



**UNODC**

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

**STRATEGIC VISION FOR  
AFRICA 2030**

**2021 - 2023**

**PROGRESS  
REPORT**



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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2021 - 2023 Progress Report on the UNODC Strategic Vision for Africa 2030. This report, covering the period since the launch of the Strategic Vision in February 2021, until 2023, serves to highlight the achievements and impact of UNODC's work thus far, and the organization's continued efforts to support all people throughout Africa. It reflects UNODC's commitment to the shared vision of a prosperous, peaceful, and secure Africa, free from organized crime, drugs, violence, terrorism, and corruption.

For over 30 years, UNODC has made significant progress towards achieving these goals, and now guided by the Strategic Vision for Africa, continues to work to build capacities, provide ongoing technical support and specialized expertise, promote national and international preventive measures, and foster innovation throughout; all aimed at strengthening African institutions in the fight against drugs and crime, and improving the wellbeing of people across the continent.

This work underscores the organization's ongoing commitment to putting people at the centre of responses and empowering women and youth as forces of change in Africa. It also emphasizes UNODC's continued focus on strengthening partnerships, enhancing upstream solutions, promoting innovative interventions, and working to eliminate discrimination and stigma.

This report is written from the vantage point of UNODC's June 2023 Cairo Retreat, where the organization's senior leadership from across the continent met in Egypt, to reflect, review and refocus. In this context, it is clear that as the world moves through a decade fraught with complex challenges compounded by crises seen and unseen, there

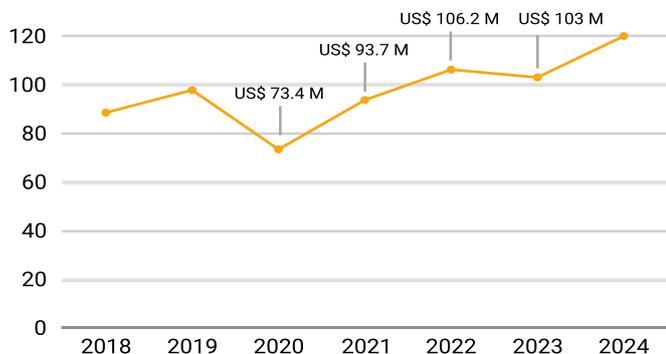
is an immutable need to continue and expand our efforts on the continent and to maintain the investment in resilient societies that can withstand the threats of tomorrow. Ultimately, there is still much work to be done.

UNODC calls on the international community to redouble its efforts towards a balanced approach to drug control, stronger measures against transnational organized crime, terrorism, and violence, and stronger interventions to help reinforce criminal justice systems and capabilities based on the rule of law and human rights principles across Africa. Equally urgent is the need to enhance the protection of Africa's resources from illegal exploitation while continuing to safeguard its economies from corruption, economic crime, and illicit financial flows.

Guided by the Strategic Vision for Africa 2030, and informed by the discussions and reflections of the 2023 Cairo Retreat, UNODC will continue to upscale this work, driving momentum for stronger investments in national institutions and more resilient societies, through partnering with African Member States, the international community, civil society, and the broad and rich tapestry of stakeholders across the continent, towards a brighter, safer and more prosperous Africa.

# PROGRAMME GROWTH

Since the launch of the Strategic Vision for Africa 2030, UNODC's operations in Africa have observed significant growth, eclipsing US\$ 100 million in 2022, and early estimates suggest nearly US\$ 120 million in 2024.



The Regional Office for Eastern Africa, is increasingly leveraging strategic intelligence analysis and geopolitical knowledge, compounded by a newly formed partnership with the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on The Horn of Africa, ensuring the organization's agile response to geopolitical shifts, particularly in times of instability. UNODC's presence will soon upscale substantially in Uganda as well, through a large-scale and comprehensive new country programme. The Regional Office for West and Central Africa expanded both programmatically and operationally, with special emphasis on border management, climate change, gender, and peace and security. Highlighting the region's focus, 61 personnel were recruited in 2022, and offices were reopened in Chad and the Central African Republic. The Nigeria Country Office, in 2022, released the Strategic Vision for Nigeria 2030 in line with the continental strategy. Developed in consultation with various stakeholders, it has become a cornerstone for

UNODC's collaborations in Nigeria. In Northern Africa and the Middle East, UNODC has magnified its presence, influenced by a strong alliance with the League of Arab States, and culminating in the launch of the Regional Framework for the Arab States 2023-2028. The Regional Office for Southern Africa, in alignment with regional necessities, has seen an augmentation of senior staff and UN Volunteers, and the office also reported nearly doubling of its implementation volume from 2020 to 2022. In Mozambique specifically, and in view of looming terrorism concerns, UNODC's presence has grown with staff numbers increasing from 3 in 2019 to 12 by 2022, and plans to open a satellite office in Cabo Delgado are evolving.

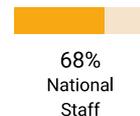
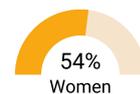
UNODC has strategically broadened its approach to maritime crime, merging the organization's maritime expertise into regional teams, establishing the Western Indian Ocean and Atlantic Ocean teams, and creating Visit Board Search and Seizure Centers of Excellence in Nigeria and Ghana, catalyzing the enhancement of maritime law enforcement in the region. November 2021 saw the inception of the Regional Hub against Transnational Organized Crime in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, aiming to consolidate UNODC's expertise and augment regional responses against organized crime. Moreover, the new UNODC Regional Hub on Anti-Corruption, aligned with the Strategic Vision for Africa 2030 and Africa's Agenda 2063, will be operationalized in early-2024, to centralize UNODC's expertise on the continent and advance integrated and regional responses to corruption and associated economic crimes.



35  
Programme  
Offices



~467  
Personnel



## Regional Office for North Africa and the Middle East

Located in Cairo, Egypt  
With 6 Programme Offices and 89 staff (in North Africa)

## Regional Office for West and Central Africa

Located in Dakar, Senegal  
With 17 Programme Offices and 158 staff

## Country Office for Nigeria

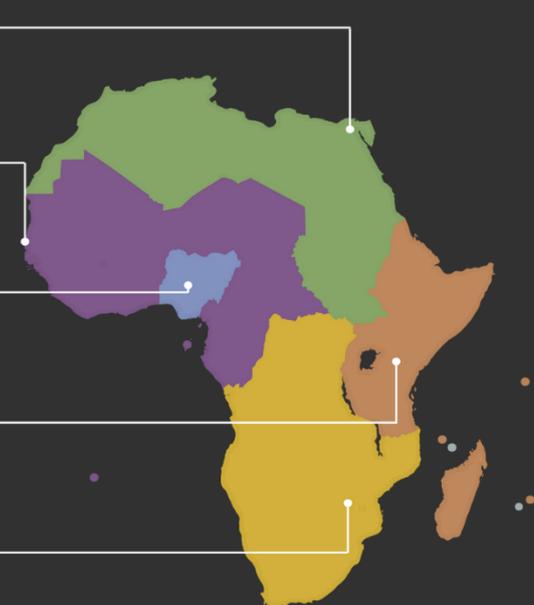
Located in Abuja, Nigeria  
With 57 staff

## Regional Office for Eastern Africa

Located in Nairobi, Kenya  
With 7 Programme Offices and 125 staff

## Regional Office for Southern Africa

Located in Pretoria, South Africa  
With 5 Programme Offices and 38 staff





# PROMOTING PEOPLE'S HEALTH THROUGH BALANCED DRUG CONTROL

UNODC emphasizes an evidence-based and balanced approach to drug control, through effective prevention, treatment, and care, in line with human rights and leave-no-one-behind principles.



## Drug Prevention Among Youth

Across the continent, UNODC has had a central focus on drug prevention among youth through the employment of evidence-based packages that deliver capacity-building workshops and training on youth and family skills. Through programmes like 'Strong Families' and life skills initiatives such as 'Lions Quest Skills for Adolescence' (LGSFA), 'UNPLUGGED', and the 'Line Up! Live Up!' Programme, UNODC aims to target factors leading to drug use and anti-social behavior among young people.

These packages have been employed across the continent, for instance, in 2021, through an assessment of drug use in eleven Arab countries, including Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia, and the subsequent development of the "Arab Plan for Prevention and Reduction of the Dangers of Drugs to Arab Society," UNODC created the 'Youth 4 Impact' (Y4I) programme, designed to empower youth in six MENA countries, including Algeria, Egypt, Libya, and Sudan in Africa, to resist drugs, violence, and crime. UNODC has since helped form national committees to integrate prevention strategies into youth policies and initiated *Line Up! Live Up!* and the *Strong Families* programmes in the region, targeting family and youth-focused interventions against drugs and crime via regional and national training workshops for teachers, coaches and NGO staff.

Similarly, in Nigeria for instance, throughout 2021-2022, 1,313 teachers in nine Nigerian states were trained on the UNPLUGGED Programme, impacting approximately

200,000 students and promoting resilience to drug use and anti-social behaviour.



