areas. In 2020, a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Equality Now/SOAR was signed to deliver on specified outputs for the Gender project of the RP. Notably, discussions to arrive at an understanding are lengthy, but, according to one respondent: “The process is as good as the product.”

In summary, all actors agree that it is easier to align interventions to overarching frameworks to ensure coherence, such as the Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol), the Beijing Platform for Action, the 2030 Agenda, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Agenda 2063, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework.

## 3.3 Effectiveness

The MTE assessed the progress made in producing the desired results, identifying which results have not been achieved and explaining the variance. Seven parameters were used: (i) progress towards achieving results for each of the three outcome areas, (ii) targeting of vulnerable, marginalized and disadvantaged groups, (iii) mainstreaming of organizational programming principles during implementation, monitoring and evaluation, (iv) the contribution of South-South and triangular cooperation and knowledge management in achieving results, (v) the most relevant and strategic programme areas for UNDP to scale up, explore or set aside going forward, (vi) improvements to the capacities of regional implementing partners to advocate and deliver on the three priority areas, and (vii) the establishment and continuation of partnerships to leverage results. Figure III illustrates the overall effectiveness of the RP.

Figure III. Effectiveness of the Regional Programme



Source: Author.

### Progress towards achieving results, by output

Approximately 87 percent of respondents concur that the RP is on track in delivering on all three outcomes, as illustrated in figure III. To measure the extent of progress made for each Outcome area, the evaluation analysed the RP results framework, outcomes and indicators designed to measure progress to determine whether the Programme is on track to achieve its planned results and outcomes. A detailed analysis of the results framework based on outputs and indicators is provided in annex I.The evaluation also delved into individual RP projects to populate data on accomplishments. Although it is difficult to map projects against outputs, the evaluation used a matrix that linked project contributions to the most relevant Outcome, agreed upon with UNDP during the inception phase.

**Outcome 1**: The AU and RECs deliver on their mandate, especially cross-cutting issues related to resilience-building.

**Output 1.1**: The AUC Legal Office has strengthened technical capacity to oversee the ratification and domestication of the African Union treaties.

Overall, the RP strengthened systems and processes of the AUC, RECs and member States in the ratification and domestication of treaties, but some capacities are yet to be fully developed. The RP effectively contributed to strengthening the technical capacities of the AUC Legal Office to oversee the ratification and domestication of six AU treaties in partnership with six countries and the Swedish Embassy.[[16]](#footnote-16) After successfully launching the regional initiative and receiving technical and financial assistance, Sao Tome and Principe has ratified seven AU treaties.[[17]](#footnote-17) Support from the RP was also used to develop a website on the status of treaty domestication and the ratification of the AfCFTA Agreement.

Other key results were achieved under this output through the RP support systems and processes:

* Two experts were recruited by the Office of the Legal Counsel to support the drafting of laws and regulations.
* Policy papers on the domestication of treaties in six countries were developed and disseminated.
* Toolkits on standards for the ratification and domestication of treaties in Africa were developed and implemented.
* Member States received support to establish national sectoral committees, and training on treaty ratification and domestication was developed and introduced.
* Legal frameworks were harmonized between the AUC, RECs and member States.
* Two South-South forums were held to exchange good practices on AU treaty ratification and domestication.
* Capacity-building workshops were conducted for legal officers from five countries on legal drafting and treaty ratification and domestication.

While the RP has contributed to strengthening the AU Legal Office and has supported countries in developing systems and processes to support domestication, the MTE finds little evidence of the domestication and implementation of these treaties. Apart from Sao Tome and the Principe, which exceeded its target, there has been slow progress in the other five countries. This is partly due to the COVID-19 pandemic and slow recruitment of experts. In addition, the ratification of treaties is a political process that requires political sensitivity and broader consultations. Stakeholders interviewed during the evaluation applauded the knowledge and experience of UNDP but faulted its capability to institutionalize relationships with partners in the region in order to bolster effective implementation of the AU Treaties project. Furthermore, the rationale for selecting the six AU treaties was unclear, given that no previous studies had been done on the progress the countries had made in domesticating treaties. The evaluation notes that a number of planned activities have not taken hold and, given the limited time remaining, it is unlikely that the intended results will be achieved. Consequently, the MTE suggests that UNDP should review the implementation modalities, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and embrace adaptive management and greater flexibility or provide an extension in the implementation of this initiative, should the current environment persist.

**Output 1.2**:The AU Peace and Security Commission has strengthened operational capacity to identify conflict hotspots and undertake in-depth scenario planning.

The RP supported the Peace and Security Commission in strengthening its technical and operational capacity to identify conflict hotspots and conduct scenario analysis in collaboration with the AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, LCBC and the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism in Algiers. The Programme aimed to establish links with the PVE agenda and promoted the use of structural conflict prevention tools for monitoring the evolution and root causes of violent extremism (see Outputs 1.3 and 3.2 for additional details). With support from the RP, IGAD has been able to play a coordinating role in PVE. Currently, 11 countries have national strategies on PVE; and capacity-building initiatives have been conducted for security actors in 10 countries.

**Output 1.3**: The AU Peace and Security Commission, ECOWAS, IGAD and LCBC have strengthened technical capacities to coordinate the continental and subregional PVE agenda.

The RP has been effective in strengthening the technical capacities of the AUC, LCBC, IGAD and ECOWAS to coordinate the PVE agenda, but commitments from partners gave cause for concern.

Throughout the six-year PVE project, the Programme has strengthened development responses to mitigate the growth of violent extremism in Africa, which has a devastating impact on the lives and livelihoods of populations across the continent, particularly the most vulnerable. Youth, women and children in the subregions represented by IGAD and ECOWAS are particularly impacted. RBA worked in partnership with the AUC, ECOWAS and IGAD to prevent and respond to violent extremism. Furthermore, this initiative has been implemented in ‘epicentre countries’ (Libya, Mali, Nigeria and Somalia) ‘spillover countries’ (Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritania, the Niger and Tunisia) and ‘at risk countries’ (the Central African Republic, Morocco, Senegal, the Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania). In 16 of these countries, interventions have begun to yield positive results.

Additionally, the project has contributed to the following results:

* A regional framework has been systematically introduced to improve monitoring of results at the output level.
* Support was provided to IGAD for the firstannual PVE research conference, which was hosted jointly with UNDP.
* The option paper on operationalizing Pillar 8 of the Lake Chad Regional Stabilization Strategywasdeveloped*,* outlining existing and potential actions to support the implementation of Pillar 8 on preventing violent extremism and building peace.
* A matrix was established to demonstrate which country-level projects contribute to regional project outputs.
* Financial support was provided to develop national PVE strategies and action plans in Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, the Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia and Uganda. Additionally, a whole-of-society implementation of PVE strategies was supported in Chad, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria and Somalia. Technical support to strategy development processes was provided in the Central African Republic and Ethiopia.

As a result, a new engagement seeking to strengthen the capacity of the AUC for conflict prevention and response has been initiated, and 11 countries have developed PVE strategies through the RP. Some of the challenges noted in the PVE agenda include its limited institutionalization in the AU Peace and Security Commission, ECCAS and ECOWAS. In the latter, there is already an operational regional counter-terrorism strategy, appearing to duplicate efforts. The commitment of the AU Peace and Security Commission to the PVE agenda has also been a matter of concern, which may require the RBA to employ its neutrality and expertise to reach an amicable political consensus. The evaluation notes with confidence that, should the RBA continue to capitalize on its recent engagement with ECCAS, IGAD, the Liptako Gourma Authority and ECOWAS, the regional PVE project will yield the desired results.

**Output 1.4**: The AU Trade and Industry Commission has adequate technical capacity to implement the Africa Mining Vision.

The RP has strengthened the capacities of the AU Trade and Industry Commission, with impressive initial results.

The Programme supported the AUC Trade and Industry Commission to strengthen its technical capacity to implement the AMV, which seeks to address the underlying challenges hampering mining, including smuggling, illicit trade and environmental impacts. The objective of the AMV is to bring about a ‘‘diversified, vibrant and globally competitive industrializing Africa economy’’.[[18]](#footnote-18) Targeted countries had experienced a boom in their mining and industrial sector. The RP also aimed to enhance the human and organizational systems of the AU Trade and Industry Commission and the African Mineral Development Centre to advance the African industrialization agenda through the implementation of the AMV. This initiative is consistent with Agenda 2063, which aspires to see economies that are “structurally transformed to create shared growth, decent jobs and economic opportunities for all”.

With this support, it was possible to share knowledge and experiences among policymakers, learn through South-South cooperation, recruit experts and provide technical assistance to ministries responsible for mining in certain African countries. Environmental safeguards and gender inclusivity, particularly in small-scale mining projects, are also integrated as cross-cutting issues. The evaluation notes with satisfaction that the strong partnership[[19]](#footnote-19) demonstrated during the project’s initiation and throughout its implementation is likely to contribute to or exceed the expected results. The Mining project is making good progress and contributing to the RP outcome, owing to adequate resources and good operational planning, as well as excellent engagement with the AUC, particularly in the project’s design and implementation stages, despite the lack of an MoU.

**Output 1.5**: RECs and member States have the adequate technical capacities to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and share knowledge on lessons learned that are gender responsive from the implementation of continental and global development agendas.

The RP has strengthened the technical capacities of certain African countries to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and share knowledge on gender-responsive lessons learned, but limited institutionalization in the targeted countries may slow the achievement of intended results.

In partnership with UNECA, the AUC, the United Nations OSAA and certain countries, demand-driven capacity development events were organized to improve the ability of African countries to report on the SDGs and Agenda 2063, including in the context of the high-level political forum on sustainable development. A high-level meeting on implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 was organized in response to the African countries’ request for a special event focused on Africa to bring attention to the critical development challenges facing the continent in implementing global and continental development agendas.

Furthermore, the RP enhanced the capacities of 20 African countries to develop and implement national development plans in line with the 2030 Agenda, Agenda 2063, the Paris Agreement and regional frameworks. Angola, Cameroon, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar and Tanzania have accelerated SDG achievement, financing and coordination as a result of mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support missions. In partnership with NEPAD, the African Union Development Agency, IDB and 11 countries, a number of activities were undertaken to foster SSC aimed at sharing horizontal development solutions in SDG-specific sectors among African countries. However, the evaluation notes that the high staff turnover, slow project start-up, lack of a mechanism to institutionalize the SSC agenda at the country level and a reliance on core funding have hampered and are likely to continue hampering the initiative’s performance and contribution to the outcome. Continued dialogue and engagement, mobilization of additional resources and institutionalization of the SSC agenda at the AUC and in target countries are likely to produce the intended results.

**Output 1.6**: The AUC and RECs have the technical and operational capacities to promote an inclusive growth model in the continent.

The RP supported the AUC and RECs in strengthening their technical capacities to promote an inclusive growth model in the continent, which is showing early results.

Under this output, UNDP, in partnership with UNECA, the AUC and the United Nations OSAA, organized demand-driven capacity development events to improve reporting on the SDGs and Agenda 2063. This was conducted in the context of the voluntary national reviews, on the sidelines of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development and the high-level political forum.

Under the project entitled ‘Private Sector: Africa Finance Sector Hub’ (Finance Sector project), the RP supported the AUC in establishing the African Inclusive Markets Excellence Centre (AIMEC), which was designed to be a premier pan-African regional platform for thought leadership and action on inclusive business and markets. The RP also provided supported in identifying, facilitating and replicating best practices and innovations in inclusive business and inclusive market policy, programming and partnerships. RBA support for the Inclusive Business Ecosystem Initiative (IBEI) has ensured that individual innovators build upon and reinforce one another, with additional support for national IBEIs[[20]](#footnote-20) on mobile money in Lesotho, solar energy in Senegal and tourism in Uganda. At the core of IBEI is a facilitated process that coordinates the ecosystem’s diverse actors at multiple levels to ensure that individual activities build upon and reinforce one another.

**Output 1.7**: IGAD has strengthened technical capacities to develop gender-sensitive and inclusive early warning systems on droughts, floods and rangelands and pasture, and develop strategic actions to address these issues.

Support from UNDP helped to begin the operationalization of the IGAD integrated regional early warning system and contributed to building capacity for government officials on post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA). Through the regional project entitled ‘Strengthening the Capacity of IGAD in Building Resilience in the Horn of Africa’, the RP supported the operationalization of the IGAD integrated regional early warning system. Technical support was provided to the 49th and 50th Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum, in Djibouti and Rwanda respectively, and the integrated early warning system was implemented in three countries: Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda. UNDP also supported capacity-building for 350 government officials on disaster preparedness and PDNA trainings in partnership with Periperi U. Consequently, a number of African countries in the region have gained the capacity to conduct their own PDNA trainings with minimal engagement from RSCA.

The evaluation team expressed serious concern about the effectiveness of the IGAD integrated early warning system.[[21]](#footnote-21) Anecdotal evidence indicates that the IGAD region continues to be affected by an unprecedented number of disasters for which the region is unprepared, permanently relying on a reactive response. In addition, the project was implemented before the current RP was designed, and the evaluation finds its contribution minimal to the current Programme.

**Outcome 2: Regional growth is inclusive, transformational and sustainable, with reduced economic inequalities, and characterized by structural transformation.**

Generally, the RP is on track to achieve this outcome and planned outputs. Results are impressive in some interventions, despite delayed starts and inadequate resources.

According to the respondents, the progress in achieving Outcome 2 was rated as ‘high’;over half of the planned outputs and activities had been accomplished at the time of the MTE.Under Outcome 2, there are eight outputs, for which the RP is implementing nine projects and initiatives. A detailed analysis of outputs and activities achieved is provided in annex I.

**Output 2.1:** The AUC, RECs and member States are enabled to design, implement, monitor and coordinate delivery of social protection to those excluded or marginalized.

Under the SP4SD Africa initiative, three of the five project outputs were achieved satisfactorily (i.e. Outputs 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4), despite the challenge of mobilizing external funds. The initiative relied solely on UNDP core funding to publish the flagship report entitled ‘The State of Social Assistance in Africa’ and the corresponding data set to provide UNDP, United Nations agencies, the AU, RECs, Member States and other stakeholders with useful data on the status of social assistance. It was well received across the continent and gained high recognition following its launch at the high-level political forum in 2019. Without this data, it would be difficult for stakeholders to navigate the challenges facing Member States in the design and implementation of social protection polices and systems. The data set serves as a baseline, providing a benchmark and information on the continent’s performance that never existed before. The SP4SD Africa initiative, a leadership and learning package on building and managing social protection floors in Africa, was adopted. It was designed to improve the critical thinking and capacities of policymakers, government officials and practitioners at the national and local levels with a view to improving the design, effectiveness and efficiency of social protection systems. The initiative has been recognized by the AU and receives support from RBA and ILO directors who are promoting this training approach among all United Nations agencies.

In addition, the RP provided financial support, advice and input on content during the development of the AU Social Agenda 2063, which has a stand-alone pillar on social protection. The initiative was instrumental in drafting the social protection protocol and revising the AU Social Policy Framework, thereby strengthening its capacity. As at November 2020, the protocol was undergoing the validation process in the AUC. Discussions, forums and webinars were organized within the framework of South-South and triangular cooperation to share knowledge on social protection. At least 23 webinars have been held. The MTE also noted good progress in developing a toolkit to extend social protection to workers in the informal economy in Africa.

Technical and financial support provided by RSCA has strengthened AU systems. The Centre has supported the AUC Department of Social Affairs in drafting the Social Agenda 2063 and seeking approval. RSCA also assisted in the researching, drafting and publishing of the flagship report entitled ‘The State of Social Assistance in Africa’ and the corresponding data set. UNDP also helped to enhance capacity with its recent support to the Department of Social Affairs to develop a social protection protocol, which will facilitate systematic engagement between the AUC and UNDP to support social protection in Africa at the country level.

South-South and triangular cooperation and knowledge management has further contributed to increasing knowledge on the design of social protection systems, improving effectiveness and efficiency through the SP4SD Africa initiative and strengthening systems in the AUC and member States. This initiative was adapted to the African continent from the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth in Brazil. A team of African trainers adapted the training design of the Transform initiative, created relevant content and delivered training on social protection to government officials and other crucial stakeholders.

**Output 2.3**: RECs and the African Group of Negotiators have strengthened technical capacities to promote the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

Under the Climate Change initiative, progress is recorded in each of the four project outputs. Efforts were under way to strengthen the technical capacities of RECs and the African Group of Negotiators in order to promote the implementation of the Paris Agreement. A draft of the ‘Africa State of Adaptation Report (SoAR)’ has been produced under the Africa Adaptation Initiative, in partnership with the UNDP-United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) National Adaptation Plan Global Support Programme, UNEP, AfDB, the World Meteorological Organization and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The report evaluates and improves knowledge of public climate finance in Africa with useful data that will enable regional and subregional actors to design appropriate interventions on climate change governance. At the national level, the the RP is supporting seven Sahel countries, promoting risk-informed development and meeting its commitments to the Sendai Framework. In addition, the intervention helped to finalize the five-year Kenya climate finance programme on budgetary and fiscal reform for building climate resilience by mainstreaming planning, budgeting and reporting at the national and county levels. A number of countries received support to align their disaster risk man­agement laws, policies and strategies with the Sendai Framework. An event for young negotiators from least developed countries was held in 2019, which provided an opportunity for SSC and capacity-building to ensure effective negotiations, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. Despite these impressive results, the MTE finds the current scale of regional climate change interventions insufficient to address the continent’s high vulnerability to climate change and many related socio-economic and development challenges.

**Output 2.4:** The AUC, the African Volunteer Corps and YouthConnekt Africa initiative have enhanced operational and technical capacities to increase youth participation in political and economic development initiatives.

The YouthConnekt initiative has recorded good progress for each of the four project outputs. Notable results include the launch of YouthConnekt chapters in over 15 countries, with additional countries in the process of launching a chapter.[[22]](#footnote-22) This platform has encouraged over 10,000 youth in Africa to improve their skills through scheduled online entrepreneurship trainings and networking to share ideas and access financing provided by the RP. The AUC has endorsed the YouthConnekt initiative as one of its strategies for youth empowerment across the continent. Traffic has increased on the Youth for Africa and SDGs (YAS!) portal platform for young entrepreneurs, which supports the development and growth of youth entrepreneurship in Africa by establishing strategic private sector partnerships to grow entrepreneurship across the continent through training, online support and start-up capital.

The partnership with the Tony Elumelu Foundation was a commendable vertical bridging that proved to be essential in supporting youth job creation through entrepreneurship. Focusing on start-ups and existing small- and medium-sized enterprises, it provided entrepreneurship skills training to emerging African entrepreneurs and delivered business development services. The Foundation further promoted innovation, technology development, networks and market linkages among African entrepreneurs, fostering partnerships with State and non-State actors to improve the policy and business environment for local enterprise development in Africa. Systems have been developed to monitor and evaluate impacts on African entrepreneurs and to encourage private sector leaders, corporations and businesses to support the development of African entrepreneurs.

