



#AfricaACTs on Development Picking Up the Pace

This past quarter, I accompanied David Malpass to Senegal on his first trip to the Western and Central African region as World Bank President. In Dakar, we participated in the 9th World Water Forum, held for the first time in Sub-Saharan Africa, joining with other Leaders to stress the urgency of access to clean water for all. With a portfolio of \$27 billion for water projects in over 70 countries across the world, the World Bank is the largest multilateral source of financing for water in developing countries. And the importance of access to clean water for all cannot be understated, especially for our region, which continues to face additional pressures from climate change.

I then traveled to Cabo Verde, where I witnessed how the country has efficiently managed its COVID-19 response, with support from the Bank. With a highly successful vaccination campaign, the country is a model for its neighbors in the region.

I also had the opportunity to visit the Republic of Congo, where I met with various stakeholders and community members to reiterate the World Bank's support for a resilient and inclusive recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. We renewed our commitment to working with all development partners to improve the living conditions of the most vulnerable populations in our countries. From there, I headed to the General Assembly of the Sahel Alliance in Madrid. Together with our partners, we discussed our efforts and ongoing commitment to the development of this fragile region.

In March, we celebrated International Women's Day and honored women who are leading the way in Africa. We celebrated African women like Maah Keita, who fight with courage and creativity to break the stigma around albinism in Senegal. Without gender equality in society and wage equality in the labor market, there can be no meaningful development in Africa. Empowering women to empower themselves and others is one of the pillars of our regional strategy.

In February, we hosted a webinar on how to remove bottlenecks that prevent firms from creating more and better jobs in our region. The discussion reflected our region's enormous youthful energy, and I was very pleased that Ursula Owusu-Ekufu, Minister of Communications and Digitalization in Ghana; Dare Okoudjou, Founder and CEO of Médecins sans Frontières Africa; Claude Borna, CEO of Sèmè a knowledge and innovation hub located in Benin; and Roger Tsafack Nanfosso, Rector of the University of Dschang in Cameroon contributed to this very insightful dialogue. It was inspiring to hear the panelists share their ideas and experiences to transform the education system.

I was heartened to learn about the initiatives they are spearheading to enable youth to build the skillsets that will empower them to successfully enter the job market or create their own business.

In April, we held the Spring Meetings in a hybrid fashion, with most delegations present in person and others joining online. After two long years, it was a privilege to renew relationships with some of our clients and to advance discussions in a meaningful way. Equipped with the latest data from Africa's Pulse Report, our bi-annual economic outlook, we discussed the Covid vaccine deployment, post-pandemic economic recovery, rising public debt and inflation in food, fuel and fertilizer prices, fragility, and accelerating our efforts to mitigate the effects of climate change in our countries. We also held constructive discussions with a number of partners. A common theme was the situation in the Sahel and its spill-over effects. Other key topics discussed with partners included our approach on remaining engaged in the region, despite the most challenging circumstances.

Soaring food prices as a result of the Ukraine war was a particularly high priority for many of our clients. According to recent studies, 7 to 10 million additional people in West Africa could become food insecure due to the war's implications. The region is facing a food and nutrition crisis in its third consecutive year with 33.4 million people expected to be in urgent need of food assistance from June to August 2022. The World Bank is both providing crisis relief and helping those in immediate need, whilst simultaneously tackling structural challenges to adapt food systems to be more resilient to shocks.

Our countries are facing multiple crises, and we have supported some incredible interventions to help the poorest and most vulnerable:

- To date, the World Bank is delivering more than \$600 million to boost food security in fiscal year 22 and is scaling up social protection with close to \$5 billion in net commitments to help cushion some of the harsh economic effects that African people are facing today. We are already seeing results in countries like Cameroon, where the Social Safety Net project has lifted over 177,000 families out of poverty. By scaling up programs like this, not only are we putting the most vulnerable people first, but we are also ensuring that the region's economy is stronger and more resilient to the type of global shocks we have witnessed over the past few years. We plan to implement more safety net programs across the region to help clients address future shocks.
- We also continue to extend our support to help create an integrated economic space in Western and Central Africa. In February, both Cameroon and Chad were allocated \$538 million to support investments in rail and road infrastructure, as well as trade facilitation. This will improve the efficiency and safety of cross-border trade and transit and will enhance regional connectivity.

