



**UNITED NATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME  
ANNUAL REPORT 2019**

## Foreword

# Development choices will define the future

I write this foreword from home. The doors to UNDP's Headquarters in New York are locked, as are the doors of our offices across the world, for the first time in our history. But that does not mean we are closed for business. In the past three months, I have seen an organization that is more dedicated and vibrant than ever as we work remotely with our partners to tackle the unprecedented impacts of the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Looking back, 2019 seems like a year from a much simpler era. But just like the decade it ended, it was a year of turbulence. City by city, people came onto the streets to protest rising inequality, stretched social services, a deficit of trust and a damaged climate. Today, a few short months later, the same streets are quiet, and life has changed utterly for billions of people on the planet.

The COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare the consequences of building societies on the backs of people who have less; of weak health systems, tattered safety nets, violence against women and digital divides. It, like climate change, offers proof — if proof were still needed — that all life on Earth is connected.

Last year, through an intense period of UN reform, UNDP worked hard to support the people of 170 countries and territories around the world to get on their feet and stay there. We continued to push the boundaries of how we think, deliver, invest and manage as *#NextGenUNDP* to deliver on our Strategic Plan, reaffirming UNDP's financial stability and taking steps to make UNDP nimbler and more responsive. Today, as we support the UN System and help countries prepare, respond, and recover in the face of COVID-19, our investments are proving their worth.

The 2019 Human Development Report's deep dive into the changing faces of inequality sharpened our thinking and action, including on social protection. With nine out of our ten largest programmes in fragile or crisis-affected countries and a new Crisis Bureau in place, our humanitarian and peacebuilding partnerships deepened.

With the Accelerator Lab Network, established across 78 countries in just 12 months, UNDP's creativity in sourcing local solutions to tackle complexity is now stronger and available to our partner countries and the broader UN Development System. UNDP's Global

Policy Network, remotely connecting 8,800 specialists across the organization and a further 5,000 beyond, and our Digital Strategy, helped to keep our teams operational and our doors 'open' during these past months.

In 2019, UNDP demonstrated the importance of economies of scale in tackling the world's biggest development challenges. Our Climate Promise is an illustration. In September 2019, we promised to support at least 100 countries to raise their climate ambitions within a year. By February 2020, we achieved our target. Our collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh saved nearly two billion workdays by digitalizing access to public services, while in Yemen, UNDP and the World Bank created over 10.7 million workdays of emergency employment and helped to stabilize the local economy.

*#NextGenUNDP* is designed to achieve integrated results at speed and at scale during both quiet and turbulent times. As always, we are stronger together. That's why UNDP works with passion and purpose, hand-in-hand with our sister UN agencies under the leadership of the UN Resident Coordinator in the countries we serve and with an increasing array of public and private partners.

All of our skills will be tested as the world charts a course through COVID-19. If inspiration is needed, the 75th anniversary of the United Nations this year should provide it. From shepherding de-colonization to eradicating smallpox, the UN has set the standard for things we take for granted every day.

It is time to write the story of the next 75 years and chart the way to the Future of Development. UNDP is committed to making it one we will be proud to have our children read aloud. I hope that this snapshot of our progress in 2019 will encourage you to join us.

UNDP/Positive Mass Films



*Achim Steiner*  
**Achim Steiner**

**Administrator**

United Nations Development Programme

# UNDP 2019

With UNDP support, millions of people improved their lives.



**\$5 BILLION**  
in revenue



**17,000 PEOPLE**  
working across  
**170 COUNTRIES**  
and territories



**110 COUNTRIES**  
joined UNDP's  
Climate Promise



**97 COUNTRIES**  
strengthened women's leadership in  
natural resource management



Partnered with  
**103 COUNTRIES**  
on integrated  
Sustainable Development  
Goals support



**40%**  
of UNDP's portfolio  
invested in governance—  
the largest share



**17 MILLION**  
people had better access to  
basic services



**5 MILLION**  
people, one third women, in  
28 crisis-affected countries got a  
job or a better livelihood



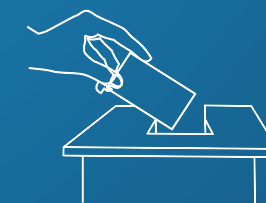
**62 COUNTRIES**  
supported to strengthen  
social protection



**4 MILLION**  
people in 27 countries gained  
access to justice



**65 PARLIAMENTS**  
enhanced their legislative and  
oversight capacities



**48%**  
of all new voters registered with  
UNDP support were women



**28 MILLION**  
protected acres in 55 countries  
were better managed

# What is the future of development?

The future is not what it used to be. A crisis can change the world from one day to the next, with tragic consequences.

But the actions countries take as they prepare, respond and recover in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic will lay the foundations for a fair and just transition to the future—a new social contract.

That is why, as the UN's leading agency on development, UNDP is not working to help people "get back to normal". Normal was not good enough.

With the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as our compass, we want people to get back to something better—a future everyone believes in, where no one is left behind.

## Ten short years to accelerate the SDGs

2019, just like the decade it brought to a close, was marked by a wave of protests. Movements across all continents lifted the lid on people's disillusionment, indignity and unmet needs. Today, the streets may be silent but the message still echoes: we need a decade of action to accelerate progress towards everything the Sustainable Development Goals stand for. This is a race against time, and the hurdles just got higher.

As the 2019 Human Development Report sets out, policy makers have a battery of choices that, integrated in the right way, will translate into lifelong investments in equality and sustainability. Making those choices starts with a commitment to tackling the complexity of human development.

UNDP's role is to create choices in the face of complexity, whatever the development context, and to create the conditions for new ways for governments, businesses and civil society to power ahead, together, faster and further than before.



# Evolving #NextGenUNDP

The world, the Sustainable Development Goals and #NextGenUNDP have something in common: each functions as a system.

No matter how well a system works, there's always room for improvement. In 2019, #NextGenUNDP continued to refocus an organization born into a different generation, making us ready for this one and the next. Pushing the boundaries of how we think, invest, manage and deliver to drive progress towards the SDGs.

We are managing complexity better by joining the dots across sectors, communities and countries. By expanding development choices, finding whole-of-society solutions, and harnessing the power of data tools and analytical models.



**#NextGenUNDP is an alias for our innovative thinking, investing, managing and delivering**

We are continuing to build our quality of collaboration, dismantle siloes and improve the connections among #NextGenUNDP initiatives. With a focused approach to finance, we have explored with governments and the private sector how to shift investment patterns to better support the Goals, learning, innovating and adapting together.

