

INDIA-UN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP FUND

Year-in-review Report
October 2022



India-UN Development
Partnership Fund 

CREDITS

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As Fund Manager and Secretariat of the India-UN Fund, UNOSSC is pleased to present this annual report of the Fund. Heartfelt thanks and appreciation are expressed to all partners that continue to support, advance and collaborate in making this portfolio a great success.

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Cover image:

Reforestation and planting hope in the Kalinago Territory of the Commonwealth of Dominica.

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FOREWORD

The year 2022 marks the fifth anniversary of the India-UN Partnership Development Fund, a landmark moment to reflect on how the vision for South-South collaboration ingrained in the ambition and design of the Fund gained reach across the Global South and became transformational for partnering countries and communities.

The Fund not only made progress in achieving its bold agenda, meaningfully contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by and in support of developing countries, but it also rose to the occasion in the face of new and intensifying challenges: a pandemic lasting over two years; the enormous socioeconomic aftermath of lockdowns and supply-chain disruptions; a rapidly worsening climate crisis; and increased frequency of extreme weather events resulting in much devastation.

This year-in-review publication reports on the Fund's progress and provides an edited compilation of the human-interest stories that were published in the India-UN Fund quarterly newsletter. Those articles feature the people-centred, grass-roots, direct impact of the Fund activities, showing how the partners and projects supported by the Fund faced those challenges with ingenuity, determination and solidarity.

We thank all stakeholders who have contributed to those successes: partnering Governments with their resolve, UN entities and project teams that have worked hard to make positive changes a reality, and partnering communities that have not given up in the face of natural disasters, a pandemic and the erosion of progress in sustainable development, but rather have responded to the challenge to rebuild, combat COVID-19 and work towards socioeconomic recovery.

Board of Directors

The India-UN Fund Board of Directors is comprised of the Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations in New York, H.E. Mr. Ravindra Raguttahalli; the Joint Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Division of the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi, H.E. Mr. Srinivas Gotru; and the Director a.i. of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, Mr. Adel Abdellatif.



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Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations



H.E. Mr. Srinivas Gotru
Joint Secretary, United Nations Economic and Social Division, Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi



Mr. Adel Abdellatif
Director a.i., UNOSSC

ABOUT THE INDIA-UN DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP FUND

The India-UN Development Partnership Fund (India-UN Fund) promotes shared prosperity in the Global South. Jointly with the multilateral system, it contributes to developing countries' initiatives towards the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Established in 2017, the \$150 million Fund is supported and led by the Government of India, managed by the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) and implemented in collaboration with the United Nations development system and partnering Governments. It supports Southern-owned and -led, demand-driven and transformational sustainable development projects across the developing world, with a focus on least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS).

The India-UN Fund is a notable example of South-South cooperation undertaken jointly with the United Nations development system and that also has the ambition to strengthen international solidarity and multilateralism to address development challenges common across the human endeavour. The Fund's thematic reach spans all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with several initiatives addressing multiple Goals. The Fund has a strong focus on many of the global issues of the day, addressed through approaches that are the most relevant for the context of developing countries. These topical issues include climate resilience, environmental sustainability, renewable energy, gender equality, health and pandemic recovery, education and skills, livelihoods, infrastructure, water and sanitation, agricultural development and digital inclusion.

Commonwealth Window

The Commonwealth Window of the India-UN Fund aims to catalyse the achievement of the SDGs in the developing countries of the Commonwealth of Nations, a voluntary association of independent and equal sovereign States whose roots go back to the British Empire, even if today any country can join the modern Commonwealth.

The countries supported through this Commonwealth Window are in various parts of the world and include some of the most vulnerable member States of the Commonwealth. Technical and sustainable development and collective national development efforts among Commonwealth countries are particularly pertinent and beneficial given these countries' shared history, mutual respect, common values, and similar institutional, technical and practical instruments that continue to guide and influence their political, regulatory and cultural lives.

The Commonwealth Window also supports demand-driven, country-owned and transformational sustainable development projects. Since its establishment, the dedicated \$50 million fund has supported over 29 projects in 28 countries.



Promoting good agricultural practices within indigenous farming techniques in the Kalinago Territory, Dominica

India-UN Development Partnership Fund Overview

The India-UN Fund responds directly to the national priorities and development objectives of its partner countries, contributing financial resources and technical knowledge.

\$150 MILLION

pledged

\$74 MILLION

contributed to date

\$46 MILLION

allocated

66 PROJECTS SUPPORTED

58 PROJECTS COMPLETED OR UNDER IMPLEMENTATION

51 COUNTRIES

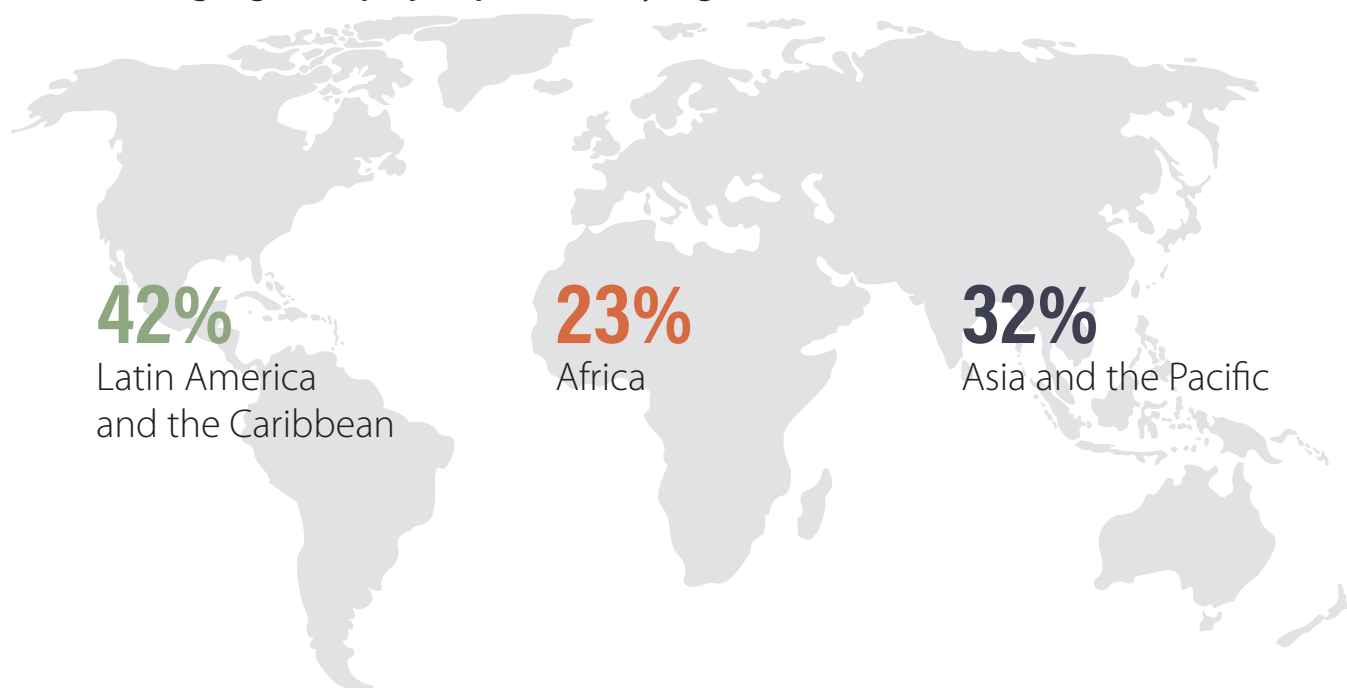
Partnering with:

29 small island developing States

18 least developed countries

10 landlocked developing countries

Distribution highlights of project portfolio, by region



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The principles of South-South cooperation underpin the activities of the Fund, with an emphasis on national ownership and leadership, development of local capacities, equality, mutual benefit, sustainability and non-conditionality.



INDIA-UN FUND GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

Enabling United Nations System South-South Action

UNOSSC is the United Nations system-wide coordinator and facilitator of South-South cooperation. It supports multilateral South-South policymaking processes; strengthens capacities of Member States to initiate, manage and implement South-South cooperation; and facilitates partner-led and -funded programmes. UNOSSC manages and serves as the Board of Directors Secretariat for the India-UN Fund as well as for a number of other South-South cooperation funds.

Twelve UN agencies, funds and programmes are currently implementing India-UN Fund projects. Through this unique partnership with the UN system, the Government of India is able to leverage the comparative advantages of the UN, particularly its worldwide presence, and its wealth of normative, thematic and programmatic experience. Through this partnership, the Fund is pleased to also support the multilateral system, its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and shared commitments and instruments to leave no one behind.

UN Implementing Partners



SDG 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA

Social innovation hubs for women's labour-market insertion and early-childhood care

“In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, a woman's work is never done until the family becomes a team.”

From the video produced by the project

The country is aware that it has a patriarchy problem. Unpaid domestic work is both undervalued and falls disproportionately on women (who on average complete 40 hours a week versus 15 for men). Unemployment among women is higher than among men, and the barriers to both accessing and maintaining decent employment among low-income women can be insurmountable. Through various efforts, including the establishment of the Ministry of Cultures, Decolonization and Depatriarchalization, the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia has set out to reverse this inequality.

A partnership between the Ministry of Development Planning and UNDP is taking a cradle-to-adulthood approach to improving women's access to decent work, especially among low-income women. Supported by the India-UN Development Partnership Fund (India-UN Fund), the project focuses on four key areas. At the policy level is the Plurinational Care Law, which seeks to improve tools for early childhood development for those up to eight months old and living in the most vulnerable urban and peri-urban areas. Innovations in both early-childhood care and the training to promote gender equity are being incubated. Finally, the project is supporting the development of a model for childcare facility management.

While the project policy and development efforts will continue through the end of 2022, a social media campaign is already up and running. Under the slogan “The family as a team makes everything easier”, the campaign depicts humorous yet true-to-life examples to raise awareness and change expectations of the roles of women in family life.

“This project will support a lot because it will improve the quality of life of our women. These women will have the opportunity to work knowing that their children will be well cared for,” said Ms. Miriam Gallardo, who supports the Tarija Municipal Government implementation of the programme.

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Development Planning;

Association of Women Councillors; UNDP

Project Budget:

\$1,000,000

Duration:

2020–ongoing



Project team members discuss the initiative with partners

SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture

SAINT LUCIA

Human security and sustainable development: A COVID-19 response

A swift COVID-19 response keeps food on the table for vulnerable households in Saint Lucia

As quickly as the COVID-19 pandemic turned the world upside down, the Government of Saint Lucia, with the support of the India-UN Fund and other partners, launched a programme to increase the number of recipients of the national Public Assistance Programme. The aim of the year-long initiative, titled Human Security and Sustainable Development: A COVID-19 Response, was to deliver cash transfers to more than 3,000 women, men and children to provide access to food and other essential needs for a six-month period. The programme was implemented by the World Food Programme (WFP).

“

WFP's support and that of its partners come at an important time. For the Government of Saint Lucia, meeting the needs of those most affected by the pandemic is a priority. We want to ensure that Saint Lucians have the opportunity to prioritize food, health supplies, educational materials for children and other needs in this unprecedented time.

Hon. Lenard Peter Montoute, Minister of Equity, Social Justice, Local Government and Empowerment

Saint Lucia's proactive efforts to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, including border closures that shut down tourism, its principal industry representing 65 per cent of gross domestic product, took a toll on the socioeconomic health of the country and its people, and the impact was swift. Within a month of implementing the border and other restrictions, a rapid assessment by WFP revealed that food prices had escalated 45 per cent, 21 per cent of people were skipping meals or reducing how much they ate, and an estimated 53 per cent of workers had either lost their jobs or had their salaries reduced. The mood of the people was equally grim, with 94 per cent predicting a negative impact on their livelihoods.

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Health and Wellness; Ministry of Equity, Social Justice, Local Government and Empowerment; UNDP; WFP

Project Budget:

\$1,000,000

Duration:

2020–2021 Completed



A beneficiary receiving cash assistance

With the resources from the India-UN Fund, the Government expanded the number of people receiving public assistance by 2,983 individuals from 794 households across the country. Actively seeking to alleviate the impact among disabled and vulnerable individuals, the Government also was able to top up assistance being provided to 283 people living with HIV (from 79 households), bringing the total number of people benefiting from the support to 3,221.

