ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Multisectoral Regional Office for West Africa-Sahel

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Acknowledgements

This Report is an annual publication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Multisectoral Regional Office for West Africa-Sahel (UNESCO Dakar Office).

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With less than twelve years to go before the deadline for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), United Nations (UN) Member States are working to achieve the targets, in collaboration with development partners, including the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

In this context, the Multisectoral Regional Office for West Africa (Sahel) in Dakar, UNESCO’s operational arm, is implementing the Organization’s Programme in the Sahel and beyond. The Office mainly covers the following Sahel countries: Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger and Senegal.

The Sahel region has recently been, and continues to be, the focus of the entire international community’s attention through a discourse generally centred around a Sahel that is plagued by terrorist and community violence, trafficking of all kinds, uncontrolled migration, food insecurity, etc. Although it is undeniable that the region faces a multitude of challenges, this crisis discourse presents only one facet of this part of the African continent. It is important to note that this is a region steeped in history and immeasurable cultural wealth, with an abundance of natural and human resources that, if managed properly, can help meet the challenges of sustainable development, in accordance with the African Union’s (AU) Agenda 2063 to which the countries of the region have subscribed.

Indeed, the Sahel is rich in important mineral resources and aquifers. Beyond natural resources, the wealth of the Sahel and its future lies in the resilience of its people. Population growth and a growing youth population, often considered as impediments to sustainable development, are certainly a challenge, but also an opportunity if human capital is strengthened through necessary interventions such as quality education accessible to all, health, the pursuit of inclusive growth policies that can generate decent jobs and ensure women’s and girls’ empowerment.

In view of the challenges as well as the opportunities offered to the Sahel countries, and within the framework of UNESCO’s mandate, the Dakar Office’s interventions in the Sahel during 2018 focused, among others, on the following main lines:

- support Sahel countries in the promotion, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes that ensure equitable and quality education and learning for all throughout life;
- capitalize on advances in the natural sciences to support Sahel countries in their development efforts;
- mobilize the humanities and social sciences to inform public policies and practices in Sahel countries in support of their development efforts;
- enhance and preserve cultural heritage and develop policies and measures to support the creative sector; and
- leverage communication and information to build peaceful, development-oriented societies.

These interventions have yielded significant results in terms of achieving national, regional and international agendas such as the SDGs in countries under the purview of the Dakar Office.

The implementation of the Dakar Office’s activities, for the benefit of its Member States and to achieve the results presented in this report, has benefited from consultations and collaboration with several stakeholders, including the National Commissions for UNESCO, policy-makers, academics and civil society. Cooperation with UNESCO offices in Africa, UNESCO Institutes and Headquarters has increased impact and visibility in the region.

The Dakar Office will continue the work accomplished in 2018 by scaling up or replicating successful experiences, while monitoring at the national level to consolidate achievements and ensure that capacity development activities lead to concrete actions in partner countries. Particular emphasis will be placed on the production and dissemination of knowledge on emerging issues and the promotion of innovative and effective solutions to address them. It is with this view that together, we will continue to support countries in their efforts to improve the living conditions of their populations.

Dimitri Sanga
Director
UNESCO Multisectoral Regional Office for West Africa-Sahel
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# Acronyms and Abbreviations

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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AHF</td>
<td>African Humanities Forum</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANA0-SUP</td>
<td>National Authority for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (Senegal)</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>CapED</td>
<td>Capacity Development Programme for Education</td>
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<td>CSE</td>
<td>Comprehensive Sexuality Education</td>
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<td>CES A</td>
<td>Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CODESRIA</td>
<td>Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa</td>
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<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>GEM</td>
<td>Global Education Monitoring</td>
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<td>GPE</td>
<td>Global Partnership for Education</td>
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<td>HDI</td>
<td>Human Development Index</td>
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<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information and Communication Technology</td>
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<td>KOICA</td>
<td>Korea International Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>OIF</td>
<td>International Organization of the Francophonie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PACE</td>
<td>Pan-african High-Level Conference on Education 2018</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAQUET-EF</td>
<td>Programme for Improving the Quality, Equity and Transparency of the Education and Training Sector</td>
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<td>PVE-E</td>
<td>Preventing violent extremism through education</td>
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<td>RCG4-WCA</td>
<td>Regional Coordination Group on SDG4-Education 2030 in West and Central Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAGA</td>
<td>Science and Gender Advancement</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDGs</td>
<td>Sustainable Development Goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRGBV</td>
<td>School-Related Gender-Based Violence</td>
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<td>SRH</td>
<td>Sexual and Reproductive Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>STEM</td>
<td>Sciences, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics</td>
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<tr>
<td>STI</td>
<td>Science Technology and Innovation</td>
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<tr>
<td>TALENT</td>
<td>Teaching and Learning: Educator’s Network for Transformation</td>
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<tr>
<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCAD</td>
<td>Cheikh Anta Diop University</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNESCO</td>
<td>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</td>
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<td>UNFPA</td>
<td>United Nations Population Fund</td>
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<td>UIS</td>
<td>UNESCO Institute for Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>UPEC</td>
<td>Université populaire de l’engagement citoyen</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>WAEMU</td>
<td>West African Economic and Monetary Union</td>
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The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Multisectoral Regional Office for West Africa (Sahel) covers the following countries: Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger and Senegal, which have more or less comparable socio-demographic, macroeconomic and environmental characteristics. These characteristics are, moreover, all sources of both opportunities and challenges.

From Cabo Verde to Niger, passing through Senegal or Mali, the high level of sunshine and the prevalence of winds make this region of the world one of the most well-endowed with renewable energy potential (wind and solar). For example, in Senegal, the annual insolation level is estimated at 394 trillion kWh. In terms of natural resources, in addition to mineral resources, the Sahel contains the continent's largest aquifers. As in most parts of the continent, the high resilience of the population and the youth demographic (64.5%) of Sahel countries are also major assets. At the economic level, diversification opportunities in almost all sectors remain numerous and are supported by positive economic growth estimated at 6.8% in 2018 for the countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU).

The Sahel also faces many crises, which intersect and feed each other, further complicating the challenges they create. This is the case, for example, with the growing insecurity that is mainly due to terrorism. Political crises, one dimension of this insecurity, the absence of the State in some areas and poor governance in some Sahel countries lead to exacerbated effects. The same is true of the high unemployment of young girls and boys, which is due, among other things, to the low rate of insertion of youth into the economy and the inadequacy of training and employment.

Young people are a preferred target for both the propaganda discourse of extremists and candidates for illegal migration. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)'s State of World Population Report 2018, nearly 81.6 million people (19.8 million in Burkina Faso, 2.2 million in The Gambia, 1.9 million in Guinea-Bissau, 19.1 million in Mali, 22.3 million in Niger, and 16.3 million in Senegal) are in need of sustenance in this semi-arid zone. To this must be added the major challenge of food self-sufficiency. This situation is aggravated by environmental crises including drought, irregular rainfall, etc. In terms of human development, except for Cabo Verde, all other Sahel countries covered by the Dakar Office are between 164th and 189th in the Human Development Index (HDI, UNDP, 2018). These
challenges and opportunities help to guide the strategic development choices and priorities of the countries of the region.

Based on an analysis of the various national, subregional and international development plans, country priorities, as they emerge, can be grouped into four main categories: access to basic services and human capital development; governance and security; sustainable natural resource management and resilience; and strong, sustained and inclusive economic growth.

In addition, in line with the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (UNISS), the United Nations Support Plan for the Sahel was adopted in May 2018, with the overarching goal to “scale up efforts to accelerate shared prosperity and lasting peace in the region” (p.5). This Plan is structured around six priority areas:

- Cross-border cooperation
- Prevention and sustaining peace
- Inclusive growth
- Climate action
- Renewable energy
- Women and youth empowerment

It is in this context that UNESCO’s Multisectoral Regional Office for West Africa (Sahel) is responsible for the operational implementation of UNESCO programmes. Its interventions are carried out in line with the Organization’s Medium-Term Strategy (37C/4) and biennial Programme (39C/5) but, above all, in support of national, regional and international development agendas, including the African Union’s (AU) Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. In addition to its relevance to these main frameworks, the relevance of the Organization’s interventions in the Sahel (ODD), is also measured by their complementarity with other initiatives of regional partners, including the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), WAEMU, as well as regional intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) such as the G5 Sahel, the Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), and the Liptako Gourma Authority.