## Opioid Agonist Therapy (OAT)

As a key avenue to support the rehabilitation of drug users, OAT has been deployed across the continent, especially for key populations. In Eastern Africa, for example, UNODC introduced OAT programmes with an emphasis on harm reduction, provided infrastructure and training in Kenya and Zanzibar, and worked with the National Drug Observatory in Seychelles to enhance national responses to opioid usage. Notably, 55% of the 8,266 opioid users in Kenya were enrolled in Medically Assisted Therapy programmes, and a third OAT clinic was established in a Kenyan prison in 2023. In Northern Africa, UNODC facilitated OAT programmes in Algeria, and by 2023, methadone maintenance treatment was being provided to over 300 clients in 5 centres. UNODC also supported Algeria in developing its Drug Reduction Strategy, methadone guidelines, and OAT monitoring capacity, while also deploying several pilot projects for OAT across Egypt.

## HIV & Other Diseases

Throughout Africa, UNODC has worked to provide training for health and incarceration professionals on the prevention, treatment and care of HIV and other communicable diseases in key populations. For instance, over 200 professionals in Mozambique were trained to address drug use prevention and mitigation, which also included a learning visit to Portugal. In Uganda, the dissemination of pre-, during and post-release information packages for people leaving prisons was provided to ensure a continuum of care and linkage to HIV/AIDS services. UNODC also facilitated the vaccination of almost 100% of the Ugandan prison population against COVID-19 and worked across Eastern Africa to establish tuberculosis control facilities and conduct sensitization sessions for prison officers and community leaders on health rights and prisoner reintegration.

Similarly, in partnership with the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Health, UNODC provided tailored training for police and correctional officers, resulting in improved HIV data reporting and better collaboration with drug user networks. Also, a pilot 'needle and syringe programme' for People Who Inject Drugs expanded from three to seven states, with enrolments surging from 2,731 in 2020 to 70,728 by May 2023. In 2021/2022, UNODC supported 118,372 Nigerians through its host of health-related activities and even worked to include responses to viral hepatitis into the national HIV strategy in 2023.

In Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia, UNODC helped develop national response strategies and the provision of quality drug and HIV/AIDS services for vulnerable groups, including inmates and released inmates, providing comprehensive health services to 28,000 male and 10,000 female prisoners and approximately 25,000 released inmates across North Africa.

## Data & Research

Data, research and analysis are equally essential to effective international, national and local responses to drug use and prevention. In this context, the World Drug Report provides the latest estimates and trends on drug supply and drug demand dynamics in different regions of Africa, and for the first time, the 2023 edition contains an online segment that provides easily searchable and succinct key findings with interactive charts and maps.



At the national and regional levels, UNODC supported a host of national and regional research studies, such as *"Drugs and the Nigerian Society - A Comprehensive Annotated Research Bibliography"* and *"At the Crossroads of Licit and Illicit: Tramadol and Other Pharmaceutical Opioids Trafficking in West Africa"*. In West Africa, virtual and in-person activities were conducted to enhance the quantity and quality of Member States' submissions to UN-mandated data-collection tools on drugs, such as data collection training for drug-related focal points in Togo and Ivory Coast, and a workshop in Abidjan to enhance Member States' understanding of UN-mandated data collection tools for approximately 150 participants from 28 countries. These efforts led to a sharp increase and all-time high in response rates to UN-mandated data-collection tools for Africa (from 13 ARQ submissions in 2021 to 24 in 2022).

## Partnerships

Partnerships remain a key factor in the comprehensive response to drugs across the continent. For instance, in partnership with the African Civil Society Working Group on Drugs, UNODC developed the African Civil Society Common Position on Drugs, backed by 106 African NGOs, and presented at the 4th Africa Union Committee in May 2022. UNODC maintains strong ties with the African Union Commission, jointly implementing initiatives with WHO since 2016 to treat drug disorders and foster health-justice collaboration in Africa. Concurrently, UNODC promoted evidence-based strategies at the African Conference on Drugs in February 2022, aligning with the Strategic Vision for Africa 2030.



UNODC has also worked with the private sector, following a UNODC-UNICEF survey on drug use among youth in Nigeria which prompted collaboration with the major African telecom MTN, and the *MTN Foundation*, where UNODC trained 160 MTN influencers in 2021 through their *Anti-Substance Abuse Programme* in Nigeria. This initiative was able to empower these influencers to promote social interventions that aim to enhance resilience to drug use among Nigerian youth.



## Synthetic Drugs

Throughout recent years, the rise of synthetic drugs on the continent has raised significant concern among law enforcement and health professionals. Through the UNODC Synthetic Drug Strategy, the organization has worked across the continent to support efforts to better identify and control synthetic drugs.



In West Africa, as an example, UNODC's port control units from Benin and Togo were equipped with field drug and precursor identification kits and trained on safe handling and synthetic drug identification to strengthen counternarcotic capacities and support international operations to disrupt trafficking in synthetic drugs.

Similarly, as part of a broader effort to combat transcontinental criminal networks, UNODC trained officers from Ghana and Nigeria on profiling of mail and small parcels, safe handling and identification of synthetic opioids as well as crime scene and investigative techniques in support of cross-border operations to disrupt trafficking in synthetic drugs.

In 2023, given the rising threat posed by the trafficking and use of synthetic drugs in Eastern Africa, UNODC is currently undertaking an assessment of the threat picture, to help countries from across the region advance early interventions before the use of synthetic drugs grows into a widespread public health epidemic.

## End of the Nigeria Drugs Project

2022 marked the conclusion of UNODC's Nigeria Drugs Project. During its 10-year lifespan, the project delivered 157 in-person law enforcement training sessions benefiting over 3,100 participants, on criminal investigation, criminal intelligence, intelligence-led investigations, law enforcement organizational management, financial investigation, first aid, ethics, integrity and prosecution. UNODC supported the implementation of the intelligence model of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency of Nigeria (NDLEA), and the development of two drug policies for the Government of Nigeria. Some 2,500 NDLEA Officers also completed 33 e-learning courses through the Global e-Learning programme. Moreover, UNODC also supported the expansion of effective, evidence-based and ethical quality drug use disorder treatment services in Kano State, in line with the UNODC/WHO International Standards for the Treatment of Drug Use Disorders.



## INVESTMENT AREA 2:

# SECURING THE SAFETY OF PEOPLE FROM ORGANIZED CRIME, TERRORISM AND VIOLENCE

Within the scope of Investment Area 2, a holistic response to the dimensions of crimes, across law enforcement, criminal justice, civil society and national policy arenas is essential.



## Terrorism Prevention

The threat of terrorism, and the immutable inter-linkages between terrorism, organized crime and conflict remain critical challenges for much of the African continent. Since the launch of the Strategic Vision for Africa 2030, the Sahel continues to be a global hot spot of terrorist activity, and extremely vicious instances of violent extremism threaten many parts of Africa, including across the Horn of Africa, in Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Mozambique to name a few.

In view of these threats, UNODC has deployed a range of national and regional programmes that target both the symptoms and impacts of terrorism, as well as the broader criminal justice and crime prevention landscape. For example, in Mozambique, and through the 'Maputo Roadmap', UNODC works with 12 national institutions, providing specialized forensic equipment, delivering training and legislative guidance, and issuing hundreds of recommendations to enhance law enforcement and criminal justice responses to terrorism, deradicalization, justice processes and combating illicit financial flows. Similarly, UNODC has worked with Nigeria for over a decade, training over 8,900 criminal justice officers through more than 400 capacity-building activities. In recent years UNODC has also supported the finalization of Nigeria's Terrorism Prevention and Prohibition Act in 2022, the construction of a new evidence storage facility in Maiduguri in 2023, and facilitated a comprehensive upgrade of the criminal justice and law enforcement training curriculum.

## Trafficking in Persons & Smuggling of Migrants (TIP and SOM)

UNODC works across the continent to counter the threat of TIP and SOM, through supporting national institutions to identify, interdict, and prosecute related crimes, as well as protect the victims and those most vulnerable. Across Africa, UNODC's work includes legislative and policy support, as well as capacity-building activities to train law enforcement and prosecutors, health and social workers, labor inspectors, consular staff, religious leaders and frontline workers to better understand, respond to and prevent TIP and SOM.

Since 2021, UNODC has worked across Southern Africa to train over 1350 law enforcement officers and over 200 magistrates, and in Ethiopia, Kenya and Somaliland, for instance, UNODC has worked to train more than 750 criminal justice officers and developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for police and prosecutors. Noting the linkages with online sexual exploitation of children and trafficking, UNODC delivered direct mentoring to Kenyan law enforcement officers working in the Anti-Trafficking and Child Protection Units in Nairobi and Mombasa as well as for the Anti-Trafficking Unit in Uganda, mentoring 27 cases and helping to facilitate 12 instances of international cooperation.

Other examples include UNODC's work in West and Central Africa to support local civil society organizations across Senegal to shelter 903 children, providing medical and psychosocial support to 1,712, and reintegrating 292 child

trafficking victims in 2021 alone. UNODC has worked to help frontline workers better identify and protect victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation purposes in artisanal mining sites, such as those bordering Mali and Guinea-Conakry, and in Côte d'Ivoire, and supported the Gabon National Taskforce on Migration to develop SOPs for the identification, referral and assistance of vulnerable migrants and victims of trafficking. Across the continent, UNODC also supported the review of national TIP and SOM legislative frameworks, notably leading to the Central African Republic's first-ever anti-TIP law in August 2022.