The intervention has supported over 900 youth entrepreneurs: 160 in partnership with IGAD and AfDB and 755 with the Tony Elumelu Foundation in partnership with AfDB. IGAD leaders and Entrepreneurial Solutions Partners have delivered the first YouthConnekt Africa fellowship programme, and a second is being developed. Trainings focused on entrepreneurship, 21st-Century leadership skills, volunteerism, networking and information on sectors such as agribusiness, the blue economy and information and communication technology. International Youth Fellowship held its third capacity-building seminar in Uganda, focusing on the digital and creative economy and the development of minerals. A review of technical and vocational education and training programmes in Africa was conducted with data from eight African countries on best practices, gaps and opportunities in the sector. The MTE notes that the findings and data have not been disseminated and some of the recommendations from the review have yet to be implemented. Given that youth constitute a majority of the population in Africa,[[23]](#footnote-23) the MTE finds that the intervention is not ambitious enough to address the multitude of challenges facing young people. As espoused in the UNDP Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa, the RP would be more effective by addressing the challenges facing youth in an integrated and collaborative manner, connecting them to other gender-sensitive, youth-friendly opportunities, such as regional value chains, commodity exports for niche products and the scaling-up of digital platforms for businesses.

**Output 2.5:** The African Union, RECs and member States have enhanced technical capacities to promote gender equality.

Satisfactory progress has been made under each of the six project outputs. The evaluation noted significant achievements at the regional, subregional and national levels in gender equality and the empowerment of women, including in civil society and the private sector. Notable achievements through the regional intervention include the drafting, launch and adoption of the AU Strategy for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment. Technical capacities for monitoring and advocacy related to gender equality and women’s empowerment were improved within the AU, RECs, formal institutions and Member States using the Gender Equality Seal. Additionally, there is growing interest in the Gender Equality Seal in the private sector. Training on gender mainstreaming has targeted the AUC, RECs and the African Group of Negotiators, and gender action plans have been developed. The RP has also advocated for the adoption of a three-year regional action plan to promote women in governance and political participation by bringing together the AUC, RECs, private actors and foundations for a series of high-level meetings. The continental results framework for reporting and monitoring on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa is also being implemented. Achievements under this output account for the high rating of Outcome 2.

In November 2020, an MoU with Equality Now/SOAR, a regional CSO, was signed to map out existing gender policies and programmes in four RECs (ECOWAS, IGAD, ECCAS and SADC). It is also focusing on the challenges facing gender mainstreaming; the ratification of regional and continental gender protocols, including the Maputo Protocol; and the challenges in implementing the protocols to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Although work had not yet begun at the time of the MTE, it was clear that the foundation is being laid to achieve a successful result. The AYWLFP received an overwhelming response; the first cohort attracted 5,789 applicants. However, support was available for only 20 young women from 13 countries, who have since been placed in various United Nations agencies and related institutions for their fellowships, which ended in March 2020.

The MTE further found that the support of the RP allowed AUC staff to build capacity on gender mainstreaming. Of the 24 AUC staff members who received training, over 50 percent were women. A total of 42 UNDP and UN Women staff from 23 RBA countries acquired knowledge and skills on gender and election through the Building Resources in Democracy Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) project. The women were selected from African countries holding elections between 2019 and 2022 to enable them to engage with relevant stakeholders from a gender perspective, including election management bodies, women candidates, voters and political parties, as well as with national electoral laws and policies. Over 20 female delegates attended the regional consultation for East Africa on introducing and implementing the continental results framework for reporting and monitoring on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa. The consultation was held in Arusha, Tanzania and organized by the intervention. In addition, 21 young women were placed in internships under AYWLFP, and over 900 young people have been supported by the entrepreneurship initiative implemented in partnership with IGAD, AfDB and the Tony Elumelu Foundation. The Gender initiatives prioritized countries in conflict, like Mali, and therefore worked with internally displaced communities.

**Output 2.6:** Member States are enabled to deliver on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) commitments and encourage public-private investment in renewable energy.

This intervention recorded substantive progress in the sole project output: “Number of relevant actors using the Africa Sustainable Energy De-Risking Facility (A-SEDF)”. While the evaluation found it difficult to assess the progress made, interventions focused on supporting AU member States in delivering on NDC commitments in line with the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Interventions also further encouraged public-private investments in renewable energy. There was a training workshop on NDC implementation and enhanced transparency. A framework was developed for 25 RBA countries in 2019 to strengthen national capacities on NDC design, implementation and tracking; improve understanding on updating NDCs; and enhance ambition. The framework also provides background information on the key concepts and provisions related to monitoring, reporting and verifying, as well as enhancing transparency, including in national communications, biennial update reports and greenhouse gas inventories. In addition, it highlights the key elements of the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency. The evaluation found limited vertical linkages between RSCA and UNDP COs in implementing this initiative, and there is possible overlap with the mandates of the COs. The capacity of RSCA to implement this intervention at the country level is also doubtful, given the capacity challenges in that regard.

**Output 2.7:** The AU and RECs are enabled to support regional value chains to implement the multi-country Agribusiness Supplier Development Programme, the Global Environment Facility and the Africa Impact Investment Action Plan.

Progress made towards achieving the project outputs was satisfactory. This output focused on facilitating regional value chains to implement the multi-country Agribusiness Supplier Development Programme and the Global Environment Facility. With support from the RP, there are ongoing efforts to adapt themethodology of the UNDP Agribusiness Supplier Development Programme to be replicated in Africa through the development of a toolkit and training manual. Under the initiative, supply chain diagnostic tests were performed to identify opportunities and challenges in developing local supply, as well as specific initiatives to support national agribusiness supplier development programmes in six countries. In Côte d’Ivoire, for example, this approach has been implemented within the ‘Programme d’Appui au Développement des Chaines de Valeurs Inclusives et à la Promotion des Initiatives Locales’ [Programme to Support the Development of Inclusive Value Chains and the Promotion of Local Initiatives]. In Kenya and Nigeria, 40 private sector consultants have acquired skills and knowledge on the methodology. Interventions resulted in achievements at both the company and community levels; production costs were reduced by 35 percent, and nearly 1,000 jobs[[24]](#footnote-24) were created in Kenya alone. However, the MTE did not find evidence of any country referencing the multi-country Agribusiness Supplier Development Programme, the Global Environment Facility or the Africa Impact Investment Action Plan as an indicator of the output.

**Output 2.8:** The African Disability Forum is enabled to promote greater inclusion of people with disabilities in development planning.

Interventions had one project output: the domestication of the AU Protocol on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, targeting 20 countries. The RP focused on supporting ADF in promoting inclusivity in programming and development planning in Africa. The MTE found that ADF continues to work with the AUC to obtain support from member States to adopt the Protocol. At least three countries (Botswana, Liberia and Uganda) had signed and domesticated the protocol at the time of this evaluation in November 2020.

**Implementation challenges and gaps**

The evaluation identified three key challenges and gaps in delivering on Outcome 2.

* Project funding gapsgreatly affected the delivery of the SP4SD Africa, YouthConnekt and Climate Change initiatives. The SP4SD Africa initiative relied on UNDP core funding throughout the implementation period, and the YouthConnekt initiative received only some external funding.
* The RP was overly ambitious inthe design stage of the interventions under this Outcome. African Governments are struggling with the concept of social protection and experience difficulties in designing effective systems. Similarly, the youth and climate change challenges facing the continent are significant, and the RP interventions, although ambitious, may never successfully address these challenges in five years. The continent is struggling to feed its growing population and, even with interventions by the RP, food security is the biggest challenge facing African Governments.
* UNDP lacks credibility for sector-specific action, which particularly affected the implementation of the SP4SD Africa initiative. UNDP must find its niche and prove that it is a worthy stakeholder in the sector.

There were also unintended positive results for this Outcome.

* The Gender Equality Seal was widely accepted as a tool for measuring gender mainstreaming. When it was first introduced, there were doubts about its acceptability, but it has attracted many countries and private companies.
* There was an overwhelming response to the AYWLFP call for fellowship, indicating the existence of a wealth of resources among young women in Africa.

There were no unintended negative results recorded during the review period for Outcome 2.

**Outcome 3: Regional institutions sustain peace and build resilience to crises and shocks.**

In order to achieve Outcome 3, seven projects and initiatives were being implemented at the time of the MTE: (i) direct engagements with the APRM to track implementation and oversee the monitoring and evaluation of key governance areas, including with regard to Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda, (ii) the Lake Chad RSF, (iii) emerging projects with the Liptako Gourma Authority, (iv) engagements in the Sahel, (v) the Borderlands project, (vi) UNDP partnership with the Office of the Special Envoy for the Great Lakes and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region on and coordination of the Great Lakes Regional Strategic Framework (Great Lakes Region project), (vii) ‘Regional Project to Support Oversight of the Regional Programme for Africa’.

**Output 3.1:** The APRM has enhanced technical capacity to track the implementation and oversee the monitoring and evaluation of key governance areas, including the M&E and reporting of Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.

The RP supported APRM by promoting regional capacities to monitor and report on key areas with the assistance of the AUC Legal Office. This includes reporting on Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda under the AU Treaties project, with a view to building the capacities of the AUC to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation of the treaty ratification processes (see Output 1.1 for additional information).

**Output 3.2:** Security actors and communities are able to reduce recruitment into violent extremism and support reintegration efforts of diverse ‘returnees’. (This output contributes to output 1.3 and 3.2).

The RP began the process of building regional and national knowledge and understanding on disengagement and reintegration strategies, facilitating collaboration among local partners working directly with the target audience to better share experiences and lessons learned. The Programme also developed strategic partnerships with CSOs working in community-based reintegration in Somalia and Nigeria to undertake in-depth country re­search on pathways for disengagement in ongoing conflict and to de­velop a regional CSO network. Government officials, civil society representatives and religious schol­ars in Sudan attended a training on disengagement and the rehabilitation of extremists, followed by peer educator sessions for youth, prisoners and women, based on the Moroccan model.

**Output 3.3:** The African Union Peace and Security Unit and national and subnational actors are enabled to establish vertical and horizontal partnerships with other critical actors to set up and support peace infrastructures.

Since 2018, the RP has been impressive in implementing activities to achieve Output 3.3. For example, the SECCCI project, an integral part of the European Union cross-border programme ‘Collaboration in Cross-border Areas of the Horn of Africa Region’, began in February 2018, after a period of six months spent on inception activities. Despite the lost time, the project has made significant progress in implementing the planned activities from the end of the third quarter of 2018 to the end of 2019. These implementation gains notwithstanding, a second slowdown was reported after the departure of the project manager, near the end of 2019. It took approximately five months to recruit and onboard the current manager, who joined the team just one month before COVID-19 restrictions were imposed. These restrictions also had a negative impact on operations. Nevertheless, the project is on track and has made several achievements. It has facilitated the review of five existing cross-border agreements, MoUs and protocols among Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. Several thematic reports and technical studies have been prepared, including annual thematic reports published by the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre. Capacity-building workshops have been organized to increase the availability of authentic information and improve the capacities of stakeholders, especially government agencies. A comprehensive monitoring, evaluation and learning plan was developed to effectively monitor SECCCI project interventions and results, and a comprehensive online knowledge portal was established with support from the IGAD Drought Disaster Resilience and Sustainability Initiative. However, due to the substantial amount of valuable time that has been wasted, the project is likely to request an extension at no cost.

In addition, the MTE noted similar impressive performance in implementing the ‘Support to the Sahel Programme’, despite a sluggish inception phase. Significant gains were also made at the national and regional levels, as reported and documented by the Lake Chad RSF. The Secretariat of the Lake Chad Basin Commission has been established to support the management of the Facility’s interventions. Although at an early stage, the Liptako Gourma project shows evidence that its implementation will be focused and robust, seemingly employing lessons learned from the implementation process of the Lake Chad RSF. Despite the lengthy starts to the Borderlands project, which was just finalizing the design phase at the time of the evaluation in November 2020, it will also have a smoother launch as it avoids the bottlenecks that the SECCCI project has navigated.

The indicator measuring success under this output is “Number of interventions across borders ‘zooming in’ on troubled, underdeveloped borderland areas and national dialogues for peace and reconciliation”. While the target was to establish three initiatives, four interventions are currently being implemented.

With the establishment of the Secretariat, the capacities of LCBC were enhanced to implement the Regional Stabilization Strategy; a steering committee was also established in that regard. The Lake Chad RSF is working to improve cross-border cooperation and coordination. A comprehensive monitoring, evaluation and learning plan was developed to effectively assess project interventions and results. The RP is providing support to strengthen the capacities of the AUC, RECs and participating countries’ line ministries with a view to delivering intended services more effectively. For example, the Borderlands project works with local governments to provide capacity-building opportunities for local and national government officials to better address conflicts and instability in border crises. In addition, the Lake Chad RSF facilitated agreements with the Multinational Joint Task Force. UNDP is also strengthening the capacities of the steering and technical committees established to support the implementation of the countries’ joint action plans, which were developed through a participatory and inclusive process involving communities, COs, government officials, representatives from the military and other stakeholders. Furthermore, under the Economist Programme, and in collaboration with the Africa Finance Sector Hub in Pretoria, enhanced South-South and triangular cooperation and knowledge management have contributed to improving economic governance and managing crises and shocks in the region. RSCA fostered intra-African SSC partnerships for horizontal knowledge exchanges by organizing the first and second ‘South-South Matchmaking for the SDGs’ events, as well as SSC matchmak­ing fairs, in which countries shared their development solutions with potential partners. Lastly, one million square meters have been demined in Sebkha Fogra, an area that posed a threat to nomadic populations in which several fatal accidents had occurred.

**Output 3.4:** African Union and RECs have enhanced technical capacities to strengthen effective governance of labour migration and mobility in Africa.

The Migration project is currently the main project under Output 3.4. As an emerging initiative, it would require an effective plan of operation for results to be achieved. However, it is important to note that migration issues are also directly or indirectly addressed under the Borderlands interventions, as the integration of returnees is a significant aspect. Policy interventions are also included in the UNDP Renewed Strategic Offer and under the SDGs in particular (see Output 1.5), as cited in policy briefs on youth unemployment, intra-African migration, the AfCFTA Agreement, a common monetary policy, SSC and urbanization.

Under this output, a project initiation plan is being implemented to support the creation of a fully developed UNDP project document to address underlying governance gaps in coordinating regional responses to natural resource management in the Lake Victoria basin and to promote regional integration through migration for the sustainable de­velopment of the Lake Victoria region. The report entitled ‘Scaling Fences: Voices of Irregular African Migrants to Europe’ supports the effective operationalization of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration by contributing to public debate. Furthermore, a foresight and scenario analysis has been conducted to inform policymakers of possible future scenarios for the Lake Victoria basin.

**Implementation challenges and gaps**

The evaluation identified four key challenges and gaps in delivering on Outcome 3.

* Borderlands projects are significantly impacted by cross-border dynamics, which include violent conflicts, poor socio-economic conditions and environmental degradation. These challenges continue to impede the sustainability and scalability of peace and development work, as well as the improvement of livelihoods and environmental conditions in border areas. In addition, the sensitivity and scarcity of essential natural resources have compromised effective planning on their use, even at the inter-country level. For example, work related to transboundary water management has been continually postponed, including the launch of the Lake Turkana sustainable development project and the transboundary dialogue between the basin countries of the Daua-Jubba-Shabelle River. The main reasons for the slow pace remain the sensitive, complex and political nature of transboundary water resources and the varied interests of upstream and downstream countries.
* There were difficulties associated with partnership-building. For instance, in the case of the Lake Chad RSF and the Regional Stabilization Strategy, collaboration and partnership-building is a critical element in implementing the projects. Partnerships were sought with the AU, ECOWAS, ECCAS, the United Nations and other organizations; however, building such political and technical partnerships is time consuming. Additionally, the United Nations and other development organizations did not have the same level of knowledge and understanding as UNDP as to the expectations and support required to implement the Regional Stabilization Strategy.
* To support the Economist Programme, one of the strategies used is to employ an economist in each of the Member States to support capacity-building. However, due to budgetary constraints, the number of economists was reduced to 28, and each was shared by at least two countries. Countries have requested individual economists, which demonstrates the value that the economists provide. As in the past, the RP faced challenges in mobilizing the resources necessary to expand the Economist Programme. The expansion of services should therefore be matched with resources in order to impact areas most in need. UNDP must develop a sustainable strategy for resource mobilization.
* For the Economist Programme, networking efforts had not extended beyond the Programme itself before the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. As result, there is a need to expand networking initiatives to reach other policy thinkers and researchers across the continent. Such initiatives could drive the coordination of efforts to achieve the SDGs across the continent.

There were also unintended positive results for this Outcome.

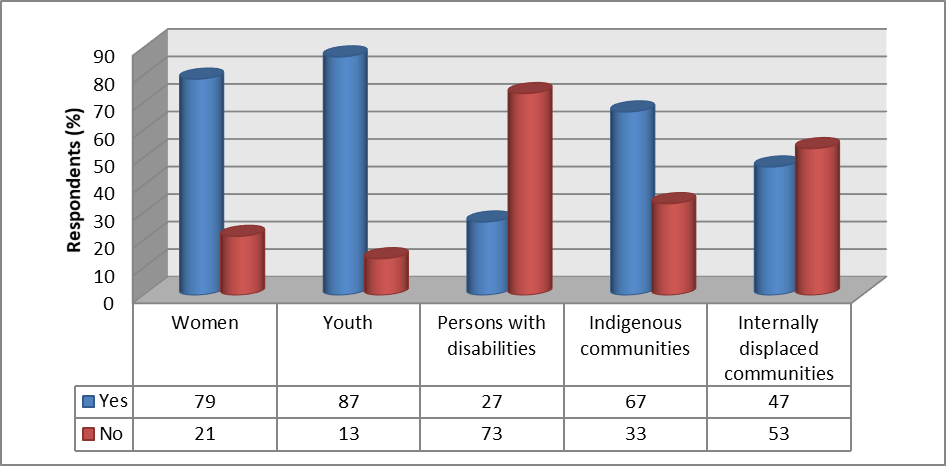
* The design of the Lake Chad RSF project has significantly influenced the establishment of the Liptako Gourma Authority, which has adopted similar approaches and strategies for implementation. The Liptako Gourma project was formulated *in situ* by United Nations participating partners in response to a request from a subregional institution to assist in fulfilling its mandate.

There were no unintended negative results recorded during the review period for Outcome 3.

### Targeting of vulnerable, marginalized and other disadvantaged groups during implementation

Approximately 54 percent of respondents interviewed felt that vulnerable groups such as women, minorities and PWDs were well targeted in a number of regional interventions, further confirming the MTE analysis, as illustrated in figure IV.

Figure IV. Extent to which vulnerable groups are targeted



Source: Author.

