

Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Office for Project Services

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UNDP Cumulative review of the Strategic Plan, 2022-2025, and annual report of the Administrator for 2024

Summary

This annual report of the Administrator for 2024 takes stock of progress three years into the Strategic Plan 2022-2025. It finds that UNDP is advancing high-performance, integrated solutions that make significant impacts on complex current development challenges and deliver maximum development impacts for every dollar spent. As UNDP prepares its next strategic plan, it is learning and adapting, remaining agile and responsive to today's development challenges while anticipating tomorrow's opportunities.

Elements of a decision

The Executive Board may wish to: take note of the annual report of the Administrator for 2024 and its annexes (DP/2025/12), the report of UNDP on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in 2024 (DP/2025/12/Add.1) and the statistical annex (DP/2025/12/Add.2).

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I. Introduction

1. In 2024, in 170 countries and territories, UNDP stayed and delivered despite funding constraints and enormous global challenges. In the process, it demonstrated that it is uniquely positioned to both respond to disruption and seize emerging opportunities to accelerate human development without increasing planetary pressures.

2. This report shows the scope and scale of UNDP work on the ground, helping to address some of the most pressing and interconnected development challenges of our time, such as poverty and inequality, political instability and conflict, forced displacement or climate change, that are destabilizing the world. The track record of UNDP and the continuing high demand for its services affirm both the relevance of the multilateral development system to tackle these challenges, and the critical role of UNDP within it.

3. UNDP delivers transformational change at scale, impacting millions of lives while maintaining the highest standards of transparency and accountability. Within the international development system, UNDP provides a significant set of offers and value propositions:

- Efficiency with maximum development impact: spending 92 cents of every dollar on development programmes and services ensures that billions of dollars directly improve peoples' lives with low expenditure on overheads;
- **Global reach with country ownership**: developing solutions tailored to national priorities in 170 countries and territories, evidenced by 101 programme countries investing \$1.2 billion of their own resources to partner with UNDP, a clear vote of confidence in its ability to help them achieve their development goals;
- Systems integration that delivers better returns: tackling interconnected challenges leads to results like 183 climate adaptation projects worth \$740 million, while leveraging an additional \$2.65 billion from partners and realigning \$32 billion in existing finance towards sustainable development;
- Crisis response that builds long-term resilience: strategic deployment of regular (core) resources generating substantial returns in crisis settings: \$7.2 million in Gaza leveraged over \$82 million; \$3 million in Ukraine catalysed \$68 million in 2022 (\$270 million delivered in 2024) while simultaneously building foundations for recovery;
- Innovation that reimagines development solutions: The UNDP network of 115 country Accelerator Labs has identified over 6,000 grass-roots solutions across all Sustainable Development Goals, while UNDP has led digital transformation in 120 countries so that technology serves human development rather than deepening divides.

4. These are the achievements of an organization that is resilient and adaptable, forward-looking and ambitious, including in pursuing four moonshot goals to lift 100 million out of poverty, provide access to clean energy for 500 million people, help catalyse \$1 trillion for the Sustainable Development Goals and support over 800 million people to exercise their right to vote.

5. This is why UNDP remains a partner of choice for countries across the world.

6. The report also reflects on lessons learned, including responding to the findings of the midterm review and evaluation of the Strategic Plan and the business model review. With an eye to the future, UNDP is ready and leaning in. But it needs the support and investment of its partners to operate on a scale that continually advances human development, leaves no one behind and leads to a more prosperous and secure world for all.

II. Observations

UNDP proves that integration accelerates human development

7. Amid intersecting challenges – from the climate emergency to complex conflicts – piecemeal development solutions rarely succeed. Across its global network of 170 countries and territories, UNDP catalyses systemic changes, for example by linking climate, nature and energy with economic transformation, or bridging early recovery from crisis with long-term resilience. Today, nearly 80 per cent of UNDP country programme results integrate two or more signature solutions and enablers. These integrated approaches are generating systemic changes in economies and across the Sustainable Development Goals.

8. To date:

- 160 million people have gained essential services to help escape poverty, including health care, education and clean water.
- An integrated focus on digital, livelihoods and financial inclusion has brought financial services to 259 million people in 52 countries.
- UNDP has made health systems more effective and inclusive in 90 countries by integrating access to finance and procurement capacity with expertise on governance, poverty reduction, digital and artificial intelligence, and clean energy.
- Seventy UNDP country offices have applied a portfolio approach to better plan, align and manage projects to achieve systemic impacts, mobilizing over \$450 million.
- 100 countries use the SDG Push initiative to define integrated policy choices to accelerate progress towards the Goals, based on the unique application by UNDP of data innovation, artificial intelligence and systems analysis for development policymaking.

In crises, UNDP stays and delivers so no one is left behind

9. UNDP offers the operational flexibility and capacity to integrate prevention, response and recovery. Half of UNDP expenditure goes to 60 fragile contexts, and demand is only increasing. By building robust risk assessments into all programmes, taking integrated approaches and applying predictive analytical tools, UNDP quickly detects and responds to complex structural challenges, working in close partnerships with United Nations humanitarian and development entities and the international financial institutions. Results include:

- Between 2022 and 2024, 19.2 million people benefited from services, infrastructure and other support offered by UNDP in its work on forced displacement.
- 2.6 million people in 46 crisis or post-crisis settings gained jobs and better livelihoods in 2024, half of whom were women.
- 84 countries improved conflict prevention and peacebuilding, benefiting 4 million people.
- 50 countries improved social dialogue, and 54 countries implemented risk-informed and gender-responsive recovery solutions.
- As a member of the United Nations Steering Group on Solutions to Internal Displacement, UNDP collaborates with 15 countries to find lasting solutions through a new generation of nationally owned strategies to tackle displacement, anchored in opportunities for jobs, housing and services. Seven countries have already taken steps for 11 million people.