North Africa is uniquely exposed to TIP and SOM, with smuggling routes crossing into Europe, precipitating a comprehensive response across the legal, policy, justice and social landscape to enhance frameworks, law enforcement capacity and the skills of first responders to effectively tackle such crimes. In June 2023, for instance, a comprehensive workshop in Egypt with over 100 participants from 15 countries was held to strengthen international cooperation in criminal matters related to investigating and prosecuting TIP and SOM. UNODC, in partnership with the EU, supported the training of over 850 criminal justice practitioners and front-line workers in 2022 and eclipsing over 1,300 individuals in 2023, covering a whole range of technical and knowledge-based training across Egypt, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia. At the national level, in December 2022, UNODC also provided IT equipment and software for 8 border crossing points in Tunisia to augment the work of the UNODC-established Passenger Information Unit and data centres, to enhance ongoing operational intelligence mechanisms.

## Firearms Trafficking

The effective prevention of firearms trafficking is essential to regional peace and security. UNODC delivers a range of capacity-building and mentoring initiatives to support states to better manage firearms stocks and respond to the threats of trafficking. In December 2021 and January 2022, UNODC supported 'Operation KAFO III' which was a cross-border firearms trafficking enforcement operation involving seven West African countries and the G5 Sahel. The operation, involving 850 officers, led to the seizure of nearly 600 firearms, thousands of ammunition rounds, drugs, explosives, tobacco, medical products, and multiple arrests. Voluntary firearms collection campaigns supported by UNODC collected over 500 firearms in Niger, while arms control initiatives in the Central African Republic, Chad and Niger resulted in over 7,000 firearms marked and registered during 2021 and 2022 alone. In March 2023, UNODC handed over a storage warehouse for weapons and ammunition (sealed, surrendered, recovered or confiscated) in Niger, and in June 2023, UNODC established joint investigation teams among West African countries, and began planning 'Operation KAFO IV'.



## Maritime Crime & Border Management

The threat of piracy and illicit trafficking by sea continues to threaten coastal countries across Africa, and the continent is burdened with multiple global hotspots of maritime crime. In the Western Indian Ocean region, particularly off the coast of Somalia, the transit of illicit drugs from Central Asia and South America, weapons trafficking in the Gulf of Aden, irregular movements of migrants, trafficking in persons, and crimes that affect the environment continue to be of central concern.



To respond to these ongoing or emerging threats, UNODC undertook various projects in 2021 and 2022 aimed at building the capacity of port and maritime law enforcement officers and prosecutors, including through equipment donations, to support maritime governance, safety and security, the promotion of regional information sharing and collaboration, and enhanced capacity to investigate maritime crimes. In 2023, UNODC delivered more than 120 capacity-building activities across the full spectrum of maritime crime prevention and response conducted from January to July alone. In Somalia, UNODC provides capacity-building training to maritime law enforcement agencies, covering the skills and knowledge in areas such as engineering, Maritime Domain Awareness, and Maritime Law Enforcement training such as Visit, Board, Search and Seizure and basic coxswain courses.

In Comoros, uniquely positioned along the Southern Route for trafficking Afghan heroin and methamphetamine, UNODC provided a comprehensive training package for over 140 Comorian maritime personnel in 2021 and 2022, specifically tailored to their needs and aimed to augment their response procedures to criminal activity in ports and enhance safety compliance. Efforts by UNODC have

contributed to a series of regionally coordinated joint maritime operations between regional partner countries targeting crimes in the fisheries sector, hazardous migrant smuggling at sea, drug trafficking and smuggling of critically endangered maritime species, such as the Malagasy radiated tortoise.

Africa continued to be a key focus of UNODC's AIRCOP and Container Control Programme (CCP), in partnership with INTERPOL and the World Customs Organization. Through supporting a network of more than 20 various units and task forces, AIRCOP and CCP continued to improve the capacity of African Member States and their law enforcement agencies active at air, sea and land borders, to safeguard security, health and economy through the protection and facilitation of the international trade supply chain and the movement of passengers. For instance, UNODC established a Port Control Unit in Maputo, Mozambique in November 2022, connecting Mozambique to a global network of over 130 units, and to a secure, web-based communication platform, ContainerCOMM, enabling the sharing of information with units across the globe, such as the movement of suspicious cargo, encouraging regional and interregional collaboration and cooperation.

## Research

Across the continent, there is an immutable gap in the research, data and analysis landscape on crime, terrorism and drugs. This is particularly salient given the poorly understood but critical links between organized crime, terrorism, poverty and conflict. In this context, UNODC is publishing a series of 'Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessments' (TOCTAs) in the Sahel, most recently covering fuel, firearms, medical products, and smuggling of migrants, and will soon explore trafficking in gold, drugs and in persons. The TOCTAs detail the nature of the market, the flows and routes, the actors involved, and the linkages with organized crime, peace and vulnerability, and provide a basis for a multi-dimensional response, combining prevention and intervention strategies that are sensitive to gender and community dynamics.



## Cyber Crime

With significant growing rates of new internet users, cybercrime and online exploitation are an increasingly extant threat in Africa, and UNODC has significantly upscaled its efforts to build and strengthen cybersecurity

across the continent. For instance, in Niger, UNODC conducted a cybercrime investigation and digital forensics training course for law enforcement officers, aiming to enhance end-to-end digital investigations. In Cape Verde, eight officers from the Judicial Police Cyber Unit were trained in digital evidence collection and preservation and training on effective law enforcement responses to cryptocurrency was held for officers from Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. A symposium on online child sexual exploitation was organized in Morocco for 70 investigators, prosecutors, and judges, and a continent-wide digital forensics competition engaged close to 1,500 participants from 45 countries. UNODC also worked to promote cybercrime prevention, for example, by training teachers in Senegal and Cape Verde and working with local NGOs to raise awareness among students. UNODC also organized a regional workshop on cyber-organized crime in West Africa, gathering experts from 10 countries from the region to exchange on challenges, tools and best practices in investigating, prosecuting and adjudicating this type of crime. In collaboration with SADC, UNODC identified and addressed cyber-violence capacity gaps by training officers across 16 member states.

## South-South Cooperation

Much of UNODC's interventions on the continent, particularly in the face of transnational security threats such as trafficking, organized crime and terrorism, involves a concerted approach to strengthen south-south cooperation. This work permeates much of the work detailed in this report, however, certain examples highlight the success of this dimension. For instance, in late 2022, UNODC supported "Operation Open Roads III", targeting organized crime activities and illicit trafficking across the borders of The Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Senegal. This operation aimed to enhance cooperation, coordination, and information exchange among law enforcement agencies and prosecutors and involved comprehensive training, an international controlled delivery exercise, and operational cross-border control units at 20 selected border posts. As a result, 102.4 kg of falsified medical products and 17,673kg of cannabis were seized, 18 stolen vehicles were recovered, and 11 arrests were made.



# PROTECTING AFRICA'S RESOURCES AND LIVELIHOODS

Protecting Africa's rich ecology within the scope of Investment Area 3, a holistic response to the dimensions of crimes, poverty and prevention.



## Wildlife Trafficking

Wildlife trafficking, illegal wildlife trade, poaching, and other crimes that affect the environment carry a devastating cost for Africa's rich and unique ecology while also providing a potent source of illicit finance for organized crime groups. In this context, effective interventions across the entire continuum of such crimes are essential to protect Africa's biodiversity, to support Member States to manage and capitalize on their rich wealth of natural resources, and to prevent illicit financial flows stemming from crimes that affect the environment.

UNODC has deployed a range of activities across the continent to this end, such as a comprehensive workshop to promote transnational cooperation in Namibia in 2022, bringing together various customs, law enforcement and environmental agencies from Angola, Cambodia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Tanzania, Thailand and Uganda. The training offered officers hands-on experience in detecting smuggled wildlife products and fostered valuable professional connections for future collaboration against wildlife crimes.

Between 2015 and 2019, Nigeria accounted for 23% of Africa's tusk seizures and saw a sharp increase in seized pangolin scales, prompting UNODC's intervention. In response, the country established its first 'National Strategy to Combat Wildlife and Forest Crime' (2022-2026) with UNODC's support and introduced tools like the 'Wildlife Crime Points to Prove for Investigators and Prosecutors', leading to a landmark pangolin trafficking conviction in 2022. Similarly, in Madagascar, a priority country for the International Consortium on Combating Wildlife Crime (ICWC), UNODC worked in this context to evaluate its

wildlife and forest crime response in 2022 and conducted port security training for 110 officers the same year. As a direct result, officers intercepted 36 endangered Malagasy radiated tortoises in the same month.



## Mineral Trafficking

Equally, preventing illegal mining and mineral trafficking is a critical dimension towards promoting peace, security and prosperity in much of Africa, and through UNODC's technical expertise on border control and on preventing crimes that affect the environment, the organization has designed programmes to strengthen the capacities of law enforcement agencies at selected international airports in Central Africa. Implemented in 2022, this initiative trained law enforcement on gold trade legislation, smuggling practices, and trafficking methods, while enhancing inter-agency collaboration for efficient information exchange on gold and metal smuggling by air. The results of these trainings have already shown an increase in seizures of gold, precious metals and currency at airports benefiting from the programme.

