Norwegian Ministry
of Foreign Affairs

Strategy

Strategy for Norway's efforts in the Sahel region (2021–2025)

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1. Foreword

The strategy for Norway's efforts in the Sahel region[1] has now been revised. Norway has increased its engagement in the Sahel significantly in recent years. This is a reflection of our stated objective to promote peace and development in a troubled region. Developments in the Sahel are also important in a European context. Norway has pursued an integrated approach and provided funding for development, humanitarian aid and stabilisation. While the situation remains very difficult, our efforts have produced concrete results for the region's inhabitants. Through its participation in the wide-ranging global humanitarian engagement and cooperation in the Sahel region, Norway has helped to ensure that 21 million people in need have received protection, access to food, clean drinking water, shelter and other forms of humanitarian assistance. Norwegian development aid has provided the opportunity for more girls and boys to attend school and enabled more families to carry out more climate-resilient food production. Our cooperation with Mali's Institut d'Economie Rurale (IER), for example, has helped families in central and northern Mali to secure a better and more stable food supply and higher earnings. Seed of higher quality, fertiliser, basic mechanisation and improved weather forecasting services have helped to increase crop yields by 50–100 % and raise productivity in camel husbandry. As a result, the annual period of food insecurity has been reduced from six months to four in the areas targeted by these efforts. Our peace and reconciliation work has played a pivotal role in achieving the participation of women in the follow-up committee for the Algiers peace agreement for Mali. By providing a transport aircraft to the UN MINUSMA mission[2] we have helped to ensure safe transport of personnel and equipment to areas difficult to access via land routes. The Norwegian-led police team in MINUSMA has provided important training for the Mali Police Force in investigative techniques. These are examples of specific results that in the long run will enhance public security and lay a foundation for sustainable development.

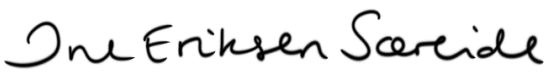
At the same time, we have seen that our engagement in the Sahel entails significant risks, not least for our partners navigating a landscape that is both difficult and directly dangerous. The region is in constant flux, which means that our efforts must continually be tailored to a new context. The military coup in Mali in August 2020, with the ensuing political unrest, and the increased threat of terrorism in the region are obvious examples of this. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought a host of new challenges as well.

Although the analyses paint a relatively bleak picture of the situation, we must keep in mind that there have been a number of positive developments too. The new African free trade agreement offers hope for expanded intra-African trade and economic development. A number of countries in the Sahel have carried out relatively peaceful democratic elections. The region is giving higher priority to good governance and safeguarding of human rights, and steps are being taken to strengthen the rule of law. Cooperation

between the Sahel countries and international partners is further facilitated by the establishment of the Coalition for the Sahel and the Sahel Alliance. Norway participates in both of these.

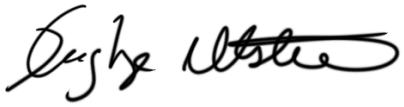
The effort to promote international peace and security is one of Norway's priorities during its term as an elected member of the UN Security Council for the 2021–2022 period. We will make use of our experience of peace diplomacy and peacebuilding to strengthen the Council's conflict prevention and resolution efforts in the Sahel, ensure the protection of civilians, safeguard women's rights and promote women's participation, and draw attention to the links between climate change and conflict. These areas will be important in other aspects of Norwegian efforts and strategy in the Sahel in the years ahead. Another key component of this revised strategy is the aim of improving coordination between humanitarian action, development cooperation and peacebuilding.

The objectives for the strategy period and Norway's efforts are based on the region's needs, Norway's foreign and development policy priorities, international collaboration in the Sahel, and lessons learned from previous efforts in the Sahel and other contexts involving fragile states. We look forward to continuing our productive cooperation with our partners in the Sahel.