I invite you to scroll down to explore some of the ways in which the World Bank Group is putting People First in the Western and Central African region.

I wish you a fruitful quarter and hope you enjoy this update

Best,

Ousmane Diagana,

World Bank's Vice President for Western and Central Africa

WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO ENSURE WATER SECURITY IN SENEGAL?

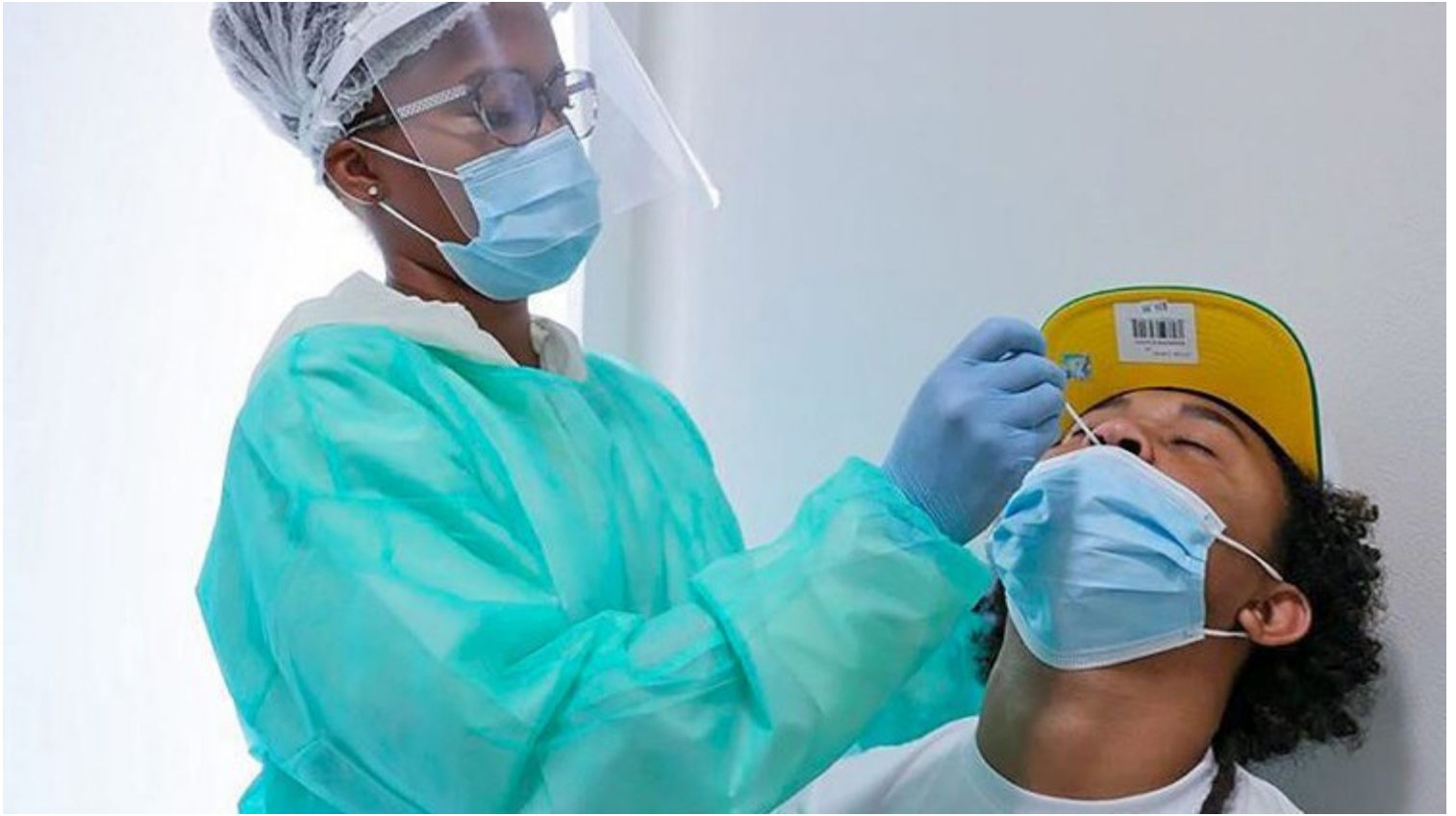


Dakar Water Forum

Senegal is already water stressed and current water withdrawals are projected to increase by 30 to 60% by 2035, while water-related extreme events and pollution cost Senegal over 10 percent of GDP every year. Like many cities impacted by population growth and climate change, Dakar, Senegal, could face a future without enough water for all. To build water security, Dakar is turning wastewater and sanitation byproducts into assets with the help of the private sector.