In view of the challenges and opportunities offered to the countries of the Sahel, and within the framework of UNESCO mandate, the Dakar Office’s interventions during 2018 focused, essentially, on the following main lines:

- support the promotion, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes that ensure equitable and quality education and learning for all throughout life;
- capitalize on advances in the Natural Sciences to support development efforts;
- mobilize the humanities and social sciences to inform public policy and practice in support of development efforts;
- enhance and preserve cultural heritage and develop policies and measures to support the creative sector;
- leverage communication and information to build peaceful and development-oriented societies.
West Africa is the region with the highest number of young people in the world. In addition, the countries covered by the Dakar Office are particularly affected by a problematic socio-economic and demographic context. All countries in the Sahel region, with the exception of Cabo Verde, fall into the category of “low human development” countries. Indeed, according to the HDI (UNDP 2018), out of 189 countries, West Africa-Sahel countries ranked in the lowest positions: Niger (189), Burkina Faso (183), Mali (182), Guinea-Bissau (178), the Gambia (177), and Senegal (164). Cabo Verde performs at a mid-level position of 122nd, but it faces numerous challenges as a Small Island Developing State (SIDS).

In addition, there are the problems of lack of employment and underemployment of young people, poverty and cases of social exclusion. Moreover, the structural issue of underdevelopment and low growth combined with the region’s exceptional socio-demographic dynamics, which arouses fear in some and suggests hope in others, undoubtedly calls on leaders and their partners to think of relevant responses to support the region’s Member States in achieving the 2030 and 2063 agendas and to prepare, with the UN and the AU, “the future that we want!”

To address most of the above-mentioned challenges, education plays a key role. Despite the progress that has been made in expansion of basic education, there are still over 31 million primary school-age children and 23 million children eligible for junior secondary who are out-of-school in sub-Saharan Africa. A sizeable number of children are out-of-school in West Africa, due to several reasons:

- inadequate and insufficient supply of schools;
- irrelevance and lack of quality teaching and learning;
- unequal or harmful norms and practices; and
- increasing financial constraints to respond to the high social demand for education combined with the rapid growth of school population.

2. Major challenges in the Sahel related to UNESCO’s fields of intervention
Among those who are able to complete basic levels of schooling, many do not acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and values to lead meaningful, healthy and productive lives and to contribute to the development of their communities and societies. Lack of access to education, school dropout and issues of education quality are just a few examples leading to the learning crisis in the West Africa (Sahel) region. The West Africa (Sahel) region includes some of the countries with the greatest challenges in this respect.

The various reviews have shown that the low quality of teaching and learning, the lack of diversity of educational provision, the high illiteracy rate among adults, especially women, the mismatch between education, training and employment across all levels of education, including in higher education, are among the factors that contribute to weak performance in human capital development.

It is well known that science, technology and innovation are important levers to propel countries along the path of sustainable development. Despite recognition of the importance in the development process, the situation in the countries covered by the Dakar Office is not ideal.

The seven countries covered by the Dakar Office together have an estimated population of 81.6 million in 2018. The region contains an estimated total of 10,000 researchers, 28% of whom are women.

Thus, the immediate challenges to the effective management of scientific development in the Sahel region on issues such as water, the environment and climate change are linked to inadequate human and institutional capacities. Insufficient expertise leads to inadequate planning as well as management complicated by the lack of scientific data needed to make informed decisions.

The ranking of all countries in the region as least developed countries (LDCs) affects their ability to deploy technologies to solve problems linked to science-related sectors such as health, agriculture, climate change, access to water, biodiversity, meaningful science education, and the possible use of science and technology for economic development.

Despite these challenges, Member States have a good knowledge of the role of Science Technology and Innovation (STI) and Sciences, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) in national development. A new wave of awareness and change is spreading across many countries, leading to new policies, institutions, frameworks and strategies to develop adequate human resources and to deploy science and technology in the service of nations. These are some of the challenges to which UNESCO has contributed to finding solutions through its activities in 2018.

### Table 1: Participation rates in education, West Africa (Sahel), 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Net Enrolment Rate (NER)</th>
<th>Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Lower Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>76.4</td>
<td>75.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabo Verde</td>
<td>86.2</td>
<td>85.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambia</td>
<td>77.6</td>
<td>81.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinée-Bissau</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>69.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>61.2</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>60.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sénégal</td>
<td>74.1</td>
<td>78.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afrique subsaharienne</td>
<td>78.2</td>
<td>75.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monde</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>88.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: T (Total); F (Female); M (Male)

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 2018
Policy makers often turn to so-called “emergence plans” in their constant quest to achieve the objectives defined in national, sub-regional and international development agendas in relation to the social challenges they face in the region, particularly demography, health, unemployment and gender inequalities. While everyone agrees on the urgent need to reform economies structurally, it is important to recognize that such a perspective cannot be achieved without structural reform of the social structures and mentalities of the women and men who drive the economy, because development is always the result of a process of social and mental transformation.

West Africa is characterized by a rich history and complex and ancient societies, as evidenced by the seventeen sites inscribed on the World Heritage List such as the historic sites of Timbuktu and Djenné in Mali, the Ruins of Loropéni in Burkina Faso or natural areas such as the Air and Ténéré reserves in Niger. Moreover, this region of Africa is the scene of a living heritage composed of traditional music that accompanies various social events, skills related to fishing, architecture, metallurgy and many other fields. The safeguarding, preservation and transmission of this heritage, in its various cultural and natural, intangible, immersed or documentary forms, faces a number of challenges such as lack of expertise, limited management capacities, armed conflicts, natural disasters, urban development and illicit trafficking in cultural property.

Moreover, culture, particularly heritage, has already demonstrated the role it can play in promoting sustainable and inclusive development, both economic and human, hence its integration into the Agenda for Sustainable Development through SDG 11 (Target 4) and into the AU Agenda 2063, Aspiration 5. It is important, from this point of view, to invest in the safeguarding and enhancement of heritage, which makes it possible, inter alia, to offer new training and employment opportunities to the Sahel populations.

The Sahel faces a major security challenge characterized by the prevalence of terrorism and violent extremism, which is fuelled mainly by poverty, youth unemployment, but also by weaknesses in governance and respect for human rights. In several countries, the principles of transparency, freedom of expression and the rule of law are yet to take root and develop. Moreover, the various restrictions put in place by States to counter terrorism in particular are not always conducive to freedom of expression.

In general, the countries of the region, with the exception of Cabo Verde and Senegal, are assessed in several international rankings as having an environment that only partially guarantees freedom of expression.

In terms of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), the States of the region have made considerable progress with countries, such as Cabo Verde, which is at the top of the Sahel ranking on the ICT Development Index (2017). In fact, almost all countries in the region are counting on digital technology to, among other things, diversify and make their economies more resilient and job-generating. However, the opportunities for innovation, education, health, etc. offered by these technologies are hampered by inadequate or insufficient public policies and the low presence of qualified human resources.
3.1. **Ensure equitable and quality education and learning for all throughout life**

Most Sahel countries are in the process of reviewing and updating their education policies and strategies in the pursuit of the SDGs through the development of competent and resilient human resources. They are endeavouring to strengthen and implement strategies and interventions that ensure that all children and youth acquire knowledge and skills and that youth and adults continue to improve their competencies throughout life.

UNESCO’s Education Programme is designed and implemented to support the achievement of the SDGs in general and the SDG4-Education 2030 agenda in particular. The AU’s Agenda 2063 and Continental Education Strategy for Africa 2016-2025 (CESA 16-25) also guide its programme design and implementation.

UNESCO Dakar’s Education Programme aims to strengthen national education and learning systems so that they ensure quality education and training for all and contribute to peaceful, sustainable and healthy livelihoods for people and societies. Inclusion, gender equality, human rights and youth are at the heart of the programme, which concern all levels of learning - from pre-school to higher education and throughout life, and enable learners to develop skills to ensure a successful transition from «school» to «work», and to bring schools and communities closer together.