It was clear that all project interventions attempted to prioritize countries facing conflict, such as the Central African Republic, Mali, Somalia and South Sudan. Indigenous communities of the Lake Chad islands and the Pygmies of the Congo basin are also targeted, especially by Borderlands interventions. Based on the responses, PWDs are least targeted by the RP during implementation. Nevertheless, the MTE notes that gender mainstreaming and the inclusion of vulnerable groups were not consistently applied across all regional interventions, and it was unclear to what extent Member States were involved in this output.

Under Outcome 1**,** young people were targeted by PVE interventions. The evaluation notes the intention of this outcome at the institutional and government levels and the potential trickle-down effect. For example, if treaties are signed and implemented, vulnerable groups will be impacted.

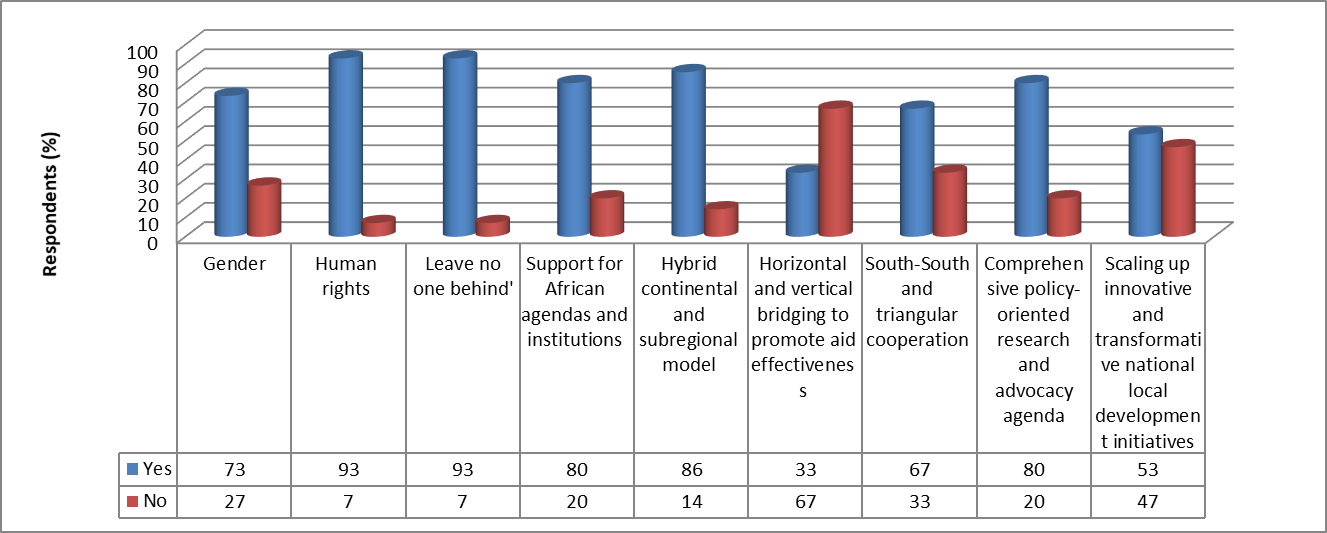
Under Outcome 2**,** all vulnerable groups were targeted during implementation, as suggested by Outputs 2.4, 2.5 and 2.8. By designing policies and practices that promote gender equality, youth involvement and the engagement of PWDs, the Outcome continues to equip officials at the regional, subregional and national levels with the skills and mindset necessary to incorporate deliberate action for these vulnerable groups. Of the 24 AUC staff trained on gender mainstreaming, over 50 percent were women. A total of 42 UNDP and UN Women staff acquired knowledge and skills on gender and elections through the Building Resources in Democracy Governance and Elections (BRIDGE) project. Over 20 female delegates attended the regional consultation for East Africa on the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Africa. In addition, 21 young women were placed in internships under the AYWLFP initiative, and over 900 young people have been supported by entrepreneurship initiatives. The MTE established that gender equality and women’s empowerment initiatives prioritized countries in conflict, like Mali, and therefore worked with internally displaced communities as well. Support for the ADF will promote increased engagement of PWDs.

Under Outcome 3, discussions with the project managers showed that women and children are the most vulnerable in conflicts arising from insurgences (led by Boko Haram, Al-Shabaab or others), whereas young people are targeted for recruitment into violent extremist groups. As a result, the Borderlands, PVE and Migration projects must focus on all vulnerable groups in order to achieve this Outcome. In addition, the Lake Chad RSF implemented food-for-work, cash transfers and livelihood support activities, as well as security initiatives around camps for internally displaced persons with a view to involving affected communities. The RP is also involved in a housing initiative at the national level. In March 2020, the project commissioned 5,000 new houses in Nigeria as part of its cross-border interventions to assist targeted internally displaced persons in returning home.

### Mainstreaming organizational programming principles

According to the MTE, 73 percent of respondents indicated that the RP has effectively mainstreamed United Nations programming principles in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the RP. Most respondents indicated that the following principles are specifically well mainstreamed: human rights, ‘leave no one behind’, the hybrid continental and subregional model, support for African agendas and institutions, and comprehensive policy-oriented research and advocacy agenda. Gender mainstreaming is considered a requirement for the RP. Horizontal and vertical ‘bridging’ to promote aid effectiveness was rated poorly, owing to the level of external funding, collaboration and support received. Projects like the YouthConnekt and SP4SD Africa relied heavily on UNDP core funding and received very little technical support from northern partners and stakeholders.

Figure V. Mainstreaming of United Nations programming principles



Source: Author.

All nine United Nations programming principles were mainstreamed, as indicated in figure V. The principles of human rights and ‘leave no one behind’ were highly mainstreamed. Horizontal and vertical bridging to promote aid effectiveness was rated ‘low’ because most of the funds mobilized to implement the RP were from UNDP core funding and there was minimal support from horizontal partners.

Under Outcome 2, for example,gender and human rights were streamlined through various interventions to support gender equality and women’s empowerment, work exploring social protection for informal workers and interventions targeting PWDs. By working in partnership with diverse stakeholders, including SCOs and the private sector, as well as diverse beneficiaries, including displaced communities and indigenous populations, the RP ensured that ‘no one is left behind’. All interventions under this Outcome were in response to needs expressed on the continent, thereby supporting the African agenda. Africa is still struggling to provide social protection for its citizens, ensure gender equality, address the challenges facing youth, mitigate the effects of climate change, capitalize on renewable energy and feed its population sustainably. Under the SP4SD Africa initiative, social protection interventions mainstreamed South-South and triangular cooperation by employing trainers who developed training modules that resonate with the African context. The SP4SD Africa initiative has become a key training package, employed in 15 African countries, and all United Nations agencies are committed to using this methodology for training and capacity-building. Trainees have highly rated these trainings, owing to the interactive and experience-based approaches to learning. The SP4SD Africa initiative also identified social protection experts, researchers and publishers to conduct quality research on the issue. Concerning the gender interventions, the Gender Equality Seal was adapted from Panama, which illustrates the effectiveness of SSC. The YouthConnekt initiative, Gender Equality Seal and YAS! platform provide examples of scaling up innovative and transformative national and local development initiatives. The partnership with the Tony Elumelu Foundation was a commendable vertical bridging that proved to be key in supporting youth job creation through entrepreneurship.

Under Outcome 3, interviews with programme managers revealed that United Nations programming principles had been mainstreamed in the RP and its projects. To ensure sustainability, projects under this Outcome have integrated a well-devised plan. Capacity-building efforts are designed to ensure that the projects’ positive results are sustained even after the projects are phased out. Local capacity is being developed to allow local and national government institutions to manage project implementation. For example, the Borderlands projects work with local governments to provide capacity-building opportunities for local and national officials to address conflicts and instability in border crises. National institutions are being strengthened, and regional institutions are being created or called on to address cross-border issues that cannot be handled solely at the country level. For example, at the national level, the Lake Chad RSF has helped to create and strengthen grass-roots institutions to support security, peacebuilding, the reintegration of displaced persons and engagement in livelihood opportunities in order to protect them from crises and shocks caused by insurgencies. A participatory and inclusive process is applied to create and strengthen these community institutions, thereby ensuring the legitimacy of the process and the product and enhancing ownership and acceptance by local leadership. The Director of Humanitarian and Social Affairs for ECOWAS said: “Institutional capacity-building is very important, as this is what is left behind to drive the interventions. As such, more effort should be invested in this area. Moreover, institutional capacity is a long-term strategy for sustainability, not doing the work for them but coming in to fill the capacity gap.”[[25]](#footnote-25)

In all projects, gender analyses informed the decision to target women as a vulnerable group in the societies supported by project interventions. Such information helps to identify the roles that women should play to improve their situation in society, such as promoting access to and control over available productive resources. Gender concerns are integrated in the development challenges and strategy sections of the RPD.

### Contribution of South-South and triangular cooperation and knowledge management

Under Outcome 1, the project on ‘Transforming the Development Cooperation Landscape in Africa to Implement the SDGs through South-South Cooperation’ (SSC project) achieved results at the national and subregional levels. Twenty African countries received support to develop and implement national development plans in line with the SDGs, Agenda 2063, the Paris Agreement and regional frameworks. This component also made it possible for target countries and RECs to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and share knowledge on lessons learned.

Under Outcome 2,South-South and triangular cooperation and knowledge management contributed to increasing knowledge on the design, effectiveness and efficiency of social protection systems through the SP4SD Africa initiative. Under the AYWLFP, Africa Leadership University created a three-part training on leadership. The 21 young women in the programme chose virtual learning courses, approved by their supervisors; participated in mentoring circles with leaders across the continent; and generated relevant knowledge among the young women, which they were able to share with their supervisors in a reverse mentoring setting. The Gender Equality Seal was adapted from Panama and is rapidly gaining popularity with UNDP, various AUC departments, national Governments and the private sector.

Under Outcome 3, interventionsunder the Economist Programme cut across all three priority areas. Enhanced South-South and triangular cooperation and knowledge management has contributed to improving governance, economies and the management of crisis and shocks in the region. For example, Dr. Raymond, the Programme Manager, observed: “Towards the realization of the Programme’s first output of ensuring that the SDGs are mainstreamed in country-level documents while also maintaining a conversation around financing for development, all 46 countries have mainstreamed the SDGs, with an achievement rate of close to 100 percent.”[[26]](#footnote-26) Similarly, many initiatives have been implemented in connection with the output on financing and partnership-building; the performance rate ranges from 50 percent to 70 percent. In addition, the economic advisers produced knowledge products and provided thought leadership by drafting national human development reports (for Botswana, Chad, Senegal and Sierra Leone), development finance assessment reports (for Benin, Cameroon, the Comoros, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Sierra Leone and Uganda) and the ‘First African South-South Cooperation Report’.[[27]](#footnote-27) Under the SSC project, over 100 codified SSC development solutions with scale-up potential were published on the UNDP SSMART platform and the South-South Galaxy, the knowledge management platform of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation. In collaboration with the network of UNDP Accelerator Labs, local innovative solutions are being mapped for scale-up, and results will be published on the South-South Galaxy platform. The SSC project has fostered intra-African South-South partnerships for horizontal knowledge exchanges by organizing ‘South-South Matchmaking for SDGs’ events. A number of African countries have expressed interest in showcasing their good practices and participating in development cooperation. Several traditional partners are also exploring the possibility of participating in the events, thereby promoting triangular partnerships. In addition, a knowledge management platform has been developed under the SECCCI project. The portal[[28]](#footnote-28) provides a common platform to share news, events, resources, lessons learned, experiences and good practices to strengthen resilience in the Horn of Africa.

### Programme areas to be scaled up

UNDP should consider scaling up the following relevant and strategic programming areas:

* Support for the AfCFTA Agreement and free movement protocols
* Work on social protection for the informal sector and community-based social protection
* Interventions related to entrepreneurship targeting women and youth
* Efforts to implement the recommendations from the review of technical and vocational education and training courses provided on the continent.
* The number of young people receiving entrepreneurship support, as current numbers are lacking significantly in terms of depth and spread to support youth in Africa, particularly with regard to the ‘1 Million by 2021 Initiative’ of the AU
* The number of participants in the AYWLFP, which can be increased through advocacy targeted to Member States, the AU and RECs in order to meet the demand witnessed in the pilot phase
* Opportunities for AYWLFP fellows to conduct research in emerging areas so that participants have a product at the fellowship’s conclusion
* Interventions under the Lake Chad RSF

The work of UNDP currently responds to four of the nine pillars in the Lake Chad Regional Stabilization Strategy. Recognizing that stabilization recovery and resilience-building require multiple stakeholders, UNDP is working with RECs to bring in other agencies to respond to the Strategy’s pillars based on their comparative advantages. Given its strengths, UNDP should scale up PVE and governance, drawing from the lessons learned in implementing the Lake Chad RSF.

### Programme areas to be scaled down

Respondents stated that efforts to encourage States to sign several treaties could be scaled down in order to focus on implementing the treaties that have already been ratified.

### Capacity-building for regional implementing partners

UNDP has been highly instrumental in developing the policy frameworks and technical capacity needed for the AUC to fulfil its mandate.

Under Outcome 1,improvements were made in several areas, including thesystems and processes of theAUC, RECs and member States to ratify and domesticate treaties; the technical capacities of the AU Peace and Security Commission and the Trade and Industry Commission; the technical capacities of the AUC, LCBC, IGAD and ECOWAS in coordinating the PVE agenda; and the capacities of select African countries to implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

Under Outcome 2, working closely with the AUC Department of Social Affairs, the RP was instrumental in developing the Social Agenda 2063 and publishing the flagship report entitled ‘The State of Social Assistance in Africa’ and its corresponding data set. The RP worked with the AUC Youth Division to support the launch of YouthConnekt chapters in over 15 African countries. The AUC endorsed the platform as an effective strategy for youth empowerment across the continent. UNDP also provided financial support for youth entrepreneurship initiatives through the YAS! platform and the Tony Elumelu Foundation initiative. Through AYWLFP interventions, UNDP is contributing to the ‘1 Million by 2021 Initiative’, an AUC commitment to young people. The RP also supported the AUC Women, Gender and Development Directorate in developing the AUC Strategy for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment and the Strategy Results Framework. UNDP also provided capacity-building to the AUC in gender mainstreaming and the use of the Gender Equality Seal, with a view to evaluating performance within AUC institutions, national Governments and the private sector.

Under Outcome 3, UNDP, IGAD and UNEP each bring prerequisite skills, knowledge and expertise to the partnership. UNEP addresses environmental and water issues while IGAD oversees components on peacebuilding and the pastoralist movement. The Authority specializes in conflict resolution, rangelands, borderlands and cross-border mobility issues. It is responsible for the programmatic and coordination aspects of the project. In early 2020, IGAD organized a one-day capacity-building workshop on pastoralism and transboundary dry land development. At the country level, government leaders have been involved and receive support to provide security and protection for stakeholders working on stabilization interventions in the area. For example, the Lake Chad RSF facilitated agreements with the Multinational Joint Task Force. UNDP is also strengthening the capacities of the steering and technical committees established to support the implementation of the countries’ joint action plans. Interventions also target the LCBC and the AU to improve their capacity to manage stabilization interventions across the four target countries.

### Partnerships to leverage results

RSCA has been highly instrumental in identifying development partners. All respondents said that RSCA was highly effective in its ability to form and maintain partnerships with other development actors, including RECs, bilateral and multilateral organizations, CSOs and the private sector to leverage results.

RSCA formed partnerships with various AUC departments, including the Department of Social Affairs; the Youth Division; and the Women, Gender and Development Directorate. Work is ongoing with RECs, such as IGAD and ECOWAS, and with regional CSOs, like the Tony Elumelu Foundation. New projects are being undertaken with Equality Now/SOAR, which signed an MoU in 2020. Discussions with project managers confirmed that they must be at the forefront of forming such partnerships, as their efforts are instrumental in ensuring buy-in. They identify partners, explain the RP concept and planned interventions, highlight areas of mutual collaboration and initiate the process of signing partnership agreements. An expedient buy-in is an indicator that the partnership will be maintained, based on mutual interest for the planned initiatives. For example, UNDP built capacity on disaster preparedness in the IGAD region through PDNA trainings. South Sudan was then able to conduct its own PDNA training for the first time in 2019, which was facilitated and managed by the national Government with minimal engagement from RSCA.

Furthermore, RSCA has fostered intra-African South-South partnerships for horizontal knowledge exchanges by organizing the first and second ‘South-South Matchmaking for the SDGs’ events, as well as SSC matchmak­ing fairs, in which countries shared their development solutions with potential partners. The Economist Programme strengthened collaboration and provided support to managing RECs, including ECOWAS, SADC and its partners, CEMAC, UNON, NEPAD and APRM. As a result of these partnerships, a concept note for collaboration between UNDP and SADC was created to foster collaboration in Botswana and the Comoros, the latter of which officially entered SADC in August 2018. Nevertheless, there may have been lost opportunities in some instances, owing to limited communication about the partnership’s mutual benefits. In general, respondents felt that good will between the AUC and UNDP was growing and would lead to more partnerships in the future.

## 3.4 Efficiency

The MTE sought to establish how the RP utilized available resources to achieve results. It examined the extent to which the Programme leveraged inter-agency synergies and outputs were delivered in a timely manner. According to the MTE, 44.5 percent of respondents rated efficiency as ‘high’, 29.4 percent as ‘medium’ and 11.8 percent as ‘low’, as illustrated in table 5. To a larger extent, the efficiency rating formed the basis of the discussion about the efficiency of specific aspects of the RP.

Table 5  
Overall efficiency rating of the Regional Programme

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Efficiency rating criterion* | *United Nations system use (human, technical and financial)* | *Extent to which RSCA practices affected the achievement of Regional Programme outcomes* | | | *Regional Project to Support Oversight of the Regional Programme for Africa* | *Contribution of the communication strategy* | *Contribution of the partnership approach to programming* | *Average rating* |
| *M&E policies* | *Processes* | *Decision-making* |
| High | 58.8 | 52.9 | 41.2 | 70.6 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 76.5 | 44.5 |
| Medium | 29.4 | 23.5 | 29.4 | 5.9 | 52.9 | 58.8 | 5.9 | 29.4 |
| Low | 11.8 | 5.9 | 11.8 | 5.9 | 11.8 | 17.6 | 17.6 | 11.8 |
| Not applicable | 0.0 | 17.6 | 17.6 | 17.6 | 5.9 | 17.6 |  | 12.7 |
| Do not know | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 23.5 |  |  | 4.7 |

**Mobilization and use of human and technical resources**

The evaluation noted that RSCA encountered a number of factors that hindered the efficient implementation of the RP. Based on respondent interviews and document analysis, RSCA made satisfactory efforts to mobilize resources and develop systems and processes to support the efficient implementation of all interventions. Key informants interviewed indicated that most regional projects have adequate staffing and systems in place to support implementation; however, the MTE found that programme efficiency was severely curtailed by delays in staff recruitment, high staff turnover and inadequate staffing in some interventions. Nearly 50 percent of core positions in the RP remain vacant. A review of minutes from staff meetings indicates that there was inadequate staffing, but recruitment was under way as early as March 2019. Nevertheless, there was little evidence to show that this issue has been addressed, implying that it has not received adequate attention. Expert consultants were used to deliver on some outputs as a strategy to achieve results efficiently. Staff reorganization was undertaken in the SP4SD Africa, YouthConnekt, Gender and AYWLFP projects. The RP also leveraged the financial capacity of other United Nations agencies to deliver results. For example, ILO provided substantial assistance to the African Union Department of Social Affairs in the final stages of developing the Social Agenda 2063, which UNDP had supported substantially in its inception. Similarly, UNDP and ILO are jointly promoting the SP4SD Africa initiative to achieve results. The evaluation also noted collaboration between UN Women and UNDP in training AUC departments on gender mainstreaming and developing gender action plans. In addition, technical resources from other UNDP offices around the world were used efficiently, such as the Gender Equality Seal borrowed from Panama and adapted to the African context.