- **Feature story:** [Water Challenges Inspire Innovation and a Circular Economy. From Senegal to India and Ecuador](#)
- **Publication:** [Water Security in Senegal: Challenges and Recommendations](#)
- **Joint Op-ed:** [The Africa Report](#) (English) and [Jeune Afrique](#) (French)

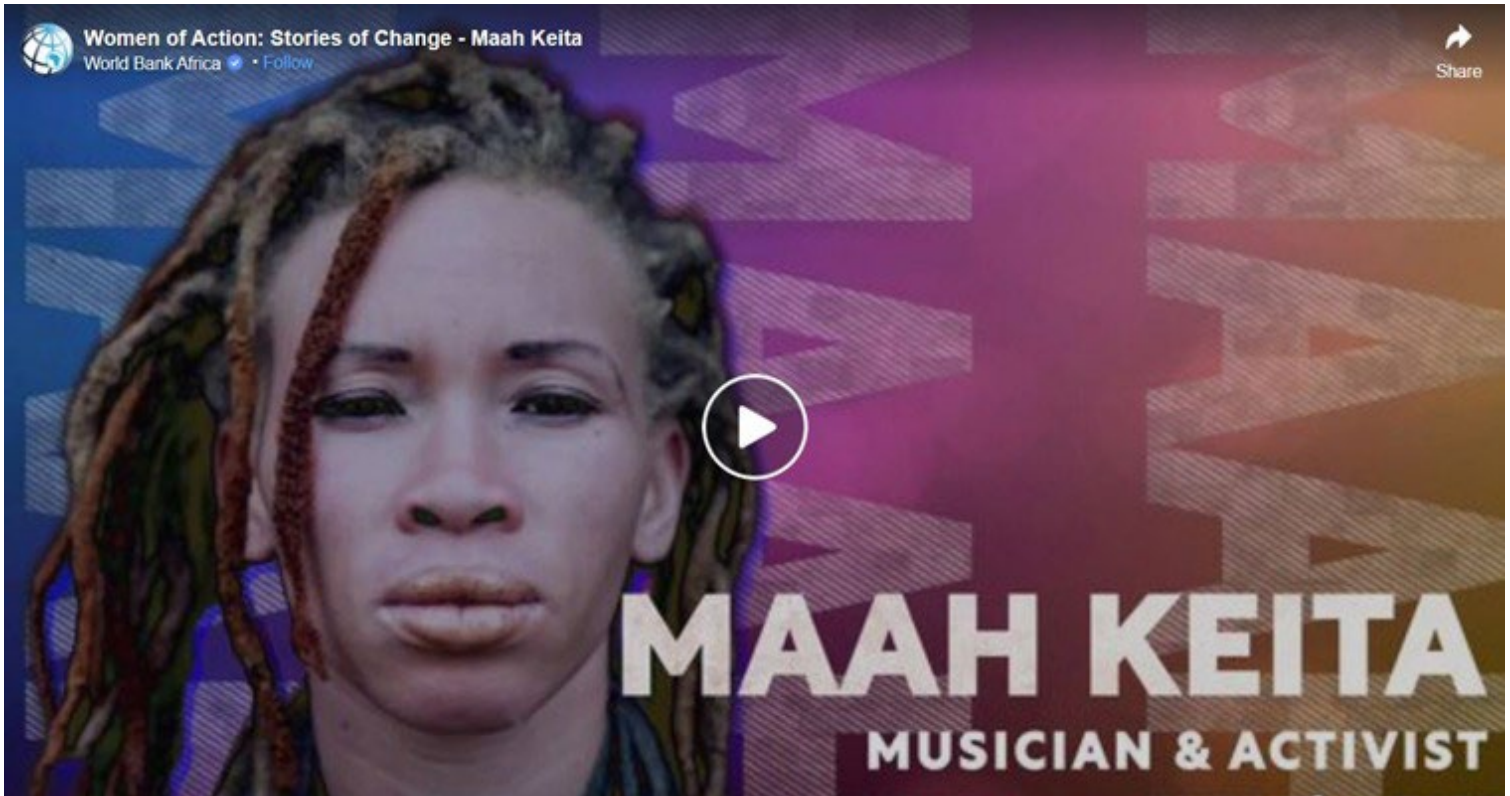
VACCINES AND THE ROAD TO ECONOMIC RECOVERY



When the COVID-19 pandemic threatened the lives and livelihoods of people in Cabo Verde, the country responded by working with the World Bank Group to implement an ambitious program of purchasing and delivering vaccines to everyone across the 10-island archipel.

[Read the Story](#) | [Learn more about the World Bank's COVID 19 Response in Africa](#)

EMPOWERING AFRICAN WOMEN



Women of Action: Stories of Change – Maah Keita

Empowering African women and girls is essential to creating dynamic markets that drive transformation and accelerate the demographic transition. This year's International Women's Day theme, #BreakTheBias, highlights the importance of challenging biases and misconceptions in the interest of creating a more inclusive and gender-equal world.

Blog: [Promoting Wage Equality in the Labor Market in Africa: a Moral Imperative](#)



THE WORLD BANK
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WEBINAR

Creating more and better jobs in West and Central Africa: Progress and Prospects

Removing Bottlenecks that Prevent Firms from Creating More and Better Jobs in Western and Central Africa

In partnership with several media, the World Bank organizes regular debates on the complicated issues. In our latest webinar, a panel of African voices (government, private sector, youth, citizen organizations) and African and international experts discussed about the challenges of job creation in Africa.

[WATCH THE REPLAY](#)

SPRING MEETINGS



Africa's Pulse: Boosting Resilience Through Social Protection

Since emerging from its first recession in 25 years, economic growth in Sub-Saharan Africa is estimated at 4% in 2021. However, growth recovery in the region has slowed in the second half of 2021. Amid new shock and slow economic growth, expanding social protection program is key to strengthen economic resilience.

[Find and Download our Reports](#) | [Data](#)



The State of the Africa Region