The global context may have altered, but the challenges for an evolving #NextGenUNDP—for all development actors—are the same: to remain relevant to a new generation demanding change in this decade of action for the SDGs.

## Blockchain and cocoa creates sustainability

The Other Bar ([www.theother.bar](http://www.theother.bar)) helps farmers in Ecuador to earn a better wage, currently 3% of the value of their cocoa production. Each wrapper has a blockchain token. Just four smartphone scans will help them buy one tree, which can produce 19 dollars' worth of cocoa. Each tree also absorbs and stores CO<sub>2</sub> to help tackle climate change. This one idea is now informing a global initiative to connect millions of sustainable producers to global value chains. This is integrated, digitally-led sustainable development—powered by UNDP and the FairChain Foundation.



Photo: UNDP Ecuador/Diego Malakias

## Speed and scale

Learning from pilot projects in Uruguay, Serbia and the Aral Sea, UNDP is assembling unconventional teams and techniques to accelerate the pace and scale of development progress. In 2019, we set up 60 Country Support Platforms—40 of them, including in North Macedonia, Pakistan, Paraguay and Somalia, are considered true “engines of integration” by evaluation experts. The Islamabad Urban Platform, for example, brings together civil society, public institutions, and the private sector to co-create large-scale infrastructure, tackling growing urbanization challenges and water conservation at the same time. This model is now being replicated in other major Pakistani cities.

## UNDP's Accelerator Labs and Global Policy Network

The UNDP Accelerator Labs network is the world's largest learning network on development challenges, working with people, governments and the private sector to reimagine development for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This is both core to our work and a key part of #NextGenUNDP's improved business model. With a mammoth effort, and the founding investment of Germany and Qatar, the 60 Labs are already up and running, with development solutions being examined by teams of entrepreneurs, engineers, data scientists and grassroots innovators across 78 countries and territories.

From addressing the informal economy in light of COVID-19, to tackling air pollution in India and making electric vehicles more accessible in Namibia, the Labs are at work delivering development results and garnering attention. In 2019, they won the Apolitical 2019 Global Public Service Teams of the Year award for evidence-based policy. The same year, we received 8,500 job applications for the Labs, 8.5 times the average for UNDP jobs. 72% of new recruits are from outside the organization, a clear indication of the excitement for this new way of working and the urgency to tackle complex development problems in a different way.

The Labs are part of UNDP's new Global Policy Network (GPN), which was rolled out in 2019. The GPN's communities of practice now connect over 8,800 UNDP colleagues, combined with some 5,000 other vetted, high-quality development professionals across 110 areas of expertise who can be mobilized quickly to support UNDP's work at country level.



## Driven by digital

The greater the problem, the greater the solution. It took a pandemic to amplify the role digital technology plays in development. The speed and scale made possible by sharing life-saving information and resources is unprecedented and makes us wonder how much more severe the consequences of COVID-19 would have otherwise been. From protecting citizens, to enabling governments to keep functioning, to bringing accessible, replicable and low-cost solutions to the world's most vulnerable people, UNDP's response has shown just how far we've come digitally, and how much further we can go.

Combine this accelerating growth of global technology with #NextGenUNDP's organizational digital strategy, plus its digital financing forecast, and you capture how our work was able to evolve in 2019—both internally and externally.



## Improving the ways we do business

Moving at speed and scale to tackle the complexity of development today requires a stable but agile institution capable of driving change. To this end, we made the following advances in 2019.



### FINANCIALLY STABLE, PRODUCTIVE

UNDP reversed the deficit and balanced its budget for the third year in a row. Financial stability was ensured by reining in costs. Productivity increased, with 91 cents of every dollar now spent on programmes and services for development, up from 88 cents in 2017.



### NIMBLE, EFFECTIVE

Investments in our business model are making UNDP more connected, effective and nimble. We began to cluster 57 of the operational services that keep our teams across the world up and running—from payroll to procurement. Once complete, this will reduce our audit recommendations at the country office level by approximately 65%.



### FASTER

We are working to speed up administrative tasks. For example, managers can now approve transactions from their phones through the new Atlas Mobile app. More than 8,200 transactions were approved in 176 countries and locations since the app was launched in September 2019.



### ACCOUNTABLE

UNDP established a new risk management body and strengthened its engagement on audit and evaluation. We received our 14th consecutive clean audit opinion from the United Nations Board of Auditors (UNBOA) for 2018, underlining UNDP's commitment to continuous improvement in financial management, transparency, and accountability. We are also making progress against all our top seven audit-related management priorities.



### COLLABORATION

By collaborating with other UN agencies, we saved \$7.5 million on travel, while a new travel request system cut processing times by almost half and saved 109,000 hours, equivalent to over \$867,000. By redeploying staff to the field, \$11.7 million was saved on headquarters' office costs from 2017 to 2019.

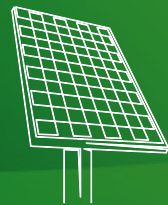
## Artificial intelligence, new frontiers

UNDP has made a major breakthrough in applying Artificial Intelligence (AI) to our data analytics and transparency. For the first time, UNDP has applied machine learning to the big data it has accumulated over the years, including development achievements and challenges reported by the country offices and the data generated from over 4,500 projects. We created a special new window to transparently track all our COVID-19 related support.

This digital resource—or Portfolio Analysis Dashboard—aims our analysis of what worked, what did not and why, with results, challenges, and insights broken out by region, income, funding, and partner type. The Dashboard also contains key Strategic Plan initiatives, including progress on resource mobilization, communications, innovation, Country Support Platforms, UNDP’s integrator role, and Signature Solutions (see pages 18-29). What we have learned is already informing UNDP’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to inform strategy setting and policy making, as we move closer to achieving the SDGs.

## Greening UNDP

UNDP is committed to “walk the talk” on climate action as part of the UN’s all-agency Greening the Blue initiative. 2019 marked the 10<sup>th</sup> year of monitoring and reporting UNDP’s global carbon footprint. We offset 70,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> annually, and our global operations have been climate neutral since 2015. 2019 also saw the launch of UNDP’s Greening Moonshot to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 25% by 2025, and 50% by 2030.