UNDP had facilitated the creation of the Project Steering Committee and project boards to provide overall programme management, coordination and strategic directions; oversee project implementation and ensure that project objectives are achieved. Joint action plans were also facilitated for the Lake Chad RSF and the Sahel Programme, with clearly defined mandates and milestones. Technical committees have been established to spearhead technical aspects of the projects. For example, the SECCCI project established two technical committees for the sustainable development of Lake Turkana and its river basins, for Ethiopia and Kenya. In addition, to improve coordination and information-sharing, the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre has produced three annual technical reports on climate, rangelands and coordination. The overall objective of these knowledge products is to increase the availability and accessibility of relevant information that stakeholders in the cluster areas can use to develop and implement robust policies, plans and programmes.

The Economist Programme seeks to ensure that the SDGs are mainstreamed in country-level documents. The Programme supports leadership on the continent in formulating policies, addressing programmatic issues and producing specific knowledge products. By investing in the capacity of the Economist Programme to support the SDG project, actions will be consistent with UNDP strategies and will provide evidenced-based guidance to policymakers and programme managers to help African countries make progress in achieving the SDGs.

**Organizational practices, policies, processes and implementation**

**Monitoring and evaluation policies and implementation**

Respondents noted that the M&E unit in particular was highly active in defining RP indicators, ensuring timely reporting and providing notifications on expenditures. Based on discussions with project managers, the evaluation found that the M&E policies in place facilitated efficient project delivery. RBA provided adequate support, advising on which projects to implement, indicators to consider, activities to undertake and reports to write. Nevertheless, the absence of a robust M&E framework made it difficult to monitor results. The current framework’s main weakness is inadequate indicators and baseline data. The indicators do not cover all aspects of the outputs planned for each project. As a result, crucial milestones are underreported. It was clear from progress reports and discussions with respondents that many achievements had been made but not included in reports. One such example is the work under the Climate Change project.

**Participatory and inclusive processes**

While such processes ensure that no one is left behind and are essential to the initiatives’ legitimacy, they have high transaction costs and lead to delays. For example, ECOWAS did not send a representative to the inception workshop of the Sahel Programme held in Abuja to familiarize the participants with the expected project outcome, outputs and implementation. This may have compromised the efficient delivery of results. After several attempts to bring ECOWAS on board and address outstanding concerns, project activities still could not begin. No results were therefore achieved in 2019 for the output. A similar lack of cooperation at the national level was reported by the SECCCI project, mainly concerning the Ethiopian Government.

**Procurement processes**

Discussions with project managers indicated that procurement processes often hampered the efficient delivery of project outputs, owing to an absence of leadership. As at November 2020, the regional procurement position had recently been filled, and project managers were optimistic that procurement processes would improve adequately in the next phase of the RP.

**Decision-making and implementation**

Respondents reported a positive response regarding decision-making capabilities, as existing platforms allow for frequent meetings within and between project management teams. Moreover, the RP knowledge product hub supports decision-making and allows best practices and lessons learned to be shared. Projects implementing the RP were able to share information on the IGAD Resilience Portal and in information exchange meetings, which improved project coordination and prevented bottlenecks.

**Efficiency of the Regional Project to Support Oversight**

Although the Advisory Board had a clear mandate, respondents did not consider it to be efficient. Meeting only once a year, the Board may find it difficult to perform its critical role. Its mandate is to oversee the RP, in accordance with the oversight and accountability frameworks established by the UNDP Executive Board. The Advisory Board provides strategic direction and guidance for the efficient and effective implementation of the RP and reports development results to the relevant UNDP corporate oversight bodies. According to its Terms of Reference, its overarching responsibility is to assist the RBA Regional Director in carrying out his/her board oversight responsibilities, especially with regard to accountability, monitoring and evaluation, strategic forward planning, overall results-based management, quality assurance and risk management.

**Efficiency of the Regional Programme communication strategy**

In response to the MTE, 57 percent of managers rated the efficiency of the RP communication strategy as ‘high’. A regional communication strategy has been developed, and an open access policy allows for vertical and horizontal communication. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the use of telecommunications technologies was highly efficient in delivering project outputs from homes and locations around the world. For example, the AYWLFP and social protection activities were able to continue, even with project managers based in New York. Such telecommunications capacity also made it possible to communicate with IGAD on the Gender initiatives and to negotiate a partnership with Equality Now/SOAR.

**Efficiency of the ‘partnership approach’**

Partnership was noted to be a hallmark of UNDP across all outcome areas. Partnerships spur demand-driven initiatives that respond to actual challenges facing the continent. The partnership strategy was employed as a way to ensure sustainability and enhance participation and inclusivity. Partnerships were established and strengthened between national, regional and subregional government institutions, including States’ line ministries. For example, the SECCCI and PVE projects bring together UNEP and IGAD but also work closely with institutions at the national level.

|  |
| --- |
| The Lake Chad RSF demonstrates how partnership is being developed and nurtured. According to the project manager, insights and partnerships must be considered at all levels (local, national, regional, continental and international levels).  At the local level, the project is owned by local communities via state governors. At the national level, it is being implemented and coordinated by individual States through their line ministries.  In addition to the five donors from Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the European Union, partnerships have been established with AfDB, and discussions to secure $2.7 million are in the final stage. This will be the first time AfDB is providing such funding, which demonstrates that partners are confident in this innovative initiative.  At the regional level and beyond, key stakeholders, partners and donors participate on the steering committee, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa, ECOWAS and ECAS. Partnerships have been established with UNDP, the AU and LCBC. Ministers from the relevant line ministries of affected Member States also serve on the project’s steering committee.  UNDP, the AU and LCBC have established an international support group that connects the initiative with all international organizations supporting the programme. Other donors, such as Denmark, Luxembourg, Norway and Sweden, are also part of the international group supporting regional stabilization. With this support, a high-level conference was held in Berlin and another conference is being organized, to be held once the action plan had been developed. |

**Timely delivery of Programme outputs**

The timeliness and adaptability of the RP are encouraging, despite some setbacks. The management of the RP had some elements of adaptability, and planned results were delivered in a timely manner. The adaptability and efficiency of the RP are demonstrated by the timely implementation of a number of new projects in response to the continent’s needs and priorities, such as the projects on migration, the Lake Chad RSF, Lake Victoria, peacebuilding and COVID-19 response and recovery. By providing core funding to catalyse project initiation while partners mobilize resources, the RP also demonstrates efficiency in the timely design and implementation of projects. The practice of repurposing funds serves as a flexible approach to reallocate resources from projects experiencing delays, thereby improving overall programme efficiency for RSCA.

Interviewed project managers and stakeholders felt that the planned mid-term results of the RP had been achieved but performance could have been greatly improved, were it not for the COVID-19 pandemic that crippled the Programme for over five months. Despite the pandemic, measures have been established to resume projects while adhering to WHO health and safety recommendations.

The following outputs were delivered on time:

* ‘The State of Social Assistance in Africa’, which addresses the continent’s gap in knowledge in that regard.
* ‘AU Strategy for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment’ and its results framework.
* Knowledge transfers on gender mainstreaming, provided through a series of trainings.
* The Gender Equality Seal, a tool to assess gender equality in public and private organizations and institutions.
* Placement of 20 young women in fellowships in various United Nations and AUC positions for exposure and networking.
* Cross-border solutions in the Lake Chad RSF, built by strengthening individual countries and regional institutions. Progress is also being made by reintegrating extremists. As a result, the project is building the infrastructure needed to improve peacebuilding capacities for security and livelihood resilience.
* Implementation of the three-year AU Treaties project. The Gender project also made contributions towards this output.
* The IGAD strategy for preventing and counter­ing violent extremism (launched in April 2018), which is linked directly to UNDP support.

Most of the projects were delayed in the inception phase; only 43 percent began as scheduled. Most delays were associated with funding, but others were due to recruitment logistics and institutional arrangements. For example, in the SECCCI project, financial management oscillated between the three parties in the partnership. Hardship and insecurity across borders could have contributed to the delay as well, albeit remotely. To some extent, these institutional challenges are linked to the inability to mobilize adequate technical resources and expertise. The delay is also attributable to the donors’ failure to dispatch funding on time, as per the project contract.

It is worth noting that some of the service delivery methods being adopted by the RP may require a substantial amount of time to be successful, as interventions must be customized to suit local situations. For example, the new stabilization in Africa intervention has been adapted from the experience of UNDP in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Table 6 shows the efficiency rating of various aspects of the RP, based on responses to ‘yes’ or ‘no’ questions from project managers and stakeholders. The average rating was 61.2 percent.

Table 6  
Efficiency rating of the Regional Programme

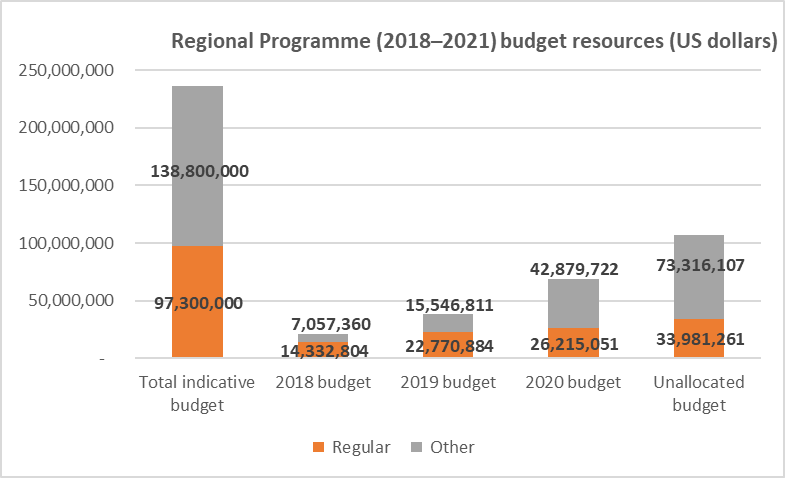
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Efficiency rating criterion* | *Timeliness in project inception* | *Recruitment of key staff* | *Mobilization of technical expertise and resources* | *Results achievement status* | *Expenditure patterns* | *Average score* |
| Yes | 64.7 | 41.2 | 82.4 | 76.5 | 41.2 | 61.2 |
| No | 17.6 | 41.2 | 5.9 | 11.8 | 41.2 | 23.5 |
| Don't know | 5.9 | 5.9 | 11.8 | 11.8 | 5.9 | 8.2 |
| Not applicable | 11.8 | 11.8 |  |  | 11.8 | 11.8 |

**Mobilization and use of financial resources**

**Programme resources:** The RP has a budgetary framework that is disaggregated by projects, which are organized into three Priority Areas (Outcomes). The total indicative budget for the RP from 2018 to 2021 is approximately $236.1 million, the bulk of which is dedicated to interventions under Outcome 1. Integrated annual work plans (IAWPs) and budgets are derived from this figure every year. From 2018 to 2020, total funding budget allocations for RP projects and initiatives is approximately $128.8 million, of which 49 percent ($63.3 million) is from core funding and 51 percent ($65.5 million) is from non-core funding (i.e. funding from external sources).

Outcome 1 has a total indicative budget of $99.19 million ($37.69 million, or 38 percent, from the regular budget and $61.5 million, or 62 percent, from other sources). Outcome 2 has a total indicative budget of $71 million ($31 million, or 44 percent, from the regular budget and $40 million, or 56 percent, from other sources). Outcome 3 has a total indicative budget of $42.3 million ($5 million, or 12 percent, from the regular budget and $37.3 million, or 88 percent, from other sources), as further illustrated in table 7. M&E, communications and innovations has a total indicative budget of $23.61 million. The budget grew to $69,094,773 in 2020, up from $21,390,164 in 2018, demonstrating the remarkable capacity of the RBA to mobilize funds.

Figure VI: Total indicative resources of the Regional Programme (2018–2021)



Source: Author.

Table 7  
Funding per source per outcome

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Funding category* | *Regular*  *(US dollars)* | *Other*  *(US dollars)* | *Total*  *(US dollars)* |
| Outcome 1 | 37 690 000 | 61 500 000 | 99 190  000 |
| Outcome 2 | 31 000 000 | 40 000 000 | 71 000 000 |
| Outcome 3 | 5 000 000 | 37 300 000 | 42 300 000 |
| M&E/communications/innovations | 23 610 000 | 0 | 23 610 000 |
| **Total Indicative Resources** | **97 300 000** | **138 800 000** | **236 100 000** |

Source: Derived from Regional Programme 2018–2021 project documents and financial reports, RSCA (2020).

**Figure VII** shows the distribution of indicative resources per outcome. Outside resources constitute a larger portion of RP finances: 62 percent, 56 percent and 88 percent for Outcomes 1, 2 and 3, respectively. This indicates an overreliance on financing from external sources and could inhibit implementation where fundraising efforts do not yield the anticipated funds.

Figure VII: Indicative resources per Outcome

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Outcome 1 | | Outcome 2 | | Outcome 3 | |
| Regular | Other | Regular | Other | Regular | Other |
| 37 690 000 | 61 500 000 | 31 000 000 | 40 000 000 | 5 000 000 | 37 300 000 |
| |  | | --- | |  | |  | |  | | --- | |  | |  |  |  |
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|  |  |  |  |  |  |

Source: Author.

As shown in table 8, the core funding percentage of annual budgets has been decreasing, from 67 percent in 2018 to 59 percent in 2019 and 38 percent in 2020. This indicates satisfactory fund-raising efforts, as evidenced by cost-sharing finances. For the period 2018–2020, core funds contributed 49 percent of overall funding and non-core funds contributed 51 percent.

Table 8  
Comparison of core and non-core funding for the period 2018–2020

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Year* | *Core*  *(US dollars)* | *Non-core*  *(US dollars)* | *Total*  *(US dollars)* | *Core*  *(Percentage)* | *Non-core*  *(Percentage)* |
| 2018 | 14 332 804 | 7 057 360 | 21 390 164 | 67 | 33 |
| 2019 | 22 770 884 | 15 546 811 | 38 317 695 | 59 | 41 |
| 2020 | 26 215 051 | 42 879 722 | 69 094 773 | 38 | 62 |
| **Total** | **63 318 739** | **65 483 893** | **128 802 632** | **49** | **51** |

Source: Derived from Regional Programme 2018–2021 project documents and financial reports, RSCA (2020).

**Funding for projects and initiatives:** During the period 2018–2020, 22 of the 31 projects and initiatives were funded solely through core funding, representing 49 percent of the total budget for the period. Nine projects and initiatives were funded with non-core resources, representing 51 percent of the total regional budget for the period. These included Lake Chad RSF ($31.89 million), PVE ($13.69 million), Lake Chad Phase 2 ($7.16  million), AU Treaties ($3.10  million), Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change ($2.63 million), Private Sector ($2.58  million), SECCCI ($2.58  million), Gender/Women in Governance ($1.41  million) and Conflict/Early Warning/ Great Lakes Region ($0.44  million).

Table 9 shows that, between 2018 and 2020, the RP had 18 initiatives with budgets of over $1 million.

Table 9   
Regional Programme funding 2018–2020, project budgets over $1 million

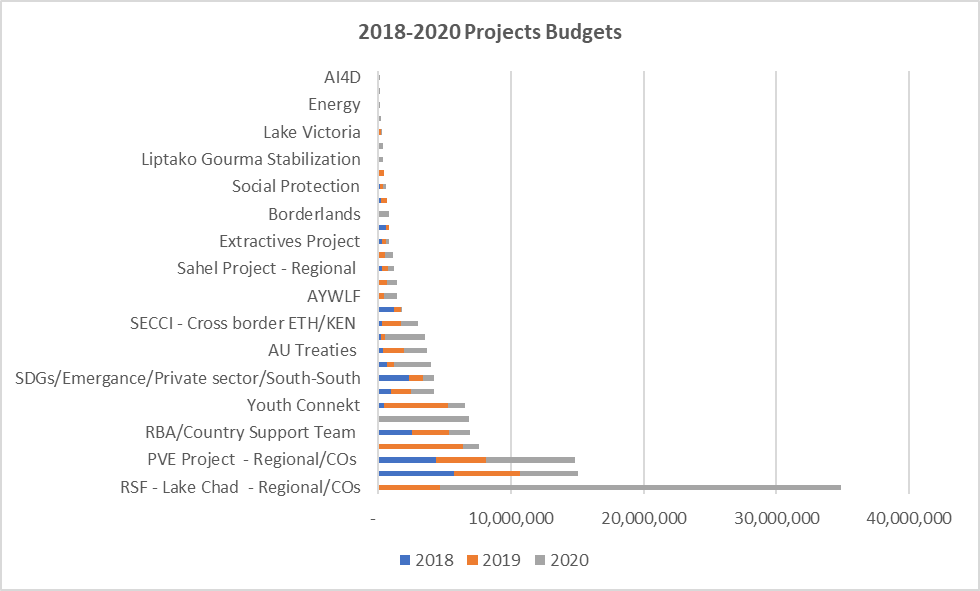
|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Number* | *Project/Initiative* | *Budget*  *(US dollars)* | *Comments* |
| 1 | Lake Chad RSF (Regional/COs) | 34 886 642 | Initiation in 2019/Full Project Document in September 2019 |
| 2 | Economist Programme (COs) | 15 040 714 |  |
| 3 | PVE (Regional/COs) | 14 827 039 | Co-financing of $4.6 million |
| 4 | Lake Chad Phase 2 (Germany) | 7 634 196 |  |
| 5 | RBA/Country Support Team | 6 927 863 |  |
| 6 | COVID-19 Response (Regional/COs) | 6 890 174 | Initiation in 2020 |
| 7 | YouthConnekt Initiative | 6 574 818 |  |
| 8 | Support Oversight | 4 248 280 |  |
| 9 | SDGs/Emergence/Private Sector/SSC | 4 216 977 |  |
| 10 | Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change | 3 983 740 |  |
| 11 | AU Treaties | 3 703 862 | Co-financing of $1.2 million |
| 12 | Gender/Women in Governance | 3 543 618 |  |
| 13 | SECCCI | 3 035 679 | Co-financing of $3.2 million |
| 14 | Migration | 1 855 000 | Initiation |
| 15 | AYWLFP | 1 472 000 | Initiation |
| 16 | SDGs Regional Programme (New York) | 1 469 151 |  |
| 17 | Sahel Programme (Regional) | 1 236 000 |  |
| 18 | Conflict/Early Warning/Great Lakes Region | 1 115 924 | Initiation |

Source: Derived from Regional Programme 2018–2021 project documents and financial reports, RSCA (2020).