With the future at stake, UNDP demonstrates the power of a connected green agenda

10. Broad UNDP partnerships on climate, nature and energy – the Climate Promise 2025, Nature Pledge and energy moonshot – have galvanized global ambition and momentum. In tandem, UNDP has helped to transform financing for the green agenda by connecting countries, based on their priorities, to financing packages that may include green bonds, international environment funds and strategies to derisk energy investment, among others. For example:

- In 80 countries, UNDP is helping to scale up climate ambitions in the third generation of nationally determined contributions, with benefits for nearly 2.2 billion people.
- Between 2022 and 2024, 14.3 million people in 84 countries benefited from integrated support to protect nature and increase the sustainable use of resources.
- In 132 countries since 2022, UNDP has helped nearly 82 million people directly, and 100 million indirectly, to gain access to renewable energy, and linked over 26 million to more productive energy use in health care, water, agriculture, infrastructure and power.¹
- 13 countries have raised nearly \$21.5 billion for green and sustainable development since 2022, including through bonds, transforming traditional debt instruments into powerful tools for investment in green transitions.

UNDP bridges the global digital divide and pursues the promise of responsible artificial intelligence

11. UNDP has been a forerunner in scaling up digital for development while working with partners to mitigate its risks and disparities. Globally, one half of UNDP projects now include a digital component. Comprehensive digital support to 120 countries includes support for over 90 countries on national digital transformation, which is improving governance, services, market access and finance. Recognizing that much of the developing world could miss economic gains from artificial intelligence, UNDP is working with governments on national artificial intelligence assessments. With the Italian Presidency of the Group of Seven, it has launched the AI Hub for Sustainable Development, dedicated to the development of local artificial intelligence ecosystems in Africa. Examples include:

- UNDP digital solutions reached over 200 million people in 2024, attracted more than \$1 billion in investments, engaged 500 partners and established or upgraded over 10,000 pieces of digital infrastructure.
- Collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union mobilized \$1 billion of new government and private sector investments in connectivity, infrastructure and skills.
- UNDP contributed to the landmark 2024 agreement on global digital cooperation, the Global Digital Compact, and developed a safeguards framework for digital public infrastructure with the Office for Digital and Emerging Technologies.

UNDP breaks down barriers for women, individually and systemically

12. Gender equality is at the heart of integrated development solutions at UNDP. Its investments in women's empowerment have a performance multiplier effect. They generate gains in women's

¹ Figures projected through 2025.

individual lives and trigger structural shifts to accelerate sustainable development. Through its dedicated gender equality strategy, UNDP directed 73 per cent of expenditures to projects with gender equality as a significant or principal objective. As a result:

- UNDP support resulted in 137 million women accessing essential services in 2024, up from 94 million in 2023, and in 139 million women obtaining financial services, up from 28 million in 2023.
- 17 million women in 45 countries accessed clean energy in 2024.
- UNDP supported the participation of 140 million women in elections.
- Equanomics, an initiative to make economies work better for women, achieved fiscal and tax reforms in 28 countries in 2024, including through partnerships with the African Tax Administration Forum, International Monetary Fund, World Bank and others.
- The Gender Equality Seal for Public Institutions, active in 30 countries, has strengthened more than 100 public institutions and 224,000 public officers to integrate women's needs and women's empowerment into core capacities such as planning and data collection.
- Across all three years of its strategic plan, UNDP surpassed targets to stop violence against women and shift harmful social norms.

UNDP has promoted investment of \$867 billion in sustainable development since 2022

13. The dedicated UNDP global Sustainable Finance Hub has met a critical need: to reimagine how public and private sector capital can resolve development challenges together. Across 147 low- and middle-income countries, 11,000 development partners rank UNDP first in support for development finance.² In 2025, UNDP expects to slightly exceed its \$1 trillion moonshot target for leveraging and aligning finance to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. For example:

- Integrated national financing frameworks in 86 countries have leveraged \$16 billion in new finance and aligned an additional \$32 billion with sustainable development targets.
- UNDP-supported national budget reviews have reported alignment of \$430 billion with sustainable development based on increased transparency and funding commitments.
- Partnerships with the private sector have promoted the alignment of \$380 billion in private capital towards the Goals.
- The joint Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/UNDP Tax Inspectors Without Borders initiative supported developing countries in raising \$1.36 billion in additional tax revenues between 2022 and 2024.

Advances in governance drive progress on development

14. More than two thirds of UNDP programme results include governance components. The distinctive UNDP offer combines complex governance issues with development approaches while maintaining political impartiality. Based on United Nations principles and decades of experience in nationally owned programming, UNDP is a trusted partner in politically sensitive processes – from national dialogues to security sector reform, to electoral support, to anti-corruption. With the unique capacity to integrate governance, rule of law and peacebuilding, UNDP supports countries

² AidData's Listening to Leaders Survey.

in achieving systemic transformation, based on their own priorities and pathways, while responding to emerging challenges, including from artificial intelligence. Results include:

- In 2024, 134 UNDP governance programmes benefitted over 500 million people.
- Support for 23 elections, in partnership with the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, enabled the political participation of over 377 million people.
- Over 100 countries strengthened the rule of law, human rights, justice and security.
- UNDP leveraged an additional \$50 billion for governance programmes based on a total investment of \$1 billion and engaged over 4,000 partners.

UNDP investments in operational excellence pay off for programmes and people served

15. By investing in modernized operations including digital transformation, service clustering and streamlined processes, UNDP has achieved cost savings while enhancing service quality and accountability and redirecting more resources to development programming. These operational improvements extend beyond UNDP, with the organization providing essential services to over 70 United Nations entities across finance, general operations, global shared services, common premises management, human resources, information technology, legal affairs and procurement. This creates system-wide efficiencies while maintaining the highest standards of reliability and transparency. For example:

- UNDP received its nineteenth clean audit from the United Nations Board of Auditors: Over 20 years, UNDP has stewarded nearly \$100 billion based on the highest standards of accountability and transparency.³
- UNDP ranked in the top category of the 2024 Aid Transparency Index, meeting or exceeding 14 of 16 indicators.
- UNDP scored exceptionally across five categories of the United Nations 2.0 System-Wide Assessment digital, data, foresight, innovation and behavioural science.
- UNDP consistently performs above average on the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.