**3,600 solar panels**  
installed with a total generation  
of more than 1,500 MWh per year



**271 smart facility**  
renewable energy  
projects in operation, 13 being  
installed, 200 in the pipeline



**US\$600,000**  
avoided in energy  
costs per year



Potential reduction of  
**4,220 tonnes**  
CO<sub>2</sub>e/year, with up to  
\$1.75 million in savings

## Nimble and efficient in numbers



**BALANCED BUDGET**  
IN 2019 FOR 3<sup>rd</sup> CONSECUTIVE YEAR



**EFFICIENCIES ACHIEVED**  
**\$11.7 MILLION** IN HQ OFFICE COSTS AND  
**\$7.5 MILLION** IN TRAVEL



**14<sup>th</sup> CONSECUTIVE CLEAN AUDIT**  
FROM UN BOARD OF AUDITORS 2018



**INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY**  
91 CENTS OF EVERY DOLLAR SPENT ON  
DEVELOPMENT (UP FROM 88 CENTS IN 2017)



**109,000 HOURS SAVED**  
EQUIVALENT TO \$867,000—WITH NEW TRAVEL  
REQUEST SYSTEM



**ADDITIONAL \$13.2M**  
SHIFTED FROM INSTITUTIONAL  
BUDGET TO DEVELOPMENT

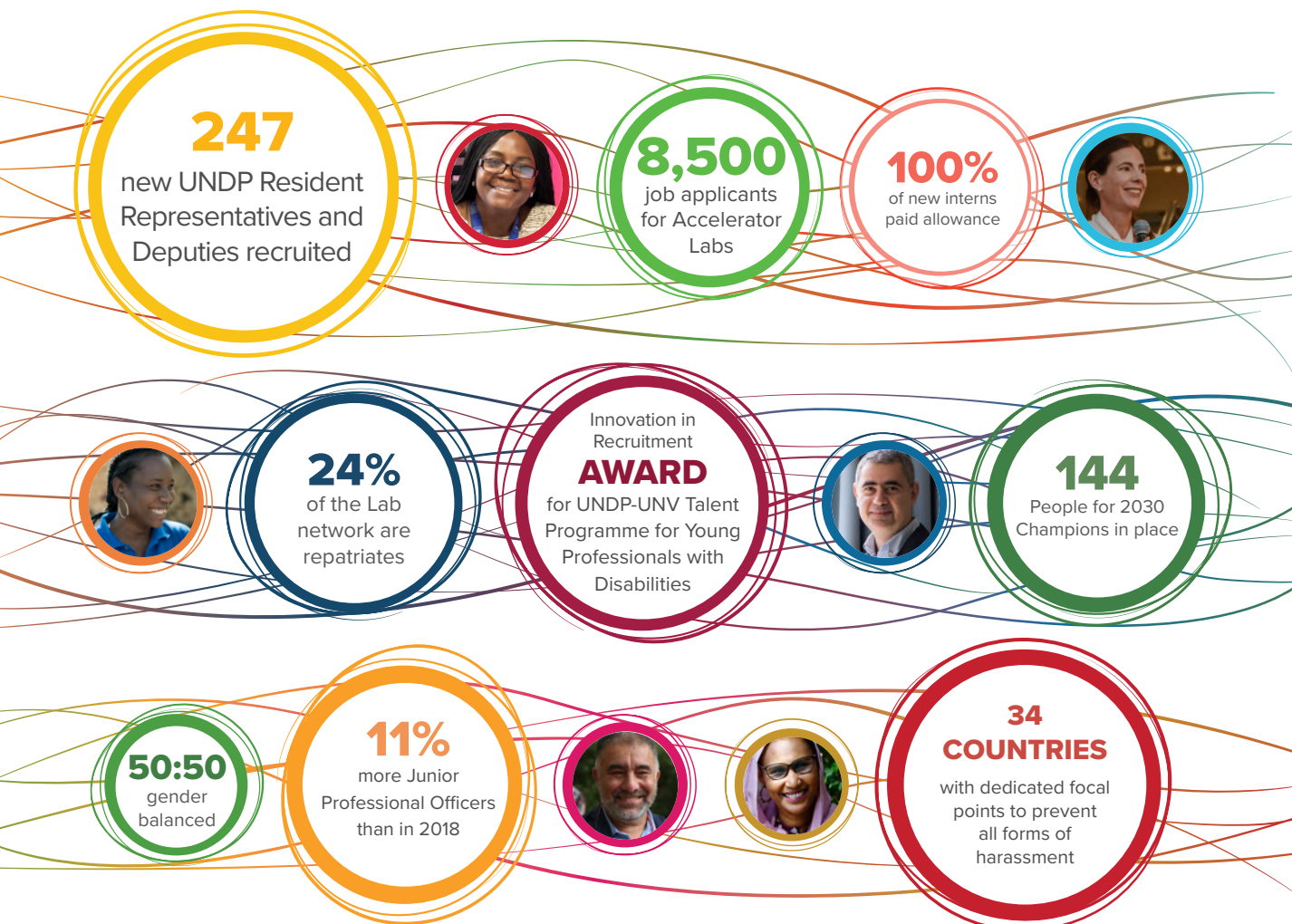
# Building the best workforce

## People come first at UNDP

The passion and purpose of UNDP begins with its people. Because working for the United Nations is more than just a job—it's a vocation.

That's why, in 2019, UNDP launched a people plan that matches the commitment of every person who works here, and is set to attract the best talent for the future. With nine areas of focus, the People for 2030 strategy is being rolled out, encouraging and rewarding excellence, efficiency and commitment; fostering diversity and respect; and building more flexible, family-friendly career paths for our global team of 17,000 development employees.

As a result of two major recruitment drives in 2019, UNDP's top and deputy leadership positions across 140 countries and territories are now gender-balanced and geographically diverse, while 24% of those who joined UNDP's new Accelerator Lab network are repatriates — an indication that UNDP is attracting world-class talent back home to developing countries.



# Global leadership

## Standing up for a better world

UNDP's global leadership team is now in place. Leading the charge alongside our Administrator is the Acting Associate Administrator and nine Assistant Secretary Generals (ASGs), pictured below. Together with their teams, they are making bold strides toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.