### Leading and monitoring SDG4-Education 2030 in West and Central Africa

UNESCO Dakar has been chairing and acting as Secretariat of the Regional Coordination Group on SDG4-Education 2030 in West and Central Africa (RCG4-WCA) since its establishment in May 2016. The RCG4-WCA, together with its task teams working in specific areas related to the SDG4 targets, aims to support national education development, in convergence with SDG4, its targets and CESA 16-25. It strengthens dialogue, synergy and coherence in the actions of the member organizations (currently 26 organizations). It supports the linking of global initiatives and discussions to country-level processes, challenges and realities.
The online platform Education 2030 in Africa and the Twitter account @ED2030Africa facilitate the sharing of information and experiences in education. In 2018, the RCG4-WCA was effective in mobilizing partners who played an active role in the Pan-African High-Level Conference on Education (PACE 2018) and the GPE Education Financing Conference. The regional launch of the 2019 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report in West and Central Africa on the theme “Migration, displacement and education: building bridges, not walls” provided an opportunity to exchange knowledge, experiences and strategies on the topic among various stakeholders, including RCG4-WCA partners, civil society representatives and young people. Among the main advocacy materials produced this year are two videos on girls’ education in Africa and two videos on the recommendations and key messages from the 2019 GEM Report.

Integrating SDG4 into national education planning

Through the Capacity Development for Education (CapEd) Programme (SDG4 Pilot), with UNESCO’s technical support, Senegal’s Programme for Improving the Quality, Equity and Transparency of the Education and Training Sector (PAQUET-EF) has been updated to take into account new national, subregional and international frameworks, including the SDG4-Education 2030 agenda. National Education Accounts were developed to identify gaps, overlaps or misuses in education financing and to explore strategies for improvement; the simulation model was aligned with the new results framework of the PAQUET-EF 2018-2030.

UNESCO Dakar, in its dual role as Lead Agency of the Education and Training Thematic Group and Coordinating Agency of the National Group for
Education and Training in Senegal, mobilized partners in the development of the 2018-2022 Action Plan for the PAQUET-EF and the Performance Measurement Framework and facilitated the external evaluation process of the revised PAQUET-EF Action Plan. It also supported the finalization and validation of the Support Plan for Education Development and Training in Senegal, which will be financed by the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), as GPE grant agent.

At the regional level, the RCG4-WCA task team on Strengthening Education Systems (SYSTeam) advocated at PACE 2018, for the inclusion of refugees in national education systems, which was reflected as one of the commitments in the final Nairobi Declaration and Call to Action on Education. The task team also gathered and shared information on the educational planning processes in the 24 West and Central African (WCA) countries through its dedicated space on the Education 2030 in Africa platform.

In Mali, through the CapED, UNESCO supported the country in the preparation of its education sector plan (PRODEC II, 2019-2028). A financial simulation model was developed to propose the different education policy scenarios in order to reveal policy options to combat sector-specific challenges, the links between PRODEC II strategies and the SDG 4 targets, and a framework of PRODEC II, of which nearly 71% of the SDG4 indicators have been integrated. In the process of developing a National Strategy for the Development of Education Statistics, Mali (SNDSE) has adopted, in alignment with SDG4 a:

Dans le processus d’élaboration d’une Stratégie Nationale de Développement des Statistiques de l’Education (SNDSE), le Mali s’est doté, en alignement avec l’ODD4 :

1. National Indicators Framework (NIF);
2. mapping of data sources in line with the SDG4 targets to respond to national political priorities;
3. Data Quality Assessment (DQA) report to assess existing sources of potential data and areas for development.

These activities were mainly carried out with the technical support of International Institute for Educational Planning (IEP)/Pôle de Dakar and the UIS Regional Office in Dakar.

Improving teaching-learning processes

Activities concerning teaching and learning have mainly been carried out within the framework of the Teaching and Learning: Educators’ Network for Transformation (TALENT) Network - one of the 6 RCG4-WCA task teams - whose Secretariat is led by UNESCO Dakar, and which brings together the main actors in teaching and learning in sub-Saharan Africa.

In cooperation with the GPE, UNESCO Dakar strengthened national capacities to improve national learning assessment systems through a series of training workshops for sub-Saharan African countries. It organized the workshop on alignment between curriculum, teacher training and learning assessments at the Open University of Tanzania for 18 countries in sub-Saharan Africa (including Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Mali, Niger and Senegal). Ten countries received 4 months of additional training on the same theme, at the end of which they further analysed their gaps and designed their strategy to improve alignment between curriculum, teacher training and learning assessments. Educational planners and evaluators from 17 countries, including Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Mali and Senegal, were also trained on the effective reporting, dissemination and use of large-scale learning assessments to improve educational policies and practices.

DA study on the teaching and assessment of transversal (“21st century”) competencies is being conducted in nine countries, including The Gambia, Mali and Senegal as part of the Optimizing Assessment for All (OAA) initiative, led by the Brookings Institution.

In Niger, UNESCO Dakar continued its activities in support of teachers within the framework of the CapED programme. In view of ensuring an effective and rational management of education staff, he
computerized human resources management database (allocation, use, redeployment) has been finalized and users and administrators were trained in its use.

Data collection tools for formal and non-formal primary education have been harmonized and regional statistical officers were trained to produce a single statistical yearbook in 2019. This yearbook is expected to provide decision-makers, partners and other stakeholders with reliable data to inform and guide decision-making and education policies, including the primary and secondary education policy being prepared with the support of CapED.

The capacities of 122 primary and secondary school supervisors in the 11 regions of the country have been strengthened on pedagogical approaches and techniques for teaching mathematics, science and technology without gender stereotypes. In turn, these mentors will support in-service teachers in implementing active gender-responsive pedagogy for participatory and inclusive learning in these subjects.

The CapED program in Mali launched the process of developing a national teacher policy by:

- establishing a national technical team to develop the policy;
- developing the rationale for relevant policy and strategy documents to be developed for the professionalization of teachers and the improvement of the quality of education.

Thus, reference frameworks for basic education teacher skills and the teaching profession, including in non-formal education, have been developed. They are a key step in the development of a qualification framework planned for 2019.

In order to promote girls’ access to STEM disciplines, UNESCO supported the Ministry of National Education in organizing the “Miss Sciences 2018 Competition”, which enabled the participation of 80 girls from 20 Education Districts, through resource mobilization from both development partners (UNICEF and the World Bank) and the private sector (BSIC Bank and TELECEL).

In 2018, 500 copies of the guide on integrating gender into teaching and learning practices were printed and used effectively in training sessions for 158 teachers, including 79 women.

**BOX 2: UNESCO advocates for the 202 million children and adolescents who do not acquire basic skills**

On the occasion of PACE 2018, UNESCO Dakar organized a panel discussion on good practices to address the learning crisis in Africa. The deliberations largely influenced the Nairobi Declaration and Call to Action on Education adopted by the AU Ministers of Education and partners. It also launched its first advocacy paper on the “Alarming Levels of Learning in Africa” on the occasion of World Teachers’ Day, with a view to sustain the momentum generated at PACE 2018 and to place learning at the heart of the education agenda at national and regional levels.
UNESCO Dakar aims to promote the integration of the Target 4.7 of the SDGs into education policies, programmes, teaching and learning so that children and young people can acquire the knowledge, skills and competencies to ensure healthy, peaceful and sustainable livelihoods.

In 2018, the capacities of 18 curriculum developers and teacher trainers from the seven cluster countries were strengthened on the integration of the prevention of violent extremism through education (PVE-E) into education systems. Following beneficiary countries’ request to develop a tool to enable information sharing of publications and educational materials, as well as their experiences on PVE-E, an online platform Learning to Live Together Sustainably (http://www.vivons-ensemble.net/) is being developed by UNESCO Dakar and the International Organization of the Francophonie (OIF).

In Mali, the project «Young actors for peace and national reconciliation» made it possible to develop a training manual on education for a culture of peace, citizenship, civics, gender and illicit trafficking. This manual, of which 600 copies were printed, has been translated into two national languages (Bambara and Fullar) and has been used to train 370 young people. Twenty members of the Regional Reconciliation Support Teams (ERARs) in the Mopti and Segou regions completed a training in these different themes in order to then train the various community leaders in conflict management by peaceful means and to fight against various forms of violence. They were also equipped with computer equipment, office equipment and transportation means.