Approximately 86 per cent of recipients used their cash primarily for food. The next –most– popular categories were covering utility bills and medical expenditures. Following the distribution of the funds, food consumption in 90 per cent of households rebounded to acceptable levels. For Shanet, a single mother of seven and small-scale farmer, the Government support was a lifeline for her and her children. *“When the Government gives help, I do what the children need. I get them what they need, not what they want; I can maintain food supplies and things they need for school. They are grateful for it,”* she said.

Shanet was not the only Saint Lucian grateful for the support. A post-distribution survey indicated a 92 per cent satisfaction rate among recipients. This project was instrumental in expanding the number of households assisted under the public programme. This, in turn, helped the Government to reach an additional 1,000 households eligible for longer-term funding as part of a separate multi-donor initiative.

This project also complemented another India-UN Fund project with the Ministry of Health and UNDP to bring two ventilators, along with vital protective equipment, to support the country’s COVID-19 response and reduce the impact that subsequent waves could have on the country.



A public assistance office distributes cash to recipients



SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Bringing high and low technology to the COVID-19 pandemic

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Health; PAHO

Project Budget:

\$1,000,000

Duration:

2021–ongoing

Robotics and telemedicine expand access and increase safety of health-care services

Thanks to this India-UN Fund project, robotics and telemedicine will enable doctors and nurses in Trinidad and Tobago to expand health care to the national population. This initiative brings opportunities for digital technology to have a transformational impact on the country's public health system. Supported by the Ministry of Health and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), it is providing eight mobile health-care robots to public hospitals and facilitating the deployment of telemedicine services.

In the spirit of South-South cooperation, this project is learning from an experience in Rwanda, where wheeled robotic systems have been used successfully in the medical system. It will also use best practices created through the experiences of other developing countries that adopted this technology into their health-care services.



Medical robots



A health centre participating in the programme

Mobile health-care robots will perform various tasks from simple medical procedures such as preliminary patient registration and evaluation of vital signs, to communication with patients, including persons with disabilities, migrants and refugees who speak a foreign language, through software with translation and accessible capabilities.

The introduction of the telemedicine services, which will benefit from the broad Internet and mobile network coverage in the country, will remotely and securely provide medical services to community members not wishing to expose themselves to face-to-face interactions during the pandemic.

These new technologies in the health-care system create the opportunity for access to new medical capabilities, notably where specialized providers are not available within communities, while also supporting the development of the capacities of health-care providers. For that reason, the project began by mapping the existing health-care capacities and making proposals for the creation of new ones.

The project has developed various tools for assessing the regulatory challenges to the roll-out of these outcomes, defining the digital environment needed for these technologies, and helping health institutions to assess their organizational and technical maturity in offering telemedicine services. It is being undertaken in partnership with the University of Trinidad and Tobago, which will propose the specifications for the health service robots and the infrastructure, technology and human resource requirements for their effective deployment.

The Ministry of Health fully endorses the project that will deliver a pilot telemedicine system; eight health-care robots that can register and screen health-centre patients, enabling personnel to devote more time to the neediest cases; 55,000 washable masks; and 50 hand hygiene stations. *"The Ministry of Health looks forward to working with all stakeholders involved in taking this project forward,"* Mr. Asif Ali, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health, stated.

The project has had a promising beginning, with support from a range of stakeholders who are confident that the successful introduction of these new technologies will support the medical community and population of Trinidad and Tobago not only through the pandemic but also in years to come.



A health-centre visitor

BELIZE

Strengthening clinical management of COVID-19 patients and reducing transmission risk among health workers

“Don’t doubt - verify” invites the communication campaign on COVID-19 in Belize

Beyond acquiring medical supplies and equipment, the Government of Belize is capitalizing on the India-UN Fund support to address the “infodemic” through public-service announcements. This and other key messages to raise awareness about COVID-19 and counter misinformation among specific target populations were developed addressing COVID-19 prevention, variants, vaccine benefits, safety and risks, misinformation and prioritization. Communication products were made available in English, Spanish, Garifuna, Q’eqchi and Mopan Maya to reach a broad population, including vulnerable and remote communities.

“The virus that causes COVID-19 changes or mutates as it moves around the world. Because of these mutations, the virus can become easier to catch. But the variants can still be detected with the lab tests that are being used in Belize. More importantly, the variants can be controlled with the same COVID protocols we all know, so continue to wash hands with soap and water for at least 40 seconds; wear a mask that covers mouth and nose; avoid large crowds, especially in small, enclosed spaces; practise physical distancing. And when it’s your turn, choose to get vaccinated,”
says one of these public-service announcements.

Beyond the public information campaign, the project has also provided 20 patient monitors, 7 electrocardiogram machines, 10 delivery beds, 12 emergency trolleys, two biomedical waste trolleys, 12 transfer stretchers, 10 suction machines, 15 incubators, 2 autoclaves for medical waste management with capacity respectively for 400 and 300 litres, and 46 automated hospital beds.

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Health; PAHO

Project Budget:

\$1,000,000

Duration:

2020–2021 Completed



INFODEMIC
COVID-19

What is Misinformation?
Misinformation is wrong information that people believe

What is Disinformation?
Disinformation is false information that people use to trick others


Avoid the Infodemic:

- Trust only reliable sources
- Check facts before sharing
- Don't believe everything on social media
- When in doubt, don't share


India-UN Development Partnership Fund | PAHO | COVID-19 RESPONSE

Countering COVID-19 misinformation

COVID-19 Vaccine





When diseases like COVID-19 don't have a cure, doctors rely on vaccines



Vaccines contain parts of a virus that are too weak to get you sick but are strong enough to activate the immune system

When the real virus enters your body, the immune system will destroy it

COVID-19 vaccines prevent people from getting severely sick and from dying

Trust only reliable sources of information

Misinformation is wrong information that people believe

Be aware of fake news

Disinformation is false information that people use to trick others



Avoid misinformation and disinformation:

- Rely on the Ministry of Health and Wellness (MoHW) and the Pan American Health Organization/ World Health Organization (PAHO/WHO)
- Check facts before sharing
- When in doubt, don't share
- Be wary of fake profiles on social media




Public information campaign banners



Medical equipment handover ceremony

SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

DOMINICA

Resilient rehabilitation of Salisbury Educational Facility post-Hurricane Maria

Post-hurricane-rehabilitated school in Dominica also provides early warning facility to the neighbouring community

On 18 September 2017, Hurricane Maria evolved into a category 5 storm and hit the Caribbean island of Dominica. The entire population of 73,000 was affected; 27 lives were lost and 31 persons were reported missing. Schools, such as the Salisbury Educational Facility, suffered severe damage, and the conditions were not suitable for teaching. Health concerns also arose, associated with mosquito-borne illnesses, mold, and the presence of rodents in and around the school building.

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Education and Human

Resource Development; UNDP

Project Budget:

\$1,000,000

Duration:

2018–2020 Completed



Salisbury Education Facility before and after the hurricane

Thanks to India-UN Fund support, the Government and the United Nations development system collaborated to rebuild the vital education infrastructure, applying the “building-back-better” principle. That approach included the enforcement of building codes, use of adequate construction materials, and the application of proper building reconstruction techniques to meet wind and seismic standards. Additionally, an early warning system was developed, which will not only directly benefit the school population but also the surrounding community of Salisbury through notification of impending hazards. The early warning system is linked to the national warning system and comprises a loudspeaker so that warning messages can be communicated from the Principal’s office.



On the job

The project reduced disruptions to the learning and development of boys and girls by restoring access to a safe education facility. It also reduced beneficiaries’ vulnerability to extreme weather events and future disruptions through the establishment of the early warning system.

Supported by the India-UN Fund with \$1 million, the project was successfully completed in September 2020. It directly benefits 109 students (47 boys and 62 girls), while the new early warning system protects the entire Salisbury community, estimated at 2,590 people.

The project benefited from the active participation of the Ministry of Education, Human Resource Planning, Vocational Training and National Excellence; the Ministry of Planning, Economic Development, Climate Resilience, Sustainable Development and Renewable Energy; the Government of Cuba; Engineers Without Borders; UNDP Barbados; and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States.

Rehabilitating the Facility



TIMOR-LESTE

Leveraging ICT to improve education and skills

Innovation Bootcamp in Oe-Cusse: ICT literacy rapidly empowers students

This education project, implemented by the Timor-Leste Ministry of Education, the regional government of Oe-Cusse and UNDP Timor-Leste, sought to enhance quality, relevant and inclusive education for children and young people of Oe-Cusse, contributing to the realization of their right to education and access to technology.

When the information and communications technology (ICT) lab was installed in secondary school in the remote district of Oesilo in the distant Timor-Leste enclave of Oe-Cusse, a 17-year-old, Norberta Lopes Esa Pires, jumped at the opportunity with enthusiasm, since it was beneficial not only for her own development but also for the community:

“Since the establishment of the school’s computer lab, I personally think that it has brought positive impact to me and the community in my village. Due to lack of computer facilities, my ICT skills were very limited, but since the lab was installed, I have learned some basic computer applications such as PowerPoint, Excel and Microsoft Word. My parents and the community are very happy, too, as now I can help the community with skills that I gained, simple tasks such as drafting and designing the letter for some community event, without having to write it manually on paper anymore.”

Norberta Lopes Esa Pires

The ICT Innovation Bootcamp and Exhibition 2021 gathered 120 competitively selected students and 30 teachers from 27 schools (primary, secondary and vocational) throughout Oe-Cusse. For a few days, this remote enclave became a vibrant, innovative, creative-knowledge, robotic and Internet-of-things (IoT) technology-generating hub. The goal of the Bootcamp was to educate students on becoming potential social entrepreneurs by solving existing problems and developing real-life solutions with workable market potential. The Bootcamp was a way to transform students’ ideas into innovative business concepts for the most motivated teams. Major activities included training and workshops, competitions and an exhibition. The international trainers from India (Robolab Technologies Pvt. Ltd.) provided online training in robotic and IoT technology using Arduino equipment; simultaneously the national trainers provided hands-on training in robotics and website design.

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Education; regional government of Oe-Cusse; UNDP

Project Budget:

\$881,194

Duration:

2019–2020 Completed



Bootcamp participants



Robotics class

Norberta had computer class at least twice a week and represented her school at the ICT Innovation Bootcamp and Exhibition 2021. *“Before, I didn’t know how to do research on the Internet. With the skills I gained, I researched and presented information about pollution, especially global pollution affecting our planet. At this moment, our planet is in danger. What I learned during this programme and in this camp gives me enormous advantages in applying for university or work in the future,”* Norberta said excitedly.



“In the twenty-first century, most of the students are already familiar with the computer. Having ICT training also influenced my employability and my career as a teacher. Using ICT skills, we improved the quality of our teaching and preparation for classes, also the quality of education,” Mr. Aleixo Coa, an information technology teacher in Oe-Cusse, observed.

Robotics class



After completing the two-day training, a workshop and competitions, students showcased their model projects at the exhibition. A total of 30 students were designated as the winners and runner-up for five competition categories: basic and advanced ICT skills, website design, robotics, and innovation using IoT. More than 200 students, teachers, parents and government staff visited the exhibition and participated in the closing ceremony. In a speech, Mr. Venkat Narayanan, Counsellor and Commercial Representative at the Embassy of India to the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, expressed his appreciation to the students and project team and visited the exhibition virtually.



Robotics class



Computer Lab

"Before, we had difficulties in training students in computer subjects, but afterwards, with support from UNDP and the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, a computer lab was established in our school. It is benefiting me and the teachers to improve our teaching by using ICT applications. It is benefiting our students, since before, they had little opportunity to have practical ICT training, and now they even participated in ICT competitions, where they learned and gained lots of experience in basic robotics, creating a video and how to do a presentation with Microsoft PowerPoint. The community is also very happy, as the village got support with such a facility, where their children can learn and develop at no extra cost. So I think the project has a very positive impact for the school, teachers and the community," said Mr. Jose Luis Mala, Director of the secondary public school in Oesilo, commenting on the project.



The regional Secretary of Education awards winners of the Innovation Bootcamp and Exhibitions 2021 competitions

NICARAGUA

Strengthening institutional capacities for successful integration of children with disabilities into the education system

Master's degree in disability to tackle social inclusivity issues in Nicaragua

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Education; National Autonomous University of Nicaragua; UNICEF

Project Budget:

\$1,000,000

Duration:

2020–ongoing

More than 15 per cent of the Nicaraguan population suffers from some form of disability. While the causes vary, the principal reasons include deficiencies in perinatal care as well as limited medical resources for pre- and post-natal care. The impact on school-age children is often devastating, with either a shortage, or no availability, of either education or therapeutic options that would enable them to integrate into society and be self-sufficient.