UNDP is future ready but needs partners to invest if it is going to continue to deliver for development

16. Through its Strategic Plan, UNDP has built on existing strengths and positioned itself well as an agile, effective organization responsive to rapid changes and ready for the future. Continued high levels of delivery, at \$4.8 billion in 2024, reflect an unwavering commitment to stay and deliver despite chronic global instability and crises. Yet 2024 programme delivery exceeded incoming contributions, leading to a reduction in the balance of previous years' contributions. If this becomes a trend rather than a one-time occurrence, it will be untenable, even with otherwise strong gains in efficiency.

17. The Strategic Plan evaluation highlighted how funding shifts, particularly the drop in regular resources (core) funding, hamper the ability to operate flexibly, leverage additional resources and pursue long-term, strategic objectives. So far, UNDP has effectively navigated these financial

³ Projected through 2024.

constraints. It continues to diversify funding streams, strengthen resource mobilization, enhance efficiency and bolster financial resilience, including through its comprehensive business model review. But these are not quick fixes. Without continued partnership and investment, UNDP faces the near-term erosion of its most valuable asset: its universal field presence, recognized by the

Board of Auditors as "a major asset", and capability to respond whenever and wherever countries and people need its support.

III. Development results: changing systems through integrated solutions

SPOTLIGHT: Access to essential services

- 160 million people, 53 countries
 - \$582 million from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria
- 50 per cent HIV reduction in Zimbabwe
- Digitally managed vaccines for 97.2 million people in India

18. UNDP started exploring the scope and

impact of integrated solutions in its Strategic Plan, 2018-2021, a focus that has continued in its current plan (2022-2025). Experience, performance analysis and evaluative evidence have shown that integrated approaches can generate impacts greater than discrete projects. By linking climate action with economic transformation, or bridging crisis response with long-term resilience, UNDP is helping to catalyse systemic change across its global network of 170 countries and territories. The evaluation found that UNDP is leading efforts to address interconnected global priorities and aligning economic frameworks with human development and environmental sustainability.

19. To align with the evidence, rather than reviewing each of the signature solutions separately, this section demonstrates how UNDP signature solutions and enablers work together to help countries manage complexity through systems approaches and accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. It provides evidence of impact, even as UNDP continues to learn and elaborate this promising approach, while also maintaining project modalities that are still relevant for targeted interventions.

A. Accelerating human development: building pathways out of poverty

20. The integrated UNDP approach recognizes that sustainable poverty reduction requires a combination of strong foundations: physical infrastructure, essential services and digital connectivity. These must be combined with

Signature solutions and enablers

- Poverty and inequality
- Governance
- Gender equality
- Digital transformation
- Development finance

effective, inclusive and accountable governance and adequate finance to achieve results.

21. This is powerfully demonstrated by the local development programme in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A \$643 million Government programme with UNDP exemplifies how development solutions work together. It is establishing 710 new schools and health centres while strengthening local governance capacity to enhance service delivery.

22. Linking solutions on poverty reduction, governance and energy strengthens national health systems. In Zimbabwe, UNDP with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has helped cut HIV infections by 50 per cent over the last decade and led to healthier lives for people across the country. It improved health-care management strategies by constructing 100 pharmacy

stores and a regional warehouse to safely store medical supplies, and brought reliable power to 65 per cent of health facilities.

23. UNDP increasingly uses digital technology to strengthen public services and lay foundations for economic growth. Digital vaccination management platforms in India have dramatically improved services for 97.2 million people. Better health leads to better prospects for education, income and equality. In the Republic of Moldova, digitalizing social protection provided a buffer for 66 per cent of households during a spike in energy prices in the 2023-2024 cold season, improving energy access while reducing income poverty and food insecurity.

24. Linking expertise on development finance, governance and public planning, UNDP has supported 86 countries to use the integrated national financing framework approach to enhance financing for sustainable development. The frameworks lay out countries' full range of financing sources – domestic and international, public and private finance – and shape strategies to increase investment, manage risk, and implement sustainable development strategies. They have generated \$16 billion in new funds and aligned \$32 billion in existing investments with the global goals.

Over 50 countries are implementing fiscal policy reforms as a result; national budget reviews have aligned \$430 billion with sustainable development.

25. The integrated national financing frameworks open scope for continued financial innovations, such as thematic bonds. Uruguay launched a social impact bond in 2024 to fund education based on a successful sustainability-linked bond to incentivize emissions reductions and biodiversity protection.

SPOTLIGHT: Digital and finance

- 86 countries are using the integrated national financing framework approach
- \$430 billion in budgets aligned with sustainable development
- 226,000 jobs created in the United Republic of Tanzania
- Higher profits for 70,000 coffee producers in Ecuador
- Digital innovations for 10,000 startups in Africa

26. The UNDP Sustainable Development Goal Investor Platform has identified nearly 700 private sector investment opportunities in 43 countries. In the United Republic of Tanzania, the investment promotion agency registered \$6.5 billion in Goal-aligned investment projects that have generated 226,000 jobs. New business models integrating economic, social and environmental objectives include a deforestation-free coffee initiative in Ecuador, launched by UNDP and the Lavazza Foundation. It helps over 70,000 coffee producers earn higher profits based on environmentally and socially responsible products.

27. A combined focus on digital, innovation and financing has opened opportunities for a new generation of young entrepreneurs, such as through a UNDP-sponsored digital registration system in Kenya. It provides an access point for loans and grants for over 580,000 business associations. The new UNDP "timbuktoo" initiative is scaling up the innovation ecosystem and growing businesses in Africa. It is raising public and private capital to support 10,000 tech start-ups and scale up another 1,000.

B. Reimagining the response to the planetary crisis

28. The UNDP integrated approach to climate, nature and energy drives solutions that recognize their interconnectedness, building resilient economies and societies. UNDP works with countries to simultaneously cut greenhouse gas emissions, shift economic processes, extend

Signature solutions and enablers

- Resilience
- Environment
- Energy
- Gender equality
- Poverty and inequality
- Innovation

clean energy, protect natural resources and promote energy security. At the centre are people and their opportunities to thrive.

29. UNDP supported the Zambian National Green Growth Strategy, for example, to take an

economy-wide approach to rural development, livelihoods, equality and climate. With Global Environment Facility (GEF) financing, it has introduced climate-resilient agriculture promoting food security for nearly a million farmers; over 60 per cent of them women.