The following projects and initiatives had budgets of over $500,000: Extractives ($830,000), Strengthening the Capacity of IGAD ($820,000), Borderlands ($811,000), Lake Chad/Nexus Study ($730,000) and Social Protection ($585,000).

The remaining projects and initiatives had budgets of less than $500,000 for the period 2018–2020, including RBA country initiatives (COs) ($486,174) and Governance ($180,000). Several initiations also fell in this category, including Liptako Gourma ($400,000), AfCFTA ($360,000), Lake Victoria ($350,000), Digital Transformation ($238,780), Energy ($200,000), African Influencers for Development (AI4D) ($300,000), Lake Chad emerging project ($300,000) and Lake Victoria ($150,000). Figure VIII shows the level of funding for the RP projects and initiatives from 2018 to 2020.

Figure VIII. 2018–2020 project budgets



Source: Author.

**Cost sharing:** For the period 2018–2021, there have been active cost-sharing agreements with 10 donors for various RP projects and initiatives, worth an equivalent of $128.9 million. An equivalent of $54.65 million (42 percent) has been received, while $74.24 million (58 percent) is due in the future. Germany is the highest donor, with agreements worth an equivalent of $53.95 million, which funds the Lake Chad RSF. It is followed by Sida ($32.71 million) and the European Union ($15.09 million), funding AU Treaties, Disaster Risk Reduction, Lake Chad RSF and PVE. The Netherlands completes the list of donors with agreements worth over $10 million, funding Lake Chad RSF and PVE. Additional donor are as shown in table 10: from the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development (DFATD) of Canada; Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC); the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTFO); and Norway.

Figure IX: Cost-sharing agreements per donor

Source: Author.

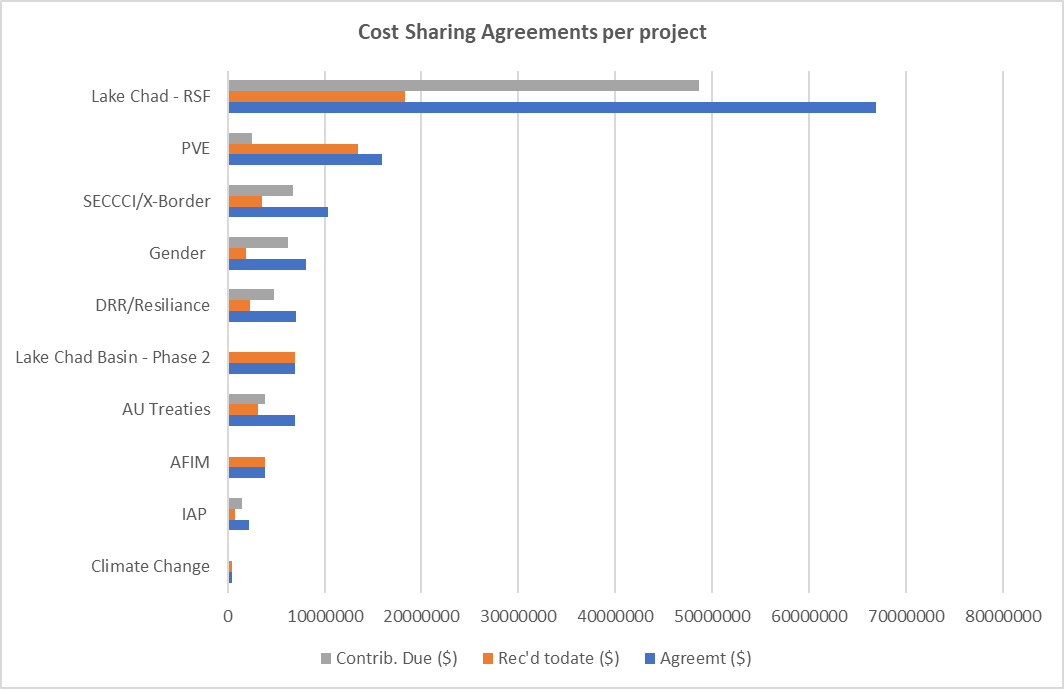
Table 10  
Cost-sharing agreements per donor

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | *Donor* | *Agreement*  *(US dollars)* | *Received to date*  *(US dollars)* | *Due*  *(US dollars)* |
| 1 | Germany | 53 949 302 | 17 949 302 | 36 000 000 |
| 2 | Sida | 32 711 343 | 18 625 431 | 14 085 912 |
| 3 | European Union | 15 086 194 | 6 373 917 | 8 712 277 |
| 4 | Netherlands | 11 688 251 | 4 267 796 | 7 420 455 |
| 5 | Canada-DFATD | 5 978 400 | 1 410 437 | 4 567 963 |
| 6 | SDC | 3 894 737 | 3 894 737 | - |
| 7 | IFAD | 2 250 000 | 771 726 | 1 478 274 |
| 8 | MPTFO-Spotlight | 2 134 478 | 510 000 | 1 624 478 |
| 9 | MPTFO-EU | 768 535 | 418 436 | 350 099 |
| 10 | Norway | 427 984 | 427 984 | - |
|  | **Total** | **128 889 224** | **54 649 766**  **(42 percent)** | **74 239 458**  **(58 percent)** |

Source: Derived from Regional Programme 2018–2021 project documents and financial reports, RSCA (2020).

Three projects had cost-sharing agreements of over $10 million: Lake Chad RSF ($66.9 million), PVE ($15.95 million) and SECCCI ($10.34 million). Projects with agreements of over $5 million include: Gender ($8.13 million), Disaster Risk Reduction ($7.09 million), Lake Chad Phase 2 ($6.98 million) and AU Treaties ($6.94 million). The remaining projects are African Facility for Inclusive Markets (AFIM) ($3.89 million, from IFAD), Integrated Approach Programme (IAP) ($2.25 million, from SDC) and Climate Change ($0.428 million, from Norway). The latter two had completed operations. Table 11 shows the projects’ cost-sharing funds and the amount received. Several projects have not yet received all cost-sharing funds. These include Lake Chad RSF, with $48.62 million (73 percent) outstanding; SECCCI Cross border, with $6.75 million (65 percent) outstanding; and Gender, with $6.19 million (76 percent) outstanding.

Figure X: Cost-sharing agreements per project



Source: Author.

Table 11  
Cost-sharing agreements per project

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Project or initiative* | *Agreement (US dollars)* | *Received to date*  *(US dollars)* | *Contributions due*  *(US dollars)* | *Received*  *(Percentage)* | *Due*  *(Percentage)* | *Donor* |
| Lake Chad RSF | 66 914 709 | 18 290 573 | 48 624 136 | 27 | 73 | EU, Germany, Netherlands, Sida |
| PVE | 15 935 351 | 13 414 907 | 2 520 444 | 84 | 16 | Netherlands, Sida |
| SECCCI | 10 340 259 | 3 591 210 | 6 749 049 | 35 | 65 | EU, MPTF-EU |
| Gender | 8 112 878 | 1 920 437 | 6 192 441 | 24 | 76 | Canada- DFATD, MPTF-Spotlight |
| Disaster Risk Reduction | 7 087 506 | 2 263 175 | 4 824 331 | 32 | 68 | Sida |
| Lake Chad Phase 2 | 6 981 884 | 6 981 884 | - | 100 | 0 | Germany |
| AU Treaties | 6 943 915 | 3 093 133 | 3 850 782 | 45 | 55 | Sida |
| AFIM | 3 894 737 | 3 894 737 | - | 100 | 0 | SDC |
| IAP | 2 250 000 | 771 726 | 1 478 274 | 34 | 66 | IFAD |
| Climate Change | 427 984 | 427 984 | - | 100 | 0 | Norway |
| **Total** | **128 889 224** | **54 649 766** | **74 239 457** |  | | |

Source: Derived from Regional Programme 2018–2021 project documents and financial reports, RSCA (2020).

Active cost-sharing agreements for the period 2018–2020 (September) total $128,889,224. As at September 2020, $54,649,766 had been received, while donors still owed $74,239,458. Distribution per donor is shown in table 10.

**Release of funds:** Projects receive their allocations annually, usually at the beginning of February, per approved IAWPs. They often have a provisional allocation to become operational in January, while awaiting final approval. Those with donor funding have funds available, per the contribution agreements. Delays would occur only as a result of delays by UNDP in submitting the required documentation to donors. The evaluation did not find any such evidence.

**Budget reallocations:** The accountability framework gives the Director of the RP the rightto repurpose funds to improve on Programme delivery in order to meets the Programme objective. For example, in response to the COVID-19 crisis, the RP was able to reprogramme and repurpose resources by revising the 2020 IAWP, reallocating $5.1 million in unspent funds from the budgets of some projects and initiatives to support countries in preparedness and recovery and help continental bodies and regional institutions respond quickly during the crisis. The COs required quick funds to raise purchase orders and acquire personal protective equipment. However, a review of staff meeting minutes suggests that project managers were simply informed after the fact. Engaging project management in a dialogue about the rationale for such budgetary decisions, which involve their projects, would be a better practice.

*The RP repurposed $5 million to support the regional response to COVID-19, by identifying activities from quarters 1 and 2, in particular travel and conferences that will not be conducted during this period, and reprogramming them for the reallocation.*

Source: Joint staff meeting minutes, 10 April 2020

A total of $5.1 million, or 19.5 percent, of the original 2020 budget of $26.2 million was reprogrammed to assist the COVID-19 pandemic response. The reallocations were based on the delivery of projects and initiatives as projected through December 2020. Approximately $4.1 million (80.4 percent) of reallocated funds comes from existing or emerging initiatives, primarily owing to a reduced workshop and travel budgets as a result of the pandemic, while $1.0 million (19.6  percent) is from a reduction in RBA salaries and common services at headquarters.

In terms of the amounts deducted from projects and initiatives, the Africa Governance Programme contributed $600,000, or 11.8 percent, of total reallocations, followed by the Regional Project to Support Oversight of the RP, with $550,000, or 10.8 percent.

Three projects and initiatives (Borderlands, ‘Regional SDGs Project under SAT Policy Work’ (Regional SDGs) and the YouthConnekt Initiative) each contributed $300,000, or 5.9 percent, while the Lake Victoria initiative contributed $250,000, or 4.9 percent. Another four projects and initiatives (Migration, AYWLFP, ‘Conflict Prevention/Climate Security-AU Support’ and ‘Africa’s Emergence: Promoting structural economic transformation and human development’ (Africa’s Emergence project)) each contributed $200,000, or 3.9 percent. An additional 10 projects and initiatives each contributed $100,000, or 2 percent. These are Natural Resource Management, Regional SDGs, Gender, Women in Governance, Mining, Social Protection, Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction, Liptako Gourma and AfCFTA.

The 2020 budgets for 12 projects and initiatives remained intact: AU Treaties, PVE, SECCCI, Lake Chad RSF, Private Sector, SSC, Energy, Great Lakes Region, Digital Transformation, AI4D, the Sahel Programme and the Economist Programme, as seen in table 12.

Table 12  
Budget revisions to reprogramme integrated annual work plan funds from fiscal year 2020

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Number* | *Project/Initiative* | *Original budget*  *(US dollars)* | *Reallocation*  *(US dollars)* | *Percentage of original budget* | *Percentage of total reallocation* |
| 1 | RBA (HQ, Addis, Dakar) Salaries and HQ Common Services | 3 608 724 | 1 000 000 | 27.7 | 19.6 |
| 2 | Governance | 1 000 000 | 600 000 | 60.0 | 11.8 |
| 3 | Support Oversight | 2 575 000 | 550 000 | 21.4 | 10.8 |
| 4 | Borderlands | 1 000 000 | 300 000 | 30.0 | 5.9 |
| 5 | Regional SDGs | 1 067 027 | 300 000 | 28.1 | 5.9 |
| 6 | YouthConnekt Initiative | 2 400 000 | 300 000 | 12.5 | 5.9 |
| 7 | Lake Victoria | 350 000 | 250 000 | 71.4 | 4.9 |
| 8 | Migration | 300 000 | 200 000 | 66.7 | 3.9 |
| 9 | Conflict Prevention/Climate Security-AU Support | 350 000 | 200 000 | 57.1 | 3.9 |
| 10 | Africa’s Emergence | 500 000 | 200 000 | 40.0 | 3.9 |
| 11 | AYWLFP | 1 200 000 | 200 000 | 16.7 | 3.9 |
| 12 | Natural Resource Management | 200 000 | 100 000 | 50.0 | 2.0 |
| 13 | Regional SDGs | 200 000 | 100 000 | 50.0 | 2.0 |
| 14 | Gender | 250 000 | 100 000 | 40.0 | 2.0 |
| 15 | Women in Governance | 250 000 | 100 000 | 40.0 | 2.0 |
| 16 | Mining | 300 000 | 100 000 | 33.3 | 2.0 |
| 17 | Social Protection (SP4SD) | 300 000 | 100 000 | 33.3 | 2.0 |
| 18 | Climate Change | 300 000 | 100 000 | 33.3 | 2.0 |
| 19 | Disaster Risk Reduction | 400 000 | 100 000 | 25.0 | 2.0 |
| 20 | Liptako Gourma | 500 000 | 100 000 | 20.0 | 2.0 |
| 21 | AfCFTA | 660 000 | 100 000 | 15.2 | 2.0 |
| 22 | AU Treaties | 200 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 23 | PVE | 500 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 24 | SECCCI | 200 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 25 | Lake Chad RSF | 1 500 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 26 | Private Sector | 174 300 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 27 | SSC | 100 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 28 | Energy | 200 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 29 | Great Lakes Region | 180 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 30 | Digital Transformation | 200 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 31 | AI4D | 250 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 32 | Sahel Programme | 500 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 33 | Economist Programme | 4 500 000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  | **Allocated resources** | **26 215 051** | **5 100 000** |  |  |

Source: Derived from Regional Programme 2018–2021 project documents and financial reports, RSCA (2020).

The relatively high amount of core funding provides the RP with a sound financial foundation, which has enabled it to develop innovative initiatives. It also provides some financial independence. However, the number of initiatives (over 30 at the time of the MTE in 2020) causes the funds to be thinly spread and may not be optimal. As a result, consideration should perhaps be given to concentrating on fewer core projects and initiatives and dedicating more of the funds to fundraising, communications, outreach capacity and innovation, which could in turn attract donors and partners.

**Project delivery and outputs against budgets:** An analysis of the overall project delivery of the RP compared to budget targets showed that, for the year 2018, expenditures were $14,261,896, or 91 percent of the budget of $15,613,868, and 100 percent of available resources for spending ($14,332,804). For the year 2019, the expenditure of core funds was $20,833,062, or 97 percent delivery against a budget of $21,421,925, and 91 percent of available resources for spending ($22,770,884). The expenditure of non-core funds for 2019 was $12,332,717, or 57 percent delivery against a budget of $21,484,960, and 48 percent of the available resources for spending ($25,804,914).

For the year 2020, as at 27 October and extrapolated to include commitments to December, only 10 of 35 projects and initiatives have so far managed a high delivery level of over 70 percent against their regular budgets for 2020. Another 11 projects and initiatives have managed a medium delivery level (51 percent to 80 percent) against their regular budget for the year, while 14 projects and initiatives have underdelivered (below 50 percent) against their regular budget.

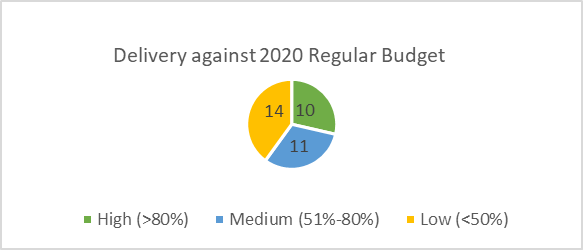
Projects that underdelivered against their budgets would need to accelerate delivery to meet their targeted outputs for the year 2020. Figure XI indicates the number of projects in each delivery range.

Apart from the regular funding budget, nine projects and initiatives also had cost-sharing budgets allocated for 2020. The total cost-sharing budget available for 2020 was approximately $43.49 million, with a corresponding expenditure of $21.62 million (50 percent delivery). As at October 2020, projects with cost-sharing budgets had a regular funding budget of $3.1 million, with a corresponding expenditure of $2.6 million (81 percent delivery). Overall, projects underdelivered against their cost-sharing funds.

It should be noted that the expenditure for 2020 includes projected expenditures and commitments as at 27 October 2020. There was still some time to the end of 2020 within which outputs could be fast tracked, were it not for the impact of COVID-19.

Unlike regular resources, which are annual targets, cost-sharing funds cover multiple years. These funds do not need to be spent within a calendar year, and budgets can be adjusted for future years. Table 13 shows the projects and initiatives with their delivery rate against regular the funding budget for 2020.

Figure XI: Summary of project delivery against 2020 regular budget



Source: Author.

