

A Virtual Journey into the Sahel: Delivering results together

Concept Note and Agenda

Overview

The Virtual Journey into the Sahel will take visitors on an immersive tour of the region, showcasing International Development Association (IDA) projects that exemplify the World Bank Sahel strategy and highlighting stakeholder voices. It will demonstrate how close collaboration with local partners, humanitarian agencies, security forces and other international partners is key to solving the complex challenges of a region like the Sahel.

The interactive site, featuring 360° images, videos, data infographics, background resources, and results stories, will be complemented by a live virtual meeting on Thursday, June 17, 2021. The meeting will engage legislators from around the world in discussions with World Bank regional leadership, country staff, IMF experts, and various stakeholders from the Sahel (parliamentarians, CSO representatives, faith leaders) on the challenges and successful strategies in achieving results for a region touched by fragility, conflict, and violence in the midst of a pandemic.

Purpose and Objectives

- Share key priorities of the World Bank Sahel Strategy and the importance of partnering with stakeholders to address the compounded crises of climate, conflict, and COVID-19 in the region
- Demonstrate the impact of IDA financing on the ground in concrete terms to highlight the relevance of an early IDA20 replenishment among an influential group of donors and parliamentarians
- Encourage and inspire donors and parliamentarians to amplify the results of their IDA contributions in their public remarks and messaging, and to positively influence the authorizing environment for a successful replenishment
- Hear from parliamentarians about the issues that concern them and their ideas for furthering parliamentary engagement to integrate citizen voices into World Bank programs for impactful and inclusive development results

Background

The compounded crises of climate, conflict and COVID-19 are pushing many people in the Sahel even further into poverty and despair with negative spillover effects far beyond the region itself. The threat of climate change is an everyday reality for the people of the Sahel. Temperatures are increasing 1.5 times faster than the global average. Expected impacts of climate change will reduce crop yields and livestock productivity, affecting food security and food prices. As the region's population is expected to grow at a high rate, the projected yield reductions are estimated to result in rising food prices.

The pandemic has triggered what is likely to be one of the deepest recessions in the Sahel countries since independence, with an additional 1.3 million people expected to fall into extreme poverty in 2020. For the Sahel countries and the international community, this is a moment for action to advance reforms and improve delivery of sustainable solutions at scale and speed.

The World Bank Group, together with partners including the Sahel Alliance has scaled up financial support to the G5 Sahel countries - Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, and Niger, notably through the International Development Association (IDA) to support conflict prevention, resilience, and emergency

responses. IDA increased from \$2.5 billion during the three-year period of IDA17, to \$6 billion in IDA18, with the ambition to reach 8.5 billion for fiscal years 21-23.

To deliver results at scale, the World Bank Group is focusing on three main areas: 1. Climate by transforming agriculture and water management; 2. People by investing in human capital and women's and girls' empowerment; and 3. Infrastructure by developing connectivity and improving access to electricity.

As the World Bank Group takes broad and fast action to support developing countries in their response to this unprecedented health emergency in addition to preexisting issues, IDA19 resources are being frontloaded. An early IDA20 replenishment will be necessary to continue providing crucial support to the world's poorest nations. In the Sahel alone, the ambition is to reach 8.5 billion for fiscal years 21-23.

Field visits have proven effective in making the case for IDA, mobilizing resources, and building advocacy among key stakeholders for the World Bank's work in the poorest countries. Given current constraints on travel and gatherings, a virtual reality version of this key stakeholder engagement will allow participants to witness development projects, learn about their impact through statistics and testimonials from local stakeholders, and gain an understanding of the overall development trajectories in the countries through a briefing on their portfolios. A virtual platform also renders visits possible in FCV countries where access for a large delegation of officials may have been a challenge, notably, the Sahel.

Tentative Agenda:

9:00 – 9:03 AM	Welcome	Moderator: Hon. Dissan Gnoumou MP , Burkina Faso
9:03 – 9:09 AM	World Bank Sahel Strategy	Ousmane Diagana , Vice President, Western and Central Africa Region, World Bank
9:09 – 9:19 AM	VR Field Visit Intro	Quick tour of VR site Video: Community Action for Climate Resilience Project for Niger
9:19 – 9:24 AM	Niger Country Perspective	Hon. Rabiou Abdou , Minister of Economy, Development Planning or Desertification Commissioner, Niger TBC
9:24 - 9:32 AM	Overview of the Socioeconomic Outlook	Joelle Dehasse , WB Country Manager Mehmet Cangul , IMF Resident Representative TBC
9:32 – 9:47 AM	Stakeholder Perspectives	Hon. Seyni Oumarou , President of the National Assembly, Niger Gambo Amadou – Coordinator of the NGO Coordination Committee on the Fight Against Desertification Zeinabou Maidah - CEO Niger-Lait SA TBC
9:47 – 9:52 AM	G5 Sahel Inter-Parliamentary Alliance	Hon. Jacques Maire , MP and Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, France
9:52 – 10:25 AM	Moderated Q&A Session	Parliamentary participants and speakers
10:25 – 10:30 AM	Conclusion	Moderator: Dissan Gnoumou MP , Burkina Faso