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The initiatives and actions carried out in 2018 in Sahel countries have established the necessary conditions on which education and training systems can build to equip young people and adults with the knowledge and practical skills necessary for a decent life, as well as a successful transition to the labour market and an effective contribution to social and economic development.

Among other things, three ministers of vocational and technical training from the Sahel countries have committed political support for the promotion and development of a regional qualification framework in the ECOWAS region.

In Mali, the National Employment and Training Observatory (ONEF) now has the technical capacity to support the management of the Malian training system in relation to the labour market. The holistic diagnosis of the sub-sector of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) carried out in Niger provides a convincing basis for the development of a TVET development policy in response to labour market needs.

With a view to improve the quality of higher education, the institutionalization and operationalization of effective quality assurance systems was promoted and supported in 2018. In Senegal, 68 experts and external evaluators were trained and are strengthening the national expert base of the National Authority for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANAQ-SUP) and 42 managers of internal Quality Assurance Units have been trained.
Mali has passed a law creating the ANAQ-SUP and a draft of institutional evaluation standards has been developed. The texts relating to the creation and status of the creation of the ANAQ-EnSuRe have been validated in Niger. Niger has also completed a comprehensive diagnosis of its higher education and research sector that was carried out to highlight the obstacles prohibiting better alignment with labour market needs. The Gambia and Senegal have ratified the Addis Ababa Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees and Other Academic Qualifications in Higher Education in the African States.

In Senegal, UNESCO has been working to promote the inclusion of illiterate young people and women in society through high-quality functional literacy and vocational training programmes integrating the use of new technologies. Particular progress was made in the certification of literacy class teachers, commonly referred to as “facilitators.” Indeed, the Regional Training Centres for Education Personnel have been equipped with a system for the initial training of literacy facilitators. Additionally, a system for Validating the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) of facilitators has been designed and implemented. Out of 104 candidates admitted at the start, 67, including 46 women, passed the exam and have acquired basic facilitator skills.

In order to provide employment opportunities for illiterate young people, a pedagogical model combining literacy in the national language (Wolof) with vocational training, with the use of information and communication technologies, has been put in place in Senegal. During the pilot phase:
- 16 trainers were trained in the national language;
- a standard framework integrating national language and vocational training skills was developed;
- digital resources illustrating lessons in Wolof were developed; and
- an illustrated 1200-word glossary on woodworking was developed for trainers and learners.

The KOICA-funded project “Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women through Education in Mali” has strengthened the capacities of more than 250 non-formal facilitators, «Women’s Learning Centres» (CAFé), CED and CAF educators on life skills, reading, writing and mathematics didactics in five national languages.
Equipping children and young people with skills and learning environments that promote health, inclusion and gender equality

UNESCO Dakar aims to improve the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of children and young people, promote their well-being and gender equality. Three priorities contribute to this:

• quality comprehensive sexuality education (CSE);
• addressing school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV); and
• girls success in science, technology and mathematics education.

UNESCO Dakar supported progress toward political commitments from West and Central Africa countries on CSE and SRH services by establishing a regional working group, building a roadmap with 23 countries and training stakeholders from five countries in the region on CSE. A CSE application for the most vulnerable adolescents is available for in-depth testing. On SRGBV, UNESCO Dakar supported the production of two teacher-training guides, published the diagnosis of three countries, and trained 87 trainers and 90 teachers.

BOX 5: To strengthen the response to school-related gender-based violence (SRGBV)

SRGBV takes many forms, such as psychological, physical or sexual, and have negative consequences for the education, health and well-being of children. To address this, UNESCO supported Cameroon, Senegal and Togo to publish and share an in-depth diagnosis of the response of these three countries to SRGBV, to develop a teacher-training guide, and to train trainers and teachers for larger-scale training actions. These actions will enable children to develop in safer school environments that support fulfilling learning, free of constraints and early and unwanted pregnancies.
The KOICA-funded project «Empowering adolescent girls and young women through education in Mali» developed indicators related to SRH in the Education Management Information System (EMIS) and supported their integration into databases. It also made it possible to:

- develop a functional database on girls’ education and health in schools;
- develop a learning booklet on sexual and reproductive health education for elementary school students;
- build the capacity of 30 peer educators in sexual and reproductive health and 60 nurses on user-friendly services (forced marriage, early pregnancy, human immunodeficiency viruses (HIV), gender-based violence (GBV), female genital cutting (FGC), etc.);
- provide nearly 1500 SRH kits to school dispensaries, nurses and peer educators in Segou, Mopti, Timbuktu and the Bamako district.

In addition, 100,000 people were sensitized on the importance of girls’ education and sexual and reproductive health through the dissemination of key messages in national languages through radios, commercials, magazines/newspapers, sketches, etc. Eight large information panels in French and national languages were installed on the main roads of the regional capitals and an awareness-raising caravan entitled «My daughter goes to school» for International Girls’ Day for 100,000 listeners (community, parents, students, students, media, etc.) was organized in the Bamako district, Segou and Mopti.
3.2. Leveraging Natural Sciences to Support the Development of the Sahel Countries

UNESCO’s work in natural sciences within the Sahel touches upon two of the region’s drivers of sustainable development, water security and biodiversity conservation. UNESCO also provides support for the development of critical capacities in science, technology, innovation, engineering and mathematics necessary for technological development in critical areas, such as health, agriculture, transport, etc. Presented below are some of the areas in which the Dakar Office supported countries under its purview and yielded some results.

Placing STI policies within public policy discussions and catalyzing youth innovation

While the work on filling gaps in data for evidence-based decision-making is still taking place, experts fully recognize that research-based evidence remains underutilized in African policy making, even though the crucial need for scientific evidence to inform policy decisions is widely recognized at national and international levels. With this in mind, UNESCO Dakar encourages training cadres of skilled science advisers in science-related institutions who are able to identify and interrogate evidence and use their enhanced capacities to provide evidence-informed policy advice on a more systematic basis. In this regard, UNESCO and its Nairobi-based partner, the Programme for Economic Policy, prepared a short course for senior-level officials of science-related ministries from Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde and Senegal to begin developing capacities for proffering scientific advice to their governments. This course took place in October 2018 in Saly, Senegal with 11 Director-Generals and Directors from the listed countries. This project is expected to be extended to other countries in the region in the coming biennium.

A practical and visible demonstration of the importance of science and technology are technology-based enterprises, often founded by youth, which create wealth through innovation. The enthusiasm of innovative youth across Africa in taking hold of their destinies through enterprise development was promoted in the Gambia in September 2018 when UNESCO Dakar organized a training on innovation, enterprise development and coding. This hands-on training allowed 27 young men
and women to develop ideas, test them on their business model canvases, and then pitch their new products to potential investors. This training is an important step toward acknowledging the potential of young people’s hidden talents that, if properly tapped, could develop successful businesses.

In recognition of the importance of data and evidence in the management of national science systems, UNESCO Dakar worked closely with Headquarters on two programmes aimed at building critical information necessary for policy decision-making. These programmes, the Global Observatory for Science Policy Instruments and the Science and Gender Advancement (SAGA) aim to produce enough information to enable managers of national science systems to understand what is available and what is needed in order to efficiently employ STI and STEM for national development. The Gambia participated in a SAGA activity aimed at boosting gender equality in STI and STEM. The Gambia is one of nine pilot countries that have received training and assistance in starting a process for efficiently collecting and using gender data in STI and STEM.

## Contribution to improving the performance of young Malians in the field of STEM

In Mali, the science sector contributes to improving the performance of young people in the field of STEM through capacity-building activities in programming and robotics, STEM training, and Blockly programmes for students, especially girls, with «YELENKOURA» visual impairment.

Several adolescents have also received training as STEM trainers. A strategy document on the situation of girls and women in STEM has been developed, with a participation and capacity development plan.