Table 13  
Project delivery against 2020 regular budget

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Number** | **Project or initiative** | | **Budget**  **(US dollars)** | **Spent**  **(US dollars)** | | | **Balance (US dollars)** | | **Delivery**  **(Percentage)** | |
| 1 | AU Treaties | | 200 000 | 195 907 | | | 4 093 | | 98 | |
| 2 | PVE | | 500 000 | 410 402 | | | 89 598 | | 82 | |
| 3 | Lake Chad RSF | | 1 500 000 | 1 500 989 | | | -989 | | 100 | |
| 4 | Lake Chad Phase 2 | | 0 | 156 080 | | | -156 080 | | 100 | |
| 5 | YouthConnekt Initiative | | 1 300 000 | 1 328 041 | | | -28 041 | | 102 | |
| 6 | Gender | | 90 000 | 102 428 | | | -12 428 | | 114 | |
| 7 | Conflict Prevention/Climate Security-AU Support | | 150 000 | 201 513 | | | -51 513 | | 134 | |
| 8 | Regional SDGs – RSCA | | 100 000 | 99 960 | | | 40 | | 100 | |
| 9 | Sahel Programme | | 500 000 | 417 513 | | | 82 487 | | 84 | |
| 10 | Economist Programme | | 4 365 820 | 3 544 899 | | | 820 921 | | 81 | |
| 11 | | SSC | 100 000 | 64 437 | | 35 563 | | 64 | |
| 12 | | Women in Governance | 1 520 257 | 992 583 | | 527 674 | | 65 | |
| 13 | | Migration | 100 000 | 62 441 | | 37 559 | | 62 | |
| 14 | | Borderlands | 700 000 | 519 554 | | 180 446 | | 74 | |
| 15 | | Governance | 100 000 | 70 070 | | 29 930 | | 70 | |
| 16 | | AYWLFP | 1 000 000 | 703 822 | | 296 178 | | 70 | |
| 17 | | Support Oversight | 1 725 000 | 1 137 129 | | 587 871 | | 66 | |
| 18 | | COVID-19 Response | 1 000 000 | 566 972 | | 433 028 | | 57 | |
| 19 | | Regional SDGs - RBA | 643 246 | 339 511 | | 303 735 | | 53 | |
| 20 | | RBA/Country Support Team | 1 566 254 | 921 530 | | 644 724 | | 59 | |
| 21 | | COVID-19 Response (CO Support) | 5 890 174 | 4 334 143 | | 1 556 031 | | 74 | |
| 22 | SECCCI | | 200 000 | 80 882 | 119 118 | | | 40 | |
| 23 | Mining | | 200 000 | 36 551 | 163 449 | | | 18 | |
| 24 | Private Sector | | 174 300 | 11 376 | 162 924 | | | 7 | |
| 25 | Africa’s Emergence | | 300 000 | 18 330 | 281 670 | | | 6 | |
| 26 | Social Protection (SP4SD) | | 200 000 | 73 209 | 126 791 | | | 37 | |
| 27 | Disaster Risk Reduction | | 300 000 | 20 690 | 279 310 | | | 7 | |
| 28 | Climate Change | | 200 000 | 45 719 | 154 281 | | | 23 | |
| 29 | Energy | | 200 000 | 27 000 | 173 000 | | | 14 | |
| 30 | Lake Victoria | | 100 000 | 0 | 100 000 | | | 0 | |
| 31 | Liptako Gourma | | 400 000 | 151 380 | 248 620 | | | 38 | |
| 32 | Great Lakes Region | | 180 000 | 80 750 | 99 250 | | | 45 | |
| 33 | Digital Transformation | | 200 000 | 49 691 | 150 309 | | | 25 | |
| 34 | AI4D | | 150 000 | 69 897 | 80 103 | | | 47 | |
| 35 | AfCFTA | | 360 000 | 68 757 | 291 243 | | | 19 | |

Source: Derived from Regional Programme 2018–2021 project documents and financial reports, RSCA (2020).

## 3.5 Sustainability

Sustainability is the extent to which results from the RP will last. The MTE examined the extent to which results at the AU and RECs will sustain benefits in the medium and long term by analysing risks in the ToC and project documents and triangulating the findings with KIIs. Most of the intended results across the three outcome portfolios have good sustainability potential, as they have a number of characteristics that enhance sustainability. These include: (a) capacity-building for various actors on technical advisory services and the exchange of good practices and experiences (b) the development of policies, systems and guidelines, and (c) the promotion of partnerships, networks and collaborations.

Institutional sustainability

The RP having focused on strengthening AU and REC institutions through various projects, the evaluation finds that this improved capacity has significant potential to contribute to sustainability. The RP strengthened the capacities and systems of a number of AU departments and RECs, including the Peace and Security Commission; the Trade and Industry Commission; the Youth Division; the Women, Gender and Development Directorate; NEPAD; and the African Minerals Development Centre. Close consultation with the various regional and subregional institutions in the design and implementation of the RP is likely to increase ownership of the interventions, a critical element for sustainability. As a result, benefits are likely to continue to be felt at those levels. However, the lack of a solid partnership strategy with the AU and insufficient vertical engagement with some RECs is likely to curtail the sustainability of results.

The MTE has also noted the existence of mechanisms to ensure sustainability, such as online platforms like Youthconnekt, managed by youth at the national level, as well as procedures like the Gender Equality Seal, used in organizations and institutions to assess gender mainstreaming and policies. Nevertheless, respondents indicated that more must be done on the digital front to ensure that the continent has the infrastructure and connectivity necessary to accommodate the growing need to use online platforms for various interventions. It was also clear that member States had signed many regional protocols but were slow to implement them, owing to a gap in monitoring accountability. I order to find a solution, the RP will work with the AUC and other regional and subregional partners to develop an accountability framework with indicators to monitor and report on implementation by member States.

Financial sustainability

The mobilization of fairy adequate financial resources from own resources and from donors to support the implementation of RP interventions is likely to contribute to the sustainability of benefits, particularly in the short to medium term. The RP has demonstrated superb skills in mobilizing external and internal resources to expand the Programme budget and initiate new regional projects. For instance, the non-core budget has increased significantly (from 33 percent to 62 percent of the total budget) from $7,057,360 in 2018 to $42,879,722 in 2020, as a result of exceptional capacity-building on resource mobilization (See table 8). UNDP has strong financial and accountability mechanisms, making it an attractive and trusted partner. The RBA must expand its current donor base by targeting AU member States, philanthropic foundations, the private sector, bilateral organizations and others to strengthen financial sustainability and reduce the risk of a narrow donor base. The RSCA should develop a system to track cost savings from all initiatives and promote joint programming by leveraging other partners’ activities in the region. In the long term, ownership of the programme through regular budgetary support for RP interventions by AU member States is crucial for the continuation of benefits and would improve financial sustainability.

An enabling socio-economic and political environment

The enabling environment created by various policies and legal frameworks has features that improve sustainability, such as the ratification and domestication of AU treaties. When the RP began in 2018, six countries were at various stages in the ratification process. With the Programme’s intervention, some improvement was recorded as at the end of 2019. Sao Tome and Principe and Tunisia had registered impressive results. Additionally, the RP has supported national sectoral coordination mechanisms in the six countries to promote the domestication and implementation of AU treaties. These efforts have the potential to contribute to the initiative’s sustainability. The website on AU treaties and the ratification and domestication toolkit will surely have a long-term effect. Under the Mining project and the Economist Programme, the development of policy frameworks also has a strong sustainability element.

Political instability, crises, shocks and natural disasters will likely have a negative impact on the results achieved. It was evident that political crises, such as the one experienced in Mali, quickly eroded gains in gender equality. The COVID-19 pandemic served to expose weak social protection systems in Africa. In fact, experts predict that no African country deemed to have good social protection systems in place will withstand the effects of the lockdowns or the restrictions on movement imposed to contain the pandemic. Many of those countries recorded negative growth in gross domestic product within six months of the pandemic’s outset. Furthermore, the main trigger for violence within the area covered by the SECCCI project is the depletion of the natural resources and the lack of supportive infrastructure, particularly for water. Through IGAD, SECCCI has mapped cross-border transhumance routes and grazing resources. It also implements activities to improve dialogue on transboundary waters among Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia and enhance cooperation concerning cross-border water and ecosystem resources in the Lake Turkana basin.

Moreover, the MTE has established that no meaningful exit strategy that has been established. This may not bode well for the institutions that have been created and strengthened, as ample time is always required for disengagement.

Respondents were asked about the Programme’s sustainability, and their responses are summarized in **table 14**. The rating criteria were based on respondents’ explanations to support the given rating, combined with qualitative information gathered from secondary sources.

Table 14  
Evaluation of the sustainability of the Regional Programme

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| ***Rating criterion*** *a* | ***Likelihood that the benefits will continue*** | | ***Policy and regulatory frameworks in place*** | ***Regional Programme designed to remain valid*** | ***Mechanisms procedures and policies exist*** | ***Extent to which partnerships exist with other regional institutions*** | ***Choice and adaptation of appropriate technology*** | ***Extent to which the following phenomenon affect the sustainability of results*** | | | ***Average rating*** |
| ***Regional level*** | ***Subregional level*** | ***Political stability*** | ***Crises and shocks*** | ***Natural disasters*** |
| High | 82.4 | 70.6 | 88.2 | 88.2 | 70.6 | 70.6 | 23.5 | 82.4 | 76.5 | 70.6 | 72.4 |
| Medium | 0.0 | 17.6 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 23.5 | 35.3 |  | 17.6 | 11.8 | 13.7 |
| Low | 11.8 | 5.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 17.6 | 0.0 | 17.6 | 11.8 | 0.0 | 11.8 | 7.6 |
| Don't Know | 5.9 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 23.5 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 5.9 | 7.6 |

a The degree of satisfaction or confidence is satisfactory (high), over 60 percent; fair (medium), between 50 and 59 percent; or below average (know), below 50 percent. ‘Do not know’ was primarily chosen by newly recruited managers or stakeholders who were not involved directly in project implementation.

Drawing from table 14, the average sustainability rating for the RP is 72.4 percent, which is considerably high. Although some of the projects were a far from completion, others were in the implementation phase, such as the Borderlands project. This high rating could also be attributed to the strong focus of UNDP on building capacity and strengthening regional, subregional, national and grass-root institutions. Each of the sustainability attributes in table 14 are discussed below.

In addition, the proactive capacity demonstrated by the Economist Programme and SSC project ensures that projects will receive support related to the SDGs in order to build capacity at the country level and provide policy and programmatic support in that regard. The RP plays a significant role in advancing leadership to support the continent in developing knowledge products and sharing best practices that will persist after the interventions’ conclusion. The Programme also supports countries in becoming knowledge management hubs across the continent and in developing strategies to achieve the SDGs. The networks created to connect countries with thinkers, policy leaders and scholars across Africa will likely help to maintain results at a low cost.

The RP has also been assisting countries in responding to the challenges associated with the COVID-19 pandemic; 43 of the 46 countries have produced a socio-economic impact assessment and approximately half of these countries have begun to consider economic recovery plans. Such plans also include strategies to return to making progress on the SDGs. The capacity being built under the Programme is imperative to the continent’s ability to manage future crises and shocks and therefore contributes to socio-economic resilience in Africa.

***It is likely that the benefits from the previous and current RP will continue at the regional and subregional levels, given the adequate ownership, commitment and willingness displayed by Member States and RECs***

The enthusiasm of stakeholders, along with partners’ efforts to ensure a sense of ownership at the regional and subregional levels, provides significant justification that the results achieved by RP initiatives will persist. Interviews with respondents from the AU and RECs indicated that these institutions are eager to work on social protection, the AMV and gender and youth empowerment, given the technical and knowledge capacity they have built from RP interventions. The African Union Department of Social Affairs appreciated ongoing efforts to systemize work with member States to adapt best practices in providing services to citizens. The AUC Women, Gender and Development Directorate was equipped with gender mainstreaming skills, a gender policy, the Gender Equality Seal and action plans. It would continue working through RECs and member States to ensure that the gender agenda remains a priority. The inclusive, consultative and participatory process, coupled with the UNDP principle of ‘leaving no one behind’, engenders ownership and acceptance among participating partners and target beneficiaries. To a large extent, the Borderlands project has succeeded in encouraging national, cross-border, regional and subregional institutions and stakeholders to participate in dialogues on peace, security and livelihood recovery for vulnerable communities, including the reintegration of insurgents and displaced persons.

When the RP began in 2018, six countries were at various stages in the process of ratifying six AU treaties. With the Programme’s intervention, some improvement was recorded as at the end of 2019 in Sao Tome and Principe and Tunisia. Additionally, the RP has supported national sectoral coordination mechanisms in the six countries to support the domestication and implementation of the AU treaties. These efforts have the potential to contribute to the initiative’s sustainability. The website on AU treaties and the ratification and domestication toolkit will surely have a long-term effect. The development of policy frameworks under the Mining project and the Economist Programme also has a strong sustainability element.

In addition, the proactive and reactive capacity demonstrated by the Economist Programme and SSC project ensures that projects will receive support related to the SDGs in order to build capacity at the country level and provide policy and programmatic support in that regard. The RP plays a significant role in advancing leadership to support the continent in developing knowledge products, advocacy and good practices. The Programme also supports countries in becoming knowledge management hubs across the continent and in creating networks to connect with thinkers, policy leaders and scholars across Africa. This elaborate network of cohorts of seminal expertise and skills will continue to contribute to knowledge directing policy, informing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063.

This year has been peculiar because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The flexibility of the Economist Programme clearly demonstrates its efficiency in responding to risks and shocks. The Programme has been assisting Member States in responding to the challenges associated with the pandemic. It has supported 43 of the 46 countries in producing a socio-economic impact assessment, and half of these countries have begun to consider COVID-19 recovery plans. These plans also address strategies to resume making progress to achieve the SDGs. The capacity being built under the RP is imperative to the continent’s ability to manage crises and shocks.

***Established*** ***policies and regulatory frameworks will enhance sustainability***

The MTE revealed that there are adequate policy and regulatory frameworks in place to ensure the continuity of RP benefits. The Programme had not only facilitated the development of new AUC policies in various sectors, such as the policy on gender and the Social Agenda 2063, but had also supported the development of regulatory frameworks, thereby enriching the AUC.

In addition, the RP has produced sustainable results by strengthening institutional capacities and developing systems and processes at the AUC and a number of RECs. For example, Accelerator Labs were established in 27 countries to support the achievement of the SDGs, and IGAD member States received capacity-building on PDNA. Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe received support to build back better following the damage caused by Tropical Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in March 2019. As a result of these initiatives, Malawi and the Sudan are leading sub-Saharan Africa in PDNA and are likely to continue strengthening capacities on post-disaster recovery with little, if any, external support, thanks to sustained support from the RP. A cost-effective digital platform was developed by RSCA in partnership with other agencies to support African planners in mainstreaming the SDGs, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework in national development plans and frameworks. The potential for sustainability is further guaranteed by the creation of UNDP Economic Advisor positions to strengthen systems of analysis, monitoring and reporting on the SDGs; the launch of the iSDG model in Nigeria; and the inclusion of data from multidimensional poverty indices in the national reviews of Angola, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

***Partnerships developed with regional institutions, non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies, the private sector and development partners support sustainability for the results attained but require further consolidation***

The RP has managed to involve a variety of actors from regional bodies, other United Nations agencies, the private sector and CSOs to ensure buy-in for its interventions at all levels. According to respondents, the involvement of development partners and regional CSOs ensures that benefits are gained at the grass-roots level. Partnerships with regional bodies (i.e. the AUC and RECs), however, must be strengthened to ensure that all regional organizations, particularly those struggling with multiple issues such as ECCAS, receive more support and attention. Respondents also argued that most of the issues addressed by the RP require multisectoral and multi-agency collaboration, creating synergies to achieve a greater impact. Better working relations must therefore be cultivated with every United Nations agency focused on the development issues addressed by the RP**.**

In implementing the RP, RSCA sought to consolidate alliances and partnerships with the AU, RECs, APRM, CSOs, philanthropic foundations and the private sector, which has good potential for sustainability. It is worth noting that UNDP defines its business model as a combination of systems, processes, instruments, partnerships and financing that effectively and efficiently support the delivery of programmes and projects. This belief and commitment appear to drive UNDP to consolidate relationships, particularly with the AU (the Peace and Security and the Trade and Industry Commissions), LCBC, ECOWAS and ECCAS. The RP also worked closely with CSOs, the private sector, academia and think tanks in Africa to implement various priority initiatives. Partnerships were formed with the Islamic Development Bank, AfDB and NEPAD. The collaboration established through the Economist Programme with RECs and regional entities (e.g. ECOWAS, SADC, CEMAC, UNON, NEPAD and APRM) also has good potential for sustainability. By ensuring that the RPD is relevant to the region and addresses the needs of beneficiaries, including vulnerable groups such as women and PWDs, RSCA fosters ownership, which is critical to sustainability. Nevertheless, there are concerns that RSCA has not fully institutionalized relationships with the AU, RECs and other partners across all the areas of engagement and, in a number of instances, depended on one-time contacts and the good will of Programme focal persons in partner organizations. The MTE also found that there is little engagement with partners from philanthropic foundations, academia and ECCAS, and engagement with the media is significantly lacking. RSCA should continue to consolidate established relationships with partners and stakeholders and prioritize institutionalization to support the sustainability of initiatives.

***The RP is well designed and remains valid given the changing environment, the impact of COVID-19 and the requirements to succeed in the ‘new normal’***

The RP was designed to adapt to the changing environment on the continent. This was evident during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which required outputs to be adjusted to incorporate new activities while still addressing the overall Priority Areas of the RP. The flexibility built into the RP design made it possible to quickly mobilize resources and direct efforts towards an economic and social response to the pandemic. The Economist Programme is also developing strategies to determine whether RP projects are making progress during the pandemic. A team is working on a COVID-19 index to report on the status of countries and projects.

T**he choice of technology and adaptation measures are appropriate to sustain results but require further enhancement**

While respondents affirmed that the choice of technology and adaptation measures used by the RP would lead to sustained benefits, the Programme received a low rating in this category. This is mainly owing to the inadequate use of technologies to ensure adequate knowledge management. Currently, the RP acquires information through data collection and reporting (e.g. using experts to collect data and write reports). It must find a way to harness the power of the Internet and allow experts to upload data and research into portals from which practitioners, organizations and agencies from various sectors can access it. The RP employs similar approaches in knowledge storage and dissemination. Much of the research, as well as policies and regulatory frameworks, is deposited in repositories that may not be accessible to users. The digital coverage and knowledge of information technology may not allow for knowledge dissemination and storage that is highly technological. UNDP must therefore focus on digitizing continent. The evaluation is concerned with the low-scale application of technology in implementing the RP and calls for expanding its use to support sustainability given the Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa.

**The strategic positioning and relevance of UNDP in the strengths, weaknesses and gaps in Africa**

* UNDP has a continent-wide presence and mechanism through which to deliver on the Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa.
* The mandate of UNDP to end poverty and build democratic governance, the rule of law and inclusive institutions allows it to design interventions in almost every development sector, collaborating with relevant agencies and organizations.
* The RP relies on the comparative advantages of UNDP, including trust-based partnerships, technical capacity, its three strategic regional hubs and its practice of seeking guidance from embedded technical experts inside the RECs and the AU. In addition, the RP will leverage strong partnerships with United Nations agencies, such as ILO and UNICEF on social protection, the International Organization for Migration and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on migration, UNECA on the SDGs and extractive industries, and UNEP on cross-border development in the Horn of Africa. At a 2017 joint meeting, the Executive Boards of UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Office for Project Services, UNICEF, UN Women and the World Food Programme agreed to reduce overlap and avoid duplication, encourage the pooling of resources and improve collaboration.
* While the RP ToC remains relevant, the Outcomes, assumptions and risks could benefit from an adjustment or realignment in the future, given that the ToC broadly addresses root causes, systemic and structural issues in a dynamic environment.
* The RP results framework should be adjusted immediately. Although the RP was highly ambitious in its design, the reality of what can be accomplished within the RP period (2018–2022) is now clear. As a result, adjustments must be made to the results framework, especially the baseline data and indicators, to conduct an objective evaluation at the end of the current RP period.
* Under the Economist Programme, the number of economists was reduced owing to budgetary constraints, and the Programme faced challenges in mobilizing necessary resources. The lesson emerging is that the expansion of services should be matched with resources in order to impact areas most in need. UNDP must develop a sustainable strategy for resource mobilization.
* For the Economist Programme, networking efforts had not extended beyond the Programme itself before the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic. There is a need to expand networking initiatives to reach other policy thinkers and researchers across the continent. Such initiatives could spur the coordination of efforts to achieve the SDGs across the continent.
* Borderlands projects are significantly impacted by cross-border dynamics, which include violent conflicts, poor socio-economic conditions and environmental degradation in border areas. These challenges continue to impede the sustainability and scalability of peace and development work, as well as the improvement of livelihoods and environmental conditions in border areas. In addition, the sensitivity and scarcity of essential natural resources have compromised effective planning on their use, even at the inter-country level. For instance, work related to transboundary water management has been continually postponed, including the launch of the Lake Turkana sustainable development project and the transboundary dialogue between the basin countries of the Daua-Jubba-Shabelle River. The slow pace is the result of the sensitive, complex and political nature of transboundary water resources and the varied interests of upstream and downstream countries.
* There are difficulties associated with building partnerships. In the case of the Lake Chad RSF and the Regional Stabilization Strategy, collaboration and partnership-building are critical to implementing projects. Partnerships were sought with the AU, ECOWAS, ECCAS, the United Nations and other organizations; however, building such political and technical partnerships is time consuming. The United Nations and other development organizations did not have the same level of knowledge and understanding as UNDP with regard to the expectations and support required to implement the Regional Stabilization Strategy.