30. UNDP leads the United Nations system-wide Climate Promise 2025. Eighty countries are working on a third generation of nationally determined

SPOTLIGHT: Green transition

- Largest United Nations provider of climate and environmental assistance: \$5 billion for 145 countries
- 14.3 million people in 84 countries benefited from protections for nature and resources
- 315 million hectares of land protected
- 41 countries with improved energy for essential services

contributions to raise emissions reductions targets and integrate climate development issues, such as land management. The UNDP-led Nature Pledge supports 133 countries with national biodiversity finance planning to restore ecosystems and reduce poverty. In 29 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP linked the Climate Promise and Nature Pledge to achieve both climate and biodiversity goals. Colombia, for instance, is restoring 5 million hectares of land to boost carbon sequestration and ecosystem resilience.

31. Systems approaches through UNDP portfolios help to identify paths to faster transitions, such as through a \$50 million European Union and UNDP partnership on the green urban economy in 60 cities. An \$800 million portfolio of programmes supports adaptation in 60 countries through better climate information and early warning systems. Somalia reached a milestone with its first National Hydro-Meteorological Service, which provides over 525,000 ago-pastoralists with early warnings on climate shocks such as droughts. Cuba increased hydrometeorological system coverage by 40 per cent, protecting 700,000 people against hurricanes and other extreme weather events.

32. UNDP links human resilience, environmental protections and innovations in finance. For example:

• UNDP is the lead implementing partner for the Global Environment

SPOTLIGHT: Finance and innovation

- New era of biodiversity finance: \$2.6 billion
- Largest public and private finance mechanism for the ocean, at \$225 million
- New hub for vulnerable countries to finance adaptation

Facility and Green Climate Fund, among the largest providers of nature and climate finance.

- The Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) initiative, launched by the European Union and UNDP in 2012, has grown into a global endeavour, ushering in a new era of biodiversity finance, catalysing \$1.6 billion since 2012 and freeing \$1 billion more by repurposing harmful subsidies.
- Over 20 small island developing States and other nations with coral reserves draw on the \$225 million Global Fund for Coral Reefs, administered by the UNDP-hosted Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office. It is the largest public and private blended finance mechanism for the oceans, strengthening the resilience of coastal reef ecosystems, communities and economies.

33. The UNDP energy portfolio spans 392 initiatives across 131 countries, integrating technology, resilience and poverty reduction to harness energy for the green transition and multiple development goals. Equipping 107 social service facilities with solar power in Yemen, for example, has improved and sustained education, health care and water services for over 500,000 people. Since 2017, the Solar for Health initiative has deployed solar power systems to electrify nearly 1,000 health centres and medical cold-storage facilities across 15 countries. Jordan doubled its renewables share to 29 per cent from 2020-2024, drawing on integrated UNDP governance and energy support to streamline regulations.

C. Crises are complex. How can development keep up?

34. UNDP helps break the cycle of poverty and crisis through adaptive development that strengthens resilience to crises and addresses the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. This anticipates and prevents multiple risks. It helps restart development so people are less prone to crisis and better positioned to flourish. In complex crises, where people

Signature solutions and enablers

- Resilience
- Poverty and inequality
- Energy
- Gender equality
- Digital

are worse off on every indicator of multidimensional poverty, such integrated approaches are critical.

35. In crisis after crisis, through its early recovery approach, UNDP meets acute human security needs for services, safety and voice:

SPOTLIGHT: Safety and stability Lebanon: UNDP and national provided institutions energy, - 50 per cent of expenditure to countries in agriculture, water and public safety fragile contexts services to nearly 600,000 residents - 54 countries with risk-informed, genderrefugees. and Social cohesion responsive recovery solutions initiatives eased tensions among 2.6 million people with jobs and livelihoods nearly 500,000 people. in 46 crisis-affected countries Ukraine: UNDP restored water - Outreach to 2.5 million people to counter systems, schools and healthcare violent extremism in the Sahel facilities for over 510,000 people. 80,000 women-owned business in Surveys of land for unexploded Afghanistan ordnance and other war-related

hazards released 3.9 million square meters to restart agriculture and other economic activities.

• Gaza: UNDP and partners collected over 210,000 tons of solid waste, benefiting 624,000 people, and provided 600,000 people with access to clean water through solar-powered desalination units.

36. Towards prevention and stabilization in north-east Nigeria, UNDP and local authorities helped improve security and services, including legal aid for human rights violations and violence against women. This bolstered social cohesion and trust in communities with nearly 800,000 people. Cash grants, agricultural inputs and vocational skills strengthened livelihoods and local economies for 10,000 households. In Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Togo, local dialogues, income-generating activities and public outreach campaigns collectively reached more than 2.5 million people, helping to counter risks of violent extremism from the Sahel.

37. Integrated solutions create a foundation for recovery. Since 2021, UNDP has reached 25 million people across Afghanistan with combined support for essential services, infrastructure and small businesses. UNDP provided some of the only services and livelihood opportunities for women and girls, including through supporting 80,000 women-owned businesses that have created over 1 million jobs and livelihoods. In Mozambique, UNDP with other development actors supported 600,000 internally displaced persons to return to their communities by strengthening the public responsiveness of local governments, rehabilitating infrastructure and re-establishing livelihoods.

38. Crises also provide opportunities, as UNDP has helped demonstrate through support for women in mediation, reconciliation and peacebuilding in 25 countries. In the Philippines, the Women Insider Mediators Rapid Action and Mobilization Platform advances women's leadership. It helped maintain peace during recent elections in the Bangsamoro region and works with communities to close gaps in health care, education and livelihoods.

39. Digital solutions increase capacities to respond and reduce risks. Turkmenistan has deployed satellite technology for integrated land-use planning based on a clearer understanding of disaster, climate and biodiversity risks. Digital insurance products, introduced in the Pacific region by the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) with local ecosystem partners, have

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improved the resilience of over 26,000 households in five countries. Digital and data tools in Guatemala have enhanced understanding of crime patterns and improve security responses. Globally, the UNDP Risk Anticipation Hub provides data and analysis for over 30 countries to inform fast and effective decisionmaking on multiple preventive actions.