With regard to multisectoral synergy between the Science and Education Sectors in the Bamako office, a training workshop on reproductive health techniques and advocacy with vulnerable adolescent girls was organized in Bamako’s municipalities I, II and IV. 30 peer educators attended with the participation of the Faculty of Medicine, Pharmacy and Odontostomatolgy as well as health and family planning workers.
«Miss Science 2018» in Mali

In order to strengthen intersectoral collaboration and to encourage more girls and women to embark on STEM training and careers, a motivating national competition for girls was organized under the leadership of the Ministry of Education, Innovation and Scientific Research.

Water resources management and water-related disasters in the Sahel region

Water security is an important human rights issue that affects the Sahel severely and is likely at the nexus of certain crises in the region, as a result of severe periods of droughts and loss of water levels in basins and catchment areas.

Most of the water available to communities in the Sahel region is from underground sources; one of the weak points of river basin organizations (RBOs) is the lack of knowledge of groundwater resources. Over the past decade or so, states and RBOs have become increasingly aware of the necessity available groundwater resources and are now trying to set up a management system for these resources.

Recently, many important efforts have been made both at the level of RBOs, as well as at the regional (GS Sahel) and international (UN) levels to remedy the situation. This is the case of the Organisation pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Sénégal, which had set up a network of piezometers to superficially assess the existing relationship between ground and surface water.

In view of these difficulties, UNESCO worked with Cheikh Anta Diop University (UCAD) to organize a session for 25 experts from seven countries of the region (Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Guinea Conakry, Mali, Niger and Senegal) on the challenges of managing transboundary waters in the Sahel. The emphasis was on shared underground water resources.

The recommendations uncovered through a Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threat (SWOT) analysis include:

- Implement a personnel recruitment and training policy for States and training institutes;
- Share good practices among different stakeholders (the State, RBO...); and
- Operationalize water policies.

The Niger River, traversing the arid lands of Mali and Niger with a total length of 4,200 km, is the third longest river in Africa and is a source of life for much of the Sahel. Each year, it floods the inland delta of Niger into Mali, allowing fishing and providing water for agricultural and domestic use, of which approximately 1.5 million (ABN, 2015) people and millions of migratory waterbirds depend. Hydropower dams, extensive irrigation systems and climate change affect the flow of water in this important river.
Due to this great risk, UNESCO and the agency in charge of the Niger River Basin carried out a broad campaign on the safeguarding aspects of the Niger River, its resources and its implications for food security in Mali. One hundred and fifty participants from the regions of Sikasso, Mopti, Gao and Timbuktu, representatives of local authorities, state decentralized services and users took part in these activities.

The Gambia is located within the drainage basin of the River Gambia and consists of five ecoregions. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change lists the country among the 100 countries most vulnerable to climate change and particularly susceptible to weather-related hazards, such as drought, windstorms, floods and sea level rise.

For instance, in 2010, flash flooding affected 35,000 people, with 2,673 families directly impacted and 35 deaths, representing a very high figure considering The Gambia’s population. The Greenhouse gas/Capita emission for the Gambia is 0.880354 tons CO2eq/capita/year (GWP-100 of AR4), which is low compared to the impact of climate change-related disasters suffered in the country.

In view of these hazards, UNESCO and the National Disaster Management Agency of The Gambia organized a sensitization and awareness campaign for community leaders and schoolchildren in the lower and upper region towns of Jarra Soma and Basse. The activities emphasized the identification of risks and the mapping of hazards in the community as two ways to mitigate disasters. Two hundred people were reached with the information on hazards identification and other sensitization materials.

Promoting citizen science through the Sandwatch Program in Cabo Verde

Sandwatch is a citizen science programme that helps teachers and their pupils to undertake practical activities aimed at beach protection and environmental conservation. Cabo Verde started its Sandwatch activities in 2009 and since then, there has been no review of the impact or otherwise. A meeting was therefore organized on 4-5 December 2018 to take stock and reflect upon the journey thus far. The outcome of the meeting provided a glimpse into the successes and challenges faced by Cabo Verde in running Sandwatch activities. Following this session of reflection, UNESCO will work with the National Commission of Cabo Verde to strengthen the programme and expand its scope among Cabo Verde’s schools.
3.3. Mobilizing the humanities and social sciences to inform public policy and practice

In 2018, the Dakar Office’s Human and Social Sciences Sector, continued to support Member States in their development and implementation of evidence-based public policies for the empowerment and leadership of youth and women in building peaceful, inclusive and sustainable societies. This support was also aimed at strengthening the Member States’ institutional capacities and advocating for the achievement of the SDGs. Gender equality, social inclusion, human rights-based approach, among others, are at the heart of this adopted integrated approach. The following present some results achieved during 2018.

Mobilizing the humanities: Promoting multidisciplinary research in the social sciences to inform public policies, societal practices and accelerate social transformations

In order to ensure the relevance of the Human and Social Sciences Sector’s work to the 2030 and 2063 agendas and to consolidate UNESCO’s leadership in contemporary ideas debates, the Dakar Office initiated two national and regional Management of Social Transformations (MOST) Policy-Oriented Research (MOS-POR) projects. They are entitled respectively: «Societal Violence and Women’s Rights in West Africa: multidisciplinary and multi-referential approach for the social inclusion of women accused of witchcraft in Burkina Faso» and «Youth and spaces of freedom in West Africa. Emerging expressions, citizen engagement and solidarity of actions for inclusive democracy and social transformations conducive to the achievement of the SDGs».

As part of the follow-up to the recommendations of the African Humanities Conference and the World Heritage Convention held respectively in Bamako, Mali and Liège, Belgium in 2017, the Dakar Office is currently preparing the African Humanities Forum (AHF), scheduled for September 2019 in Mali. All measures are being taken to ensure a fruitful mobilization of the Humanities in service of the Cultural Renaissance of Africa, fostered by aspiration n° 5 of the Agenda 2063. In addition, World Philosophy Day (2018) was celebrated with Société Sénégalaise de Philosophie and Fédération mondiale des cités unies, sharing an important round table entitled «Philosophy and Human Rights: Kouroukan Fouga at the source of the issues.» As the only UN organization to be invited as a partner to the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) General Assembly (December 2018), UNESCO organized a major panel discussion for the first day in a plenary session. The panel’s theme, «Decolonizing research, questioning epistemic masculinities: for more egalitarian, more inclusive and more integrative human and social sciences with plural perspectives!», as well as the introduction of rich debates by eminent intellectuals from around the world, exhibited the panel’s impressive. Almost all of the 300 representatives from 35 countries, including President Thabo Mbeki and writer Wole Soyinka, took part in the debates.

Similar to the World Bioethics Summit in Dakar, which brought together more than 200 participants from 70 countries to discuss issues related to the establishment of the National
Build capacity and promote the empowerment and civic engagement of youth and women to spread peaceful, democratic and inclusive societies

Several activities were implemented to empower actors and to promote youth and women’s leadership in order to consolidate their role in building peaceful, democratic and inclusive societies. Young people and women are the main vectors of this action. Three MOST Schools, successfully implemented in Senegal and Guinea Bissau through the MOST programme, provided direct training and tools to nearly 150 young and female leaders and promoted their role in the pacification of the elections scheduled in their respective countries.

The Dakar Office also organized, in collaboration with United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) and other UN agencies, a high-profile conference on «Women, Violence and Terrorism in West Africa and the Sahel Region». It also carried out, with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the OIF, etc., a MOST/Regional School workshop on «Gender, Youth, Migration and Human Rights in West Africa». Furthermore, the Dakar Office was also involved in the training of ToT members by the West and Central African Regional Gender Thematic Group and organized a coaching session for the national winner of «My thesis in 180 seconds», a competition designed to improve communication and rhetorical skills.

The Dakar Office joined forces with Université populaire de l’engagement citoyen (UPEC) to unite citizen movements from across the continent (Côte d’Ivoire, Togo, South Africa, South Sudan, Benin, Burundi, Chad, Kenya, Senegal, Madagascar, DRC, Republic of Congo, etc.) around «Y’en A Marre» in Dakar. UPEC was an opportunity for young African leaders to discuss the theme, «Citizenship and the right to decide», and to advocate for actions on crucial issues, such as citizenship, the role of civil society in the democratization process.
of African States. Moreover, it was an opportunity for UNESCO to consolidate its network while providing symbolic support for the UPEC’s proceedings publication.