**Mourad Wahba**  
UNDP Acting Associate Administrator and ASG for the Regional Bureau for Arab States



**Kanni Wignaraja**  
Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific



**Haoliang Xu**  
Bureau for Policy and Programme Support



**Ahunna Eziakonwa**  
Regional Bureau for Africa



**Luis Felipe López-Calva**  
Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean



**Ulrika Modéer**  
Bureau of External Relations and Advocacy



**Asako Okai**  
Crisis Bureau



**Mirjana Spoljaric Egger**  
Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States



**Angelique M. Crumbly**  
Bureau for Management Services



**Abdoulaye Mar Dieye**  
Senior Advisor to the Administrator



# Where we are, where we're going

## Midway through the Strategic Plan

Our performance against the Strategic Plan 2018-21 is right on track. In 2019, we delivered strong development results against its three development outcomes, striving to help build and maintain a better world for everyone. The outcomes are:

- **Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions**
- **Accelerating structural transformations for sustainable development**
- **Building resilience to crises and shocks**

Moving through the Plan's implementation, we are diligently working with our partners across the most multi-dimensional, deep-rooted development challenges of the new decade. These include tackling inequality, climate change, and the root causes of migration and forced displacement. In short, integrated solutions to complex problems—it's what makes UNDP's work unique.



# Signature Solutions

## In sync with the world, in time for the future

Poverty, Governance, Resilience, Environment, Energy and Gender. Why does UNDP have these six Signature Solutions? The answer is simple: to help focus our roles and responsibilities across the Sustainable Development Goals. These cross-cutting solutions are more relevant and urgent than ever, reflective of the big “passion points” mobilizing our world towards a safer, fairer future. Through lasting results, not just temporary relief.

The following section outlines what each Solution does, its relevance and its performance.

The inequalities of poverty:

# Outsmarting the trends

In 2019, 26 people had the same wealth as half of humanity. One third of all the food produced on the planet went to waste while one in ten people went hungry. Plus, next-generation inequalities like access to tertiary education and broadband increased — accentuated by climate change, conflict, and the deep roots of gender inequality.

Today, as economies shut down and unemployment soars in the face of COVID-19, keeping the commitment of the Sustainable Development Goals to leaving no one behind will require going beyond income, beyond mathematical averages and beyond today, as UNDP's 2019 Human Development Report sets out. Because even now, poverty and inequality are not beyond solutions.



**24**  
**MILLION**

people in 22 countries gained access to financial services, 2018-19



**10.7**  
**MILLION**

emergency employment workdays created in Yemen



**30**  
**GOVERNMENTS**

went beyond income, building multi-dimensional poverty indices to improve social inclusion



## REDUCING CHILD MORTALITY RATES WITH A CLOUD

With UNDP as a key partner, a cloud-based system in India can monitor vaccine stocks and temperatures in real time. This strategic use of technology, administered by mostly female health workers, has helped to significantly reduce the mortality rate of children under five.

Photo: UNDP India/Dhiraj Singh



UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Poverty in 2019



## Governance for people: Beyond having a voice

UNDP is committed to building a future that is just and fair, anchored in SDG 16. But many signs are trending in the wrong direction. Governance failures and a lack of trust are holding back development, undermining freedom and fueling conflict. That's why, in 2019, governance was our largest portfolio. 25% was invested by programme countries to support their own national efforts to build peaceful, inclusive societies.

In 2019, UNDP helped 100,000 Afro-descendants and indigenous people in Colombia to access transitional justice. We scaled digital innovations with Bangladesh to create governance systems of the 'now', strengthened legal identity with Burkina Faso, and helped Somalia's transitional government to manage public service revenues. Across the world, UNDP worked with 89 countries to reform discriminatory laws and policies. That's just a snapshot.

We support efforts to close the gap between people and their governments. 77% of the irregular migrants interviewed for UNDP's 2019 Scaling Fences report felt unheard at home, with no opportunity to influence government. By creating choice and innovation in the face of complexity, we help everyone—citizens, migrants, public servants, politicians and parliamentarians—to play their part in building a future where no one is left behind.



**50**  
COUNTRIES

supported to strengthen their human rights systems



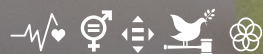
**138**  
COUNTRIES

strengthened their health systems to increase resilience and reduce the socio-economic impact of diseases, including Ebola



**\$2.5**  
BILLION

in savings for Thailand by improving government procurement—equivalent to a 50% pension increase for 9 million people



### SHARING KNOWLEDGE ON HIV TO TACKLE STIGMA AND SAVE LIVES

Angolan women and adolescent girls are over 50% more likely to contract HIV than young men. With the support of UNDP and the Global Fund, the next generation of female activists are mobilizing local communities, increasing awareness of HIV and health issues, and improving services for their peers.

Photo: UNDP Angola/Cynthia R. Matonhodze

UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Governance in 2019





# Disaster, crisis and war: From adversity to resilience

In 2019, crises evolved in scale and complexity. Protracted conflicts were a major culprit, driving the number of people forcibly displaced from their homes to over 70 million. Climate change and disasters continued their devastating march and now, recovering from COVID-19 will test peace, stability and the rule of law.

With years of experience embedded on development's frontlines, UNDP is focused on building resilience before adversity strikes and building back better when it does. We do this by integrating our network and array of disciplines with the skills of our humanitarian, development and peacebuilding partners—from conflict prevention, risk management and pandemic preparedness to climate security, early warning systems and green recovery.

In 2019, our investment in resilience included fostering regional stability in the Sahel, helping Mozambique recover from Cyclone Idai, and supporting over 850,000 refugees and host communities across five countries in response to the Syrian crisis. With nine out of our ten largest programmes in fragile or crisis-affected countries and a new Crisis Bureau in place, we are intensifying efforts to reach those who need support the most.



**3**  
**MILLION**  
displaced people in 13 countries benefitted from improved political, legal and social conditions



**34**  
**COUNTRIES**  
supported to address the root causes of violent extremism



**2.4**  
**MILLION**  
people accessed early warning systems or disaster and climate information



#### TRAINING BORDER POLICE IN FIRST AID AND PEACEKEEPING

Positive connections help prevent conflict, while breaking down barriers to peace, trade and economic growth. UNDP partnered with the European Union to build relationships among border police in Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan—increasing security, regional cooperation and cross-border markets.

Photo: UNDP/Freya Morales

UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Resilience in 2019



## Nature's tipping point:

# Time to fix our planet

The COVID-19 pandemic is a reminder of the intimate relationship between people, wildlife and biodiversity. With 50% of SDG targets directly linked to the management of natural resources, building back to a better future after the pandemic is not a zero-sum game of environment versus economy. Rather, it's a once-in-a-generation chance to set things straight.

In 2019, UNDP worked with our partners on the relationship between climate, nature and development, to catalyze and accelerate positive change. Our new three-part integrated offer for Small Island Developing States covers the blue economy, digital transformation and climate action, with a focus on finance throughout.