Ine Eriksen Søreide

Minister of Foreign Affairs



Dag-Inge Ulstein

Minister of International Development

2. Background for Norwegian efforts in the Sahel region

Norwegian efforts in the Sahel region build on humanitarian and development activities dating back to the 1980s. Major importance has been attached to cooperation with the UN, Norwegian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and academia. This has been supplemented by support for peacekeeping operations through Norwegian participation in the UN MINUSMA mission from its start-up in 2013. In light of the increased focus on the region, Norway established a Norwegian Embassy in Mali in 2017. The embassy covers all the G5 Sahel countries. Norway's financial contributions to the region have increased substantially, and amounted to approximately NOK 1 billion (USD 100 million) in 2019.[3]

Norway has a clear interest in promoting improvement in the security situation in the Sahel and stabilisation of the region as a whole. The security challenges we are seeing in the region are transnational in nature, closely related and mutually reinforcing. Poverty, climate change, health crises, international terror, organised crime, human trafficking and irregular migration have direct consequences for Norway and all of Europe. These are global challenges that require international cooperation. This is the reason why there is growing European participation in and support for MINUSMA, the European Union Training Mission (EUTM), the G5 Sahel, the French counterterrorism force Barkhane and the Task Force Takuba.

Norway will continue to take its share of the responsibility for helping to save lives, alleviate suffering and facilitate peaceful and more sustainable development in the Sahel. It has become more important than ever to promote good governance that incorporates inclusive, democratic processes. It is critical both for the affected states and for the international community at large to safeguard the rule of law, the territorial integrity of states and a rules-based world order. It is also important for Norway to promote compliance with obligations under international law for people who are affected by armed conflict and other types of humanitarian crises. This is what will guide our bilateral and multilateral political dialogue. Human rights, including the rights of women, form the core of Norwegian foreign policy. Norway's humanitarian efforts are to be based on the humanitarian principles and respond to acute humanitarian needs. At the same time, we will take a long-term perspective and seek to contribute to more sustainable solutions and reduce vulnerability.

Norway's efforts in the Sahel are to help to achieve the objectives of the Sahel countries' own strategies, and will be part of the established international coordination mechanisms. A key point of reference is the UN Support Plan for the Sahel (2018), which seeks to increase results delivery under the UN Integrated Strategy for the Sahel (2013) and covers both the Sahel and the Lake Chad regions. The African Union's strategies for the region, the G5 Sahel's own investment programme, and the policies designed and coordinated within

the framework of the Sahel Coalition and the Sahel Alliance are also of importance in this context. Constructive cooperation with the Sahel countries, the UN, multilateral financial institutions, African regional organisations and NGOs is essential. This strategy document sets out Norway's priorities and areas of action for the coming period.

3. Strategic objectives

The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs provide an important part of the political framework underlying the Government's efforts at both national and international level. During its term as an elected member of the UN Security Council for the 2021–22 period, Norway's efforts in the Sahel will be more targeted and have a clearer emphasis on the four thematic areas given priority in the work in the Council: 1) peace diplomacy; 2) inclusion of women; 3) protection of civilians; and 4) climate change and security. Respect for international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law, also underpin Norway's work in the Security Council.

Norway will continue to attach importance to a coherent approach to development, crisis prevention, humanitarian aid and stabilisation. Thus, work towards achieving optimal coordination between humanitarian action, development cooperation and peacebuilding (the 'Triple Nexus') is a key part of this strategy. Norwegian efforts will be centred around the needs of the people, with special focus on reaching vulnerable groups and people at risk. It is crucial to promote good governance and a rules-based society as a whole. At the same time, military efforts aimed at improving the region's security situation are crucial to success. Norwegian support for and participation in MINUSMA is the most important security policy component of this strategy. Adequate consideration of women's rights and gender equality are to be incorporated as an integral part of all the strategy's objectives. Lessons learned and assessments from previous efforts in the Sahel and other fragile countries and regions form the basis for the approach set out.