## Illegal Fishing

UNODC also works to support coastal states to prevent illegal fishing. For instance, in Somalia, the coastline is especially vulnerable to illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing and associated crimes. Reports suggest that \$300 million is lost annually in Somalia due to IUU fishing, with foreign vessels engaging in dynamite fishing, which damages local marine resources, affects the livelihoods of local fishermen, and diverts funds away from Somalia's economic development.

By request from the UN Security Council, UNODC pioneered a fisheries pilot project in collaboration with the Ministry of Fisheries and Blue Economy, the Attorney General's Office, and the Mogadishu Maritime Police Unit. In October 2021 and June 2022, a series of training sessions brought together inspectors, prosecutors, and boarding officers to learn about fisheries protection and inspection skills, enhancing their capacity to protect Somalia's fisheries from IUU crimes. During the first half of 2023, support in this area continued with the delivery and installation of information and communications equipment to the Fisheries Monitoring Centre in Mogadishu.



## Legislative & Policy Support

In unison with the aforementioned capacity-building initiatives, UNODC also works to strengthen the broader legislative landscape of countries across Africa, to align with international standards and to build continuity among legal regimes, ultimately ensuring an effective prosecution, adjudication and conviction for crimes that affect the environment.

For instance, in September and November 2022, UNODC experts held workshops in Abidjan and Lagos, for representatives from over a dozen West and Central African nations, to support the adoption of comprehensive laws against crimes that affect the environment. Participants were trained on the use of *UNODC Legislative Guides on Wildlife Crime, Waste Trafficking, Illegal Mining, Trafficking in Metals and Minerals and Crimes in the Fisheries Sector*. An additional sub-regional workshop, organized with the Secretariat of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions with support from the Basel Convention

Coordinating Centre for Capacity Building and Technology Transfer for the African Region, specifically focused on hazardous chemicals and waste. Here, over 60 participants from ministries, law enforcement and environmental protection agencies exchanged on shortcomings and challenges in their existing regulatory regimes and discussed ways to improve and amend these laws. As another example, UNODC also worked with ECCAS Member States including Cameroon, Chad, Central African Republic, Congo, Gabon, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to enhance the criminal justice capacity to respond to illicit natural resource exploitation through legislative reform. Ministers from across the region joined UNODC to work on strengthening regional cooperation and advance a commitment to combat these crimes. In separate instances, UNODC has worked with these countries to promote legislative reforms in line with the organization's Legislative Guides, as well as the new Rapid Reference Guides for justice officers to make relevant casework more efficient and effective. These initiatives have continued in 2023, and are complemented by a host of technical assistance and capacity-building activities, notably translating this expertise into a field context, working with NGOs to engage rangers and first responders to strengthen evidence handling and investigation techniques.



## Whole of Government Responses

Through the same scope of legislative and policy support, UNODC is working in Eastern Africa to strengthen whole-of-government responses to crimes that affect the environment. This initiative complements legislative and justice interventions with efforts to support governments to prevent and mitigate corruption risks as enablers of environmental crime. Ensuring robust judicial institutions, by building inter-agency cooperation and enhancing the capacity of prosecution services has been vital. UNODC aims to ensure criminal penalties are proportionate and have a deterrent effect on organized criminal groups, by supporting the development of technical tools such as the *Sentencing Policy Guidelines and Disclosure Policy*. UNODC is also working with wildlife and forest authorities in undertaking Corruption Risks Assessments and developing and implementing Mitigation Strategies, which in Kenya, has led to the development of an Integrity Management

System for public and internal complaints and whistleblower reports. During 2021 and 2022 alone, UNODC trained some 4,400 criminal justice practitioners through this initiative across Eastern Africa.

## Research & Analysis

Within the scope of Investment Area 3 and acknowledging UNODC's potent area of expertise to support states to counter crimes that affect the environment, the knowledge landscape for such crimes remains particularly under-saturated, especially in terms of the interlinkages with other dimensions of crime. In this context, UNODC developed research and technical assistance products on crimes that affect the environment, including a training tool for investigators and prosecutors, outlining key actors, organizational structures and business models of wildlife crime. In Central Africa, a research study into the illegal exploitation and trafficking of mineral resources in border areas between the Central African Republic, Chad, Cameroon and Gabon was conducted and published in 2022.



## Civil Society & Youth Empowerment

Effective responses to crimes that affect the environment, and also targeting the respective linkages with the broader landscape of security, conflict and criminality require interventions at all levels of society. In this context, UNODC's work in partnership with UNESCO and UNV to train 1,770 young people in Cameroon, Gabon and Chad has highlighted the potential of youth as "Peace Weavers" and agents of change in the fight against illicit exploitation of natural resources, corruption and money laundering. These peace weavers now work to raise awareness and promote sensitization and prevention around trafficking within their communities and through visits to cross-border areas.



## UN Climate Change Conferences

At COP27, UNODC and partners organized three high-level side events on waste trafficking and crimes that affect the environment, featuring the participation from the Ministers of Environment of Egypt, Ghana and Seychelles, took part in two presidential events, and launched two research papers - 'Crimes that affect the environment and climate change' and 'Illegal wildlife trade and climate change'.



At COP28, UNODC led the narrative on crimes that affect the environment, which contribute to the triple planetary crisis of biodiversity loss, pollution, and climate change. UNODC and partners organised five high-level events and took part in the climate resilience ministerial forum on empowering law enforcement to protect biodiversity, promote peace and ensure climate recovery and resilience. Addressing the urgent need to safeguard biodiversity and vulnerable communities, with a focus on the essential role of law enforcement, the ministerial forum marked the first-ever participation of the global law enforcement community at the COP and launched the Abu Dhabi Call to Action on Supporting and Enhancing the Role of Law Enforcement Agencies in the Fight against Crimes that Affect the Environment.



INVESTMENT AREA 4:

# SAFEGUARDING PEOPLE AND INSTITUTIONS FROM CORRUPTION AND ECONOMIC CRIME

Combating corruption and economic crime through the scope of Investment Area 4 is a whole-of-society effort, that can unwind cycles of crime, conflict and instability.



## Anti-Corruption

Corruption across Africa continues to undermine peace, security, development and human rights. It erodes public trust and confidence in institutions and governments, weakens governance and hinders public service delivery while enabling illicit financial flows and financing of organized crime and terrorism. In this context, UNODC works across the continent to strengthen national and regional responses to corruption through support to governments, civil society, education systems, and the private sector, aiming to reinforce and fortify institutions, actors and processes against the threat of corruption.

For instance, UNODC is supporting governments across West Africa and the Sahel on corruption prevention and legislative reform. UNODC has held a series of training workshops, benefiting well over 1,600 individuals since the launch of the Strategic Vision, including a broad range of professionals from law enforcement, government agencies, the judiciary and the media. Several corruption surveys, including in Ghana and Nigeria, have highlighted strong areas for intervention to promote integrity and fight corruption among law enforcement and within the public service. In Nigeria, UNODC's capacity-building activities, as well as the establishment of the Kaduna State Anti-Corruption Unit, and the Police Complaints Response Unit, have also led to a significant improvement in rates of complaints lodged and responded to, and have reinforced Nigeria's efforts to strengthen law enforcement integrity.

In Southern Africa, UNODC collaborated with several partners, including the Commonwealth African Anti-Corruption Centre and Open Ownership, to deliver training

to practitioners from 20 African nations on curbing corruption and transparency in public procurement. Ethics officers from South Africa's nine provinces were also trained on risk-based analysis of financial disclosures.

Similarly, following the COVID-19 pandemic in Eastern Africa, UNODC established a pioneering e-platform facilitating continued engagement with regional stakeholders on four thematic areas for fast-tracking the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC). The platform hosts representatives from seven countries and allows live sessions, private communications, and progress updates on ongoing initiatives. Concurrently, UNODC conducted in-country capacity-building activities in Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia and recruited 80 investigators via the East African Association of Anti-Corruption Authorities, supporting preparatory work for online investigations.



## The United Nations Convention Against Corruption

These activities to combat corruption are guided by the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC),

and strategically aligned through UNODC's 'Regional Platforms to expedite the implementation of the UNCAC'. The Regional Platform methodology aims to cultivate cooperation among beneficiary countries, partners, and assistance providers in a specific region to leverage local knowledge and abilities for joint reform priorities. UNODC has eight regional platforms across the world, three of which are based in Africa (Eastern Africa, Southern Africa, and West Africa and the Sahel). In November 2022, the Regional Platform for West and Central Africa was formed to enhance anti-corruption measures in Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal, with a collaborative work plan in development for the end of 2023.



## Illicit Financial Flows (IFFs)

Organized crime and terrorism continue to work against governments, populations and institutions in Africa, through both the impact of their predicate crimes as well as the illicit financial flows that stem from them and undermine Africa's economies, public governance, natural resources, peace and security. UNCTAD's 2020 Report estimated that Africa loses \$88.6 billion annually due to illicit capital flight, and recent indications suggest that some countries are spending up to 58% less on education or 25% less on healthcare as a result. In view of this threat, UNODC works with governments to establish and enhance national and regional mechanisms to prevent IFFs, particularly in connection and in the context of the broader continuum of crime and criminal landscape.