Signature solutions and enablers				
-	Governance			
-	Poverty reduction			
-	Resilience			

- Gender equality
- Finance

D. Governance is the foundation for human development

40. UNDP governance work is a cornerstone for human development. Strengthening institutions, processes and civic participation unleashes progress across all development areas. Nearly 80 per cent of UNDP country achievements integrate governance with other signature solutions to amplify development impact. The Strategic Plan evaluation concluded that UNDP drives transformative solutions by strengthening both public institutions and individual agency.

41. UNDP has exceeded its Strategic Plan moonshot of supporting 800 million registered voters to participate in elections, reaching 816 million in 57 elections in 43 countries from 2022 to 2024. In Latin America and the Caribbean, in partnership with the United Nations Department of Political and Peacekeeping Affairs, UNDP strengthened 14 electoral management bodies to oversee secure, credible elections for 159 million voters in Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico and Panama. Voter education campaigns reached 85 million people in Pakistan.

SPOTLIGHT: Governance and resilience

- 80 per cent of country achievements integrate governance
- Supported 57 elections for 816 million voters
- Vote education campaigns reached 85 million people in Pakistan
- Ethiopia is demobilizing and reintegrating 372,000 ex-combatants
- More effective human rights institutions in 40 countries

42. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic accelerated digital transformation as a strategic governance priority; UNDP supports countries to make links to more inclusive, higher-quality services.

- Indonesia: The SMILE digital logistics system improved vaccine and health commodity management for 12,000 health facilities serving 34 million people.
- Bangladesh: The digitization of government-to-person payments benefited 12 million individuals.
- Dominican Republic: A new information management system

SPOTLIGHT: Digital

- Digital logistics improved health care for 34 million people in Indonesia
- Kenya equipping 300,000 civil servants with digital skills
- Digital payments for 12 million people in Bangladesh

improved document traceability in 24 institutions while cutting costs by 80 per cent.

• Brazil: Digital models to classify court cases increased efficiency and cut trial times.

43. Towards a modernized civil service, UNDP and the Kenyan Regional Centre of Competence for Digital and AI Skilling are partnering to equip 300,000 public servants with digital and artificial intelligence skills, thereby fostering innovation and improved service delivery. Other African countries in this cohort include Cabo Verde, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Uganda and United Republic of Tanzania. Together, they are establishing a foundation for a continental digital governance network.

44. As part of mitigating risks that developing countries will be left out of the artificial intelligence revolution, UNDP works with governments to prepare for artificial intelligence. Fiji developed an artificial intelligence-powered citizen budget application strengthening both transparency and citizen participation. In Serbia, UNDP supported foundational institutions for artificial intelligence research and a supercomputer platform at the National Data Center to stimulate research and development.

45. Social cohesion and poverty reduction go hand-in-hand in peacebuilding. In Ethiopia, UNDP and regional authorities, United Nations partners and civil society are supporting the National Rehabilitation Commission to demobilize and reintegrate 372,000 ex-combatants in the next two

years. The programme provides civic education, psychosocial support and a reinsertion grant to help former combatants return to their communities

46. Support for human rights and justice improves social stability, trust and resilience. UNDP

strengthens national human rights institutions in over 40 countries. Such work is critical in fragile contexts, such as the State of Palestine, where UNDP, UN-Women and the United Nations Children's Fund collaborated to provide legal aid to 11,000 people, 88 per cent of whom were women. UNDP and the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic supported the Special Criminal Court to convict four armed group members of crimes against humanity and war crimes.

E. Gender equality matters to everything else

47. The UNDP cross-cutting approach to women's empowerment achieves multiple gains for women. UNDP support resulted in 137 million women accessing essential services in 2024, up from 94 million in 2023, and 139 million women obtaining financial services, up from 28 million in 2023. New models of integrated care systems in 16 countries combine multiple

Signature solutions and enablers

- Gender equality
- Poverty and inequality
- Governance
- Environment
- Finance

SPOTLIGHT:

- 137 million women obtained essential services
- New models to provide integrated care in 16 countries
- 100 public institutions more genderresponsive
- Social protection for 140,000 women-headed households in Cambodia

services that free women from unpaid care burdens so they can pursue economic, educational and other opportunities.

48. Through its gender equality strategy, UNDP triggers structural shifts to level the playing field for women in economies. Economic reforms link poverty reduction and governance to dismantle longstanding barriers for The UNDP women. Equanomics programme, a partnership with the

SPOTLIGHT: Finance

- 139 million women gained financial services
- Fiscal and tax reforms in 28 countries
- 20 countries have brought women's empowerment into REDD+ financing

African Tax Administration Forum, International Monetary Fund and World Bank, achieved fiscal and tax reforms in 28 countries in 2024. These increased support for women's labour force participation in the Mongolian tax code, for example, and ensured the reflection of women's needs in nine institutional budgets across the Government of Costa Rica.

49. The UNDP Gender Equality Seal for Public Institutions has strengthened genderresponsiveness in 100 public institutions in 30 countries, involving 224,000 civil servants. All 100 institutions now have specific goals that promote equal opportunities; most collect sexdisaggregated data and have set up departments focused on women. In Peru, the General Comptroller improved audit strategies for services related to violence against women.

- 50. UNDP improves women's access to livelihoods and social protection simultaneously addressing poverty reduction and resilience. Programmes in crisis and post-crisis settings provided jobs and better livelihoods to 1.3 million women in 2024. Further:
- Assistance to 57 countries on social protection and care included registering more than 140,000 women-headed households for services in Cambodia.
- In 65 countries, services for survivors of violence against women increasingly integrate empowerment, such as reintegration assistance and psychosocial support for women formerly associated with armed groups in South Sudan.
- In the Syrian Arab Republic, safe centres extended economic resources and protection to 19,000 women and girls; the digital Fadfada platform offered remote access to mental health and psychosocial care.
- 51. Evaluations have highlighted a step change at UNDP in integrating climate, the environment and women's empowerment.
- Under the Climate Promise, 63 countries have implemented gender equality provisions in nationally determined contributions.
- Through the United Nations Collaborative Programme on REDD+, 20 countries have brought women's empowerment into measures such as performance-based climate finance.
- Among projects completed under the GEF Small Grants Programme in 2024, 41 per cent were led by women; 86 per cent were responsive to women's needs.