While advocating for and institutionalizing inclusive education were essential elements for success, such success could only be possible if the country's educational professionals were empowered with the knowledge and resources to effectively meet the special needs of disabled students.

In 2020, the Ministry of Education, the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua and UNICEF, with the financial support of the India-UN Fund, designed the country's first master's degree programme in disability, with emphasis on inclusive education. The programme consists of three modules in which participants will have the opportunity to acquire tools relating to specialization in research, implementation of inclusive methodologies, the use of neuroscience to create diverse environments, and the design of curricula that consider the inclusion of children with disabilities in the school system.

“ This master's degree is the result of the strategic alliance between academia, institutions and organizations to create innovative solutions to the social challenges that we face in the country and will help us to have more inclusive teachers and schools, ”

said Mr. Luis Lobato, Vice-Rector General of the University of Nicaragua.



Members of the first cohort of the master's degree programme in disability, with emphasis on inclusive education

Now in the first cohort of the two-year programme, 37 teachers, school directors and pedagogical advisers from 15 schools are participating and will acquire tools to apply the inclusive educational model, which recognizes the different needs of each child. The India-UN Fund is also supporting improvements in infrastructure, which will serve as a model for inclusion across the country.

“Achieving an inclusive school system requires teachers who are prepared and able to apply the inclusive and child-centred educational model, which recognizes the different needs of each child. Contributing to the preparation of teachers is a key objective, which is considered one of the factors with the greatest influence on the development of more inclusive schools and communities and that improves the results of educational centres,” said Mr. Antero Pina, Representative of UNICEF Nicaragua.

“Disability represents one of the main factors of exclusion to education. That is why the Ministry of Education is working every day to implement actions that promote participation and overcome barriers to learning,” said Ms. Nora Cuadra, Director of the Planning Directorate of the Ministry of Education.

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

PARAGUAY

Prevention of adolescent pregnancy and sexual abuse/violence against girls and adolescents through an intersectoral approach

Ending pregnancies and sexual violence against children and adolescent girls in Paraguay

Paraguay has made significant strides in its efforts to ensure both the right to family planning and a life free of violence. It has passed laws and implemented policies, programmes and protocols all to ensure access to sexual and reproductive health and a life safe from sexual abuse for all.

This project is poised to make important strides in the Government efforts to ensure a childhood free of unwanted pregnancy and sexual violence for girls. Supported by funding from the India-UN Fund, it is a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Public Health and Social Welfare; the Ministry of Education and Sciences; the Ministry of Children and Adolescents; the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security; and UNFPA. It focuses on Caaguazú in the south central region of the country.

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Public Health and Social

Welfare; Ministry of Children and

Adolescents; Ministry of Education and

Sciences; Ministry of Labour, Employment

and Social Security; UNFPA

Project Budget:

\$600,000

Duration:

2019–ongoing



Girls and boys participating in an awareness-raising activity

Finding effective ways for adults to communicate with youth without having the latter roll their eyes can be difficult. In an unusual twist, the project team engaged families early on in the creative process to ensure that the materials and activities would be appealing to young people and in ways that they could understand and appreciate and with which they could feel comfortable, such as comic books, stories, games, radio programmes, and video and song contests.

Seven schools in Caaguazu, reaching 1,500 students, their families and 40 teachers, were targeted for the programme. Educational talks on the prevention of all forms of violence, including online, were followed by a youth video contest aimed at fostering the creativity of adolescents using tools provided by Tik Tok, a digital platform for producers of short videos. The contest promoted the right of young people to live a life free of violence and sexual abuse and develop the ability to defend their rights and express their opinions so that they could enjoy equal opportunities and freedom from all forms of discrimination.

The project team complemented its student focus by working with institutions to provide training in good-care practices using a psychosocial approach to victims. That included working with authorities to coordinate care and increase the awareness of forensic technical teams and the health system. Health personnel were regularly updated on the related procedures of the Ministry of Health. Furthermore, a focus on the Government jurisdictional system is intended to optimize inter-institutional responses to sexual abuse and violence so as to better protect the rights of children and adolescents.

On 24 June 2021, the mayoral candidates all signed “Ten commitments to the children and adolescents by candidates for mayor and municipal board of the City of Caaguazu”, a living testament to the seriousness with which the municipality regards this effort. Among the 10 pledges are to (a) invest or increase existing investments in resources to address issues of vulnerability for children and adolescents as well as the protection and restitution of their rights; (b) provide professional training to combat child labour and human trafficking among young people; and (c) create a platform to ensure that the children and adolescents of indigenous peoples receive care from the institutions that are charged with ensuring their protection.



The great challenge that remains is to ensure that 100 per cent of victims reach health care within 72 hours, especially given the remoteness and often difficulty in reaching areas of the Department. The team has been coordinating with responsible institutions and using a smartphone application to link people across the Department with the National Protection System for Children and Adolescents. The team’s strategy has been so successful overall that it was selected as an example at the regional launch of *International Technical and Programmatic Guidance on Out-of-school Comprehensive Sexuality Education* that was developed by UNFPA in collaboration with UNAIDS, UNESCO, UNICEF and WHO.



Comic books help to make information easy to understand.

SAO TOME AND PRINCIPE

Support for acceleration of family planning

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Health; UNFPA

Project Budget:

\$550,000

Duration:

2018–2021 Completed

More options and easier access are bringing quality family planning to Sao Tome and Principe

With a population of approximately 220,000 (the second-smallest in Africa) but with a high fertility rate of 93 births per 1,000 young women 15 to 19 years of age, the island country of Sao Tome and Principe recognized that empowering women and families through increased access to modern birth control and family planning support could be instrumental in helping it to meet its commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals while at the same time ensuring the health and well-being of its citizens.



A busy day at a mobile clinic

The Government, with an investment of \$350,000 from the India-UN Fund, thus partnered with UNFPA to launch a nationwide effort to increase the use of modern family planning among the childbearing-age population. Part of the National Family Planning Plan (2018–2021), the project also fed into the National Reproductive, Maternal, Neonatal, Child, Adolescent and Nutrition Health Plan (2019–2023), an integral component of the Government's commitments concerning SDG 3 on good health and well-being.

In three years, the project achieved its goals. All 38 health units (hospitals, centres and posts) throughout the country were equipped with the medical equipment needed to provide high-quality family planning, including long-acting contraceptives. Residents in six districts participated in health clinics that provided family planning guidance, general clinic services, HIV screening and civil registration of births. More than 140 health-care providers received training in the delivery of contraceptive methods, and, through three mobile clinics, family planning services expanded to remote communities in the northern, southern and central regions of the country.

Most importantly, almost 50 per cent of women of childbearing age – more than 50,480 women and adolescents ages 15 to 49 years – are now using contraception, 46 per cent of whom opted for long-lasting modern methods; this is up from 37.4 per cent prior to the launch of the programme.



Receiving family planning advice at a mobile clinic

“The implant is the most popular method, especially for teenagers and young girls. It helps them study and make their dreams come true,” said Nurse Sortiana Lima.

“This mobile clinic is a reinforcement for our team that travels to the field with pregnancy maintenance services, child deworming, vaccination, care for pregnant mothers, among others. The service provided is integrated,” Health Delegate Bonanza Aragao stated.

“There are stages of a journey where the aspect of information and communication for behaviour change is fundamental. We have a very young population, and it is important that the structures linked to sexual and reproductive health are very well leveraged not only by the Ministry of Health but by all those involved in the process,” Dr. Edgar Neves, Minister of Health, commented while attending one of the health fairs.

The decision as to whether and when to have children is at the heart of family planning programmes but like a pebble in a pond, the ripple effects on the health and well-being of a woman, a family and even a country are much greater.

Certainly, contraceptives prevent unwanted pregnancies and reduce the number of abortions and sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS but they also save lives by significantly reducing the number of maternal deaths. This is especially important among adolescent girls ages 15 to 19 years for whom complications with pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death. Studies show that by strengthening a woman’s household autonomy, the family’s economic security is similarly strengthened. Countries also benefit through the realization of a demographic dividend and improved economic productivity as a result of increasing the workforce coupled with a falling number of dependents.

“ I advise women like me to do family planning. This way you avoid having too many children, which brings benefits to women’s health and children’s education, ”

said Djamilia, a mother of three living in the Lobata District, who does not wish to have more children for the time being.



Djamila with her daughter

SDG 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

MALI

Six improved village hydraulic systems in the District of Bamaki and surroundings, Sikasso and Segou

Now the family is clean and healthy since access to the water supply has been improved

“We were really running out of water. We could do 4 to 5 hours to fill 4 to 5 cans at the water pump. Sometimes we would leave without anything,”

said Ms. Mariam Coulibaly (pictured) from Dialakorougou, Mali.

“There were days when we would spend the night by the wells or in front of the only water tower that existed at the time just to get some drinking water. With all this, sometimes we couldn’t find any,” Ms. Assitan Coulibaly stated.

Lack of economic development, high population growth, progressive degradation of the livelihoods of rural populations in line with environmental degradation, and intensified climate vulnerabilities over several decades in countries of the Sahel have contributed to rural exodus into cities. In Mali, these trends are exacerbated by the rise in the national population growth rate from 2.2 per cent in 1998 to 3.6 per cent according to the results of the 2009 census, with 5 per cent of the population living in the city of Bamako. There was a significant decline in the national rate of access to safe drinking water from 76 per cent in 2010 to 68 per cent in 2017 due to delays in investments in the water and sanitation sector.

Thus the Ministry of Energy and Water and UNDP, with funding from the India-UN Fund, constructed drinking water wells and related structures for pumping and distributing drinking water, that is, hydraulic systems, in the District of Bamako and surrounding areas, Sikasso and Segou. The project aimed to improve access to drinking water, thereby enhancing the health conditions of the Malian population in partnering regions. In total, the project built 6 hydraulic systems for 6 villages, including 19 drinking-water distribution points.

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Energy and Water; UNDP

Project Budget:

\$500,000

Duration:

2018–2020 Completed



Gathering water from the local pump

Project activities also included production of detailed engineering studies for the works; construction of the drinking water wells, fountains and solar-powered pumping stations; and community organization to facilitate good management of the physical structures built by the project.

"This is a hydraulic system consisting of a 15-cubic-metre tank on a 7-metre tower with panels to feed the pump into the drilling. There is also a small house that serves as a guardian's lodge and a lamp post next to it that is used for light at night. Each system has 3 fountains, except in Dialakorobougou, which has 4," explained M. Guindo, Technical Director of Hydraulic.

"After the hydraulic system was set up, we were trained, and we established a 10-member committee to ensure good management of the fountain," said Mr. Lamine Dembele from the Village Management Committee. *"We sell a can at 10 CFA francs and the barrel at 100 CFA francs, which is incredible today because before, the barrel was sold at 600 CFA francs,"* explained Mr. Souleymane Diabate, a fountain maker.

"Where there's water, there's life. Now we have it at our disposal at all times; even at night we can use it easily and take a peaceful shower. The whole family is clean and healthy now," said Ms. Tenimba Coulibaly from Kouliniko.



The hydraulic system that feeds the pump



Clean running water

SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all

CAMEROON

Scaling up rural household use of renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies

Renewable energy solutions bring the light of hope to municipalities in the North and Far North

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Water and Energy; UNESCO

Project Budget:

\$1,000,000

Duration:

2020–ongoing

Suddenly it turns dark in Maroua's, (North Cameroon), streets as the local dwellers are having their evening snack of roasted fish. It is another power failure, and the restaurant owners are busy pulling out their rechargeable lamps, candles and torches to once again brighten up their businesses. These power cuts disrupt the social and economic life of the inhabitants of this town and could be unbearable for some dwellers, based on the possibility of living in a total blackout.

"Power cuts are common in this town, and they can last for 4 hours," said Evelyn, standing behind her mini barbecue on which she roasts fish every evening for a living. She added that the power outages trigger the fear of Boko Haram, which is still present around, affecting her business, but even in those conditions, she feels privileged compared to those who live in the surrounding rural areas.