For instance, to enhance financial investigation capacities against money laundering from TIP and SOM, UNODC brought together practitioners from the MENA region, from law enforcement, prosecution and financial investigation units, and experts from regional and international organizations such as MENAFATF and INTERPOL to exchange knowledge on TIPSOM cases and strengthen international cooperation. With a particular focus on understanding emerging payment methods, the initiative culminated in a set of action-oriented recommendations for countering illicit financial proceeds from TIP and SOM in the region.

Similarly, in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Gabon, UNODC has worked to provide continuous and progressive technical assistance to combat the broad range of illicit financial flows that stem from the illicit extraction of resources and rare earth minerals. As part of this strategy, in 2022, UNODC undertook a review of the supervisory powers of the regulator/supervisor and the definitions of precious metals and stones and dealers in precious metals and stones. Together with the supervising authorities, a supervisory framework action plan for 2023-2024 was drafted to better prevent the illicit extraction of precious metals and stones and disrupt key financial sources for organized crime groups in the region. In 2023, additional emphasis was placed on the implementation of targeted financial sanctions related to terrorism and terrorism financing in Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

UNODC also works with South Africa's National Prosecuting Authority, running the *Asset Recovery Inter-Agency Network of Southern Africa* (ARINSA) which facilitated over 105 international cooperation requests during 2021 and 2022 and has led to notable seizures, reinforcing South-South cooperation, enhancing investigation effectiveness and confiscation outcomes, including the seizure of two helicopters for Zambia and about US\$ 2 million for Lesotho. From 2022 to mid-2023, ARINSA countries have reported 660 new confiscations and roughly \$1 billion in new seizures.

## Countering Terrorist Financing

Across the continuum of crime and illicit financial flows, initiatives to specifically target the financing of terrorism are critical, as upstream interventions to prevent terrorist activities and disrupt their operations. For instance, UNODC has been supporting Niger, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana to effectively disrupt, investigate, prosecute and adjudicate terrorism financing, through facilitating international cooperation and sharing of information among legal institutions and supporting officers working to counter terrorist financing through professional development, strengthening institutional capacity, improving the coherence of policies, regulations and standard operating procedures, establishing effective implementing supervisory frameworks, and identifying sectoral risks.

Similarly, interventions on the more granular operations in this context are essential, as highlighted by UNODC's work with states from the Sahel to better investigate fuel smuggling and related terrorist financing. In Burkina Faso, for instance, subsequent investigations led to the identification and seizure of criminal assets. During 2021-2022, 45 plots of land and property were identified, assets

worth some US\$ 3,500,000 were frozen, 1 factory was placed under custodial management, and close to 50 vehicles were seized along with 175,000 liters of fuel. Similarly, with the aid of intelligence from a third-party country and through UNODC's training in intelligence gathering, investigation and prosecution, authorities of Benin made a significant arrest, involving an individual who was financing violent extremism and terrorism, operating under the cover of a locally established NGO whose accounts were frozen and assets seized.

## Whistle Blower Protection

UNODC has also expanded its efforts to support African nations with whistle-blower protection in recent years. All three African regional platforms have identified whistle-blower protection as a priority to focus on, noting that jurisdictions face challenges in developing effective whistle-blower protection measures and a general social reluctance to report wrongdoings. Subsequently, UNODC has provided legislative assistance and drafting support to 10 African countries, organizing 3 regional workshops on the issue, and participated in a Conference by the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie discussing whistle-blower protection in francophone Africa.

## Digitalization, Innovation & Youth

The potential of young people and their ability to leverage digitalization and innovation carries a profound potential to shift the landscape of anti-corruption and anti-money laundering across the continent. In this context, UNODC held the first edition of the Coding4Integrity Hackathon series, organized in 2021, for young coders from Egypt, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa. More than 1,900 developers from the five African countries applied to take part in the hackathon, and 193 were admitted to the 4-week hackathon programme, including training, mentoring and tech development components. The hackathon represents an outstanding example of how to leverage distance learning, digital innovation and social entrepreneurship to meaningfully engage youth whilst empowering them to come up with their own innovative and creative solutions.



## Education & Graduates

Similarly, the application of UNODC's modules and training programmes in education settings has been another central focus for the organization's intervention to combat corruption on the continent. Launched in December 2021, the Global Resource for Anti-Corruption Education and Youth Empowerment initiative (GRACE) focuses on education and youth engagement across primary and secondary education; academia and research; and youth empowerment, through a host of activities. For instance, UNODC held two workshops on integrity and ethics education for university lecturers from Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, and Uganda. UNODC also launched its YouthLED Integrity Board which consists of youth from all regions, including 8 youth representatives from Eastern Africa, Southern Africa, North Africa and West Africa to advance youth consultation on anti-corruption, integrity and ethics.



These interventions have also played out in national contexts to great effect. In Mozambique, through the Maputo Roadmap, UNODC has worked with university lecturers and legal practitioners, to advance education on organized crime and corruption, which have since been adopted in tertiary education curricula and also precipitated the development of a Master's Degree in Law, Security and Citizenship at the University of São Tomás of Mozambique, with a focus on governance, cyber-security and humanitarian law.

In Kenya, UNODC has worked with business and academic sectors to foster ethical decision-making in the private sector by shaping young university graduates' ethical attitudes and skills early in their careers. The project incorporates locally contextualized integrity modules that were developed and implemented by academics and business practitioners, through student-centric teaching, and targeting graduates to become vital ethical figures in the private sector. Through mid-2023, over 10,000 students from 20 Kenyan universities have accessed and learned from the modules. Similarly, UNODC also supported the development of a public procurement toolkit and facilitated the training of close to 8,000 university students as ethics ambassadors under the Global Integrity Education Project in Kenya.



# MAKING CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEMS MORE EFFECTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE

UNODC's work across Africa contributes to crime prevention and criminal justice, with access to justice, particularly for women and youth, promoting accountable, effective and independent justice systems, and strengthening prison management and rehabilitation.



## Access to Justice & Strengthening Criminal Justice Systems

Access to justice is a cornerstone of crime prevention and criminal justice and a central focus of UNODC's work on the continent. One of the best examples of this is the Programme for Legal Empowerment and Aid Delivery in Kenya (PLEAD), a partnership with the Kenyan Government, the European Union, UNDP, and civil society. Initiated in 2018, PLEAD aims to improve justice services delivery, and dispute resolution, promote alternatives to imprisonment, in line with the Kenya Vision 2030 strategy, and address case backlogs, expensive legal advice, corruption, and inadequate utilization of alternatives to imprisonment. Since 2021, UNODC has supported the development of Pro Se Litigants Manuals for use by students and academics and developed legal literacy materials for the general public. Strategic plans and guidelines have also been developed, including the Alternative Justice System Framework Policy, Active Case Management, the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Court Roll-Out Strategy and the Child Justice Strategy. While investing in broad training for judicial officers and staff, UNODC also reinforced customer care desks in 30 court stations, provided support with sanitation and supplied solar power to select court stations, and engaged over 500 Judicial Officers to exchange diverse best practices and collaboratively address challenges in access to justice. UNODC also procured essential office equipment including over 100 laptops, 70 printers, 30 scanners and furniture, tables, screens, monitors and more, providing crucial technical and logistical capacity, especially during the COVID-19 lockdowns.



Similarly, in Nigeria for instance, UNODC has supported the government in reducing case backlogs in terrorism cases, working with Nigeria's Complex Casework Group and Joint Investigation Centre (JIC) to review nearly 3,000 terrorism-related cases, leading to the release of 1,800 adults, 580 minors, and referral of 230 new cases. UNODC offered intensive training on human rights-compliant, evidence-based investigation and adjudication of terrorism cases and facilitated the regular deployment of trained federal counter-terrorism prosecutors, which led to the release of 516 detainees due to lack of evidence, and in 2023, a new evidence storage facility was completed at the JIC. In early 2022, UNODC, supporting Niger's specialized judicial anti-terrorism unit, focused on efficiently managing terrorism cases while ensuring due process and human rights. National UN Volunteers provided legal assistance and rights awareness to terrorism suspects in Niamey and Kollo prisons, contributing to fair and effective justice processes.

## Gender-based & Youth-Focused Justice

Enhancing national responses to gender-based violence, and improving access to justice for women and children is

especially critical as both groups face unique and often insurmountable challenges with accessing justice and interfacing with the justice system. In October 2021, in partnership with the Nigerian Ministry of Justice, UNODC and UNICEF conducted a mission to the Kwara Borstal Training Institute, identifying opportunities to support and strengthen access to justice for the children in the facility. With UNODC's support, of the 225 individuals assessed, 218 were discharged by the Nigerian Presidential Committee, and 66 reunited with their families. Similarly, in Mozambique, UNODC worked with 35 justice professionals in December 2021 to enhance the treatment of children in contact with the juvenile justice system, with the potential to incorporate this training package into the formal national correctional training curriculum.