# Lessons learned

The following are the key lessons learned to be considered in the design of future RPs:

* RBA has continued to interact with the AU and RECs to deliver a wide range of interventions to address the many interlinked continental challenges. In line with the RPD, many of the projects sought to strengthen regional and subregional institutions. Examples include the Mining and AU Treaties projects. The evaluation found that the lack of a clear, strong strategy for engaging with the AU and RECs is undermining the delivery of results, despite the claim that the RP is investing in such partnerships. Developing MoUs with clear rules of engagement in key strategic areas of cooperation would help institutionalize partnerships with the AU and RECs to support the achievement of results. At the operational level, joint work plans and monitoring frameworks with the AUC, RECs and other institutions would help mitigate setbacks in implementation.
* There are good indications of ownership and sustainability in instances where regional interventions are based on extensive consultations with key partners during project initiation, design, implementation and monitoring. For example, the Mining project was developed at the request of the AU, and RBA has learned from the extensive consultations throughout the process.
* In order for RBA to deliver results as expected, there must be a strong coordination and communication system at the regional level targeting United Nations agencies, the AU and RECs, of which the MTE found no evidence. The design, implementation and monitoring of regional projects involves a number of stakeholders, including donors, United Nations agencies, UNECA, AU institutions, RECs and development partners. The establishment of focal points in ECOWAS, IGAD, ECCAS, the AU and other institutions could support RSCA in coordinating and implementing regional initiatives. There must also be a clear communication strategy with the AUC, RECs and other partners to allow UNDP to share information and updates regarding the implementation of the RP. Such a strategy could also minimize the duplication of work, foster ownership and enhance sustainability.
* RBA has demonstrated the capacity and willingness to collaborate with other United Nations agencies working in similar sectors, which helps to promote synergies and achieve milestones with shared resources. There must be a strong regional coordination mechanism, modeled on the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, to support the ‘Delivering as one’ approach and enhance synergies among the various programmes while limiting duplication.
* The world is highly complex, globalized and intricately interconnected, making it vulnerable to the cascading effects of risks. The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed that RBA is not malleable and cannot adapt to changing contexts in the face of crises. The Bureau lost a number of opportunities to work with partners to adapt and reorient interventions, most of which had the potential to mitigate the impacts of the pandemic. It is important to be flexible and adapt constantly when faced with cyclic shocks that could erode all gains made by the interventions. Nevertheless, the RP has been flexible in some instances and has responded to the socio-economic effects of the pandemic as other actors focus on medical solutions on a limited scale.
* In order to insulate results from the persistent UNDP problem of high staff turnover and recruitment, there must be a strategic response to curb the effects of the shortfall in internal capacity. For example, with a view to accelerating the achievement of results before the deadline, the SECCCI project has contracted two consultants, hired with well-defined mandates. The Lake Chad RSF project applied a capacity stopgap in the inception stage when the capacity needed for implementation was lacking at the regional level. To ensure implementation, UNDP seconded staff on an *ad hoc* basis while recruiting staff.
* In order for interventions to be successful and sustainable, partners must be involved in conceptualization and throughout the entire cycle of the intervention. This approach also helps to address more risks at the design stage. There must also be a constant review of risks and mitigation strategies.
* Projects must provide quality policy advice and research, such as the flagship ‘The State of Social Assistance in Africa’ data platform, launched by UNDP at the 2019 SDG Summit. Such research provides the basis for many more opportunities for UNDP; it provides information for stakeholders and helps UNDP be accepted as a credible actor and receive funding.
* When planning future cross-border projects, UNDP must consider the potential difficulties given that project implementation is dependent on multiple stakeholders at the regional, national and local levels and is being carried out by various teams in different countries working both in regional offices and in the field.
* Capacity-building requires continuous efforts and cannot be achieved immediately.

# Conclusions and recommendations

## Conclusions

Drawing from the analysis of relevant documents and interviews with a wide range of internal and external partners, the evaluation makes a number of conclusions and recommendations:

* The RP is highly relevant to the ongoing development challenges facing the continent and RECs and has responded to emerging issues, including the current COVID-19 pandemic in Africa. Interventions under Priority 1, for example, are creating an enabling environment through the ratification and domestication of AU treaties and addressing a number of relevant regional challenges such as peace and security, industrialization and mining, disaster risk reduction and inclusive economic growth. The relevant bodies of the AUC and RECs were strengthened to fulfil their mandates and deliver on commitments made under the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework and Agenda 2063. The RP has been responsive to issues articulated in the RPD 2018–2021 as well as other emerging development challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the borderlands. It has also provided support to the Sahel and AYWLFP.
* Theengagementof RSCA with the AU, RECs and other entities in Africa is an appropriate and effective way to deliver results; however, given the apparent weak capacities of these institutions, consideration should be given to developing a long-term capacity enhancement strategy for the region in order to address the significant interlinked challenges.
* The COVID-19 pandemic continues to impede the delivery of results for the RP in most areas, thus requiring RSCA to be agile and adapt to the ‘new normal’. It has affected many aspects of RP implementation, including coordination, monitoring and the evaluation of current activity. Although this crisis was unforeseen, RBA has been unacceptably slow to embrace adaptive management techniques to provide support. As a global leader in recovery and reconstruction, UNDP should adapt all regional initiatives to contribute to resilience and recovery, through projects such as the Economist Programme, PVE and Gender.
* Many projects were delayed at start-up due to a lack of non-core funding. For example, the completion date of the Climate Change project was extended by four years.
* The RP is highly relevant and responsive to real issues affecting the continent. Borderlands are hotspots for resource-based conflicts, violent extremism and radicalization, which call for the development of seminal initiatives in prevention, including early warning strategies. The Continental Early Warning System is imperative for PVE.
* The RP has delivered on most planned activities and outputs during the review period. While these achievements are documented in various reports (e.g. annual reports, progress updates, review reports), there is no shared knowledge repository to allow easy access for internal and external partners and stakeholders to learn about the Programme’s progress. Such a repository or collaborative platform would contain all relevant information regarding the RP, including the project documents, reports and knowledge products. It is therefore no surprise that some project managers and stakeholders from the AUC, RECs and civil society had little understanding of the RP, giving the impression that work was conducted in ‘silos’ to deliver on the Programme’s Outcomes.
* The RP lacks a robust results framework, which would allow for active implementation and delivery on desired outputs and outcomes. The framework should be broad but extensive, to accommodate emerging interventions. A number of baseline values to calculate the indicators have yet to be established. Moreover, some of indicators, like under Output 3.2: “Percentage of gender sensitive initiatives aimed at reduction of recruitment, support of reintegration, and reduction of mutual distrust initiated successfully implemented”, would be difficult to measure without identifying the baseline value and target population. Baseline data and projections (targets) should be mandatory in order to allow for objective measurement.
* Delayed funding and challenges associated with institutional constraints in managing and directing the inception phase of initiatives has been a major factor, which is likely to affect project implementation timelines. Inadequate resource mobilization hampered the start of various interventions and slowed the implementation of some projects. A robust resource mobilization strategy should have been embedded in the RP in the design stage. Half of the required funding should be available before potential interventions are approved for implementation and monitoring. Such a policy would protect the RP from receiving unfavorable reviews, which overshadow the good work done by other interventions.

## Recommendations

* Revise and/or update the RP results framework indicators to evaluate outcomes and outputs using measurable data. This should include providing baseline data and SMART indicators to facilitate progress monitoring. Knowledge management should be systematized in order to capture, package and disseminate knowledge.
* Improve and streamline the procurement process for human resources to support Programme efficiency. The timely delivery of quality inputs is crucial to quality programming, and delayed programme inputs lead to delays in implementation.
* Strengthen the role of regional coordination mechanisms to improve communication among RP actors. A high percentage of respondents (including UNDP staff) were not familiar with the RPD. While project managers deliver on their projects reverently, they may not be familiar with the bigger picture or the role of their deliveries in the RP. Such clarity should also exist among stakeholders, especially implementing actors like the AUC, RECs, civil society and the private sector.
* Reconsider the idea that RSCA should be agile and adapt to the ‘new normal’. Given the COVID-19 pandemic, this goal may be far-reaching. While the MTE noted efforts to maximize telecommunications to deliver some project outputs, there must also be a strategy for engaging with stakeholders and beneficiaries in the field. Telecommunications cannot provide the same benefits as engagement on the ground.
* Further review the approach of the RP by examining past and current challenges and lessons learned to ensure that the UNDP Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa achieves innovative results during the Decade of Action.
* Scale up digital transformation across the continent to meet the pressing need to use online tools in project interventions, particularly those targeting youth entrepreneurs.
* Consider concentrating on fewer core projects and initiatives and dedicate more funds to fundraising, communication, outreach capacity and innovation, which could in turn attract donors and partners.

# ANNEXES

## Annex I: Results framework analysis

## [Annex II: Terms of Reference for the mid-term evaluation](file:///C:\Users\Jelena.Raketic.RSCET\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\HN360FOT\2.%20Terms%20of%20Reference%20for%20UNDP%20Regional%20Prog%20for%20Africa%20MTE.docx)

## [Annex III: Evaluation criteria and questions](file:///C:\Users\Jelena.Raketic.RSCET\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\HN360FOT\3.%20Evaluation%20Creteria%20&%20Questions.docx)

## [Annex IV: Theory of Change](file:///C:\Users\Jelena.Raketic.RSCET\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\HN360FOT\4.%20Theory%20of%20Change%20MTE.docx)

## [Annex V: List of interview respondents](file:///C:\Users\Jelena.Raketic.RSCET\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\HN360FOT\5.%20List%20of%20Interview%20respondents.docx)

## [Annex VI: Reference documents](file:///C:\Users\Jelena.Raketic.RSCET\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\HN360FOT\6.%20Reference%20Documents.docx)

## Annex VII: Interview guides and questionnaires

1. [Results-based matrix analysis tool](file:///C:\Users\Jelena.Raketic.RSCET\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\HN360FOT\i.%20Results%20Based%20Matrix%20Analysis%20tool.docx)
2. [Semi-structured questionnaire](file:///C:\Users\Jelena.Raketic.RSCET\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\HN360FOT\ii.%20Semi%20structured%20questionnaire.docx)
3. [Modified SWOT analysis tool](file:///C:\Users\Jelena.Raketic.RSCET\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\HN360FOT\iii.%20Modified%20SWOT%20Analysis%20tool.docx)