“Can you imagine living in a community which has never experienced electricity-produced light? There are several villages like that around here,”

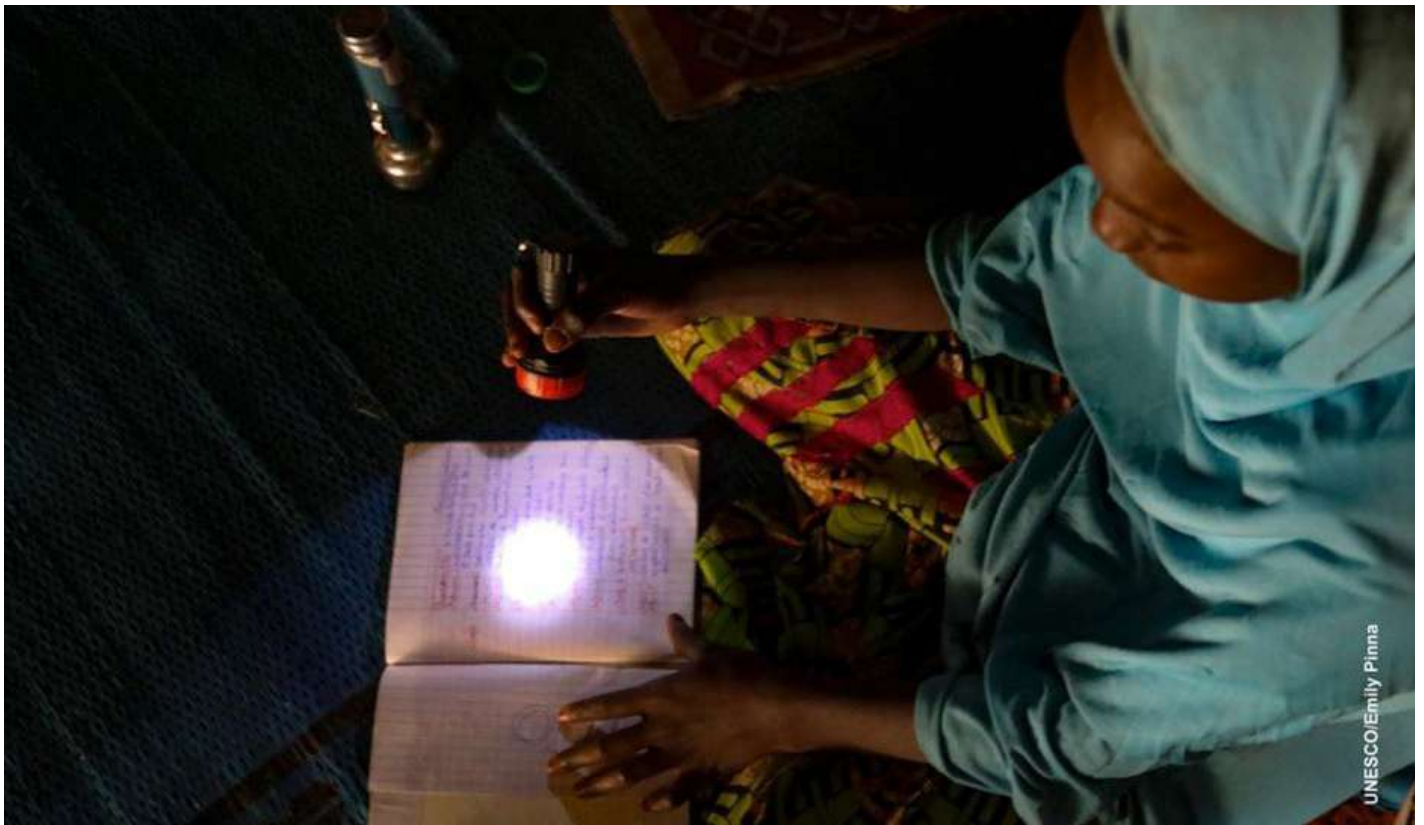
confirmed Babah, a fish consumer, sitting on a wooden table in front of Evelyn's barbecue.

Indeed, a few kilometres from Maroua, there are hundreds of villages that have never known any kind of electric illumination; this situation gravely affects education and health opportunities for the villagers.

Those off-grid communities are part of the population that UNESCO is targeting with renewable energy solutions as part of its project, funded by the India-UN Fund, to enable the use of renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies in households in the three communes of Bibemi, Poli and Zina in the North and Far North of Cameroon.

"If I could just have a light bulb in the middle of my dealership, I would be very grateful. This will help my children and my neighbours," said Mr. Adamou Hamadou, a father of eight children from a small village of Bibemi.





Studying at night

"We don't have electric power. Our children study with flashlights. We expect a lot from this help," said a mother from Djaloumi village.

This project places women at the heart of the activities to promote renewable energy technologies, since women are at the forefront of most energy consumption in the households. They bear the enormous responsibility of finding firewood, fetching water, and looking after the house and the children. Thus, this project strengthens women's capacities to become community leaders by teaching them different skills in the promotion of energy-efficient technologies.

In addition to the core training for the community representatives selected to become trainers, five other women, named "Solar Mamas", gained expertise at Barefoot College in Dakar, Senegal, in the production of various renewable energies, all using locally available materials. Those women will become renewable energy champions for their communities.





Susan, 56, a widow and grandmother with nine children in Bikale on the outskirts of Bibemi, has revealed that she intends to expand her cheese and yogurt business once solar panels are installed in her home.

"I am so happy because my family will have a better life, since my children will be able to work at night and I will be able to produce and store yogurts more easily in the refrigerator," she said, sharing her hopes.

Susan and seven of her children

Local women bringing firewood to the village



A group of women from Zina, returning from their regular chores of collecting wood, explained that if they could reduce the amount of wood needed for cooking through the use of improved stoves, then they would have more time to devote to other activities.

At the community level, the joy is evident as families eagerly await their dream of having electricity in their homes come true by December 2021 owing to this \$1 million project. In the first phase of the project, the use of photovoltaic systems, improved stoves, ecological briquettes and the CM2013 bio-digesters would be popularized among 1,000 households (about 6,000 people), eventually benefiting 12,000 people by the end of 2021.

The project is implemented jointly with partners with complementary skills such as local NGOs and the Ecole Polytechnique de Maroua and also involves schools and communities in educational activities for sustainable energy solutions. According to Mr. Mohamadou Alidou of the National Advanced School of Engineering of Maroua, *“At the moment, Cameroon is facing a very serious problem of energy deficiency and this gets worse in the Northern part of Cameroon, so this project will enable us to use our natural energy potential, which is the sun. Renewable energy is at the heart of most development projects, justifying why the education sector is also supporting this project.”*

Cameroon has significant potential in renewable energy sources, in particular with a large solar exposure and large biomass resources. Access to energy remains precarious, however, especially in rural areas. This precariousness is more severe in the regions of the North and the Far North, where the electrification rate is very low – less than 22 per cent – and where more than 95 per cent of households use wood fires for cooking.

Aware of the impact of the energy sector on the environment and on climate change, Cameroon has opted for sustainable development by planning to increase the share of renewable energy in its energy supply to 25 per cent by 2035. The proportion of the population with access to hydroelectric and thermal energy is less than 10 per cent and less than 1 per cent uses renewable energy, yet the country has significant potential in renewable energy sources, particularly in the North and Far North regions.

This project is seeking ways to promote the use of alternative energy sources such as solar, eco-friendly charcoal, sustainable stoves and biofuel production and contribute to Cameroon’s efforts to achieve SDG 7 by striving to reduce gaps in access to affordable energy and contributing to the vision of providing services for reliable and modern energy by 2030 in line with the 2030 Agenda.



Solar panel on thatch

SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Strengthening national health capacities and reducing the negative socioeconomic and human development impacts of COVID-19

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Public Works and Housing;

UNDP

Project Budget:

\$1,000,000

Duration:

2018–2020 Completed

Micro- and small enterprises go digital: Sustaining livelihoods through the pandemic

COVID-19 has forced many societal changes and has accelerated the need for inclusive, sustainable digital transformation in the Caribbean region. Businesses, specifically micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) that are critical to the socioeconomic growth of the region, have been hit hard by the pandemic and require support to transform their operations so as to recover and grow.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda launched a grant programme for MSMEs operating in Antigua and Barbuda, whose owners were desirous of transitioning their businesses to an online or digital model and providing safe deliveries. The programme, which was implemented in collaboration with the India-UN Fund, UNOSSC and UNDP, provided around \$8,500 to MSMEs in the agriculture (agribusiness, farming, fishery and livestock), manufacturing, hospitality (events and catering, food and beverage), health and tourism sectors. Those resources were used for activities such as developing or subscribing to an e-commerce website, purchasing a domain name and web hosting platform for an e-commerce website, and facilitating online merchant payment arrangements with a financial institution.



WIDLANDE PIERRE
OWNER & MANAGER OF CREPE IT ANTIGUA



Speaking about the importance of the programme, H.E. Mr. Walton Webson, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations in New York, noted that *“this project once again showed the importance of the South-South cooperation and the full engagement of the UN system. Thanks to the Government of India and UNDP for responding to my request to repurpose the funds to support the effort of the recovery and place the youth in economic activities and provide equipment and material for the health response to the pandemic.”* He went on to say that *“we began this project a year ago, firstly with an urgent response to the health challenge of COVID-19 by collaborating with UNDP and the Government of India through the South-South cooperation project by reshaping this response to meet both the health and recovery challenges. UNDP responded speedily by assisting us in purchasing equipment and health supplies for the hospital. Once the health challenge was addressed, we turned our attention to supporting individuals, especially the youth, in the recovery process. The project also reached out and provided small grants to some displaced workers.”*

Ms. Valerie Cliff, UNDP Resident Representative for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean, noted that *“MSMEs have made significant contributions to Antigua and Barbuda’s socioeconomic growth, and we recognize that the pandemic has critically impacted these businesses and amplified their unique vulnerabilities. Through programmes such as this one, UNDP will continue to advance MSME recovery and champion digital transformation in the region.”*

After a stringent selection process, the following MSMEs were awarded grants to transition their businesses to thrive in the digital landscape. Mr. Elijah James is the owner and developer of The Local App, a tech start-up that is on a mission to build digital communities of destinations around the world. Their aim is to make it easier for businesses and consumers not only to connect better with each other but also to connect the many other available opportunities around them.

“I must say that the MSME Digital Transformation Grant has been nothing short of a timely miracle for my business. Even before the start of the pandemic, I struggled with getting financing even with collateral from financial institutions just to make the investment we needed in software and equipment to take our operations to the next level. So I must say a heartfelt ‘thank you’ to the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, UNOSSC and UNDP for seeing our vision and giving us the opportunity to scale into digital,” Mr. James said.

At a time when exogenous threats such as COVID-19 and natural disasters are impacting the region, it is vital that development efforts are continued to reinforce the need for regional resilience and building forward better.

SDG 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

PALAU

Building resilience: Community health-centre improvement and strengthening of national capacities to address the COVID-19 crisis

Rehabilitated clinics improve access to health in Palau

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Health and Human Services;

UNOPS

Project Budget:

\$1,647,125

Duration:

2019–2021 Completed



Palau's President receiving the key to the Northern Community Health Clinic

What do you do when your child is sick but the nearest medical facility is a costly, over-two-hour boat ride away and you cannot afford to lose a day's pay? For many people in the Pacific Island country of Palau, this is a regular, but no less vexing, conundrum, one with no easy answers but one with cascading implications. Now, however, more than 2,000 people of Palau have access to better health centres.

With the financial support of \$1.65 million from the India-UN Fund, the Ministry of Health and Human Services and UNOPS set out to tackle the disparities in accessing health facilities that stem from remoteness and socioeconomic conditions. The central focus of the initiative was the rehabilitation of three community health clinics in three strategically located States and serving more than 2,000 people: one each in Ngarchelong, Peleliu and Ngaremlengui.

Infrastructure was an issue for the community health centres. Most centres were more than 15 years old, with heavy wear due to challenging climatic conditions including high wind, storm surges, heavy rain, and salty and humid conditions that affect the durability of materials. Problems included termite infestations, corroded or damaged roofs, a lack of outside drainage, and unpredictable energy supplies and the provision of medical and communications equipment. Furthermore, the country's geography posed the challenge of accessibility.



Northern Community Health Clinic during rehabilitation



Northern Community Health Clinic before rehabilitation

The rehabilitation of the health centres included replacing the septic system, cabinetry and related plumbing, electrical works, air conditioning installation and roofing. Additionally, the centres have been made ready for renewable-energy upgrades (photovoltaic systems) and emergency backup power. The facilities have been made accessible to people living with disabilities, including upgrades to the bathrooms and treatment rooms. Importantly, the improvements have created a more conducive work atmosphere for the frontline workers and staff of the centres.