UNODC has also been instrumental in supporting the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions in Kenya to promote a child-friendly justice approach, developing a Prosecutor's Guide to Children in the Criminal Justice System and establishing child-friendly interview rooms in 8 regions, complete with video-link equipment to enable remote interviewing and court sessions. UNODC aided in developing the 'Rapid Reference Guide on the Prosecution of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Kenya' while providing essential assistance to prosecutors nationwide and complemented by relevant training for 65 prosecutors. Similarly, in Egypt, UNODC has worked in juvenile justice reform focused on rehabilitation and reintegration of children in conflict with the law, while in Libya, work focusses on strengthening child-friendly justice systems and on promoting legal aid and alternatives to incarceration for juvenile offenders in Morocco.



In Somalia, recognizing a male-centric bias in prison rehabilitative and reintegration programmes, a first-of-its-kind vocational training programme for women prisoners at Gabiley Women's Prison was implemented. The curriculum, informed by an assessment of marketable skills in Somaliland, included Henna art, tailoring, and cosmetics, and was delivered by three recruited community women. Post-launch, the Gabiley prison commander observed a significant reduction in violent attacks within the female facility. Similarly, in South Africa, UNODC's reports have

highlighted that 50% of incarcerated women were caregivers, emphasizing their challenges within a backdrop of inequality. Through this analysis, UNODC provided recommendations on gender-responsive non-custodial measures, and has since worked to support policy reforms throughout criminal proceedings. The recommendations were endorsed by the Minister of Justice and Correctional Services, leading to the launch of the first Gender Responsive Prison for Women in December 2022 with UNODC's support.

## International Judicial Cooperation

In the broader regional, continental and international legal and criminal justice landscape, there is a pervasive need to strengthen the interoperability of judicial systems to investigate, prosecute, and convict transnational crimes, in line with international standards. UNODC works across the globe to this end, where, for instance, under the Liaison Magistrate initiative, UNODC has been able to strengthen judicial cooperation in TIP and SOM cases among West and Central Africa (WCA) states, and between WCA and European states. UNODC has deployed Liaison Magistrates from Niger and Nigeria to Italy and Spain, and by 2022, these magistrates facilitated 55 cases, comprising 40 on TIP, 7 on SOM, and others on fraud, money laundering, cybercrime, terrorism, and piracy. They've also handled 25 rogatory requests, 27 mutual legal assistance requests, 4 international arrest warrants, and 3 extradition requests. UNODC also facilitated 2 case investigative forums between Latin American countries, Benin, Togo, Côte d'Ivoire and several European countries concerned by major seizures of cocaine cases pending trial, to facilitate the exchange of intelligence, evidence and exhibits. Several operational meetings, bilateral forums, and exchange visits between various Member States were facilitated during 2021 and 2022, strengthening operational cooperation in the investigation, prosecution and adjudication of TIP and SOM cases. UNODC also supports the Permanent Follow-up Mechanism of the Niamey Declaration, arranging 2 yearly technical meetings on responses to TIP and SOM at the regional and cross-continental level, as well as an annual high-level conference to promote cooperation among representatives from WCA, EU member states, and regional and international organizations.

In the realm of international cooperation on criminal justice for maritime crimes, and in view of the unique need for interoperability among legal jurisdictions, UNODC has delivered significant technical aid to coastal countries in West Africa, facilitating the revision of their collective national maritime crime frameworks and combating maritime crime in the Gulf of Guinea. A notable achievement is Cameroon's adoption in December 2022 of the "Law n°2022/017" designed to combat piracy, terrorism, and attacks against maritime navigation security. To further

strengthen national inter-agency coordination and collaboration, UNODC in West Africa assisted Ghana in June 2021 with the development of Harmonized Standard Operating Procedures (HSOPs) to guide evidence collection and handover procedures relating to arrest and investigation for effective prosecution of maritime cases. This support was extended in 2022 to Benin, and Togo and in 2023 to Cote d'Ivoire Cameroon and Gabon.



## Witness Protection

In the theatre of organized crime, and critical to an effective criminal justice system, the need for witness protection mechanisms cannot be understated. UNODC has worked with Kenya, for instance, to strengthen the effectiveness and capacity of the national Witness Protection Agency (WPA) by investing in professionalization of staff and strengthening their operational structures. UNODC supported the development of 47 standard operational procedures and staff training, as well as 4 policies covering a range of processes such as managing witnesses, risk assessments and protection of witnesses. UNODC also facilitated a legislative review of the Witness Protection Act, and supplied 4x4 vehicles and other vital equipment such as 21 witness protection boxes and 10 voice distortion machines, while helping to upgrade WPA's informational materials, website, and communication strategy.

This need also extends to protecting and specifically responding to the needs of child victims and witnesses. For instance, within the scope of UNODC's support to Nigeria to promote youth resilience to terrorism and violent extremism, the organization directly sought to train first responders and justice officials to approach witness protection through a youth lens, and better protect children as both witnesses and victims exposed to exploitation and recruitment by Boko Haram and other terrorist groups.

## Prison Management & Rehabilitation

UNODC is among the sole international organizations with the mandate to safeguard the rights of prisoners and their rehabilitation. In this context, UNODC has worked to enhance prison management and promote offender reintegration in compliance with international norms and implemented rehabilitative strategies. Furthermore, at the

final stages of the crime continuum, it is essential to equip offenders with skills, attitudes and hope to rehabilitate and reintegrate into society, aiming to reduce rates of offender recidivism, and unwind cycles of incarceration, crime and poverty. For instance, UNODC has worked to implement cognitive behavioral therapy programmes in Tunisian prisons. Additionally, UNODC organized workshops to enhance access to justice in Egypt and Sudan, with particular attention to women, persons with disabilities, and legal aid accessibility, as well as assisted Sudan in assessing its prison system for future reforms. In 2023 in Egypt, following a request from the Ministry of Interior, UNODC prepared and launched a training programme on applying the *United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules)*. In addition to these dimensions of capacity building, UNODC has also sought to improve psychosocial support available to prison officers who interact with Violent Extremist Offenders (VEOs), where their mental health is crucial for a safe prison environment and society.

In an effort to improve prison management in Mozambique, UNODC has worked with the government to emphasize adherence to international prison standards, particularly the Nelson Mandela Rules, through capacity-building workshops and distributing essential health care supplies to strengthen the provision of health care in prisons. A landmark achievement in 2022 was the inauguration of a training room at a women's prison in Maputo, in partnership with the National Penitentiary Service, aiming to enhance the prison management skills of staff and facilitate rehabilitative programmes for inmates, marking a progressive stride in advancing human rights within the prison system. UNODC also held training for prison staff on medicolegal assessments, management of victims of violence and early diagnosis of cervical and breast cancer. A learning visit to Portugal focused on the management of high-security prisons and the rehabilitation and reintegration of inmates, particularly those accused of terrorism.

In Nigeria, for instance, UNODC renovated the vocational center and constructed a new 'skills acquisition center' at the Maiduguri Maximum Security Custodial Centre in Borno State, including the procurement of essential resources, such as books, equipment and tools for disciplines like tailoring, hat making and carpentry. As a result, over 700 inmates successfully enrolled in educational programmes, while another 700 individuals have registered for at least one vocational course. These collective endeavors played a pivotal role in facilitating the effective rehabilitation and social reintegration of offenders, and between January and June 2023, UNODC extended the scope of these efforts by training correctional officers in vocational programmes and facilitated dialogues with community leaders on comprehensive reintegration strategies.



# THE CHANGE ENABLERS

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Guided by the Strategic Vision for Africa 2030, UNODC has worked to ensure that certain dimensions, or 'Change Enablers' are included throughout all programming to have the widest reach. This is essential for developing youth-focused and gender-sensitive programming, legislation, and policy, while guiding activities to target both the causative factors of crime, violence and terrorism, as well as their symptoms. UNODC also aims to leverage emerging technologies, digitalization and online platforms to compound the reach and impact of the organization's work, as well as strengthen partnerships among Member States, within governments and across regions, while partnering with other development partners and UN agencies to achieve a maximum concentration of effort. The Change Enablers of the Strategic Vision for Africa 2030 are:



## Strong Partnerships



## Reinforcing the Role of Women



## Empowering Children and Youth



## Prioritizing Prevention



## Innovation-led Impact



## Eliminating Discrimination and Stigma

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## Strong Partnerships

UNODC has strategically emphasized strong partnerships across all of the organization's operations in Africa. For instance, in the realm of youth drug prevention through the Youth4Impact programme, UNODC has collaborated with the League of Arab States, Member States, and several UN agencies, as well as national bodies like the Egyptian Fund for Drug Control and Treatment of Addiction and Algeria's Ministry of Youth, to lead with an integrated approach, incorporating academic institutions, CSOs, and religious leaders.

To enhance and reinforce data collection, UNODC has worked with West African states, offering training and webinars through enduring ties with health institutions and the African Union, enhancing regional harmonisation and enhancing data sharing tools. In November 2022, in association with various UN bodies, UNODC organized a regional training on SDG 16 indicators on crime statistics, boasting participation from 425 individuals.

UNODC's GlobE Network, launched in June 2021, is a rapidly expanding professional community aimed at facilitating global collaboration against transnational corruption. It includes 24 African countries and several observer organizations from Africa, and has facilitated over 127 case meetings globally while operating a secure communication platform, reinforcing the collective effort in tackling corruption worldwide.

The establishment of UNODC's Regional Hubs in West and Central Africa and Kenya showcases this commitment to regional partnerships, knowledge-sharing, best practices, and strengthening inter-governmental cooperation in combatting transnational organized crime and corruption.