IV. UNDP runs on partnerships

52. Partnering with UNDP allows entry into a global network with local knowledge, proven systems for transparency and accountability, and the ability to work across sectors and scales. The Strategic Plan evaluation described UNDP as a catalyst for collaboration, and the most recent AidData survey found that UNDP remains among the top five development partners, even with a comparatively smaller pool of resources. Government leaders gave very high rankings for UNDP partnership across all signature solutions. Private sector approval approached 98 per cent.

Why is UNDP a partner of choice?

53. **Partnering with UNDP means greater value for money:** UNDP's ability to use regular resources to mobilize other resources turns initial investments into substantially larger financial flows:

- In Paraguay, a 20 million euro initiative brokered through the multi-donor Mitigation Action Facility unlocked an additional \$100 million from national development banks and international financial institutions a fivefold multiplier that will introduce 300 electric buses to transform public transportation.
- Collaboration with the Development Bank of Latin America and the Caribbean in 2024 supported seven national public banks in Bolivia, Mexico and Panama to increase women's financial inclusion, with financial products targeted to women and services reaching 44 million people.
- In North Macedonia, the Green Financing Facility leveraged \$46.5 million for renewable energy in households and small enterprises, based on a collaboration between UNDP, the International Organization for Migration, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

54. Engaging the private sector:

- The 80-member Better Than Cash Alliance is collaborating with the Ghana Cocoa Board and the private sector, including licensed-buying companies, to introduce digital payments for over 800,000 cocoa-growing households.
- UNDP collaboration with 20 major global insurers, including Generali, Milliman, AXA and Swiss Re, and the Insurance Development Forum is developing local insurance markets to protect 64 million vulnerable people.
- In Malawi, UNDP partnership with the private sector leveraged over \$31 million in combined finance to create more than 5,500 jobs and disburse over \$27 million in loans to small enterprises.
- A strategic partnership with Grameenphone, a leading telecommunications firm in Bangladesh, developed the FutureNation technology platform, enhancing skills and employment options for approximately 74,000 youth.
- Public and private partnerships in Thailand helped align business practices with international human rights standards. Training provided to 263 companies by the UNDP B+HR Academy resulted in the integration of human rights in environmental, social and governance reporting requirements.
- In Kyrgyzstan, UNDP supported the national and Batken investment councils to leverage \$2 billion in public and private investments for regional development.

55. Bridging global finance with local implementation:

- Partnerships with the Green Climate Fund and Global Environment Facility have reached nearly 200 million people, improving management of 459 million hectares of critical ecosystems.
- The GEF Small Grants Programme, administered by UNDP, has channelled over \$800 million directly to 30,000 community-led projects, ensuring global funds reach the local innovators with solutions tailored to their contexts.

56. Coordinated crisis response that builds back better:

- In Ukraine, UNDP partnered with the European Investment Bank and the European Commission to secure over 940 million euros for recovery efforts, supported by work with national and local authorities to uphold transparent, effective loan disbursements.
- In Sudan, UNDP and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees assisted over 77,000 internally displaced persons, including by restoring livelihoods and economic assets; women comprised nearly 60 per cent of beneficiaries. UNDP restarted lifesaving healthcare services for 3.5 million people, including through a partnership with the International Organization for Migration.
- Our longstanding partnership with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has evolved into a cornerstone for health system resilience across 56 countries with \$582 million provided in 2024 alone. This includes meeting immediate needs and sustaining service continuity in crises.

57. Trusted partner to civil society:

- In Afghanistan, UNDP's support enabled 210 local organizations to deliver critical health, education, livelihoods and agriculture services for over 250,000 community members.
- Partnerships with non-governmental organizations reached the most vulnerable communities in eight governorates of Egypt, disbursing nearly 8,400 small loans; 90 per cent went to women and 10 per cent to people with disabilities.

58. **UNDP as a United Nations system integrator:** The Strategic Plan evaluation confirmed the value of the UNDP integrator function in supporting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development while identifying opportunities to strengthen inter-agency collaboration in line with United Nations development system reform objectives.

59. UNDP brings integrated solutions to complex development challenges in collaboration with over 30 United Nations entities in 136 countries, under the leadership of United Nations resident coordinators. These collaborations often prove effective in large-scale efforts, including responses to crises and initiatives driving systemic changes. They:

- Steer the integrated national financing frameworks, which have mobilized and aligned \$48 billion to date.
- Support climate action in 80 countries for nearly 2.2 billion people through the Climate Promise.
- Drive early recovery assistance in major crises, including Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sudan, Ukraine, Yemen and Gaza.

60. Moving forward, UNDP is developing clearer mechanisms to leverage this function in alignment with United Nations development system reform objectives and the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. A significant recent advancement was the integration of the UNDP SDG Push approach into revised guidance on sustainable development cooperation frameworks for United Nations country teams.

61. **UNDP-hosted entities amplify system-wide impact:** UNDP continues to proudly host entities that support the entire United Nations system in achieving transformational results:

- The United Nations Volunteers deployed 14,631 volunteers from 181 nationalities to serve 59 United Nations entities in 169 countries to support sustainable development, peacebuilding, and humanitarian efforts and to strengthen the impact of the United Nations and its partners at the grass-roots level.
- The Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office administered over \$1.1 billion in inter-agency pooled funds, involving 116 programme countries, 41 United Nations entities and resources from 71 contributors.
- UNCDF helped to unlock domestic capital and private investment in 78 countries, including 43 least developed countries and 21 fragile countries. One example was the landmark Tanga Water Green Bond in the United Republic of Tanzania, which mobilized over \$20 from the domestic market for every \$1 invested.
- United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation delivered over \$10 million to more than 50 countries through its trust funds, while sharing knowledge and brokering partnerships across 150 countries. It successfully advocated for including South-South and triangular cooperation in 40 United Nations resolutions and intergovernmental declarations.

Recognition and awards

The UNDP Tripartite Agreement, in partnership with the Insurance Development Forum and Germany, was selected as the Property & Casualty Innovator of the Year by the International Insurance Society.