Of equal importance to the site improvements was the training of 18 construction workers (14 male/4 female). Palau had not yet adopted construction codes or practices adhering to International Standards Organization (ISO) specifications and international best practices, practices that are central to the UNOPS approach to sustainability. Through their training, the 18 workers gained valuable hands-on knowledge of sustainable construction standards, including resistance to weather hazards. Those men and women are now in a position to pass that knowledge on to colleagues throughout the construction industry.

The project was designed to support the Ministry’s ambitious agenda to help to ensure happy and purposeful lives for its population by enhancing primary care through a staged centre-upgrade approach. Along with the rehabilitations, UNOPS provided support and advice to the Ministry in achieving its long-term goals as well as to address the additional challenges brought on by the pandemic.

“On behalf of the people of Palau, I wish to extend my deepest appreciation to UNOPS, the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation, the India-UN Partnership Development Fund and the Government and people of the Republic of India for their great partnership and support in the rehabilitation project of the Northern Community Health Centre. I strongly believe that this newly improved infrastructure will provide an accessible, safe and comfortable space for community members to receive quality and efficient primary health-care services,” President Surangel S. Whipps, Jr., said during the handover ceremony of the Northern Community Health Centre in Ngarchelong.

“UNOSSC, through the India-UN Fund, was pleased to support Palau’s infrastructure to provide better health services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As we work to build back better, with more resilient systems and services, the relevance of this support is most evident,” Mr. Adel Abdellatif, Director a.i., UNOSSC, stated.

“UNOPS is glad to be handing over the rehabilitated community health centres to the Ministry of Health and Human Services and the people of Palau in the knowledge that people across Palau now have improved quality health delivery and patient care. We are proud to have been a part of [this] South-South cooperation and remain committed to improving the lives of Palauans by building the future through infrastructure for climate action,” Ms. Samina Kadwani, UNOPS Director for the Pacific, Thailand and Indonesia, said.

Final handover of the three facilities was completed in November 2021.



On-the-job training at the Northern Community Health Clinic

TONGA

Repair and reconstruction of export building and fumigation facility

Rising from the destruction of cyclones and tsunamis, better harvests, and improved livelihoods in Tonga

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forests; UNOPS

Project Budget:

\$500,000

Duration:

2018–2022 Completed

With sustained winds of 230km/h (142 miles/hour), Cyclone Gita bashed into the islands that comprise the Polynesian kingdom of Tonga on 12 February 2018, leaving behind a swath of injury and destruction by the time it moved out to sea six hours later. The country recorded more than 400 injuries (out of a population of 106,00 people) and the damage or destruction of more than 2300 homes. Miraculously, only two people died.

Even for a country well-used to annual cyclones, it was the most power cyclone in 60 years and the results for the country were devastating.

Among those structures most seriously damaged by Cyclone Gita were the country's Food Processing and Export Building and the Fumigation Facility of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forests (MAFF); both were rendered inoperable. With agriculture Tonga's primary source of employment, food, and foreign exchange earnings, it was essential to get them back up and running as quickly as possible.

In early 2020, UNDP and MAFF began working on the reconstruction and upgrading of the facilities. With financial support from the India-UN Development Partnership Fund's through its Commonwealth window, the organizations conceptualized prepared a detailed plan that included improved energy and resource efficiency, greater processing capacity and resilient construction techniques designed to withstand future natural disasters. The project was an integral component in the country's recovery efforts and re-establish core government functions. By the end of 2021, work was on track to complete the construction by March of 2022.



Construction of Tonga's new Food Processing and Export Building

On 15 January 2022, a month shy of Gita's four-year anniversary, aerial footage of the nearby Hunga Volcano eruption captivated the world as Tonga disappeared beneath the massive plume of an Atmospheric Pulse, setting record-breaking winds that reached into space and booms that were heard in Alaska, more than 6000 miles away. The waves of the resulting tsunami damaged the underwater fibre optic cables cutting off the communications via both phone and internet. It was the volcano's most powerful eruption in 100 years.

Despite all the odds, as the volcanic ash and smoke dispelled and Tonga began to re-emerge, the buildings had done what the architects had set out to do: they had withstood another natural disaster sufficiently enough for minor repairs and the resumption of their purpose, to export Tonga's produce to the world.

The results have been quantifiable. According to MAFF, there has been a steady and significant increase in Tonga's exports since the facilities were both restored and upgraded. Exports of root crops – such as cassava, yams, taro, and giant taro – have grown from a total of 5,514.8 metric tonnes (MT) in 2019 to 9,679.7MT in 2021 (a 76% increase). Kava exports have increased from 128.6MT in 2019 to 367.2 MT in 2021 (a 186% increase). Watermelon exports have also increased, from 166.3 MT in 2019 to 490.5 MT in 2021 (a 195% increase).

"I believe more and more farmers and exporters are, today, able to utilize the pack house facility for preparation and packing of their produce (cassava, yam, watermelon, taro, and Kava) to be ready for the final inspection by the Quarantine Officers in the same pack house before loading into frozen containers for export to New Zealand, Australia, USA, and other Pacific Island countries," says Metuisela Falesiva, Deputy CEO of Tonga's Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Forests.

On behalf of the Hon. Minister and CEO, and our farmers, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the Government of India for your generous contribution of \$500,000 to renovate the Export Pack house and Fumigation Facility of MAFF. *"You have already made a valuable difference in the livelihood of our communities, farmers, and the exporters in Tonga and specifically during the recovery from the cyclone since 2018, the recent volcanic eruption and tsunami as well as the COVID-19 era."*



Produce packed and ready to ship from Tonga's new Food Processing and Export Building

SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Strengthening the Centre for Excellence in Information Technology

Implementing Partners:

University of Papua New Guinea; UNDP

Project Budget:

\$556,635

Duration:

2018–2019 Completed

E-commerce platforms developed in Papua New Guinea? Why not!

Globally, Internet- and ICT-based industries account for a growing proportion of gross domestic product (GDP). In the Pacific Region, use of these technologies is expected to benefit communities, creating 16,000 new jobs and raising the GDP by an estimated 6.2 per cent. The use of ICT in Papua New Guinea, however, has been relatively low in comparison with use in many of its neighbouring countries owing in part to a lack of learning opportunities, qualified teaching staff and adequate teaching facilities.

With over 50 per cent of the population of Papua New Guinea under the age of 25, the ICT sector is seen as offering a way to increase social and economic opportunities for the growing urban youth populations. In addition, ICT is seen as providing a key opportunity for connecting the 85 per cent of the population living in hard-to-reach rural areas of the country.

Mr. Alfrey Kombil, a certified student in advanced web technology, was fostering big dreams: *“After this training, I will be able to build a complete website, to develop business, like eBay, but here in PNG. This programme is a very good start,”* he commented, talking about the Centre for Excellence in Information Technology (CEIT) at the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG), which was established to provide ICT learning opportunities. It was built, equipped and institutionally developed with support from the India-UN Fund and began operations in March 2020, offering courses from 7 to 18 weeks in duration and including 12 unique certificate programmes.

“We found that many courses and the programmes which are run through this Centre are very much needed in the day-to-day operations not only in Papua New Guinea but also in other islands of the Pacific Region. The Centre brings an added dimension to what we do here at the University. Thank you to the Government, the people of India and UNDP for building this facility,” said Prof. Frank Keith Griffin, UPNG Vice Chancellor.

The project demonstrates the effectiveness of South-South cooperation and knowledge exchange in addressing development challenges, since the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing in India developed the concept design for the CEIT facility at the University of Papua New Guinea and guided the installation of its information technology equipment. When the Centre opened, professors from India were in residence, supporting curriculum development, staff capacities and student teaching.

“I thank the Government of India and Papua New Guinea for establishing this, as this is very helpful for us, Papua New Guineans, who really want to go into IT [information technology] and I feel very privileged to be part of this programme,” said Ms. Lenora Komberg, an IT-certified student.

“This is outstanding, as I didn’t see anything like this in Papua New Guinea, comfortable facilities and latest resources. It is really good. I really like the set-up,” added Mr. Alfrey Kombil.



Centre for Excellence training room

The Government of Papua New Guinea allocated over \$1 million in its 2020 national budget to the University of Papua New Guinea, expanding the impact of the training facility to a wide group of professionals and to other parts of the Pacific Region and to Timor-Leste.

The project supported Papua New Guinea in implementing its SDG targets, specifically quality education and reducing inequalities. It provided a venue for skills development and a model learning environment including education software, curricula to support teaching staff and teaching facilities so as to help to ensure increased ICT capacity in the country for years to come. Such facilities in Papua New Guinea have increased interest among senior policymakers in how technology can be better used not only for learning outcomes but to stimulate economic activity.

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

BELIZE

Support to infrastructure for human development, health and sport

Sports, as a discipline, develops mindset: Belize's vulnerable youth benefiting from an improved sports centre

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation;
UNDP

Project Budget:

\$590,000

Duration:

2018–2021 Completed

The Belize Youth Challenge Programme campus, which supports youths at risk, was renovated to provide a safer, more functional space for those youths. The multi-purpose sports facility in San Ignacio benefits the community of 4,000 persons, providing new ways to be active and a safe space to stay healthy and build the community through community outreach; it also hosts the women's newborn birth feeding programme.

“ The Belize youths are very involved in sports, and an opportunity like this allows them to develop their talent but also to develop their mindset. Sports is a discipline, teaches us discipline,”

said Hon. Kevin Bernard, Minister of Youth, Sports and E-Governance



Sunset football game

The completion of the infrastructure for the Human Development, Health and Sports project has a direct impact on the lives of the community members in the San Ignacio area and is also a positive influence for the youths of Belize.

“This initiative was the first of its kind for Belize and the Government of India and provided the much-needed resources and support that assisted us in addressing some of the root causes of poverty in Belize, such as young men’s vulnerability to crime and violence, young female vulnerability to early pregnancy, poor nutrition and lack of fitness opportunities for all ages. We recognize that access to safe and inclusive spaces can contribute to overall social and personal development of our communities,” said Hon. Dolores Balderamos Garcia, Minister of Human Development, Families and Indigenous Peoples’ Affairs.



Cayo North facility

“The Cayo North facility is now a resource in Saint Ignacio community and provides an opportunity for all to be positively engaged in healthy development and activities. The Belize Youth Challenge is a voluntary programme that recruits young males from across the country and presents these youths with an opportunity to turn their lives around towards more positive and productive paths. I am...grateful for the opportunity to now thank the Government of India and UNDP for investing in the well-being of Belize’s vulnerable populations,” said Hon. Dolores Balderamos Garcia, Minister of Human Development, Families and Indigenous Peoples’ Affairs.

Hon. Kevin Bernard, Minister of Youth, Sports and E-Governance, emphasized that *“the upgrades at Belize Youth Challenge Programme will bring a more pleasant working environment not only for the coordinators of the Programme but also for our young people... We are working jointly to ensure that those young people, their minds are given some mentorship and at the same time can go back to the community and the society as meaningful citizens of this country.”*



Belize Youth Challenge Programme campus

MOZAMBIQUE

Resilient restoration of pivotal public infrastructure for the recovery and sustainable development of a health centre post-Cyclones Idai and Kenneth

**We are rebuilding Macomia:
A story of hope and determination**

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Health; UNDP

Project Budget:

\$1,000,000

Duration:

2021–ongoing



Ms. Mendonca Joao, during refurbishment work

“ We have stayed here, in this same district of Macomia, since the beginning and throughout the conflict and we never left this area. At this moment, there are lots of people in this village, but what happened was that, during the attacks, we fled into the woods and stayed there for six days without water or food. To this day, we’re still here and we haven’t gone anywhere,”

said Ms. Mendonca Joao.

Ms. Joao, 25 years old, experienced the horrors of the armed conflict and the violence in the Cabo Delgado Province of northern Mozambique. Shortly after the attacks on the village by non-State armed groups, she found her home burned along with buildings such as schools, clinics and the local police stations.



A little over a year later, Ms. Joao continues rebuilding her life. She is not alone in her story: many of the 744,000 internally displaced people who fled the conflict areas, some for as long as two years, are slowly starting to voluntarily return to their areas of origin. People from Cabo Delgado are currently living in and returning to areas where all infrastructure was destroyed, including buildings that had already been damaged by Cyclone Kenneth in 2019 and where the provision of basic public services has yet to resume.