## Reinforcing the Role of Women

In view of the unique role of women and recognizing that traditional gender-non-specific interventions often limit the capacity for women's empowerment, UNODC's work specifically targets gender parity and reinforces the role of women towards equitable and inclusive policies and institutions. Their under-representation in the Sahel's security and justice sectors, for instance, deepens public distrust, affecting strategies and operations, thus hindering community understanding and responses. The UNODC Sahel Programme aims to more effectively integrate gender dimensions in countering terrorism, tackling organized crime, and ensuring access to justice. This aligns with UNODC's Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, promoting gender considerations throughout the criminal justice chain by researching gender dynamics in crime, enhancing the capacity to integrate gender approaches, and building gender-sensitive security services in the Sahel. The 'WhyNotMe' campaign encourages gender equality in the Sahel's justice and security sectors, challenging gender stereotypes and social norms that result in women's minority presence. Led by the UNODC Sahel Programme in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, the campaign uses humor and hope to deconstruct stereotypes, rethink gender roles, and address

women's self-censorship. The campaign has already raised awareness among more than 450 Mauritanian youth, resulting in 70% of sensitized girls expressing interest in becoming police commissioners or security officers.



Mauritania, while stable, faces threats of radicalization and violent extremism, and since 2022, recognizing women's unique position in communities affected by such issues, UNODC and UNESCO trained 50 women, known as Mourchidates, to counteract extremism. Drawing from their deep understanding of Islam and community leadership roles, they have educated over 7,600 individuals in key regions. These Mourchidates provide alternative narratives to extremist ideologies and challenge radical rhetoric. Working in various community hubs, they promote tolerance and address misconceptions, and their influence has empowered more women to participate in public dialogues and shifted societal attitudes, emphasizing the significance of women in decision-making.



Launched in 2021, the '*Customs, Cargo and Women: A Talk for Her!*' initiative connects women customs and law enforcement officers working at Port Control and Air Cargo Control Units in the MENA region developed under the UNODC-WCO Passenger and Cargo Border Team. Bringing these officers together for regular meetings, coaching sessions and professional development activities, including exchange visits to meet with counterparts in other countries, enables the establishment of personal and

professional networks regionally and globally which can be tapped into for career advice and development.

## Empowering Children & Youth

Equally, and given the profound scale of youth populations across Africa, as well as their unique vulnerability to crime, criminality and radicalization, UNODC specifically targets the needs of children and youth, aiming to support their resilience and empowerment in response to these threats. UNODC aims to integrate the enablers of "empowering children and youth" (as well as "innovation-led impact") through the *Coding4Integrity* hackathon series. The first edition of the *Coding4Integrity* series was organized in October 2021 and targeted young African software developers who were trained in integrity, ethics, anti-corruption, and computer programming, and empowered to develop technological solutions for corruption-related problems in their communities. By providing a learning and networking space, the hackathon tapped into the youth's motivation to use their skills for social causes, making their communities more just and peaceful efficiently and sustainably. Overall, the *Coding4Integrity* hackathon series demonstrated how new technologies, and the abilities of young people to master them, present significant opportunities for innovative approaches to tackling complex social issues, including corruption, on a global scale.

UNODC aims to empower youth and prioritize prevention through the development of evidence-based family and life skills programmes, ensuring the adaptation of such programmes to various settings within the African continent (low- and middle-income countries, low-resource/rural settings, conflict and post-conflict settings, refugee settings). These initiatives aim to empower children and youth by equipping them with the needed social, emotional, and cognitive skills through their engagement in life skills programmes (LQSFSA, UNPLUGGED, Line Up Live Up), which in turn increases their resilience against negative and risky behaviour, including drug use and violence. Moreover, UNODC's family skills programmes (Strong Families) work to enhance parenting skills and create a warm and positive parent-child relationship, which prevents violence against children and promotes their mental health. To educate youth on cyber threats, two TikTok campaigns were launched and a radio and social media campaign in three local Senegalese languages and graffiti in four Senegalese communities were developed for prevention messaging.

Given the scale of youth populations across Africa, often making up more than half of national populations, UNODC's responses to the proliferation of crime, terrorism and conflict must also target youth-focused dimensions. For instance, UNODC worked with the Office of the President of

Nigeria to deliver sports-based training, employing various sports activities as tools for teaching practical life and social skills, aiding in managing peer pressure, emotional regulation, and growing self-esteem. This concluded with debriefings, encouraging participants to reflect on their learning and improved life skills, resilience, and positive behavioral change. Under this programme, 24 coaches were trained to reach youths in 5 states in Nigeria. In 2022, the programme was extended to the Niger Delta in Southern Nigeria reaching 1,000 youth, comprising 414 females and 586 males, in this region, and activities have continued in 2023

## ✓ Prioritizing Prevention

Prevention of crime and drug use, as well as efforts to reduce associated stigma and discrimination, are also fundamental to a holistic response to criminality and social cohesion. This Change Enabler is central to UNODC's initiatives in Mozambique, to improve responses to drug use and related HIV prevention, treatment and care. For the 2022 World AIDS Day, UNODC co-funded a week-long campaign in Nampula, Mozambique, with local government agencies, including widespread testing, registration of drug users, and community activities in schools and drug user hotspots. Civil society activists disseminated vital information on prevention and harm reduction strategies to combat discriminatory social narratives.

National crime prevention strategies critically rely on strong and effective data to develop informed policy and evidence-based prevention strategies. UNODC has been working closely with the African Union in aligning data collection and sharing to decrease the response burden on Member States from the region and enhance evidence-informed prevention strategies and interventions. As part of a broad campaign of briefings and capacity-building events, UNODC held an in-person workshop in Abidjan with 12 countries from West Africa covering data collection on drugs. With respect to data collection on crime, UNODC co-organized briefings on the United Nations Surveys on Crime Trends and the Operations of Criminal Justice Systems in July and August 2022, one in English and one in French, with more than 40 participants from 21 countries in Africa. Additionally, UNODC organized a similar briefing with ESCWA, in which five countries from Africa took part.

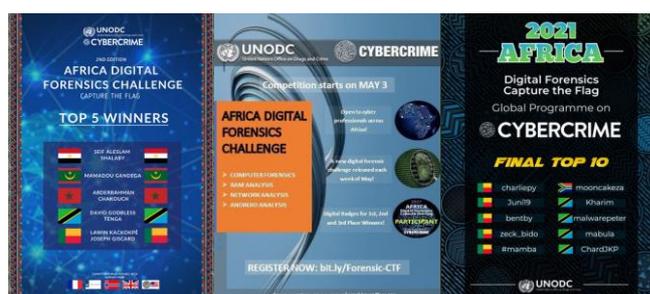


UNODC is actively expanding the scope and reach of its partnerships in the private and business sectors across

Africa to promote the prevention of corruption. This can be seen in the Siemens Initiative on Business Integrity in Northern Africa, which aims to strengthen the private sector operational capacities to effectively prevent corruption and highlights the success of this approach. Through providing SMEs with training and tools to fight corruption, as well as promoting direct and indirect communication between the public and private sectors by facilitating dialogue and knowledge sharing, UNODC is able to contribute to fostering a generation of ethics-focused young professionals.

## 💡 Innovation-led Impact

Innovation and digitalization are other key dimensions essential for expanding the scope and compounding the impact of UNODC's activities in Africa. As an example, UNODC has run the Africa Digital Forensics Competition each year since 2021, which asks participants to solve digital forensics challenges in an online competition platform. Registration for the competition is free and open to anyone from Africa. The first competition in 2021 focused on digital forensic skills related to forensic, RAM, network and Android analysis. The competition had 282 participants from 29 African countries, and 20% of registered participants were women. In 2022, the competition focused on digital forensic skills related to basic electronic evidence searches, open-source investigations, dark web investigations and cryptocurrency investigations. The competition had 1,027 participants from 45 countries, of which 21% were women. This activity serves as an educational tool to address the strengths and weaknesses in cyber and digital forensics that already exist on the continent and to connect more with experts and future partners in Africa, increasing the connections between the experts across borders, and the presence of women in the cyber field.



UNODC also uses technology to reach a broad range of participants through its capacity-building activities. For instance, the UNODC Counter-Terrorism Learning Platform (CTLP) provides training and facilitates policy advice sharing via a secure online forum, while promoting cooperation in counterterrorism initiatives. During the COVID-19 crisis, the CTLP expanded its use, training 1,711 African practitioners, while leveraging virtual training to build skills and capacity, and creating networks of

practitioners. To date, the platform serves over 4,000 users from 172 countries, including 61 African nations, with 33% female users.

The use of innovative approaches to training is also critical in the operational training dimensions of UNODC's work. In working with Western Indian Ocean member states to enhance their capacity in the prosecution of maritime crimes, UNODC has led simulated trials in Kenya, Seychelles, Tanzania and Mauritius since 2022, and aims to expand this to regional settings. The mock trials, which were conducted with the participation of prosecutors, investigators, and coastguard officers, explored legal gaps that could be exploited in maritime crime cases, potentially impacting the attainment of legal finish. The exercises, held in actual courtrooms, trained participants in aspects like case preparation, evidence handling, and case management. With the skills acquired, the participants are able to significantly contribute to a complete judicial response for criminals in maritime-related cases thereby promoting safety and security in the maritime domain.