In addition to training, UNESCO’s Operational Strategy for Youth also includes a regional forum, «Engaging Young African Leaders (...) for Democratization and Peacebuilding in Africa», scheduled to take place in Banjul in 2019. Despite the postponement of the implementation of funds mobilized under the 2019 Regional Youth Initiative, the forum is in the process of being organized. It will, among other initiatives, be informed by the results of the MOST-POR «Young people and spaces of freedom in West Africa.» In addition to CODESRIA, OHCHR, Trust Africa, and Article 19..., the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation has joined the group of partners.

**Bringing cultures closer together through intra-cultural and inter-religious dialogue to lead advocacy and to create awareness against social exclusion and poverty**

Mainly focused on women excluded on charges of «witchcraft» in Burkina Faso, the Dakar Office carried out a double action of advocacy and empowerment of victims of the DELWENDE 1 and 2 Centres. This multidimensional intervention has informs targeted awareness campaigns and advocacy initiatives to support Member States in the pursuit of equitable and inclusive social policies. The fourth session of «Grand-Plaidoyer» for the rehabilitation of victims is in advanced preparation under the aegis of the Burkina Faso National Commission for UNESCO. The Watch Committee’s tours and visits to customary and local authorities made it possible to advocate for the inclusion of women in the Mossi Plateau. The provisional results of the study on «Societal violence and women’s rights in West Africa» are already available and should feed into a targeted awareness campaign.

In Senegal, Guinea-Bissau, Niger and at the regional and continental levels, advocacy activities have been conceptualized with various stakeholders (UNESCO, UN Agencies, Guédiawaye Cultural Academy, SAF, Women’s Platform for Peaceful Elections in Senegal, AHF Scientific Committee, etc.) and networks set up or consolidated to implement the action plans developed during various strategic workshops for sustained advocacy for the culture of peace and democratization. With EducommunicAfrik, a digital campaign was launched (October 2018) to raise awareness among young people about gender-based violence through social media in Burkina Faso and Niger. Digital tools have been put in place to fight against stereotypes and to encourage social inclusion of women and girls. In addition, productive exchanges were undertaken in different countries with collectives of young leaders and activists in order to consolidate their participation in the Pan-African Networks (author of PAYNCoP) and integrate them into the preparation of the African Standby Force and the Banjul Forum.

**More than a «soul supplement», the Bamako Office is at the heart of flagship projects in West Africa and Sahel!**

To contribute to the implementation of the National Programme for the Culture of Peace (PNCP), under Regular Programme funds, the Bamako Office supported the Government of Mali through raising awareness and capacity-building sessions for populations affected by the crisis in the Sahel. These sessions focused on the positive values of sport and peace education. Some of them took
place during an interregional football tournament (Gao, Kidal, Mopti, Timbuktu), attended by about 60 people.

In the same vein, UNICEF and International Organization for Migration jointly implemented the project entitled «Young actors for peace and national reconciliation in Mali», funded by the Peace Building Funds under the supervision of the Ministries of National Reconciliation and Social Cohesion (MRNCS). In April, the project was launched in Bamako in the presence of the national authorities, governors and deputies of the Segou and Mopti regions. Within the framework of the project, capacity-building activities were carried out for young people, the Regional Reconciliation Support Teams and local authorities.

A space for the prevention of cross-border smuggling of migrants and irregular migration has been set up with communication and information tools (standing banners, banners, leaflets, posters, etc.).

Awareness campaigns were also conducted for a peaceful presidential election as well as an in-depth survey of women’s civil society organizations in the Ségou and Mopti regions. The Bamako Office also contributed to the financing of a regional study of youth reached by the Dakar Office. UNESCO also carried out an independent external final evaluation of the project to support children, young women with children and victims of violence as a result of the occupation of northern Mali, notably Gao and Timbuktu, and the Bamako district. This resulted in the production of a document showing the project’s impact.
3.4. **Enhance and maintain cultural heritage and develop policies and measures to support the creative sector**

In 2018, the Dakar Office’s interventions in the field of culture were based on the standard-setting mechanism established by the SDGs (4, 8, 11, 16 and 17) and the five major UNESCO conventions on culture. These range from supporting the creative industries to protecting and safeguarding heritage in its various forms and contexts: natural, cultural, intangible, armed conflicts, illicit trafficking, urban development, etc. The year 2018 saw the implementation of a significant number of innovative flagship activities through diversified strategic partnerships and the commitment to the protection of the underwater cultural heritage of African countries along the Atlantic coast.

### An exceptional heritage

The seventeen World Heritage sites in West Africa have exceptional cultural and natural potential. However, there are significant challenges related to mounting conservation and management needs. To this end, the Dakar Office’s strategic response is based on improving management tools and strengthening local expertise and higher education. Thus, four new management plans were finalized and formally submitted in Mali to the Prime Minister in November 2018 for the ancient cities of Djenné, Timbuktu, the Bandiagara Cliff and the Askia Tomb. Rehabilitation work in Timbuktu has been completed, including the mosques of Sidi Yahia and Sankoré and the fenced wall of the Three Saints cemetery. The museums of Timbuktu and Gao have been revitalized with the installation of new exhibitions. In Cabo Verde, Cidade Vehla has an Urban Planning Standards Manual that will help maintain the integrity of preparation of a new management plan for the historic centre of Agadez.

Senegalese officers from Niokolo Koba National Park received extensive training in ecological monitoring by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature in Ouagadougou. The park has mainly implemented one of the principal recommendations of the World Heritage Committee. This includes updating its management plan which was finalized in December, implementing a sustainable tourism development project in the Bassari country, and installing the first signage on the island of Gorée, to be followed by the Djoudj National Bird Park, the Saloum Delta and the Loropeni Ruins in Burkina Faso.
The commitment to heritage in educational programmes is an issue that affects the entire African continent. The issue was discussed at the November 2018 regional meeting, «World Heritage and Higher Education Institutions in Africa», organized by the Office in Saint-Louis (Senegal).

In collaboration with the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF), Gaston Berger University (UGB), the Ministry of Culture and other organizations, more than 70 professionals, experts and researchers met to propose solutions for strengthening training opportunities in heritage professions and helping to fill the generational gap that exists among heritage professionals in Francophone Africa.

To train new generations of experts, the Office supports the creation of a Master’s degree in Heritage Management and Conservation at UCAD and a comprehensive inter-university mobility programme. As part of a multisectoral project with the Education Sector, a study of labour market demand for the skills required in heritage professions was carried out in order to inform the training profile of this new Master’s degree. Inter-university mobility is ongoing with 16 refresher trips planned for technicians, teachers and students between the universities of St Louis, Dakar, Bologna, Ferrara and Naples.

### Protecting heritage in times of crisis

In Mali, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Mission for the Stabilization of Mali civilian and military personnel, as well as national defence and security forces (military, gendarmerie, police, customs, civil defence, water and forestry officers), continue to be trained on the importance of protecting and respecting cultural heritage in the event of armed conflict. The work of training trainers and inserting training modules in defence and security forces schools was continued throughout the year. In addition, a course at an international level on emergency assistance to cultural heritage in times of crisis First Aid for Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis in Africa (FAC AFRICA 2018), was organized from 12 to 28 November 2018 in Bamako in partnership with International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property and the Ecole de la Paix.

About 21 cultural heritage professionals, site managers and experts from 18 countries in Africa, Europe and South America participated in this high-level international training, held for the first time in Africa. Support was also provided to Burkina Faso, which this year ratified the Second Protocol to the 1954 Convention, in developing an action plan for the identification of cultural property in need of protection in the event of armed conflict (2020-2022).

### Conserving cultural objects and combating illicit trafficking

In a context where the issue of the restitution of African cultural property is highly topical, the Office provides a sustainable and constructive response based on support for African museums and the prevention of illicit trafficking in cultural property.

With regard to support for African museums, the Dakar Office supported the Musée d’art africain Théodore Monod in developing skills in textile conservation and the National Museum of Burkina Faso in protecting its collections. UNESCO also celebrated, on 6 December 2018, alongside Senegal, the inauguration of the Museum of Black Civilizations - a great moment for Africa and its diaspora.