In addition to our Climate Promise (page 30), UNDP delivered nature-based results across our six Signature Solutions, building the resilience of 70,000 farmers in Zambia, generating an additional \$200 million in GDP through sustainable tuna fishing for 14 Pacific Island countries, and mobilizing green funding to benefit 37 million people. Because the force of nature is ours to nurture, not destroy.



**\$1  
BILLION**

accessed by countries from vertical funds with UNDP, 2018-2019



**275  
MILLION**

tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions will be avoided (equivalent to taking 59 million cars off the road for a year)



**334  
MILLION**

hectares of landscapes and marine habitats protected, improved or restored



### RESTORING CORAL REEFS WITH NATURE

With the help of UNDP, inventors at Oceanus developed a resourceful way to regenerate local ecosystems. Their new coral nurseries are built with a mix of organic concrete and the overabundant sargassum seaweed that washes up on their shores. This will be added to the 48,000 replanted coral colonies.

Photo: UNDP Mexico/Emily Mkrtychian

UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Environment in 2019



## Clean, affordable energy:

# The power to change lives

As COVID-19 wreaks havoc on renewable, oil and gas industries alike, countries have a critical choice to make. Either stimulate low-carbon investments and save eight times more than the cost—according to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), taking health and education benefits into account—or rebuild the carbonized status quo, resetting the economy's collision course with nature.

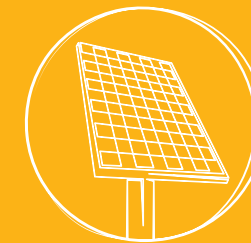
With a de-risking portfolio that leverages billions of public and private clean energy dollars, and policy solutions to politically difficult reforms addressing subsidies and carbon pricing, UNDP offers investors choices. We work closely with the UN Capital Development Fund and other partners to increase the share of renewables in countries' national energy mix, at speed and at scale, while expanding electricity access to everyone.

In 2019, we worked with Belarus, the Republic of Moldova, the Development Bank of Ethiopia and the Gambia to create the conditions for green energy investments. In China, we supported the trade of 330 million tonnes of carbon valued at \$1 billion. We provided solar energy access to people displaced by conflict; fueled systemic change in the transport industry; and generated renewable ways to light hospitals and homes for millions of people. Powerful, life-changing ways to help achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.



**800,000**  
HOUSEHOLDS

headed by women in 16 countries  
benefitted from clean, affordable  
and sustainable energy access



**652**  
HEALTH FACILITIES

in 8 countries running on  
solar energy



**50**  
COUNTRIES

partnered with UNDP on  
clean energy and energy  
efficiency, 2018-2019



### RECYCLING WASTE, EMPOWERING WOMEN

This UNDP work in Jordan puts women in the driver's seat of environmental change, with ground-breaking solid waste management, creating sustainable livelihoods for local communities, with salaries, business training and shareholder incentives for women employees. This is part of UNDP's growing service line in integrated waste management, including healthcare waste, e-waste, and the circular economy of converting waste into energy.

Photo: UNDP/Sumaya Agha



UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Energy in 2019

## Gender equality: 200,000 years overdue

The silence around the abuse of women and girls is finally breaking, but the glass ceiling is not. Today, the fight for gender equality is a story of bias and prejudice. According to the 2019 Human Development Report's gender social norms index, 50% of men and women interviewed across 77 countries say they think men make better political leaders than women. More than 40% felt that men make better business executives. This isn't just a gender gap. It's a power gap.

In 2019, UNDP redoubled its efforts to close that gap, working across our Signature Solutions. Gender equality was a key objective of 58% of our programmes, up 10% since the launch of our Strategic Plan. UNDP ranked among in the 13 highest scorers on the 2020 Global Health 50/50 Gender and Health Index. By the end of 2020, 750 companies in 16 countries will be certified with UNDP's Gender Equality Seal. Evidence shows that investing in UNDP 'core' resources improves gender results.

It's taken two thousand centuries to get here, but together we can give gender equality the priority it deserves.



**1.3**  
**MILLION**

women benefited from UNDP recovery programmes across 17 countries



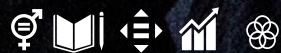
**80**  
**COUNTRIES**

supported to tackle gender-based violence, including through the UN-EU Spotlight partnership



**74**  
**COUNTRIES**

integrated gender into environment and climate policies, plans and frameworks



### BRIDGING THE TECHNOLOGY GENDER GAP

With UNDP's support, the nation of Georgia is closing the gender gap in tech and science for women and girls by promoting their participation, and educational and career development. This has the potential to foster new career paths and bring more inclusion and equality than any other industry before it.

Photo: UNDP Georgia/Leli Blagonravova

UN partners with whom we worked most frequently on Gender in 2019



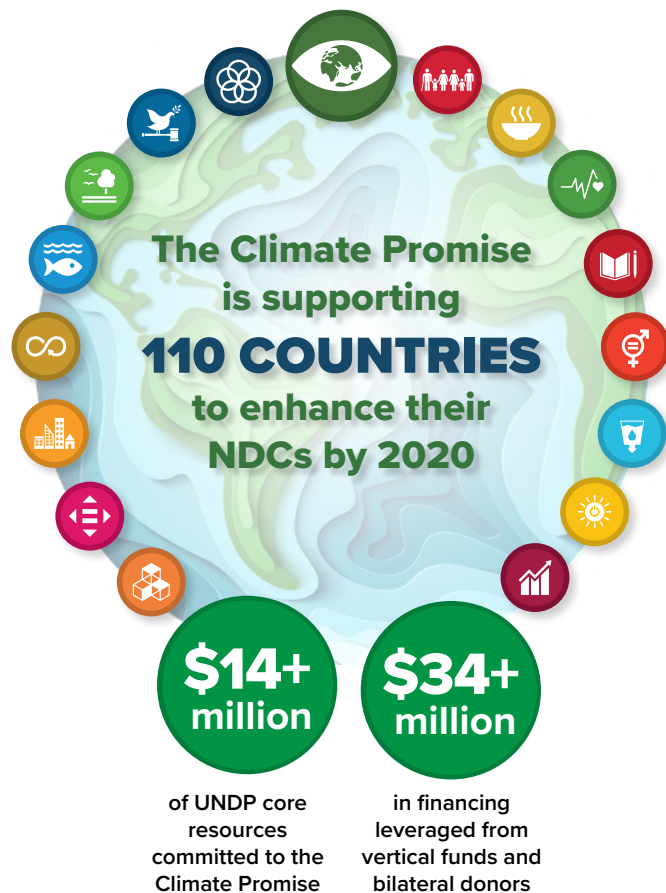
# Keeping our Climate Promise

## Integrated support at speed and scale

Nothing impacts the future of development more than climate change. 2019 concluded a decade of unprecedented global heat, melting ice and rising sea levels, driven by human activities. However, current national climate targets under the Paris Agreement, known as Nationally Determined Contributions or NDCs, are not ambitious enough to limit the rise in global temperature to below the all-important 1.5°C. Today, as nations struggle to recover from COVID-19, even agreed targets will be under threat.