The State of the Africa Region event focused on how social protection programs can help build the resilience of poor and vulnerable households and support economic recovery.

[Watch the replay](#)



All Events: Watch the Replay

Conflict, COVID-19 and climate change have created unprecedented challenges for developing countries. In case you missed it, you can watch the replay of the World Bank and IMF's Spring Meetings events where leaders and special guests discussed ideas and solutions to prepare for future shocks.

[Catch up with the event](#)

PROJECTS THAT CHANGE LIVES



Cameroon: Youth Fighting Back Poverty with the Help of the Social Safety Net Project

Approximately 6.9 million Cameroonians are currently living in extreme poverty. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a slowdown of business activities, and loss of jobs and income for many, especially the youth. By providing temporary jobs and cash allowances, a social protection project has already helped 177,000 families to get out of poverty.

[Read the Story](#)



Benin, Hitting Two Goals with Honey!

In Benin, the creation of beekeepers' cooperatives brings steady income to local communities and helps stop deforestation.

[Read the Story](#)



Why is Mauritania a Champion for COVID-19 Vaccination?

In Mauritania, the World Bank is a key partner helping the government to finance the Covid-19 response and build back better.

[Read Feature Story](#)



Has Poverty Been Reduced in Nigeria?

Central African country Cameroon and its landlocked neighbor Chad are getting a significant boost to improve the efficiency and safety of cross-border trade and transit.

[Read Blog](#)

REGIONAL INTEGRATION

Cameroon and Chad to Improve Regional Connectivity and Resilience

Central African country Cameroon and its landlocked neighbor Chad are getting a significant boost to improve the efficiency and safety of cross-border trade and transit.

[Read Press Release](#)

12 Million

to benefit from improved railway and road transport systems with a

595 km

road corridor to be rehabilitated.

OUR PROJECTS AT A GLANCE

As of May 9, 2022, the World Bank has an active portfolio in Western and Central Africa of 388 projects totaling \$49.49 billion.

[View ALL Projects](#)

JOBS



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