With regard to the prevention of illicit trafficking in cultural property, the Dakar Office developed a regional network in 2016 to effectively combat illicit trafficking of
cultural objects in order to stop fraudulent withdrawals of artifacts from national territories. One of the key links in the protection chain are security and customs forces. The first awareness campaign was organized in May 2018 in Ouagadougou to analyse customs needs in the fight against illicit trafficking, with the participation of more than 45 customs officers from West and Central Africa. Seven months later, in December, 30 customs and INTERPOL officers from 17 countries in the region were trained in operational techniques to prevent illegal transactions of cultural property at airports, ports and land borders. This activity is the result of an innovative collaboration between the World Customs Organization and Senegalese customs. It made it possible to test, for the first time in the world, the Programme for the Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Cultural Heritage (PITCH).

Traditional partnerships have been revitalized, particularly with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), INTERPOL and the African Heritage School, along with new partnerships created with a network of qualified experts: French Customs, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Helicon Conservation Support. A total of seven working meetings and identification of targeted actions took place this year and follow-up actions are planned for 2019.

### First steps towards the protection of immersed heritage

The Office has launched cooperation between African countries along the Atlantic coast to strengthen legal provisions for the protection of underwater cultural heritage, to develop expertise through academic connections (UCAD, DRASSM, UNITWIN, etc.) and to develop tourism economy around shared heritage.
Safeguarding intangible heritage: connecting schools with communities for more inclusive curricula

The integration of African cultures in school curricula and the development of endogenous content and pedagogies are points that have long been defined as necessary, not only to rethink education in Africa but also to safeguard living heritage.

The Dakar Office, in consultation with Sahel countries, has thus initiated actions for the implementation of an innovative and pilot project aimed at integrating elements of the intangible cultural heritage into school curricula in four Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal). In addition, with regard to the safeguarding of the intangible heritage, three international assistance programmes have been launched to strengthen national capacities for the preparation of inventories in Senegal, Burkina Faso and Niger.

Develop policies and measures to support the creative sector

In order to support the development of the cultural and creative sectors, the Office provides support for the implementation of appropriate public measures and policies, and directly supports projects carried out by cultural actors.

Public policies

The Gambia adopted a new cultural policy framework and is preparing its first quadrennial periodic report following the 2005 Convention, which takes stock of the measures and policies implemented in favour of the cultural and creative sector. In the same vein, the Office supported Senegal in drafting an important law on the status of the artist. Guinea-Bissau has benefited from capacity-building under the «promocao de l’economica creative» project.

In March, the 2018 World Report, «Rethinking Cultural Policies», was launched in Dakar, a first in Africa, and received high visibility on social networks, reaching more than 10,000 users. Dakar served as a pilot project for a series of similar launches which will incorporate young creators and decision-makers; their launch are planned for 2019 in Burkina Faso, The Gambia and Mali.

Promoting women’s rights

Promoting women’s rights and artistic freedom is one of the priorities for the Dakar Office. In support of their creation, the Office is assisting the «Digitelles» project, which was selected this year as part of the UNESCO-Sabrina Ho initiative and is supported by the AFRICULTURBAN association. Digitelles supports 20 female entrepreneurs in the music industry under the age of 40. This project is in line with other advocacy actions from the first semester that aim to improve the working conditions of women creators and entrepreneurs, in partnership with musicians’ unions (AMS, FIM) and the organization Music in Africa.

Youth and the prevention of violent extremism

«Better knowledge of emerging forms of expression among young people in West Africa» was one of the joint actions of the Social and Human Sciences and Culture sectors. The Office launched a study in November with the participation of sociologists and young leaders from Senegal, Mali, Guinea-Bissau, etc. This study will serve as an advocacy tool for strengthening the place of young people in public decision-making. In addition, activities targeted Burkinabe and Malian youth through creativity and the arts. Two videos of the rap TV News were produced to convey messages of peace and living together as part of UNESCO’s multisectoral programme
«Promotion of Peace and Sustainable Development through Strengthening Youth Competencies for Life and Work in the Sahel,» which addresses the prevention of violent extremism. For its part, the Equations Nomades, Hope through Art project, led by the Bamako Office, was devoted to artistic training on the theme of the transmission of peace and to meetings with artists from different cultures.

A FEW FIGURES

In 2018, 185 professionals received a 29-day specialized training course through various capacity development activities. These training courses covered the fight against illicit trafficking in cultural property, the protection of the world heritage, the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage and the creative economy covering all the countries covered by the Bureau.

More than 4,500 young people and school children participated in activities to promote and raise awareness of organized heritage, in collaboration with public partners, civil society, and UNESCO Associated Schools and Clubs. These actions were carried out to encourage young people to reconnect with their heritage and make it their own, whether on World Heritage Day, National Days or other events. The multiplier effect of the VUE d’Afrique mobile application, promotional actions on social media through the development and distribution of videos, the tour of the photo exhibition «Seven exceptional sites of Senegal» and the visuals of the project «Rehabilitation of the cultural heritage of northern Mali», have all contributed to the effort to reconnect young generations with their heritage.

The activities were implemented through a supplementary budget of 465,000 USD, a voluntary contributions from Sweden, the Netherlands, Japan and Italy and funds from the 2003 and 1972 Conventions, including cash support estimated at 230,000 USD.
3.5. Leveraging Communication and Information to Build Peaceful and Development-Oriented Societies

In the Sahel region, in view of the main challenges facing countries, the activities of the Communication and Information Programme are designed and implemented to contribute, directly or indirectly, to the strengthening of security, good governance, human capital development, youth and women’s empowerment, the strengthening of access to information and knowledge, and the preservation of the environment.

In 2018, the Office focused its interventions on the prevention of violent extremism, the safety of journalists and the empowerment of women through the media. This approach is guided not only by the need to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, to ensure the implementation of the United Nations Action Plan for the Safety of Journalists, but also by regional and national priorities as formulated in the various regional and national strategic documents.

Strengthening the Capacity and Safety of Journalists and the Prevention of Terrorism in the Sahel

The increase in terrorist attacks is a serious challenge to the stability and development of the Sahel countries. In 2018, terrorist attacks increased in several countries, including Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. In such a context where people need fair, non-partisan information more than ever to counter terrorist propaganda, the practice of journalism and investigative journalism in particular, requires strong skills in both security and information handling in relation to terrorism.

Thus, in accordance with the United Nations Action Plan on the Safety of Journalists and the Plan of Action on the Prevention of Violent Extremism, the Office, in collaboration with the Ministry of Communication and
Relations with the Parliament of Burkina Faso, organized a subregional workshop to strengthen the capacities of journalists in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger.

The workshop provided nearly 30 media professionals (25% women) with skills, including the prevention of security risks related to media coverage of violent extremism, the use of social media to prevent extremist speech, and the security measures before, during and after the processing of information on terrorist acts.

Thus, in view of the quality of the results obtained during the practical sessions, it is expected that professionals will be able to not only share the learning outcomes with their peers, but also to strengthen their security while producing content that helps to prevent extremist propaganda.

Strengthening women’s empowerment and preventing media-based violence

Although most of the countries of the Sahel region are committed to the fight against all forms of discrimination and GBV, they face burdens made up of socio-cultural norms, principles and practices deeply rooted in popular habits that tend to restrict women’s rights and opportunities for their empowerment. Moreover, according to the Gender Inequality Index (GII, 2017), the Sahel countries rank between 124th and 157th, i.e. among countries with a very high level of inequality.

UNESCO, for its part, supports grassroots awareness campaigns by following the strategic options adopted by countries in their national gender equality strategies. Thus, it collaborated with the Union des Radio Associations et Communautaires (URAC) of Senegal in 2018 to strengthen the capacities of community radios on gender issues and the prevention of gender-based violence. This initiative was implemented through a series of workshops organized in different regions across the country, including Kaolack, Saint Louis, and Thiès. In each region, the activity targeted nearly 20 community radio stations, each with an average of 40 participants.
As illustrated by the results presented above, while the Dakar Office has generally been successful in the implementation of its Programme activities and in supporting Member States in UNESCO’s fields of competence, a number of challenges nevertheless deserve particular attention in order to improve in the future.