For its partnership with UNDP Nepal, the Nepal Tourism Board received its third consecutive Pacific Asia Travel Association Gold Award for creating employment opportunities in tourism and promoting sustainable tourism.

A joint UNDP project entitled Strategic Management of UNDP Capacities and Workforce Planning received the Innovation in Recruitment Award at the Career Development Roundtable, the largest annual multilateral human resources event.

In 2024, UNDP earned re-certification from EDGE, a leading global gender equality assessment and business certification body.

The UNDP Digital Office won a 2024 Anthem Award for its Data to Policy Navigator, a resource for policymakers to integrate new data sources into their decision-making and policy-development processes.

UNDP won gold in two categories at the annual United Nations Procurement Awards for the UNDP Tuvalu Coastal Adaptation Project and the Digital Governance, Innovation and Transformation Initiative, which is doing groundbreaking work supporting national ID systems, digital governance and electoral assistance.

V. Delivering impact with efficiency

Ninety-two cents of every dollar reaches development programmes

62. UNDP has dramatically improved its operational efficiency, directing more resources to development programming instead of overhead costs, while maintaining financial stability. With 92 cents of each dollar reaching programmes in 2024 – up from 88 cents in 2018 – partners' investment in UNDP delivers tangible impact for communities worldwide.

63. Value for money highlights:

- \$4.8 billion Programme delivery in 2024
- 7.4:1 leverage ratio Each dollar of regular resources mobilizes \$7.4 in additional funding
- 170 countries and territories Global reach with local impact: the UNDP Accelerator Labs sourced over 6,000 development solutions across 115 countries
- Over 70 country offices have adopted portfolio approaches to maximize resource use and better plan, align, and manage projects.

For every \$1 in regular resources, UNDP mobilizes \$7.4

64. UNDP efficiently leverages regular resources funding with impressive results: \$1 of regular resources mobilized \$6.8 in 2017, increasing to \$7.4 in 2024. This ability to attract significantly more other resources funding while keeping costs low demonstrates the effectiveness of UNDP as an investment vehicle in the multilateral system.

65. Regular resources enable UNDP to prioritize countries' needs, respond swiftly in crises, and maintain high standards in accountability and transparency. Without adequate regular resources funding, the organization's unique ability to respond rapidly in emergencies and address critical needs where other funding isn't available would be severely compromised.

Spotlight on funding partners

Top 15 contributors to regular resources⁴

Germany, United States of America^{*}, Japan, Switzerland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Canada, Denmark, Republic of Korea, Qatar^{*}, United Kingdom, France, Belgium and Australia

10 partners increased their contribution to regular resources

Germany, United States of America, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, France, Spain, India, Luxembourg, China and Austria

12 partners had multi-year pledges to contribute regular resources

Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Luxembourg, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Qatar, Sweden, Switzerland, and Türkiye

6 per cent increase in funding windows

Contributions from thematic funding windows increased to \$133 million from \$126 million in 2023

Programme countries contributed a quarter of total resources

They invested \$1.2 billion of their own resources in UNDP programmes in their own countries in 2024

Supporting over 70 United Nations entities: UNDP as the operational backbone

66. Investment in UNDP strengthens the entire United Nations system. In 2023, UNDP management of common services generated \$46 million in cost savings for 40 United Nations entities across 113 country teams, with \$37.5 million from administrative services alone.

67. UNDP leverages its global presence to lead two of the four active common back offices worldwide, offering over 70 service lines to 15 entities, reducing operational costs and increasing impact. Through its Smart Facilities initiative, UNDP now extends technological innovations and renewable energy solutions to United Nations organizations, Governments, and partners globally.

68. Towards a digital-first culture, UNDP, the International Telecommunication Union and the United Nations Innovation Network launched the first system-wide community dedicated to digital for development, attracting 3,700 members from over 60 organizations for ongoing knowledge-sharing and dissemination of innovations.

69. United Nations system-wide support services in 2024:

- \$5.28+ billion Payments processed annually in 122 currencies
- 70+ United Nations entities Receiving critical services in finance, human resources, information technology, legal, procurement, and treasury
- 136 common premises Serving 46 United Nations entities in 118 country teams
- 95 per cent Client satisfaction rate
- Over 50 per cent Cut in payroll and human resources administration fees (January 2025)

⁴ * Indicates the inclusion of regular resources intended for 2023 but received in 2024.

Proven efficiency gains and innovations

- 70. The UNDP collaborative approach and digital transformation yield substantial savings:
- \$23 million Efficiency gains from common administration services (2023)
- \$19.4 million Additional efficiencies through corporate digitalization
- Quantum platform Cloud-based system adopted by eight United Nations organizations, with two more joining in 2025
- 3,000+ Business processes automated, delivering \$5.5 million in net benefits

71. The service clustering initiative launched in 2019 has consolidated 21 processes across eight locations and time zones, delivering significant improvements in compliance, data integrity, risk management, and cost recovery. In 2023, UNDP improved efficiency and reduced costs for the United Nations system by leading the establishment of joint long-term agreements for various services, partnering with 40 United Nations organizations to increase procurement capacity.

Transparency and accountability: Investment is in trusted hands

72. Its 19th clean audit from the United Nations Board of Auditors in 2024 means that UNDP has transacted approximately \$100 billion in total revenue in an accountable and transparent manner over the last 20 years. In 2024, UNDP scored as a top performer in the United Nations 2.0 Systemwide Assessment across all five categories and maintained its position as the second most transparent United Nations organization in the Aid Transparency Index. UNDP also maintained its rating against the United Nations System-wide Action Plan 2.0 and exceeded or met its targets in 15 of 16 (94 per cent) of relevant indicators.

73. The appointment of a high-level Chief Risk Officer and implementation of an integrated risk module for results management enables proactive risk identification and management. Beginning in 2025, UNDP enhanced its capacity to monitor performance across five key areas – impact, accountability, efficiency, values and people – through a new Performance App that uses data from numerous systems to assist managers in making better decisions.