The India-UN Fund and UNDP are supporting the full reconstruction of the Macomia Health Centre, which started with clean-up and minor repairs, including the installation of a generator for light, mainly in the maternity ward where mothers were previously giving birth in the dark. Ms. Catarina Falume, a resident of Macomia who works with the local community and returnees in the district's clean-up activities supported by the India-UN Fund and UNDP, reported that *"I am responsible for the family but currently, the financial life is not good because we are unstable. There is a lot of running around due to insecurity. There is great value in this activity that we do because we are putting right the area of our hospital with good visibility and hygiene. We hope that our hospital will have the same conditions as before. When this activity ends, I will produce my cassava again because at the end of this activity, I will have some money in my hands."*

Ms. Mendonca Joao helping with the rehabilitation



Before and after the Health Centre's refurbishment

SDG 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

ZIMBABWE

Building resilience of small farmers in Mangwe and Chiredzi by increasing small-grains production and productivity and improving market access

Climate-smart agriculture is reducing food waste and giving women hope in Zimbabwe

It is estimated that 55.7 million people in Southern Africa are facing food insecurity and malnutrition owing to years of drought; rising food, fuel and fertilizer costs; and supply chain disruptions. In Zimbabwe, while the impact is generally spread across the country, it is especially challenging for women and girls.

An integrated resilience-building initiative aimed at improving livelihoods, food security and nutrition is working to protect vulnerable communities from climate-related and other shocks by giving people the additional skills needed to withstand those shocks through seed/fertilizer inputs and skill-building. The Zimbabwe Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development, and the Department of Agricultural Advisory and Rural Development Services have partnered with WFP and FAO to implement a small-grains programme in Mangwe and Chiredzi Districts. The programme targets the most vulnerable people, who are also supported by the WFP Lean Season Assistance and Food Assistance for Assets programmes. The districts of Mangwe and Chiredzi benefit from these programmes owing to support from the India-UN Fund. The India-UN Fund project reaches 5,200 smallholder farmers and 40 agricultural extension officers in these two districts. One of them is Ms. Muhlava Munyangani, a 35-year-old mother of five. After her community faced one of the worst droughts in recent years, she managed to obtain some grain.

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries,

Water and Rural Development;

Department of Agricultural Technical

and Extension Services; WFP; FAO

Project Budget:

\$998,523

Duration:

2021–ongoing



“ From what we were taught by WFP and the seed packs, I managed to harvest 10 bags of sorghum. The most important thing I learned is that farming is proper planning. You need to plan for every situation, including a drought,”

Ms. Munyangani added.

Cultivating sorghum and cowpeas, farmers learn agronomy methods using conservation agriculture principles, group development, collective marketing, post-harvest loss management and gender issues in agriculture. The idea is for them to produce high-quality grain that can be competitive on the market.

◀ Ms. Munyangani managed to harvest her crop while most people in her village could not.

Through this initiative, women are empowered to address the underlying drivers of food insecurity; they are trained to grow different crops able to withstand severe drought, which is essential to helping them through the poor harvests. Investments in drought-tolerant varieties help to manage post-harvest losses.

Traditionally, women used to sow small grains by scattering them over the field, which attracted pests and dramatically reduced the plant survival rate. Instead, they were taught to use ridge furrows, a traditional method of ploughing that helps to drain the field by allowing the excess water to flow through the furrows, thus reducing stress on plants from excess moisture. The proper seed variety suitable to the geographic area was identified, and the women were encouraged to use locally available organic manure from their compost. The farmers were supported with the rehabilitation and establishment of community warehouse infrastructure and post-harvest equipment to enable them to aggregate their commodities and meet the quality requirements.

In July 2022, the communities of Chiredzi and Mangwe were supported with multi-functional threshers to improve farm mechanization and minimize the post-harvest losses associated with manual threshing processes among farmers. Since processing small grains is labour-intensive, farmers have not adapted their plantations despite understanding that small grains are suitable for their agro-ecological regions and in view of the impact of the climate crisis. While the Government of Zimbabwe is actively promoting the production of traditional grains, indications are that the labour-intensive nature of the processing can be a deterrent to community adoption. In view of this, the support provided by the India-UN Fund is addressing this challenge through the provision of mobile threshers, thereby strengthening Government efforts to promote drought-tolerant grains and their adoption by the supported beneficiaries and others in the district who will also be able to use the equipment at a cost.

“Harvesting and post-harvest losses remain one of the major challenges that the Zimbabwe agricultural sector continues to face,” said Mr. John Basera, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture, Fisheries, Water and Rural Development during the handover ceremony in Chiredzi in July 2022. *“Our aim is to reduce post-harvest losses from the current 20 to 25 per cent through mechanized harvesting and use of modern storage structures such as metal silos. The threshers that WFP is handing over today will go a long way to reduce such losses and reduce threshing and winnowing labour, which in most cases is undertaken by women and youths.”*

Manual threshing



“What makes this programme particularly successful is the pool of resources and expertise within our respective organizations – all working towards developing the resilience of smallholder farmers,” said Ms. Christine Mendes, WFP Deputy Country Director. *“WFP has been proud to support our partners through implementation, logistics and monitoring of the programme, helping to distribute drought-tolerant small grains, fertilizers and other agricultural inputs through our established programmes.”*

The Ambassador of India to Zimbabwe, H.E. Mr. Vijay Khanduja, commended the leadership by the Ministry and the project as a good example of South-South cooperation: *“What we are witnessing here is a very good example of trilateral South-South cooperation being carried out through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund. The aim of the Fund is to support projects which contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, as per the requirements of the recipient countries. The funding is provided in adherence to the principles of South-South cooperation, which place priority on national ownership and leadership, equality, sustainability, development of local capacity and mutual benefit.”*



The handover ceremony



The production of small grains means that these women have the future in their hands

SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

FIJI

Developing climate disaster-risk financing framework and parametric insurance

Launch of Pacific Region's first-ever parametric insurance scheme

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Economy; UNCDF

Project Budget:

\$850,000

Duration:

2020–2022 Completed

Rishi Ram was on the verge of harvesting his rice crop when Tropical Cyclone Ana tore through his home in northern Fiji in January 2021. With little warning, the strong winds and heavy rain levelled his rice, vegetable and livestock farm and damaged his home. Farming was the only source of income for Mr. Ram and his family of eight, who live in Dreketi, a small district on Vanua Levu, Fiji's second-largest island. The 50-year-old farmer left his teaching job to focus full-time on farming despite the yearly risks of cyclones and other natural disasters. The damage caused by category 2 Tropical Cyclone Ana just over a month after category 5 Tropical Cyclone Yasa led to financial hardships for the family stemming from income loss and high repair costs. Mr. Ram was faced with the impossible choice of repairing his home or investing whatever little money he had left in rebuilding his farm.

“ I gave first priority to repairing, rebuilding and investing back into my farm while leaving my house in a partially damaged state,”
he said.

Mr. Ram is one of many rice farmers in Dreketi to have suffered from the increasing frequency and strength of cyclones and other extreme climatic events in the Pacific Region. Fiji Rice Limited reported that farmers in the Northern Division incurred F\$350,000 (about \$171,700) in losses due to Tropical Cyclones Yasa and Ana alone.

Rice farmers attending a session on the parametric micro-insurance scheme





Training session

vulnerable in the world, facing many natural hazards, such as cyclones, earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions, whilst having limited means to prepare and respond to them.¹ Moreover, Fiji is ranked the twelfth-most-hazardous country in the world according to the World Risk Index, and the frequency of cyclones and floods is expected to increase in the coming years owing to climate change.

The United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), with support from the India-UN Fund and other partners, launched Fiji's first parametric micro-insurance scheme on 25 August 2021 in the context of the Pacific Insurance and Climate Adaptation Programme, which itself receives financial support from the India-UN Fund and the Governments of Australia and New Zealand. South-South exchanges of technical expertise have been a key enabling feature to develop this disaster-risk financing scheme. According to the Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Mr. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, *"we are piloting a parametric climate and disaster risk micro-insurance product which, we hope, can be scaled up in Fiji and to other small island developing States."*

The defining feature of parametric insurance is that it pays out the agreed amount when the event happens. It has many advantages over indemnity-based insurance, which focuses more on broad conventional areas such as physical losses and can be difficult to categorize. Perhaps the biggest pull factor is the quick payout of claims, which can be processed within seven days after an event occurs, enabling beneficiaries to begin recovery immediately. This is particularly attractive for farmers such as Mr. Ram, whose livelihoods are left in tatters after a cyclone. Besides building financial resilience, it also ensures that families do not fall deeper into poverty by being forced to sell off assets to cover losses.

The programme has been conducting a series of "ideation workshops" with key stakeholders who have been identified as partners for implementation. Owing to these co-creation opportunities, the project developed a digital onboarding platform for aggregators and insurer partners and supported the Government of Fiji as it granted a value-added tax exemption to the product.

Mr. Ram believes that parametric insurance will improve the prospects for farmers by securing their assets and livelihoods. Since its launch, enrolment in the pilot scheme has included largely smallholder farmers, fishers, market vendors and micro business owners. By the end of 2021, 1,246 beneficiaries were insured for the parametric micro-insurance product.

¹ See <https://www.unicef.org/pacificislands/what-we-do/disaster-risk-reduction-emergencies>.

These farmers and other vulnerable groups such as women, youths and persons living with disabilities have little financial capacity to cope with the economic shocks that follow a cyclone. For instance, there are no climate- and disaster-risk insurance instruments that individuals, businesses, organizations, cooperatives or others in the Pacific Region can access. This is a concern, given that, according to UNICEF, *"the Pacific Islands are among the most*



Ideation workshop, 2021

GABON

Strengthening climate information services for resilient development and adaptation to climate change

Building a climate-resilient Gabon one meteorological station at a time

Implementing Partners:

National Climate Council; UNDP

Project Budget:

\$1,000,100

Duration:

2019–2022 Completed



The meteorological station in Nyonie

Gabon's 885 kilometres of coastline and its corresponding regions are essential to the country's economy as they host the majority of its development sectors: agriculture, industry, fisheries and tourism, yet they are increasingly vulnerable to climate change owing to their exposure to natural hazards such as coastal erosion, landslides and floods.

To counter the effects of climate change, UNDP, in partnership with the National Climate Council and the Directorate of Meteorology and with support from the India-UN Fund, installed six meteorological stations along the coast in the following regions: Mayumba, Gamba, Kango, Cocobeach, Ntchongorove and Nyonie. These stations will provide proper climate information to forecast and communicate immediate and long-term risks to the local population.



The meteorological station in Cocobeach



Local fishermen in a boat in Cocobeach

“ I am very happy (about the stations) because we have not had a weather forecast for a long time. Now when we go to the water, we will know if it will be rainy or cloudy and make the decision to go fishing or not,”

says Mr. Obiang, a local fisherman in Cocobeach.

These automatic stations will help in collecting the data used by the Directorate of Meteorology to send out regular weather forecasts by SMS to more citizens.

Prior to this project, Gabon’s meteorological network had 14 synoptic weather stations inherited from the colonial era, 9 of which were considered obsolete or ineffective because of poor calibration that no longer provided the required information. These six new stations will measure the parameters of temperature, rainfall, wind strength and air pressure and automatically transfer data to a control centre monitored by the Directorate of Meteorology.

At Nyonie, a tourist site on the beach near Wonga-Wongue National Park, these stations will inform tourists and help them to plan better for their excursions according to the weather forecast. Mr. Moukambi, the manager of Chez Beti campsite, stated that people who visit the area very often call them in advance to ask about the weather and to know if the waters are calm or not.

“ I think these stations will improve things a lot. All we ask for is improvement,”

he added.



*Mr. Moukambi, Manager of the Chez Beti campsite in Nyonie/
Aerial view of the Chez Beti campsite*

Following the installation of the six stations, UNDP organized a series of workshops and seminars to strengthen the capacity of partners to produce and disseminate data, information and warnings on extreme weather, climate and hydrological conditions.

THE GAMBIA

Use of drones and early warning systems for pre- and post-flood disaster management

Early warning system and Flying Labs help the Gambia to mitigate the impacts of flash floods

Implementing Partners:

National Disaster Management Agency;

UNESCO

Project Budget:

\$1,200,000

Duration:

2019–2021 Completed



Drone observed impact of flooding in Banjul in July 2021 and helped to define evacuation routes.

Flash floods have long posed challenges for the Gambia. They destroy crops, wash away homes and, if someone is unfortunate enough to live among the poorer communities or along its canals, they can bring up sewage and even crocodiles.

Flanked on three sides by Senegal and split seemingly in two by its namesake, the Gambia River as it pushes its way towards the Atlantic Ocean, the Gambia is the smallest country of mainland Africa and one of the poorest. With the climate crisis, flooding is no longer relegated to just the June-October rainy season but the kinds of technology needed to predict and therefore prepare for the deluges that regularly wreak havoc on its key agricultural and tourism industries have long been a financial impossibility.