Among the challenges observed in the field of education is the compartmentalization of the different national structures/ministries in charge of education and training; this represents a major challenge in the implementation of programmes that often involve various fields of competence or an inclusive and multi-stakeholder approach in the pursuit of the holistic and transformational SDG4–Education 2030 agenda.

Efforts should be continued to promote intra- and inter-sectoral collaboration and strengthen coordination within West African countries in the pursuit of SDG4 and CESA 16-25. Moreover, without adequate coordination, the multiplicity of partners involved in certain areas, such as the PVE-E, does not allow achievable sustainable results in view of the scale of the challenges. Concerning the PVE-E in relation to education, the establishment of a new RCG4-WCA task team on this theme in 2019 will help to strengthen the coherence of actions.

On the other hand, mobilizing partners to work in synergy on common themes can be difficult. An effective strategy seems to be identifying concrete common objectives, in the short and medium term, to stimulate common interests. The objectives and targets are often ambitious in view of the resources allocated and the time constraints, which require careful planning of interventions and sufficient human resources.

Finally, frequent delays in the availability of resources had a negative impact on the implementation of various activities and the organization of work. Better planning with donors and partners, in collaboration with UNESCO’s relevant entities, will be one of the measures to take to avoid difficulties in the implementation of Programme activities in 2019. Funding was a major limitation on the scope and number of activities that the science sector was able to organize during 2018.

With a few exceptions, a major challenge that faces many organizations within the field of science in the Sahel and ECOWAS countries is the confusing signals from the governments about their commitments to developing strong science systems. Very few national governments participate in cost-sharing or make in-kind contributions, whether it be as simple as paying for a venue for an activity. Secondly, when high-level regional meetings take place, the level of representation is often low, thus leading to an unclear message about commitment to STI driven development. In addition, the region’s low number of experts and inadequate institutions affect the quality and outcome of activities that require the participation of adequately qualified personnel. This also affects UNESCO’s exit strategy as skill transferral sustainability becomes questionable. Furthermore, in view of this inadequacy, science activities often have to source experts outside of the region, thus increasing the cost of implementing training activities. Moreover, due to the current financial situation of UNESCO and the noncommittal nature of many Member States to contribute funding to activities, the scope and impact of most activities of the Natural Sciences sector remain limited. Within the Sahel, the cost of mounting a regional activity is often three to five times of doing the same in a European nation. For example, the cost of a flight for one person from Niamey, Niger to Dakar, Senegal may vary from US$ 1,200 to US$ 2,500 depending on the time of year. This severely limits the number of people that can be invited and the amount available for the activity itself if no external funding is acquired.

In the field of the Humanities and Social Sciences, the major challenge remains the insufficient funds allocated and the difficulties encountered in mobilizing resources, which are closely linked to the fact that the strategies deployed, particularly for research and advocacy, are not the most popular with donors, who are often committed to the immediate achievement of results.

The implementation of the Culture Sector’s Programme has been disrupted by the organisation of large-scale, unscheduled events involving many international actors. The Dakar Office was thus confronted with organizational, logistical and resource mobilization challenges in planning its events, such as the launch of the World Report on Rethinking Cultural Policies in Africa during the GPE’s conference in February, as well
as the regional workshop on World Heritage and Higher Education Institutions in Africa in November.

There is a certain tendency at UNESCO Dakar to favour events over concrete interventions, which are less visible. In addition, one of the major challenges remains the institutional weakness of national partners, which regularly leads to delays of more than six months or impedes the implementation of projects and activities. These difficulties sometimes result in a lack of transparency and leadership. Finally, cyclical events, often linked to the political context of the region, have an impact on the conduct of activities, such as university strikes, ministerial reshuffles or repeated changes in positions of responsibility that are not accompanied by any real transfer of files. The main challenge to the implementation of the Communication Programme during 2018 was, essentially, the absence of a programme specialist in the office.

5. Conclusions and Prospects in 2019

The main lessons learned and approaches to be considered in the implementation of the Dakar Office’s activities are presented below.

In order to overcome the compartmentalization of national institutions and partner organizations, UNESCO Dakar will implement concrete activities to share and integrate projects whose implementation meets partners’ missions and responsibilities in the spirit of co-construction dynamics.

Regional capacity-building activities are, in general, of great interest to participating countries, but their duration is not sufficient to address the themes in-depth and their national impact is often mixed. UNESCO Dakar will strengthen technical support at the national level or at a distance to beneficiaries in order to provide more consistent and sustainable support. Online knowledge sharing, including through virtual platforms, will contribute to deepening their knowledge and additional capacity-building.

With regard to the Natural Sciences, the only way to reach most Member States remains the implementation of regional activities, despite the limited number of beneficiaries of such training activities. In doing so, there is a need to manage Member States’ expectations by requesting cost-sharing for participation in activities; for example, by asking Member States to cover the transport or accommodation of their participants, while UNESCO takes care of the remaining logistical costs.

The work of the Dakar Office in the Social and Human Sciences has benefited from the quality of human resources and collaborative research within UNESCO, including its sections and local partners, for a concerted consolidation of a budget dedicated to shared action in order to overcome the above-mentioned challenges, notably those relative to limited budget allocations relative to needs. The undertaken efforts for additional resource mobilization have not been concluded but will be pursued and reinforced in 2019.

Collaboration between UNESCO Offices in Africa, UNESCO Institutes and UNESCO Headquarters increases visibility in the region and will be continued in 2019. Collaboration with partners will be further strengthened in 2019, continuing the pooling of efforts to ensure holistic interventions that produce sustainable results.

The work initiated in 2018 will be continued, including the scaling up or replicating of successful experiences, while monitoring at the national level to consolidate achievements and ensure that capacity-building workshops lead to concrete actions in partner countries. Particular emphasis will be placed on the production and dissemination of knowledge of emerging issues and the promotion of innovative and effective solutions to address them.

On the basis of the country-level planning exercise, the UNESCO Country Strategy (UCS), the strategy of the regional Culture Programme has been updated as a framework for action in 2019, wherein the focus will be on fundraising and engagement with new partners for project implementation from 2020 onwards partenaires pour la mise en œuvre des projets à partir de 2020.
Annex: Level of 2018 Activities by Funding Source

The total expenditure (Regular Programme and extrabudgetary projects) implemented in 2018 by the programme sectors of the multisectoral regional office for West Africa (Sahel) amounts to 5 million USD. These are mainly activities implemented as part of extrabudgetary projects (84%), in particular the CapED programme in the countries covered (Niger, Mali and Senegal), the KOICA-funded project “Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women through Education in Mali and the European Union project to support the rehabilitation of damaged heritage in the northern regions of Mali.

As in previous years, these projects have made a significant contribution to the performance of extrabudgetary funding in 2018. These figures also highlight the importance of mobilizing extrabudgetary funding to support the Organization’s action in the countries covered by the Office.

The table below shows the distribution of expenditures across the various programme sectors, the main sources of funding and the relative weight of each sector in relation to the total volume of expenditures incurred by the Office in 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Regular Programme expenditure (K$)</th>
<th>Extra-budgetary projects expenditure (K$)</th>
<th>Total expenditure (K$)</th>
<th>Regular Programme (%)</th>
<th>Extra-budgetary Projects (%)</th>
<th>Weight of different sectors (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>3 439</td>
<td>3 720</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHS</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>4167</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>4 240</td>
<td>5 065</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of the implemented amount, the contributions of the Dakar and Bamako offices are indicated in the following table, which shows, in comparative terms, the relative shares of funding sources (extrabudgetary/regular programme) in UNESCO’s interventions for the countries covered by the Dakar Office for the year 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Regular Programme expenditure (K$)</th>
<th>Extra-budgetary projects expenditure (K$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Bamako Total Dakar Bamako Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ED</td>
<td>249 312 281 1 517 1 923 3 439</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>99 99 197 190 304 494</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHS</td>
<td>122 122 122 295 295</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>153 153 153</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CI</td>
<td>712 72 12 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>694 131 825 1 718 2 522 4 240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ED – Education   SC – Natural Sciences
CLT – Culture    CI – Communication and Information
SHS – Social and Human Sciences