But this pandemic tragedy also presents an opportunity: to kick our dirty old habits and build a better system. As economies get back on their feet, leaders can make the choice to accelerate rather than undermine decarbonization, to create green jobs and more resilient systems for the future. That will take ambition, acceleration and mobilization across all sectors and societies—and committed partners who understand how the pieces of the puzzle can fit together. That is where UNDP comes in.

UNDP launched an ambitious undertaking in September 2019: to take our experience in helping countries design and implement their climate pledges, initially in 25 countries in 2017, and multiply it to 100. This was our Climate Promise, and it tested all our abilities to deliver integrated support at speed and scale. By February 2020, we surpassed our target. Today, the roll-out of the Climate Promise continues at full speed, with 13 high emitters already on board.



The Promise includes a menu of five services tailored to each country's unique context for maximum impact, backed by the strength of UNDP's investment in nature and the full weight of our integrated SDG programming on poverty, governance, resilience, environment, gender and energy. Through the Promise, which is a direct contribution to the NDC Partnership, we deliver technical support to countries with UNDP's strategic partners on climate action, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), UNICEF, IRENA, World Bank, UN Habitat, the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund.



Building on UNDP's global climate change portfolio of:

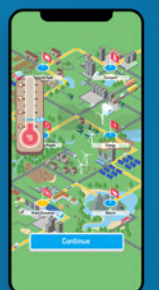


The Climate Promise appreciates the support of UNDP's core donors, including:



Gaming has become a global pastime. Led by UNDP and our partners, this new mobile game educates people on climate solutions and allows them to vote on the actions they would like to see their country take. The results will be collected and delivered to global leaders. Over 1.2 million people have played so far.

[www.mission1point5.org](http://www.mission1point5.org)





# Growing partnerships

UNDP craves diversity, especially when it comes to partnerships. That's why 2019 saw our range of trusted partners grow to include a new breed of global and local allies, including tech companies, media groups, the gaming industry, scientific and financial institutions, and space agencies. 80% of partners surveyed in 2020 consider UNDP a valued partner.

Private sector partnerships amplify SDG advocacy, redirecting investments for good and raising public awareness—from inviting millions of smartphone users to crowdsource climate policies, to co-founding a fund for global brands and the advertising industry to support conservation and biodiversity.

Our valued partnerships with financial institutions continue to scale as we deliver development results together in some of the toughest places in the world.



UNDP's long-standing partnerships with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the Green Climate Fund, the Global Environment Facility and the Montreal Protocol stand strong. In 2018-2019, we enabled countries to access grants of over \$1 billion from vertical funds, leveraging an additional \$1.2 billion of private and public finance for 91 countries.

Much of our work on the ground happens thanks to our partnerships with some 600 Civil Society Organizations around the world.

By combining inspiration, ideas and resources with our partners, we become more than the sum of our parts. And that's what the world needs to reach the SDGs.

## Going further on finance

UNDP envisages a world where all capital flows advance progress towards the SDGs. That is why we're committed to empowering investors—public and private—with the clarity, insights and tools they need to optimize the positive impact of their investments, closing the gap between high-level principles and financial performance to make a positive contribution to society.

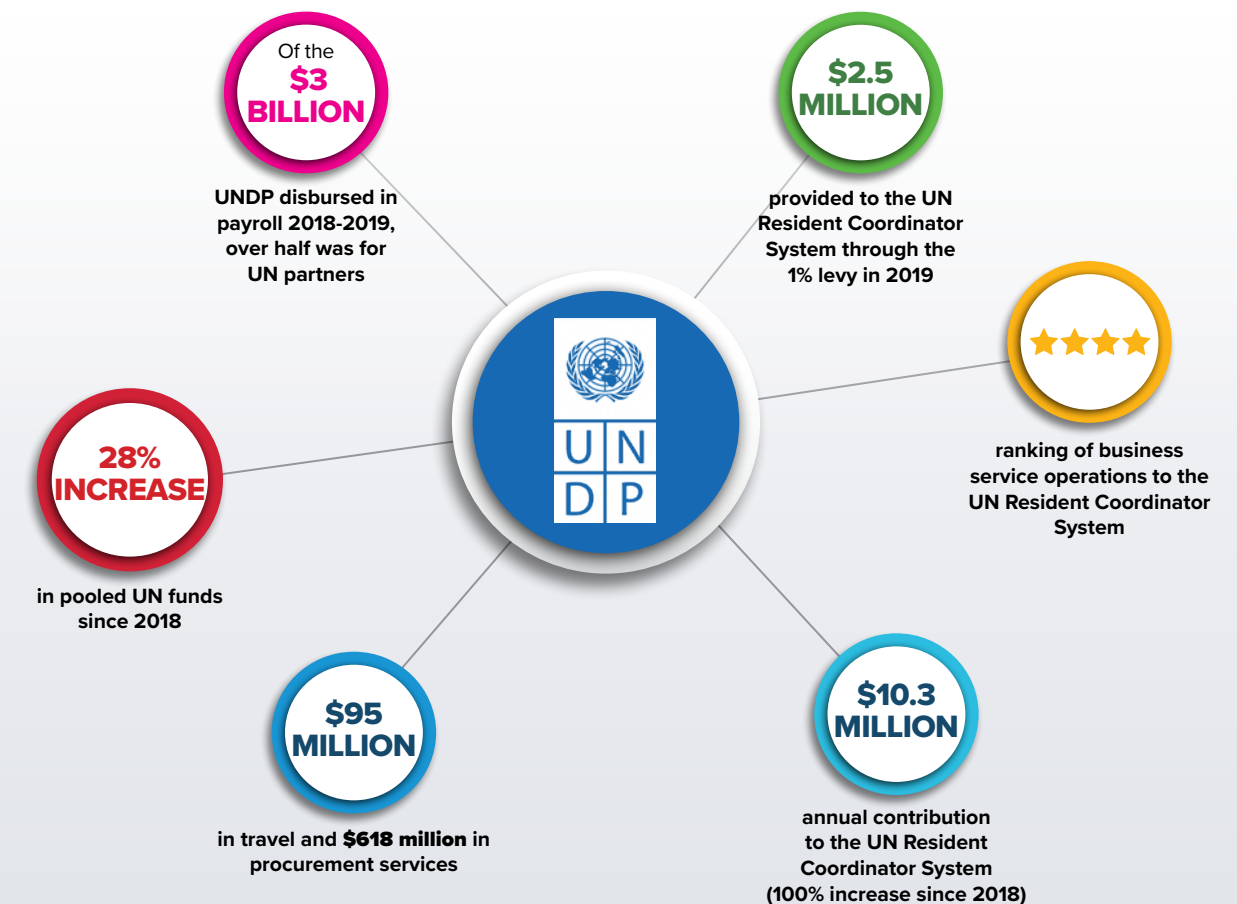
In 2019, UNDP established the SDG Finance Sector Hub to bring coherence and scale to our work on financing for the Sustainable Development Goals, with a range of services for public and private partners to choose from. These include: a UNDP-UN-European Union initiative to advance integrated national financing frameworks to align public financing to the Goals, already underway in 19 countries; an enhanced focus on insurance and risk finance to build resilience; and SDG Impact, which is accelerating investment by the private sector towards the SDGs.