74. Key governance achievements:

- High-level Chief Risk Officer Enabling proactive risk management
- 88 per cent Projects receiving unqualified audit opinions, up from 75 per cent in 2023
- 49.6 per cent Evaluations rated highly satisfactory/satisfactory, up from 40.5 per cent in 2023
- 95 per cent Evaluations with management responses outlining implementation actions
- 31 per cent increase in participation in ethics sessions above 2023 levels

People-centred excellence

75. The greatest asset of UNDP is its people. Investment in the workforce directly translates to improved development performance. The People for 2030 Strategy, now in its fifth year, has been instrumental in driving forward a culture focused on leadership excellence, accountability and ethical behaviour – creating a work environment that is safe and where everyone can thrive. Data shows that where leaders participated in our award-winning Leaders for 2030 Programme, UNDP offices were twice as likely to be top performers.

76. People investments:

- 74 per cent Overall score measuring employee engagement, reflecting a two-point increase in 2024. The score measuring trust, psychological safety and belonging in the workplace was 75 percent.
- 500+ Leaders equipped through our award-winning Leaders for 2030 Programme
- 2,771 Staff completed certificate courses in key operational areas (2022-2024)
- 4,000 Personnel trained on preventing sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse
- AI-enabled Talent Marketplace Recognized as a platform that enables rapid deployment of talent to meet urgent business needs, while also supporting career growth.
- 'Speak Up Culture' programme Piloted in 12 offices to encourage all personnel to contribute ideas and raise concerns.
- Nearly 8,400 Participations in UNDP Ethics Office sessions

A critical inflection point: An opportunity to invest in proven success

77. UNDP acknowledges the critical support of our partners who have provided regular resources to UNDP over many years, including those that increased their contribution in 2024. However, for the first time in eight years, UNDP programme delivery has exceeded incoming contributions, leading to a small reduction in the balance of previous years' contributions. While this reflects continued strong demand and delivery capacity, it also signals a funding imbalance. If prolonged, this will become unsustainable, even with ongoing strong efficiency gains, and will undermine the ability of UNDP to meet the future needs and expectations of the countries and people it serves.

78. Current challenges:

- Core resources declined from 16 per cent to 12 per cent of total funding (2018-2024), far below the 30 per cent Funding Compact target
- Rising costs due to inflation and currency fluctuations
- Increasing oversight expenditures: \$41.6 million in 2025

79. UNDP is proactively addressing these challenges through diversifying income sources, strengthening resource mobilization, adapting financial strategies, streamlining policies and optimizing services. However, without strong and sustained political and financial support, difficult choices loom: a retreat from a universal presence, scaling back crisis response capacity, programme discontinuations, lost system-wide efficiencies and reduced funding for oversight. Continued investment is key to preserving UNDP's ability to deliver high-impact, impartial support where it matters most.

80. Over the decades, Member States have built and sustained UNDP as a trusted partner in advancing sustainable development – investing billions and achieving tangible, shared results. These achievements reflect a collective commitment to long-term progress. At this critical juncture, it is vital to safeguard that investment. Protecting UNDP's ability to deliver requires continued support for regular (core) and flexible funding – the foundation of our universal presence, agility, and effectiveness. Development remains the most enduring path to peace and shared prosperity. A shift toward short-term, fragmented approaches risks undermining hard-won gains and falling short of our shared ambitions for the future.

VI. Learning and adapting for greater impact

81. As UNDP marks its 60th anniversary, reflections on the Strategic Plan 2022-2025 provide insights into achievements and challenges that help inform and strengthen UNDP's position as a development partner of choice.

- This report shows that UNDP has delivered significant results over its Strategic Plan 2022–2025, including on all three directions of change: inclusive, green and digital transitions; leaving no one behind; and resilience. The three enablers digitalization, innovation and sustainable finance have driven structural transformation. Looking ahead, these achievements also provide important lessons for how UNDP can continue to improve and adapt:
- Embracing complexity through integration. The Strategic Plan evaluation confirms integrated approaches yield greater impact than siloed interventions. While UNDP has implemented portfolio approaches in over 70 countries, operationalizing integration remains challenging. Obstacles include insufficient cross-sectoral expertise and misaligned financial mechanisms. UNDP is addressing these by systematizing procedures, strengthening cross-practice collaboration, and improving knowledge management across thematic boundaries.
- **Refining approaches to crisis settings.** With over 50 percent of expenditures in crisis or fragile settings, UNDP's ability to connect humanitarian responses with long-term development objectives is valued by partners. However, fragmented financing mechanisms remain a key challenge. In response, UNDP is diversifying financing instruments and enhancing de-risking tools to unlock public and private financing for crisis settings, and to strengthen risk management systems. The revamped Early Recovery approach integrates development solutions from day one of a crisis.
- Governance as a foundation for transformation. Governance remains a distinctive UNDP strength, but approaches must evolve to address contemporary challenges. UNDP is reimagining governance for a digital age, focusing on institutions that can accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals while navigating complex transitions. It is leveraging digital transformation strategically. UNDP has supported over 90 countries in implementing whole-of-society digital initiatives, yet recognizes the need to better tailor strategies to different contexts. Future initiatives will address varying levels of digital readiness while enhancing governance and ethics approaches to ensure people-centred, inclusive digital advances.
- Enhancing efficiency. The Business Model Review, in addition to examining UNDP's value proposition and funding, revealed opportunities to enhance strategic positioning and operational efficiency. While UNDP has significantly increased the proportion of funding going directly to development and reduced costs, the organization must further adapt business processes to support diverse partnerships and innovative financing. Current improvements include streamlining processes, creating flexible operational modalities, and investing in risk management approaches that balance innovation with accountability.

Path Forward

82. As UNDP prepares the next Strategic Plan, consultations across 115 countries have consistently emphasised three demands: the importance of aligning strategies with countries' national priorities and evolving with their development needs, systemic and integrated approaches that address interconnected challenges, and multistakeholder partnerships that bridge local and global perspectives.

83. These insights will help shape the future direction as UNDP builds on strengths while addressing areas for improvement. The organization remains committed to continuous learning and adaptation, ensuring responsiveness to today's development challenges while anticipating tomorrow's opportunities.

84. By enhancing strategic focus, operational agility, and collaborative approaches, UNDP aims to maximize contributions to human development and demonstrate the enduring value of multilateral cooperation in creating a more peaceful, just and sustainable world.