## ANNEX I: Results framework analysis

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Regional Programme output** | **Planned indicative outputs** | **Indicator** | **Baseline and target** | **Achievements to date** |
| **Output 1.1:** The  AU treaties initiatives  **Project: Accelerating the Ratification and Domestication of African Union Treaties** | * The AUC Office of Legal Counsel is able to support treaty ratification * Legal frameworks between the AUC and RECs are harmonized * Member States are able to rapidly and effectively ratify and domesticate treaties * National CSOs and the general public have improved knowledge of treaty processes and their benefits * Bilateral and multilateral development partner endeavours are informed by AU treaties and protocols | Extent to which the Office of Legal Counsel has the capacity to support treaty ratification | Baseline: 1  Target: 4 | * Recruitment of 2 experts in the Office of Legal Counsel to support drafting laws and regulations * Policy papers on the domestication of treaties in six countries were developed and disseminated * Toolkit on standards for the ratification and domestication of treaties in Africa were developed and introduced * Member States were supported in establishing national sectoral committees and trained on treaty ratification and domestication * Harmonization of legal frameworks between the AUC, RECs and member States * Two South-South forums on exchanging good practices on AU treaty ratification and domestication were carried out * Capacity-building on legal drafting and treaty ratification and domestication was conducted for legal officers from five countries |
| **Output 1.2:** The AUC Peace and Security Commission  **No project or engagements** | * Various | Number of conflict hotspots identified by AUC Peace and Security Commission | Baseline: 0  Target: 16 | * Structural conflict prevention tool developed for AUC, but there is no data on the number of conflict hotspots identified * Support for the AUC Peace and Security Commission to strengthen its technical and operational capacity to identify conflict hotspots and conduct scenario analysis in collaboration with the AU, ECOWAS, IGAD, LCBC and the African Centre for the Study and Research on Terrorism in Algiers. * Support for establishing links within the PVE agenda and promoting the use of structural conflict prevention tools to monitor the evolution and root causes of violent extremist (See Outputs 1.3 and 3.2 for additional details) * Support to IGAD to play a coordinating role in PVE |
| **Output 1.3**: Africa Borderlands Programme  **Project: – Preventing Violent Extremism (PVE) in Africa: A Development Approach** | * Conduct research and needs assessments of cross-border areas and priorities * Secure commitments for increased cooperation in borderlands * Provide backstopping and implementation support to ongoing initiatives in the borderlands * Operationalize the UNDP borderlands unit * Develop the borderlands programme strategy and programmatic offer | Number of continental and subregional gender-responsive legal frameworks on terrorism | Baseline: 1  Target: 13 | * PVE capacity-building for 11 of the 18 countries under the Regional PVE Programme, with a focus on IGAD and Lake Chad basin: Cameroon, Chad, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Somalia, the Sudan, Tanzania, Tunisia and Uganda * Development and testing of a toolkit on early warning and PVE, in collaboration with ECOWAS and IGAD * Preparation of the RSS Steering Committee, including the drafting of a report on the inception phase of the RSS * A regional framework has been systematically implemented to better monitor results of interventions with regard to outputs * Supported first annual PVE research conference, which was jointly hosted by IGAD and UNDP * Developed the option paper on operationalizing Pillar 8 of the RSS, outlining existing and potential project actions to support the implementation of the pillar * Established a matrix demonstrating which country-level projects contribute to regional project outputs * Provided financial support to the development of national PVE strategies and action plans in Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, the Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia and Uganda * Whole-of-society implementation of PVE strategies was additionally supported in Chad, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria and Somalia * Technical support to strategy development processes was provided in the Central African Republic and Ethiopia |
| Number of countries with national plans of action for PVE under implementation | Baseline: 1  Target: 13 |
| **Output 1.4:** Extractive industries  **Project: African Mining Governance Project** | * The AUC has strengthened capacity to advance the industrialization agenda of the AMV * AMV principles on industrialization are adopted at the subregional and country levels. * Knowledge is generated and disseminated to support the development of industrialization policies and strategies | Percentage of Member States with mining policies that are gender responsive, inclusive of target groups and aligned with the AMV | Baseline: 16 percent  Target: 75 percent | * Supported the AUC Trade and Industry Commission to strengthen its technical capacity to implement the AMV * Assistance to targeted countries that had experienced a ‘boom’ in their mining and industrial sector * Enhancing the human and organizational systems of the AUC Trade and Industry Commission and within the African Mineral Development Centre to advance the African industrialization agenda through the implementation of the AMV * Facilitated the sharing of knowledge and experiences among policymakers through South-South cooperation, recruited experts and provided technical assistance to ministries responsible for mining in select African countries * Promoted and ensured gender inclusivity in African mining, particularly in small-scale mining projects, as well as environmental safeguards as cross-cutting issues. * Began strong partnerships at project initiation and throughout the implementation |
| **Output 1.5:** Sustainable development  **Project: Transforming the Development Cooperation Landscape in Africa to Implement the SDGs through South-South Cooperation** | * Emerging African countries become South-South providers and global partners (working through UNDP Botswana, Cabo Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa and Uganda). * Common position on key SDGs and relevant sectors strengthened * Promote South-South, triangular and regional partnerships (on SDG-relevant sectors involving Africa and other South-South partners) | Number of RBA countries and related partners utilizing SSC Platforms (SSMART and the African Solutions Platform) | Baseline: 0  Target: 5 per year | * Enhanced the capacities of 20 African countries to develop and implement national development plans in line with the SDGs, Agenda 2063, the Paris Agreement and regional frameworks * Supported select African countries and RECs in implement the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 and share knowledge on lessons learned * In partnership with UNECA, AUC, the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa and a select number of countries, demand-driven capacity development events were organized to improve the ability of African countries to report on the SDGs and Agenda 2063 (including in the context of the high-level political forum * A high-level meeting on implementing the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 was organized in response African countries’ request for a special event focusing on Africa to bring attention to critical development challenges facing the continent in implementing the global and the continental development agendas * Mainstream, accelerate and provide policy support to missions in Angola, Cameroon, Guinea-Bissau, Madagascar and Tanzania |
| Percentage of gender-responsive lessons learned shared in SSC Platforms | Baseline: 10 percent  Target: 75 percent |
| **Output 1.6** Promote an inclusive growth model in the continent (Regional SDGs, the Economist Programme)  **Project:** Economist Programme |  | Extent (on a scale of 0–3) to which the Africa Inclusive Markets Excellence Centre engages with RECs and private sector organizations to  accelerate and replicate businesses in Africa that are inclusive of the needs of women, youth and people with disabilities | Baseline: 0  Target: 3 | * In partnership with UNECA, the AUC and OSAA organized demand-driven capacity development events to improve the ability of African countries to report on the SDGs and Agenda 2063 * Supported the AUC in establishing the African Inclusive Markets Excellence Centre, which was designed to be a premier pan-African regional platform for thought leadership and action on inclusive business and markets * Support for identifying, facilitating and replicating best practices and innovations in inclusive business and market policy, programming and partnerships * RBA support for IBEI, with additional support for national IBEIs on mobile money in Lesotho, solar energy in Senegal and tourism in Uganda. |
| **Output 1.7** IGAD has strengthened technical capacities to develop gender-sensitive and inclusive early warning systems on droughts, floods, rangelands and pastures, as well as strategic actions to address these issues  **Project:** Strengthening the Capacity of IGAD in Building Resilience in the Horn of Africa | * Increased collection, accessibility and application of disaster and climate risk information in development planning by public and private sector stakeholders at the national and subnational levels. * Strengthened regulatory and policy frameworks for translating disaster and climate data into risk-informed development * Enhanced recovery processes that address underlying disaster and climate change risks and restore pathways to sustainable development * Enhanced regional and national capacities for urban risk management * Enhanced knowledge on risk-informed development through regional dialogue and South-South exchange | Percentage of gender-sensitive early warning systems on droughts, floods, rangelands and pastures developed by IGAD | Baseline: 0 percent  Target: 75 percent | * Support for the operationalization of the IGAD integrated regional early warning system and capacity-building for government officials on PDNA * Technical support provided to the 49th and 50th Greater Horn of Africa Climate Outlook Forum, in Djibouti and Rwanda respectively * Introducing the integrated early warning system in three countries: Kenya, South Sudan and Uganda * Supported capacity-building for 350 government officials on disaster preparedness and PDNA trainings in partnership with Periperi U |
| **Output 1.8:** Support for effective cooperation and coordination of cross-border initiatives in Southwest Ethiopia-Northwest Kenya, Marsabit-Borana and Dawa, and Kenya-Somalia-Ethiopia.  **Project: SECCCI** | * Cross-border communities have enhanced trade opportunities, improved access to natural resources and increased productivity capacity * The regional thematic resilience-related policy framework has improved * Improved evidence-based analysis and information inform investment decisions * IGAD specialized institutions are able to more effectively fulfil their mandates | Percentage of actions included in the IGAD regional framework that are responsive to gender, youth or people with disabilities | Baseline: 0 percent  Target: 75 percent | * SECCCI project document was finalized and secured funding * SECCCI project entered the inception phase (operationalization, collaboration, recruitment and the establishment of the overall project management and implementation structure), and three cluster offices were established * International ministerial conference on access to justice, impunity, and human rights in the Sahel * SECCCI project Steering Committee, Project Board and Technical Committee have been established * SECCCI cluster offices are fully operational * SECCCI has reviewed 5 MoUs and held 11 community dialogues and workshops * Under SECCCI, IGAD organized a one-day capacity development workshop on pastoralism and transboundary dry land development * IGAD produced a report on securing cross-border mobility for livestock in border areas in Ethiopia and Kenya and mapped cross-border transhumance routes and grazing resources |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 2.1:** Social protection  **Project: Social Protection for Sustainable Development in Africa (SP4SD Africa)** | * National institutions in 15 countries are able to promote, develop and improve social protection * The AUC and RECs are able to promote, develop and improve social protection * Policy and knowledge on social protection are strengthened and disseminated, including through South-South and triangular cooperation * Capacities of national institutions to design, implement and monitor social protection programmes for informal economy workers are strengthened | Number of countries with policy measures and institutional capacities in place to increase access to social protection schemes, disaggregated by gender and target group | Baseline: 0  Target: 15 | * The flagship report on ‘The State of Social Assistance’ and corresponding data set are meant to provide UNDP, United Nations agencies, the AU, RECs, member States and other stakeholders with useful data on the status of social assistance. * The ‘Transform Initiative’, a leadership and transformation learning package on building and managing social protection floors in Africa, was initiated and adopted. * Content input, financial support and advice were provided in the development of the AU Social Agenda 2063, which has a stand-alone pillar on social protection. * Providing input for the design of the AUC social protection protocol, which was still undergoing all relevant validation stages * Knowledge-sharing on social protection mechanisms through discussions forums and webinars within the framework of South-South and triangular cooperation. At least 23 webinars had been organized at the time of this evaluation. * Development of a toolkit to extend social protection to workers in the informal economy in Africa |
| **Output 2.3:** Climate change governance  **Project: Strengthening Climate Change Governance in Africa** | * Enhanced transparency and accountability on resource allocation and expenditure towards gender-responsive climate investments that reduce poverty and vulnerability * Increased national capacity for integrating climate finance in public finance systems * Regional institutions have strengthened capacities to provide products and services to address the climate finance gap in Africa * Knowledge exchanges on climate finance governance inform policy and regional upscaling | Number of regional policies and strategic actions using the Africa Adaptation Initiative | Baseline: TBC  Target: TBC | * Drafting the ‘Africa State of Adaptation Report (SoAR)’ under the Africa Adaptation Initiative, in collaboration with UN­DP-UNEP National Adaptation Plan Global Support Programme, UNEP, AfDB, World Meteorological Organization and NGOs. * Support for the seven Sahel countries in promoting risk-informed development and support for the region in meeting its commitments to the Sendai Framework * Supported the finalization of the five-year Kenya climate finance programme on budgetary and fiscal reform for building climate resilience by mainstreaming planning, budgeting and reporting at the national and county levels * Support given to a number of countries in aligning their disaster risk man­agement laws, policies and strategies with the Sendai Framework. * An event for least developed countries targeted to young negotiators was held in 2019, in which South-South learning and capacity-building were achieved |
| **Output 2.4:** The YouthConnekt initiative  **Project: UNDP Africa Regional Programme for Upscaling the YouthConnekt Initiative** | * Conducive and enabling environment for job-rich growth, particularly for youth * Youth social and economic participation and leadership are enhanced * African youth businesses and entrepreneurship skills and capabilities are improved or developed * Business and entrepreneurship skills and capabilities are improved or developed * Increased number of African youth who are gainfully employed | Percentage of youth (women/men) in decision-making bodies, including the AU, RECs, Governments and regional and national parliaments | Baseline: TBC  Target: 40 percent | * Over 900 youth entrepreneurs have been supported: 160 in partnership with IGAD and AfDB and 755 with the Tony Elumelu Foundation * Over 20 young women were placed in various institutions under AYWLFP * The launch of ‘YouthConnekt chapters’ in at least 15 countries, with additional countries in the process of launching * Scheduled online entrepreneurship trainings to allow participants to network and share ideas and access financing. Trainings have attracted over 10,000 youth. * Seeking the endorsement of the AU for the YouthConnekt Initiative as a strategy for youth empowerment across the continent * Increased use of the YAS! portal platform for Africa’s young entrepreneurs, which supports the development and growth of youth entrepreneurship in Africa * Establishing strategic partnerships with the private sector to grow entrepreneurship across the continent through entrepreneurial training, online support and start-up capital * In partnership with AfDB, IGAD leaders and Entrepreneurial Solutions Partners delivered the first YouthConnekt Africa fellowship programme * Implementation of the second YouthConnekt Africa fellowship programme, which provides training on entrepreneurship, 21st-Century leadership skills, volunteerism, networking and information on sectors such as agribusiness, the blue economy and information and communication technology * Implementation of the third youth fellowship capacity-building seminar in Uganda, focusing on the digital and creative economy and the development of minerals * A review of technical and vocational education and training programmes in Africa was conducted with data from eight African countries on best practices, gaps and opportunities in the sector. UNDP should disseminate the findings and data and implement some of the recommendations from the review |
| **Output 2.5: Gender equality and women’s empowerment**  **Project:** **Advancing Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Africa; African Young Women Leaders Fellowship Programme** | * The AUC and RECs have increased internal technical capacities for monitoring and advocating for gender equality and women’s empowerment within the institution and member States * The AUC and RECs have strengthened technical capacity to support member States to promote women’s leadership, representation and participation in decision-making in democratic governance and peacebuilding * The AUC and RECs have improved capacity to monitor the ratification, domestication and implementation of regional and international gender instruments * The AUC and RECs have strengthened capacity to advocate for women’s economic empowerment, including access to, ownership and control of economic assets * Regional and national institutions have strengthened capacity to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence and improve women’s access to justice. * Regional and national policies and programmes are informed by gender research and analysis | Number of newly adopted regional and subregional legal, policy and institutional reforms to remove structural barriers to women’s empowerment | Baseline: 0  Target: 3 | * Drafting, launching and adopting the AUC ‘Strategy for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment’ * Improving the technical capacities for monitoring and advocacy related to gender equality and women’s empowerment within the AU, RECs, formal institutions and Member States using the Gender Equality Seal. There is also growing interest in the Seal from the private sector * Training on gender mainstreaming for the AUC, RECs and the African Group of Negotiators * Gender action plans completed * Advocating for the adoption of a three-year regional action plan to promote women in governance and political participation * Implementing the continental results framework to monitor the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in East Africa. An MoU with Equality Now/SOAR, a regional CSO, has been signed to map out existing gender policies and programmes in four RECs (ECOWAS, IGAD, ECCAS and SADC) and address challenges facing gender mainstreaming and the ratification and implementation of regional and continental gender protocols, including the Maputo Protocol and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women * AYWLFP had an overwhelming response; the first cohort attracted 5,789 applicants but support was available for only 20 young women from 13 countries, who have since been placed in various United Nations agencies and related institutions for their fellowships, which ended in March 2020 |
| Percentage of AU, RECs and member States with systems to track and make public allocations for gender equality and women’s empowerment | Baseline: TBC  Target: 75 percent |
| **Output 2.6:** Member States are able to deliver on Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) commitments and encourage public-private investment in renewable energy  **Project:** **Regional Energy Initiatives** | * Number of relevant actors using the Africa Sustainable Energy De-Risking Facility | Number of relevant actors using the Africa Sustainable Energy De-Risking Facility | Baseline: 0  Target: TBC | * A training workshop on NDC implementation and enhanced transparency was conducted for 25 RBA countries in 2019 to strengthen national capacities on NDC design, implementation and tracking; improve understanding on updating NDCs; enhance ambition; and provide background information on the key concepts and provisions related to monitoring, reporting and verifying under the enhanced transparency framework, including national communications, biennial update reports and greenhouse gas inventories. It also highlighted the key elements of the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency |
| **Output 2.7:** AU and RECs are able to support regional value chains to implement the multi-country Agribusiness Supplier Development Programme, the Global Environment Facility and the Africa Impact Investment Action Plan  **Project: Integrated Programme for Food Security; Africa’s Emergence: Promoting structural economic transformation and human development** | * Create and/or strengthen integrated institutional frameworks and mechanisms for scaling up proven approaches with multiple benefits. * Scaling up integrated approaches and practices * Monitoring and assessment of global environmental benefits and agroecosystem resilience | Number of regional initiatives referencing the multi-country Agribusiness Supplier Development Programme, the Global Environment Facility and the Africa Impact Investment Action Plan | Baseline: 0  Target: 5 | * Three private sector actors in Côte d’Ivoire, Kenya and Nigeria * Ongoing efforts to adapt the methodology of the Agribusiness Supplier Development Programme to the African context by developing a toolkit and training manual * A supply-chain diagnostics was conducted to identify opportunities and challenges in the development of local supply * Initiatives to support the establishment of national Agribusiness Supplier Development Programmes in six countries. In Côte d’Ivoire, the approach has been incorporated in the Programme to Support the Development of Inclusive Value Chains and the Promotion of Local Initiatives * In Kenya and Nigeria, 40 private sector consultants acquired skills and knowledge on the methodology, completing supply-chain diagnostics with approximately 15 companies. Achievements were made to benefit both the company and the community, such as a reduction in production costs by 35 percent and the creation of nearly 1,000 jobs in Kenya alone. |
| **Output 2.8:** The African Disability Forum is able to promote greater inclusion of people with disabilities in development planning. **Project: UNDP Regional Programme** | * Domesticate the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the rights of persons with disabilities in Africa | Number of countries that domesticate the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the rights of persons with disabilities in Africa | Baseline: TBC  Target: 20 | * Botswana, Liberia and Uganda signed and domesticated the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the rights of persons with disabilities in Africa, owing to the initiative’s efforts * ADF continues to work with the AUC to encourage member States to adopt the Protocol |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Output 3.1:** The APRM has enhanced technical capacity to track implementation and oversee the monitoring and evaluation of key governance areas, including M&E and reporting on Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda.  **No projects or engagements** |  | Extent to which the APRM has data collection and analysis mechanisms in place, providing disaggregated data to monitor progress in key governance areas, including the SDGs and Agenda 2063 | Baseline: 0  Target: 4 | * A matrix is available under the Regional Progress Monitoring Framework * The APRM project works promote regional capacities to monitor and report on key areas, including Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda |
| **Output 3.2:** Security actors and communities are able to reduce recruitment into violent extremist groups and support reintegration efforts of diverse ‘returnees’  **Project: Lake Chad Regional Stabilization Facility**  **Emerging projects: Liptako Gourma Authority** | * Community safety and security improved * Essential infrastructure and basic services functioning * Livelihood opportunities available * Enhanced capacities of LCBC to implement the RSS * Improved cross-border cooperation and coordination * State and regional territorial action plans developed | Percentage of gender-sensitive initiatives aimed at reducing recruitment, supporting reintegration and reducing mutual distrust that have been successfully implemented | Baseline: 0  Target: 75 percent | * Development of a regional CSO network * Held a symposium in Kigali for CSOs on reintegrating fighters in epicentres of extreme violence in Africa * Piloted reintegration initiatives within four Moroccan prisons and trained 32 staff members from the Moroccan General Delegation for Prison Administration and Reintegration, as well as 220 peer educa­tors * Training was offered for government officials, civil society representatives and religious scholars in the Sudan regarding the disengagement and rehabilitation of extremists. There were 30 participants from CSOs, NGOs and youth organizations and 15 representatives from Elman Peace * A Regional Progress Monitoring Framework has been systematically introduced to improve monitoring of interventions’ results * Supported first annual PVE research conference, which was jointly hosted by IGAD and UNDP * Developed the option paper on operationalizing Pillar 8 of the RSS, outlining existing and potential project actions to support the implementation of the pillar * Established a matrix demonstrating which country-level projects contribute to regional project outputs * Provided financial support to the development of national PVE strategies and action plans in Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, the Sudan, Tanzania, Togo, Tunisia and Uganda. Whole-of-society implementation of PVE strategies was additionally supported in Chad, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria and Somalia |
| **Output 3.3:** The African Union Peace and Security Unit and national and subnational actors are able to establish vertical and horizontal partnerships with other critical actors to establish and support peace infrastructures  **Project: Support to the Sahel Programme** |  | Number of interventions across borders ‘zooming in’ on troubled, underdeveloped borderland areas and national dialogues for peace and reconciliation | Baseline: 0  Target: 3 | * An activity was undertaken in the Lake Chad basin * Activities are implemented to build grass-roots institutions in order to support security, peace and partnerships with local authorities. COVID-19 awareness was also included in interventions * Implementing partners have been established and the Regional Task Force has been inaugurated * In collaboration with the AU, a draft communication strategy for the RSS has been developed and is currently under review * Regional action plan was approved by LCBC * 🗸The Stabilization Secretariat developed a draft strategy for CSO engagement * RSF governance mechanisms have been established at the national level in each country. * Annual thematic reports are produced on climate, rangelands and coordination |
| **Output 3.4:** AU and RECs have enhanced technical capacities to strengthen effective governance of labour migration and mobility in Africa.  **Project: – Africa Borderlands Center; and UNDP partnership with SESG-GL, ICGLR and coordination of GLRSF** | * Developed UNDP borderlands strategy and programmatic offer that is innovative and informed by up-to-date research and analysis | Number of regional, national and subnational development strategies that have integrated migration | Baseline: TBC  Target: TBC | * The Project Initiation Plan was established to support a fully developed UNDP project document * UNDP organized a multi-stakeholder workshop in Kisumu, Kenya, hosted by the Lake Victoria Basin Commission * A foresight and scenario study was conducted in January 2019 to inform the policymakers of possible future scenarios for the Lake Victoria basin. The study included a Gender, Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental and Political Analysis * UNDP convened a third regional policy forum on human rights with a focus on migration and displacement |

1. Africa's blueprint and master plan for transforming Africa into the global powerhouse of the future. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. African Union Commission, Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want (2015), p.15. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See the Terms of Reference in annex II. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Draft regional programme document for Africa (2018-2021), DP/RPD/RBA/3. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. According to the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme, there were 40 armed conflicts in the world in 2014, the highest since 1999. The number of people killed as a direct consequence of these conflicts reached its highest peak in 25 years. Scott Gates and others, “Trends in armed conflict, 1946–2014”, *Conflict Trends*, vol. 1 (Oslo, Peace Research Institute Oslo, 2016). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, “Cyclones Idai and Kenneth”, 24 April 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. International Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Global Report on Internal Displacements* (2020). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Alice Ruhweza, “Africa and climate finance: The state of the debate and our perspectives”, United Nations Development Programme, 23 April 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. These include ‘Accelerating the Ratification and Domestication of African Union Treaties; ‘Preventing Violent Extremism in Africa: A Development Approach’; ‘African Mining Governance Project’, ‘Africa’s Emergence: Promoting structural economic transformation and human development’; ‘Transforming the development cooperation landscape in Africa to implement the SDGs through South-South Cooperation’; ‘Africa Borderlands Center’; ‘African Continental Free Trade Area including investment officers’; ‘Strengthening Africa’s Resilience and Capacities for Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction’; ‘Regional SDGs Project under SAT Policy Work’; and ‘Economist Programme’. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. UNDP, *Africa’s Promise: The UNDP Renewed Strategic Offer in Africa* (2020), p.2. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Interviews with MTE evaluators. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. A/RES/75/233. In the review, the General Assembly recommends strengthening system capacity by scaling up coordination and coherence. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. UNDP, *Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism in Africa: A Development Approach*. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Hugh Morris, “Kenya visitor numbers fall 25 per cent as terrorism hits”, The Telegraph, 12 June 2015. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. DP/2017/38, p.11. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. The six treaties are: the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights; the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child; the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption; the Maputo Protocol; the African Youth Charter; and the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance. The countries are Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal and Tunisia. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, “Sao Tome and Principe has ratified the ACRWC”, 27 June 2019. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. AU, Africa Mining Vision (2009). p.V. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. The key partners for this project include the AUC, the African Mineral Development Centre, UNECA, UNDP, AfDB, the European Union and select African countries. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. IBEI is a multi-stakeholder platform that brings together all relevant stakeholders to identify key gaps in the inclusive business ecosystem, coordinate activities, address challenges, create solutions and innovate in a systematic and inter-operative manner. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. An early warning system should have four interlinked elements: risk, warning service, communication and response capacity. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Cabo Verde, Cameroon, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Madagascar, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe have launched chapters. Botswana, Ethiopia and Togo are in the process of launching. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Mariama Sow, “Figures of the week: Africa’s growing youth population and human capital investments”, Brookings Institution, 20 September 2018. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. UNDP, *Annual report 2019*. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Interviews with MTE evaluators. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Interviews with MTE evaluators. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. The report was a milestone for the SSC in Africa. It was developed by UNDP and NEPAD, with technical support from IDB and the Ibero-American General Secretariat. The report included contributions from 11 African countries, reporting on their SSC activities in 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. IGAD Resilience Portal. Available at <https://resilience.igad.int>. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)