# The UN family

In 2019, UNDP renewed and strengthened our bonds with our UN family members. From collaborating with the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) to strengthen resilience in the Lake Chad Basin in Africa, to our cutting-edge global SDG innovation initiative with UNICEF that drew 190 joint bids from around the world, to our ongoing work with the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN Development System agencies to strengthen health systems, we focus on tackling complexity through integrated development, just as the United Nations Development System reforms intended.

UNDP remains the largest single UN entity contributor to the Resident Coordinator System, as well as its operational backbone, delivering timely, quality services.





## UNDP hosts crucial functions for the UN's work around the world:


<p><b>\$1.25 billion</b> managed for the UN Development System</p>	<p><b>3 million</b> unbanked and underbanked people benefited from access to digital and other financial services</p>	<p><b>2,671</b> volunteers deployed in 2019, 17% more than in 2018</p>	<p><b>160 countries</b> recommitted to South-South and Triangular cooperation at BAPA+40 in Argentina</p>
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# Advocacy adds up

UNDP joined forces with a number of innovative partners in 2019, launching a variety of ongoing initiatives. With the help, expertise and networks of each partner, the level of exposure and impact across our development work keeps increasing.


 **The Lion's Share**  
To help tackle the crisis in nature, UNDP's co-founded fund asks advertisers to donate 0.5% of their media spend for each ad that features animals. It raised \$3.3 million and over \$10 million in in-kind contributions within the first year.

 **Samsung**  
UNDP and the leading producer of smartphones co-created the Samsung Global Goals mobile app to increase SDG awareness and fundraising, with Samsung matching donations 1:1. Available in 17 languages, it already has over 1 million active users.


 **TICAD VII**  
53 African countries gathered to showcase people, technology and innovation partnerships for development in Africa, co-organized by the Government of Japan, the African Union Commission, the World Bank and the United Nations.

 **iHeartMedia + Live Nation**  
Various joint projects were broadcast across iHeartMedia, with a US audience reach of 110 million a week. These included a campaign with Sustainable Partners, Inc., inviting artists, celebrities and influencers to produce their own SDG videos.

 **Microsoft**  
This global partnership is producing innovative, digital solutions for sustainability—including biodiversity, climate action and disaster risk reduction. UNDP is helping Microsoft to scale up its commitment to become carbon negative, while reducing our own emissions by 50%.

 **UN BioDiversity Lab**  
Working with NASA, UNEP and more than 30 other partners, this new spatial data facility has enabled 149 countries to overlay environmental indicators with key nature-dependent SDGs, providing insights that help governments achieve cross-cutting solutions.

 **Space Climate Observatory**  
Launched by the French government, jointly founded by UNDP, and attracting 22 space agencies, this important decision-making tool uses space data and UNDP local data to pinpoint, understand and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

 **Data4Human**  
The German Aerospace Center and UNDP are working together on space technologies and data science for development. AI and space data helps to monitor and accelerate post-disaster recovery, improve meteorological predictions, and better understand human mobility.

# Goodwill Ambassadors and celebrity advocates

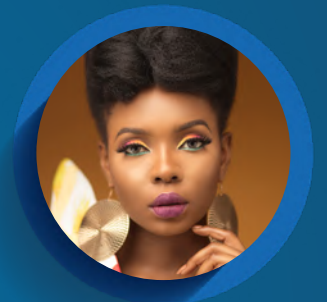
UNDP's Goodwill Ambassadors (GWAs) and other powerful influencers continue to bring their unique perspective and value to our work on the SDGs, driving awareness throughout the world. Highlights in 2019 included: the appointments of author and TV personality Padma Lakshmi and acclaimed eco-artist Olafur Eliasson; actor Nikolaj Coster-Waldau's climate action advocacy, including his visit to Peru's Ulcumano Ecolodge, which conserves 102 hectares of forest; and Nigeria's international Afropop star Yemi Alade, who collaborated with UNDP to mobilize action on climate, wildlife and equality.