## **Eliminating Discrimination & Stigma**

Finally, and in an effort to address the entire continuum of crime, criminality, and drug use, UNODC works to strengthen responses to discrimination and stigma, aiming to ensure effective social cohesion and rehabilitation of offenders, drug users and victims. Through this lens, states are using enhanced data to strengthen public health planning, promoting meaningful interventions to reduce the negative health and social consequences of drug use disorders. In November 2022, Senegal published a national drug use school survey to build a drug data information system and the results have informed policy decisions and interventions in the country. Of 3,303 analysed questionnaires, 15% of students reported lifetime cigarette or alcohol use, 7.8% used tranquillizers or pain medication, and 3.5% of 15-16-year-olds reported using other psychoactive substances, and the related data feeds into national health response strategies. Additionally, Kenya has worked to strengthen data by mapping 18 service providers treating drug use disorders via the WHO-UNODC Substance Use Disorder Treatment Facility Survey, enhancing their coordination and collaboration in national healthcare responses to drug use disorders.

UNODC's work on HIV prevention, treatment and care in prisons, such as that in Nigeria or South Africa among many

others, focuses also on overcoming the social stigma and discrimination and delivering training on how to provide human rights and gender-responsive services and support. Similarly, in prisons and other closed settings, UNODC has helped states counter discrimination and stigma, especially concerning children in conflict with the law, to support their successful reintegration into society.

Through rehabilitation efforts and awareness-raising campaigns, such as the Youth4Impact programme, or UNODC's work in West Africa on vocational training for prisoners, the organization works to ensure effective post-incarceration outcomes for individuals in conflict with the law, aiming to reduce social exclusion and rates of reoffending. These efforts also aim to enhance access to justice for women, children, and persons with disabilities and special needs by directly addressing identifiable seen and unseen barriers and discrimination. UNODC's Sahel Programme and the Youth4Impact programme in North Africa also aim to achieve this by supporting interventions that challenge prejudice and enable access to justice and health services. The Youth4Impact programme specifically targets the support for the most marginalized such as youth who use drugs, young offenders, youth living with HIV and victims of crime/abuse.



# LOOKING FORWARD

Following the milestone of the first two years of the Strategic Vision for Africa 2030, UNODC's senior leadership gathered in Egypt for the UNODC Cairo Retreat in June 2023, to reflect, plan and expand the organization's operations on the continent, ensuring that the organization is able to most effectively serve people of Africa. In view of the range of achievements on the continent, as outlined throughout this report, UNODC also sought to analyze the gaps and opportunities through the lens of the Strategic Vision for Africa, yielding a range of strategic recommendations and commitments to improving the way we work, while expanding and redoubling our efforts to reinforce programming, categorized through eight dimensions across the organization's mandate areas.



## Youth as Agents of Change

Africa is currently experiencing a powerful demographic dividend, which holds the potential to drive development and growth. Without effective interventions, this may lead to dramatic gaps and challenges if young people are left unsupported and marginalized. In view of the enormous potential for youth to become agents of change for Africa, in the fight against the many multi-dimensional challenges facing the continent, UNODC has marked a specific strategic intention to expand programming on supporting Youth across each of the Investment Areas. In 2024 UNODC will deploy a Youth advisor to Africa, specifically to strengthen, coordinate and advance Youth-focused interventions.

## Comprehensive Health Interventions

Concerningly, UNODC has observed a notable decrease in resources available for drug prevention, treatment and care programming, and this lack of funding stands in a distinct contrast to the dramatic needs and challenges the continent faces to address the spread and consumption of illicit substances, as well as collecting data and research on trends. In view of this dynamic, UNODC has made a renewed push for mobilizing resources in support of Africa's continued efforts to address the drug pandemic and will continue to lead with the mandate to provide interventions promoting a balanced approach to drug control.

## Crimes that Affect the Environment

Responding to crimes that affect the environment and illicit resource extraction, largely guided by the Strategic Vision for Africa's Investment Area 3 on Protecting Africa's Resources and Livelihoods, has been and remains a crucial but under-saturated area for UNODC's programming. The needs and challenges facing the continent have never been greater, especially given the unfolding environmental crisis, the potential for wildlife crimes to finance organized crime and terrorism, as well as the potential for devastating damage to ecologies and economies. Ahead of COP28 and in recognizing the universal need to support the Just Energy Transition, UNODC commits to further strengthening and enhancing programming through the lens of Investment Area 3 in Africa.

## Prison Reform

Across Africa, prison populations face a range of often under-reported and not well-understood challenges, and are often particularly susceptible to human rights violations. Under-developed prison management can perpetuate violent extremism through radicalization in prisons, as well as facilitating the spread of HIV within populations. In Africa particularly, UNODC recognizes the necessity to promote modern prison reform policies, in line with the Nelson Mandela Rules and the Bangkok Rules, and the profound need to support over-burdened justice systems through implementing effective justice programmes and alternatives to incarceration processes. UNODC's work has highlighted the need for a critical effort in this space, and the organization commits to refocus and strengthen interventions on enhancing prison and incarceration reform.

## Research & Analysis

The urgency for better data, research and analysis cannot be understated, highlighted by recent trends, such as surging cocaine seizures, increased illicit trafficking of medical products, and rising rates of sexual and gender-based violence. Much of Africa, however, remains a research and data dark spot across many dimensions of crime, and better data research collection capacity throughout the continent is needed to inform evidence-based policy and interventions. UNODC's Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessments (TOCTAs) and other relevant research materials are a testament to the profound value of stronger research and analysis, and in view of this, UNODC will continue to build stronger research, data collection collaborations, enhance capacity-building with counterparts, and continue to seek an ever-greater understanding of crimes and the most affective avenues for interventions.

## Firearms Trafficking

UNODC's TOCTA on Firearms Trafficking in the Sahel has shown the devastating effects of the spread of light weapons and other firearms throughout the region. Unregistered weapons, often originating in post-conflict, play a critical role in fuelling and perpetuating conflict and violence, and provide substantial income for organized crime groups. The issue of firearms trafficking has grown to a central focus in the region, spurring UNODC's commitment to redouble efforts to enhance responses to firearms trafficking, and its linkages with terrorism and organized crime.

## Digitalization & Cyber Crime

Africa has also registered the highest rate of growth in connectivity, and the expanding number of internet users has resulted in a global rise of potential cybercrime victims and cyber-offenders. As an emerging and ever-changing dimension of crime, cyber crime constitutes a cross-current threat to security, economic development, peace and stability, and necessitates a dynamic and constantly evolving response. However, the emergent possibilities of digitalization and digital technologies, relevant across the entire scope of UNODC's interventions in Africa, also carry a profound potential to strengthen and reinforce institutions and maximize the reach and impact of government services. In view of this complex and potent landscape, UNODC will continue to expand work on the continent in preventing cybercrime and will proceed with a renewed commitment to innovation-led impact, looking to enhance initiatives that employ digitalization and digital-forward solutions.

## South-South Cooperation

Finally, and given UNODC's successes and the profound value derived from partnerships and relationships that have been built and strengthened in the fight against drugs, crime and violence, South-South Cooperation was recognized as a critical factor in the long-term and ongoing impact of UNODC's operations and programming on the continent. With the establishment of UNODC's regional platforms and centres, such as the Regional Hub on Transnational Organized Crime and the Regional Hub of Anti-Corruption, and broadly throughout the organization's programming, UNODC aims to ensure that South-South Cooperation remains a key and central dimension in the organization's interventions across the continent.

# CONCLUSION

The UNODC Strategic Vision for Africa 2030 represents a transformative and sustainable vision to support African member states in their efforts towards improved safety and resilience from drugs, organized crime, terrorism, corruption, and illicit financial flows. Developed through extensive consultation with stakeholders, the Vision reflects UNODC's commitment to partner, empower, strengthen, include, innovate, and educate towards a safe, prosperous Africa capable of capitalizing on its enormous potential.

To achieve this vision, UNODC recognizes the need to shift to new and innovative approaches in line with the Strategic Vision for Africa and the UNODC Strategy 2021-2025. This requires an ongoing, sustainable, and concerted effort across the organization, both at headquarters and in the field, and a sustained and clear-eyed review and evaluation of UNODC's presence and impact on the continent.

Mobilizing the financial resources required to operationalize this Vision requires significant financing from a wider spectrum of sources at the domestic, regional, and international levels. UNODC will continue to expand programming, respond to critical gaps and reinforce its commitment to joint UN programming for more integrated and sustainable impacts across all investment areas and change enablers.

In conclusion, UNODC invites all stakeholders to join in driving change towards realizing the SDGs by 2030 and the Strategic Vision for Africa 2030. UNODC works tirelessly to convene governments, organizations, experts, institutions and people from across Africa and around the globe to unite and empower agents of change against drugs, organized crime, terrorism, violence, corruption, and illicit financial flows. If you feel that you can contribute to realizing these ambitions and goals, please participate. Together, we can contribute to a prosperous, peaceful, and secure Africa for all its people.



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# STRATEGIC VISION FOR AFRICA 2030