Now, a unique South-South initiative that combines technical experience, professional training and community engagement is changing the dynamic. Through this initiative funded by the India-UN Fund and implemented by UNESCO in partnership with the National Disaster Management Agency, the Gambia has received the kind of state-of-the-art equipment and training that can change and save lives.

Increasing flood resilience through an early warning system is at the heart of the project. Beginning in 2019, the project started to develop a flood early warning system, designed as an open data-handling platform to provide forecasting and warning capabilities. Those efforts included the use of specialized meteorological data collection stations, professional development for effective analysis and response, and the installation of automatic weather stations and the training of Gambian hydrologists and meteorologists to gather and assess real-time data. Among the activities to ensure student and community engagement were a mobile app development competition with students and youth, and the development of a school curriculum and complementary workshop to integrate the curriculum into the early-childhood, lower and upper basic school curricula.

State-of-the-art technology is only as good as the people who manage and interpret the data that it produces, however, and it is here that the Gambia's African neighbours have made the difference. The project supported the attendance of 15 technical staff working in disaster risk for a week-long training programme led by two experts from Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, ranked as the top university of Ghana and West Africa. During the programme, the technicians learned the key skills needed to feed information on terrain topologies into the flood early warning system to ensure up-to-date information for accurate flood forecasting.

The India-UN Fund also provided the National Disaster Management Agency with five drones, an increasingly vital tool in disaster-risk prevention and mitigation. The Agency engaged Senegal Flying Labs, a leading robotics and artificial intelligence technologies centre, to train and certify Gambian drone operators, and in one of the truest expressions of South-South cooperation, the centre continued its support outside its formal commitment.



Setting up to fly during the project at the Mansa Konko area in the Lower River Region

“The Senegal Flying Labs trained the drone operators and certified them as drone pilots. But we have gone beyond this by continuing to support the NDMA with advice on technical activities and even in drone maintenance, all without direct intervention from UNESCO but through the trust and friendship that developed during the training activity. This shows that we can strengthen weaker member States through regional organizations that can be encouraged to build friendship and trust to continue to support weaker members in subject areas where they have comparative advantages in or are more advanced in terms of technical knowledge and skills,”

*stated Mr. Anthony Maduekwe,
UNESCO Programme Specialist for
Natural Science in West Africa.*

SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

PALAU

Our Ocean Conference 2020 preparation project

Small island developing countries lead the way in saving our oceans

The oceans are the Earth's largest ecosystem and their role in people's lives cannot be overstated. They are home to a vast array of life, absorb 25 per cent of global annual CO2 emissions, feed communities on the water's edge and well inland, and are a major source of trade and economic development. In addition, like the rest of the planet, they are under siege. Leading culprits include plastic and marine pollution, overfishing, acidification and ocean warming.

In June 2017, the UN held the first annual Ocean Conference a vital component of the global effort to achieve SDG 14: to "conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development". It was then, on the margins of the Conference, that the India-UN Development Partnership Fund was launched.

Since its founding, the India-UN Fund has prioritized support for small island developing States (SIDS) in their specific, unique development needs, vulnerabilities and pathways to sustainable development. The Fund inaugural programme was on investment in early warning systems for small island States. Today, SIDS are the most active and well-represented partners in the Fund, with 29 of the current 51 countries (57 per cent) classified as SIDS.

Palau, a Fund partner country, was scheduled to host the 2020 UN Ocean Conference. In preparation for hosting world leaders, government officials, climate activists and development professionals, the India-UN Fund provided support to the Government of Palau, in partnership with UNOPS, to refurbish the physical infrastructure to be used for the Conference, upgrading a range of facilities. However, the live event was postponed owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the setback, the refurbishment of the buildings was completed and is now benefiting the community college students, patients of the community health centre and the users of various public facilities.

During the 2022 UN Ocean Conference held in Portugal, the contributions of the Fund were recognized at a side event entitled "Leveraging South-South and Triangular Cooperation for the Blue Economy Agenda in SIDS".

“The health of our oceans affects us all, both those who derive their livelihoods from their waters and those who enjoy their bounty,...

through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, India will continue to support the world's SIDS and will use the power of South-South cooperation to help them meet their development and socioeconomic needs,”

said H.E. Mr. Ravindra Ruguttahalli, Deputy Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations.

Implementing Partners:

Prime Minister's Office; UNOPS

Project Budget:

\$1,000,000

Duration:

2020–2021 Completed

SDG 15: Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

DOMINICA

Strengthening sustainable livelihoods and resilience in Kalinago Territory

Halting deforestation key to improved livelihoods for Dominica's indigenous region

Nestled in a remote and mountainous area of the Atlantic coast of Dominica, Kalinago Territory is home to the indigenous Kalinago people, who have inhabited the region historically. The roughly 3,000 people living in the region share communal ownership of the Territory, comprised of mostly poor-quality land that is susceptible to soil erosion and deforestation, which in turn have destroyed many of the area streams. It is among Dominica's poorest regions.

In an effort to strengthen the livelihoods and resilience of the Kalinago people, the Government, with support from the India-UN Fund, launched an integrated programme designed to strengthen sustainable agricultural production and practices; implement community reforestation programmes to protect livelihoods and water catchment areas; develop a comprehensive gender-sensitive tourism strategy and Kalinago brand; and boost institutional capacities of the Kalinago Council for inclusive decision-making and planning.

The 18-month project is being facilitated by UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment and the Kalinago Council, with the support of the Ministry of Blue and Green Economy, Agriculture and National Food Security and the Ministry of Tourism, International Transport and Maritime Initiatives.



“ The coining of the project here is very, very clear. It tells us something we have discounted a lot in the conversation about the Kalinago people: they are resilient, they have been able to sustain themselves for millennia and a project like this only magnifies it, ”
said Hon. Cozier Frederick, Minister for Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment, in launching the programme.

Implementing Partners:
Ministry of Environment, Rural Modernization and Kalinago Upliftment;
UNDP
Project Budget:
\$1,000,000
Duration:
2021–ongoing

Deforestation is a critical issue confronting Kalinago Territory, and as such, the Government is providing support to demarcate some of the major activities important to the areas of livelihood of the Territory such as agriculture, tourism and social forestry so as to provide a management structure to decrease the risk of further deforestation. These activities include the planting of 2,000 trees donated by the Forestry Division and planted by the Kalinago Territory community under the National Employment Programme and the construction of 15 community greenhouses.

In terms of agriculture, the project provides equipment and materials to support the final construction and implementation of a Climate Smart Agricultural Research Station. This included providing technical expertise for product development and the marketing of cassava and value-added cassava products, a traditionally important crop in Kalinago culture. Small grants were also provided to support Kalinago farmers with cassava cultivation and product development.

In an effort to boost tourism, the partners designed a gender-sensitive tourism strategy for Kalinago Territory focusing on three areas: an indigenous tourism route/experience in the Territory that supports both culture and long-term business potential; a gender-sensitive tourism infrastructure plan; and a Kalinago tourism brand package.

Strengthening the ability of the Kalinago Council to implement and manage is essential to making the integrated programme work efficiently. To this end, the programme supports the exchange of experiences and best practices by the participation of the Kalinago Council in regional and international forums and conferences on indigenous peoples. In addition, it supports digitizing the Council archives to secure a historic record of its work.



Building resilient livelihoods through reforestation

SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

Improve availability of administrative data for tracking progress

Implementing Partners:

National Bureau of Statistics; UNFPA

Project Budget:

\$550,000

Duration:

2019–ongoing

Digital technology serves Republic of Moldova in times of peace and war

In 2020, when the Republic of Moldova National Bureau of Statistics first partnered with UNFPA to transform its system for gathering population-based data, little did it know that its effort would play an instrumental role in helping the country to cope with the massive number of refugees that would pour over its borders from Ukraine.

Supported by a grant from the India-UN Fund, the project was designed to improve the mechanisms by which administrative data are exchanged between data holders and to transform the country's statistical system to become more efficient, register-based and user-friendly. The goals of the revised system included helping to accurately project population figures and including a methodology for population balancing to estimate growth.

In early 2021, the partners prepared and conducted the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS), a data tool to help to guide demographic policy development that is both people-centred and data-driven. The first survey engaged more than 10,000 people from across the country. When the results were published in October 2021, they included more than 100 demographic indicators on fertility, life history, work, income, generations, households and well-being. The success of the work was such that the Republic of Moldova was one of two countries (the other was Uruguay) that were asked to demonstrate and share best practices during a regional webinar, also supported by the India-UN Fund.

Fast-forward to 24 February 2022 and the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. The Republic of Moldova was among the first countries to welcome refugees. By mid-May, more than 5.9 million Ukrainians had left Ukraine, of whom 450,000 had crossed into the Republic of Moldova, the highest number of refugees per capita of any host country. While the majority passed through en route to other European Union countries and beyond, approximately 85,000 remain in the country. This is a high number for a poor country of only 2.6 million people to absorb.

The GGS methodology has been instrumental in helping the Government to plan for and provision the refugees to meet their myriad needs. The Republic of Moldova has opened approximately 100 refugee accommodations in various locations. With the support of development partners, refugees are receiving vital legal and psychological services. The Ministry of Education is working with the education sector to address the needs of school-age refugees. This includes scaling up complementary non-formal education and partnering with the Moldovan Football Federation to provide extracurricular activities.



Psychologist Ms. Natalia Gandrabur assisting refugees

Furthermore, UNFPA has expanded its own support to the country. Working with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, it has provided a variety of needed equipment and services including personal protective equipment for COVID-19 prevention as well as medicines and medical equipment and sanitary products for women and girls. The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection has received 2,000 dignity kits with basic hygiene and menstrual supplies to be distributed to women and girls through local public authorities, and UNFPA is providing psychological support, sexual and reproductive health services, and therapy.

It is the GGS that has enabled the Government to best tailor its support for Ukraine's refugees and it will continue to do so in the months to come.



A social worker with UNFPA basic dignity kits in a refugee shelter

SAMOA

The Samoa Knowledge Society Initiative

Expanding access to information in Samoa

Implementing Partners:

National University of Samoa; UNESCO;

UNDP

Project Budget:

\$999,998

Duration:

2019–ongoing

Access to information is the foundation of equitable development. When citizens exercise their right to know, they can hold public and other institutions accountable, participate and make decisions about their lives. Access to information is closely connected to freedom of expression, as recognized in Article 13 of the Constitution of the Independent State of Samoa that details the right to freedom of speech, assembly, association, movement and residence. However, this Article has not been legislated in its entirety to enable a legal right to access to information.

It was against this background that the national stakeholders in Samoa, with assistance from the India-UN Fund, UNESCO and UNDP, embarked on the Samoa Knowledge Society Initiative. This project acknowledges the advances that Samoa has made in developing legislation on many areas of information and communications technology (ICT) but more needs to be done to safeguard citizens' freedom of expression and access to information.

The initiative also acknowledges the progress made in achieving Sustainable Development Goals but more can be done to achieve progress in adopting and implementing statutory guarantees for public access to information (SDG indicator 16.10.2). In implementing statutory guarantees for public access to information, it is important to assist public institutions and public service officials to provide information and meet their obligations to citizens. The Samoa Knowledge Society Initiative foresees capacity-building to improve record management and use ICT to access information.

“The contribution of the rights to freedom of expression and access to information to good governance requires willingness of government to be transparent and protect the rights of citizens as well as the ability of citizens to access and use relevant information. It is critical, therefore, that policy priorities and legislative frameworks are put in place for both,”

said Hon. Toelupe Poumulinuku Onesemo, Minister for Communications and Information Technology.

Workshop participants





Trainees taking part in the training of trainers

Obstacles to access to information can undermine the enjoyment of civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights. Speaking on the issue, Ms. Nisha, Director of the Office and UNESCO Representative to the Pacific States, pointed out that *“freedom of expression and access to information, coupled with a public service that is committed to citizens’ rights, are vital for empowering citizens, in particular those who are poor and socially disempowered, to claim their rights and entitlements.”*

While planning the Samoa Knowledge Society Initiative, which is supported by the India-UN Fund, stakeholders used a participatory approach to identify national gaps. The project includes, among other actions, development of a policy on access to information and a provision to support the development of a Freedom of Expression Bill as well as capacity-building training for the public service officials in partnership with the relevant government institutions.