Eco-artist  
Olafur Eliasson



Author and Television Host  
Padma Lakshmi



Afropop artist  
Yemi Alade



Nikolaj Coster-Waldau's climate action work in Peru

Photo: UNDP/Leonardo Fernandez for Getty Images

# Investment matters

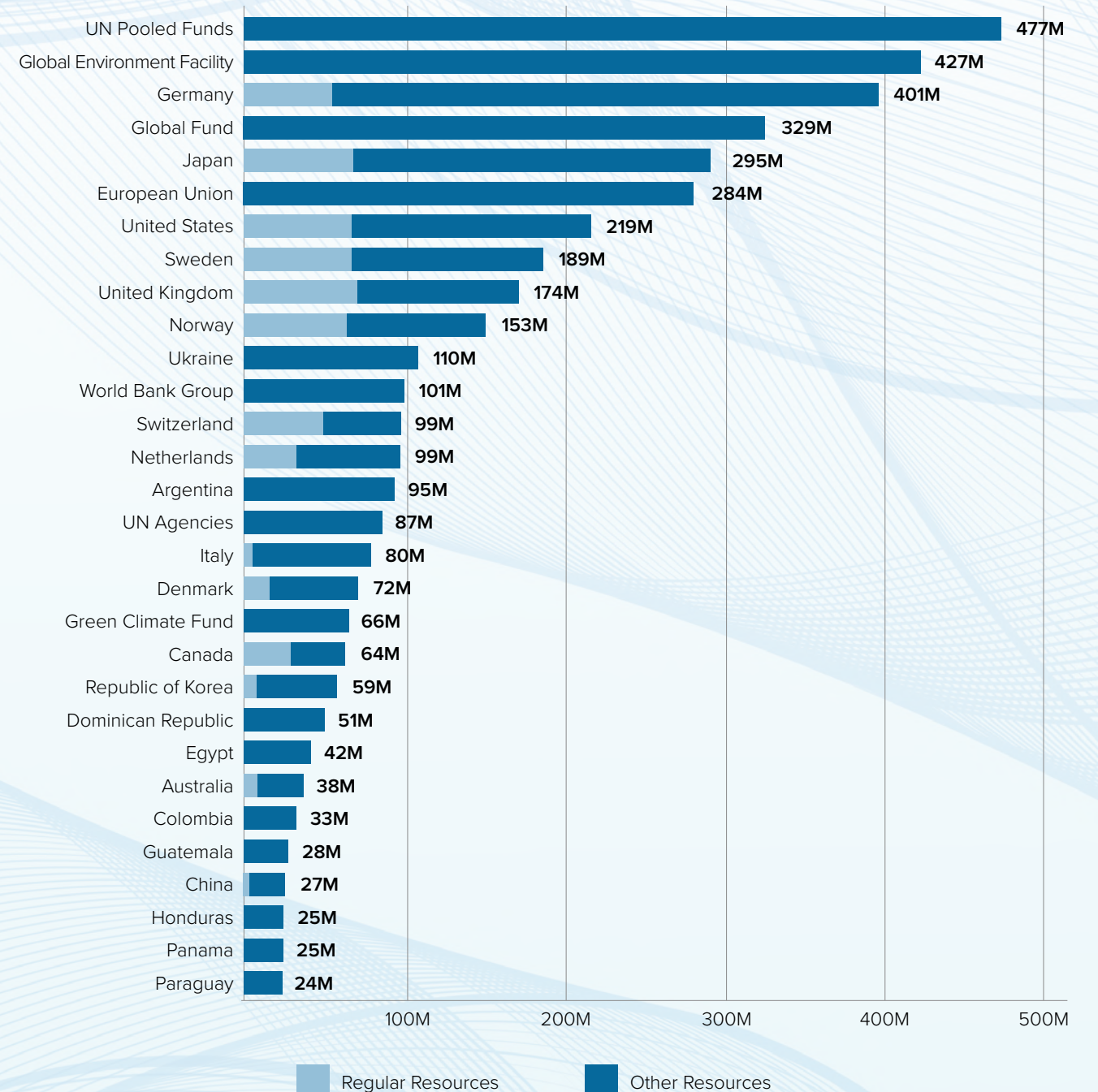
The UN's Decade of Action and the Secretary General's Funding Compact have elevated both the need and scope for financial investment across UNDP's critical development work.

## Top contributors

UNDP thanks all its funding contributors starting with the top 15, listed below.



## Top 2019 UNDP funding partners<sup>2</sup> (in USD millions)



## Highlights in 2019

- 54% increase in thematic Funding Windows**  
 UNDP received \$103 million for its thematic Funding Windows, the largest total since its inception in 2016
- 28% increase in engagement with pooled funds**  
 UNDP received \$477 million from UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) pooled funds, up from \$372 million in 2018
- \$1.82 billion in government cost-sharing contributions 2018-2019**  
 Governance work accounted for the largest share of government cost-sharing with UNDP in 2019
- \$5 million increase in core resources**  
 Increase in regular resource contributions in 2019 from \$624 million to \$629 million<sup>1</sup>
- 14% increase in multi-year pledges to regular or “core” resources**  
 \$363 million in contributions to UNDP's core resources came from multi-year pledges - a 14% increase compared to 2018
- 2% drop in the use of regular resources to run UNDP**  
 An additional \$13.2 million for development programming as a result

1. Includes \$12 million pledged but not yet received as at April 2020

2. All financial figures are provisional as of April 2020 and subject to change until the completion of audited financial statements.

# The importance of core resources

## Sustaining our multilateral, universal character

Core resources (unearmarked funds or regular resources) underpin UNDP's operational capacity and networks, and our presence at global, regional and country levels across 170 countries and territories. This allows us to provide on-demand support to national governments as part of broader UN System support.

With our sights set on Agenda 2030, we depend on sufficient and predictable core resources in order to work with our United Nations Development System partners to maximize our collective results on the ground. This includes fueling programmes where the need is greatest, from the poorest countries to pockets of poverty and vulnerability. Core's importance is recognized by the Secretary General's Funding Compact, with its goal of 30% of development resources as core funding.



Thank you to our top 10 core contributors of 2019:



# Awards and recognition

Here are some highlights from the past year that UNDP aims to build upon in the future.

- 2020 Global Health 50/50 Gender and Health Index**  
ranked UNDP as a "highest scorer"
- Best Practice on Leadership - Legal and Ethical Behavior**  
for UNDP's Ethics Code of Conduct, given by Business Performance Improvement Resource, New Zealand
- Apolitical 2019 Global Public Service Teams of the Year award**  
for evidence-based policy to the UNDP Accelerator Lab Network
- iati International Aid Transparency Index (IATI)**  
ranked UNDP 2<sup>nd</sup> globally, the highest-rated UN agency, with information on over 4,500 projects worth over \$4.5 billion
- CANNES LIONS Grand Prix at 2019 Cannes Lions Festival of Creativity**  
awarded to The Lions' Share fund, co-founded by UNDP
- FUTUREEDGE50 AWARDS FutureEdge 50 Award**  
for developing a Global Incident Response and Threat Hunting cybersecurity platform, highlighting its cutting-edge application of emerging technologies

## Human Development Report 2019

**Inequalities: beyond income, beyond averages, beyond today**

UNDP's Human Development Report is designed to drive conversation on the future of development. The 2019 report examines the way inequalities are changing and growing, helping development partners to keep improving. For UNDP, this includes adapting how we think about social protection in this era of COVID-19 and the climate crisis.





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