During training on “open access” and “access to information” for the public service officials held in the last week of October 2021, the Samoa Ombudsman, Ms. Luamanuvao Katalaina Sapolu, stated that *“capacity-building and awareness-raising among public servants are key in building a culture of disclosure within the public service, guided by a clear understanding of restrictions and set criteria to determine the information that can and cannot be disclosed.”*

The training process that ran from the middle to the end of October 2021 began with a high-level dialogue involving the senior officials of all the ministries and State bodies of the Government of Samoa. It was followed by training of trainers facilitated by the UNESCO Chair in Open Educational Resources (OER) at the OER Foundation and Otago Polytechnic (New Zealand). The trainees included a senior official from each of the ministries of the Government and personnel of the National University of Samoa. The trainees are strengthening their skills so as to run and staff the specially developed training for Samoan public service officials in the future.

SDG 17: Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

THE BAHAMAS

Strengthening public debt management framework and developing government bond market

The Bahamas passes a public debt management law to protect fiscal health and economic stability

Implementing Partners:

Ministry of Finance; Commonwealth

Secretariat; UNDP

Project Budget:

\$550,000

Duration:

2020–ongoing



“Covid-19 has added \$24 trillion to the already-worrying mountain of global debt. Countries are facing extra costs at a time when trade and other economic activities are being impeded by the pandemic, and there is recognition across our governments that prioritizing strategies and tools to ensure debt sustainability is crucial,” said Commonwealth Secretariat representative Ms. Ruth Kattumuri, commenting on the tripartite collaboration between the Secretariat, the India-UN Partnership Development Fund and the Government of the Bahamas in preparing the Public Debt Management Act, 2021, which was passed by the Parliament and enforced by the Governor General.

The technical support of the Commonwealth includes policy advisory services and software solutions such as the state-of-the-art Commonwealth Meridian debt management system, currently being used by central banks and government agencies across the Commonwealth to monitor transactions and conduct in-depth analysis to enable informed decisions for debt management.

The new public debt management legislation *“affords us a modern and comprehensive framework for debt management, one that promotes greater accountability, transparency and efficiency in these operations, and which is necessary to help us navigate the more challenging operating environment for fiscal policy determination amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic,”* said Hon. James Thompson, Minister of State for Finance.

ONGOING PROJECTS

GRENADA SDG 3

- > New incinerator for the General Hospital

THE BAHAMAS SDG 17

- > Strengthening public debt management framework and developing government bond market

HAITI SDG 1

- > Improving access to water through the installation of a solar pumping system

BELIZE SDG 11

- > Strengthening clinical management of COVID-19 patients and reducing transmission risk among health workers

GUYANA SDG 3

- > Reducing adolescent pregnancy

PLURINATIONAL STATE OF BOLIVIA SDG 1

- > Social innovation hubs for women's labour-market insertion and early-childhood care

SAINT KITTS AND NEVIS SDG 3

- > Ensuring adequate PPE for the Government's COVID-19 response

NICARAGUA SDG 4

- > Strengthening institutional capacities for successful integration of children with disabilities into the education system

SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES SDG 8

- > Arrowroot-industry modernization

DOMINICA SDG 1

- > Strengthening sustainable livelihoods and resilience in Kalinago Territory

SAINT LUCIA SDG 4

- > Upgrading Saint Lucia's capacity to provide impactful vocational training for marginalized youth

BARBADOS SDG 8

- > Local content development project in Barbados

BURKINA FASO SDG 6

- > Mobilization and valuation of surface water in the village of Niangdo

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO SDG 3

- > Bringing high and low technology to the COVID-19 pandemic

TOGO SDG 15

- > Biodiversity business in Fazao-Malfakassa National Park

PARAGUAY SDG 5

- > Prevention of adolescent pregnancy and sexual abuse/violence against girls and adolescents through an intersectoral approach

ZAMBIA SDG 8

- Empowering women and youth
- > with increased access and usage of utility and digital financial services

REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

> SDG 16

Improve availability of administrative data for tracking progress

ZIMBABWE

SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 17

> Building resilience of small farmers by increasing small grains production, productivity and improving market access

MALAWI SDG 1

> Digital identity: Resolving the identification barrier for financial inclusion among rural populations, women and youth

MOZAMBIQUE SDG 11

> Resilient restoration of pivotal public infrastructure for the recovery and sustainable development of a health centre post-Cyclones Idai and Kenneth

SOLOMON ISLANDS

SDG 3

> Support response to COVID-19

CAMEROON SDG 7

> Scaling up rural household use of renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies

MICRONESIA (FEDERATED STATES OF) SDG 3

> Strengthening the national gender machinery

KIRIBATI SDG 3

> Assistance for COVID-19 response

SAMOA SDG 4

> Samoa Knowledge Society Initiative

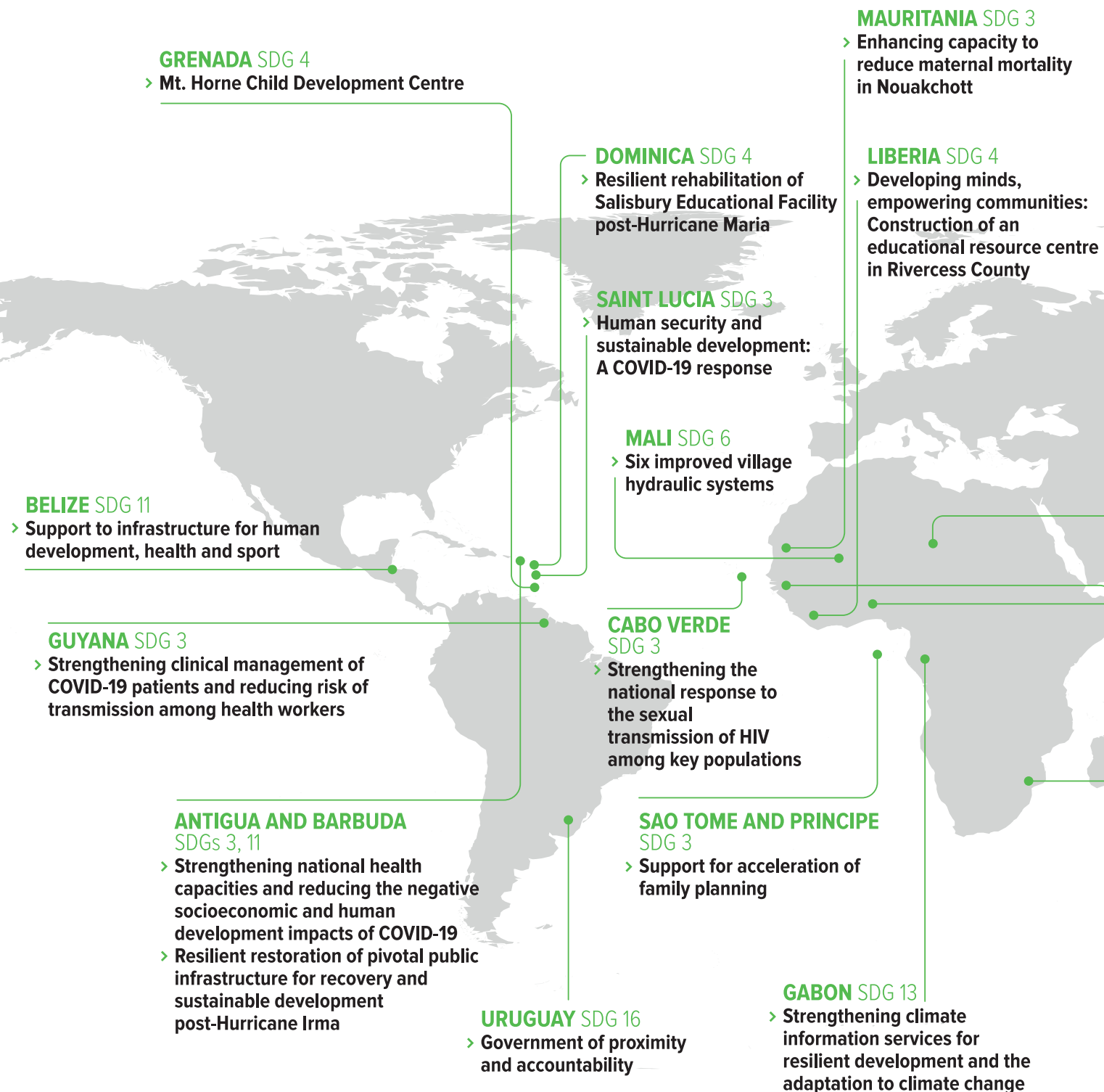
TONGA SDGs 3, 11

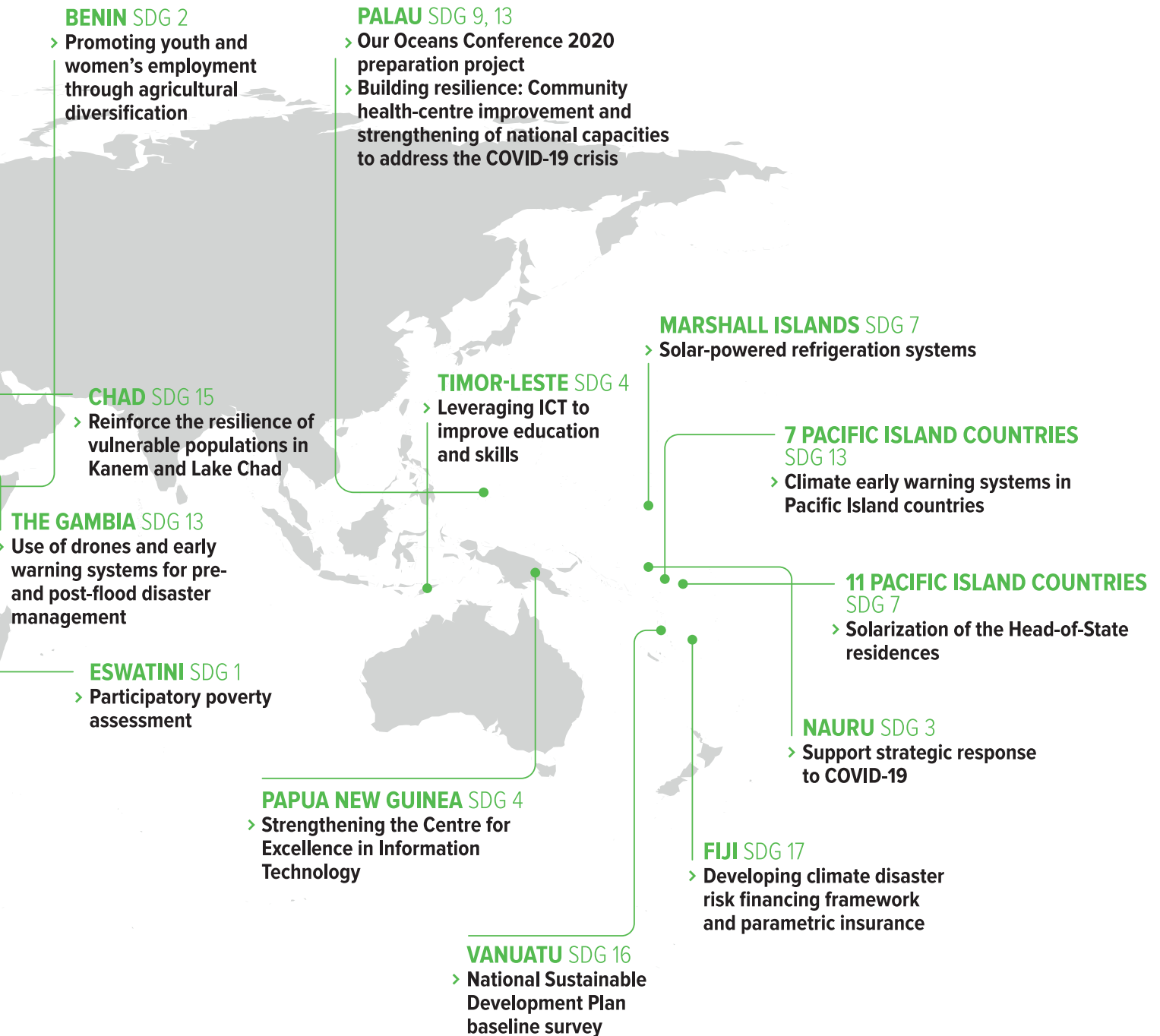
> Assistance for COVID-19 response
> Repair and reconstruction of Export Building and Fumigation Facility

TUVALU SDG 7

> Solar home stand-alone systems for Funaota, Nukufetau

COMPLETED PROJECTS





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