The strategic objectives set out the general direction for Norwegian efforts. These are broken down into more specific secondary objectives and will be supported by efforts at national and regional level, as well as through Norway's multilateral engagement. As with all work in fragile areas, we must employ a long-term perspective and be prepared for setbacks. Risk assessment is discussed in more detail in section 7.

1. Norway will promote good governance, democratic development and respect for human rights

1.1. Secondary objective: Strengthen the authorities' capacity to promote democratic processes

Challenges relating to political governance are considered one of the root causes of violence and conflict in the Sahel. Norway will work to strengthen the authorities' capacity to carry out democratic, transparent elections, and to make democratic institutions more representative. Norway provides core support to the UN Development Programme (UNDP) to enable it to focus on governance challenges in the region. Norway also has productive cooperation with the UNDP on election processes. Norway will continue to work with the UN Office for West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) on good governance and elections. Cooperation with MINUSMA on the implementation of the Algiers peace agreement and political reforms in Mali is vital. In addition, Norway will continue the effort to strengthen civil society and enhance the role and capacity of women in the public debate and in the design, implementation and follow-up of reforms. Norway works actively to promote an inclusive, human rights-based approach to security and justice and security sector reform that addresses the needs of all groups of society. This will guide the political dialogue with local, national and regional stakeholders, and will be followed up in dialogue with the UN at country level.

1.2. Secondary objective: Intensify cooperation with the authorities in the region on combating impunity, corruption, financing of terrorism, and international organised crime

Norway provides significant core funding to the World Bank and the African Development Bank to support efforts to promote good economic governance and domestic resource mobilisation. Norway helps to develop accessible, effective and trustworthy judicial systems through its participation in programmes under the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in West Africa. Strengthening courts, police, border guards and correctional services in a larger part of the Sahel is essential to succeed in combating organised crime, human and drug trafficking, terrorism, corruption and impunity. UNODC works to re-establish trust between the judicial system, security forces and the public. Norway's financial, civilian and military support for MINUSMA helps to broaden the presence and enhance the competency of Malian institutions. A specialised, Norwegian-led police team established under MINUSMA helps to increase the capacity of police and judicial authorities to conduct forensic and crime scene investigation. Greater use of criminal investigation materials by prosecutors when they present evidence against accused persons will be an effective

measure in the fight against impunity and will at the same time serve to reinforce legal rights.

Support for UNODC, Interpol and the Danish-Norwegian Sahel Peace and Stability Programme helps to combat corruption and the financing of organised cross-border crime, and to counter criminal networks involved in human trafficking. UNODC's activities promote stronger legal and practical cooperation between the Sahel countries, facilitating coordinated police actions and the investigation and prosecution of persons suspected of cross-border crime, human trafficking, weapons smuggling and terrorist activities. In Niger, UNODC has assisted the authorities in enhancing legal protection for children suspected of affiliation with armed groups.

Norway participates in EU capacity-building programmes in the Sahel and provides guidance on how to build trust between the police and civil society organisations. Norway contributes to the prevention of irregular migration in the region via the EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa (EUTF). The EUTF is targeted towards strengthening local communities (particularly those that host displaced people), conflict prevention, good governance and measures to improve the countries' migration management. The EUTF mandate has been extended through 2021, and some of the programmes will run beyond this. Norway will continue to seek opportunities for cooperation with the EU on migration in the Sahel region.

1.3. Secondary objective: Promote respect for human rights in the region

Norway works actively in the UN Human Rights Council and via the country-specific Universal Periodic Review process to promote and protect human rights in the Sahel. Human rights will continue to be a priority issue in the dialogue and cooperation with national authorities and international partners. Norway will in addition raise these issues in the UN Security Council. Norway will continue to provide support through the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to enhance the systems employed by regional and national security forces to prevent, monitor and report human rights violations. Norway will also provide support for organisations such as UN Women, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) to raise awareness about the rights of women, children, and vulnerable and marginalised groups. Civil society organisations are important partners in this context and play a key role in holding the authorities accountable.

2. Norway will promote conflict prevention and conflict resolution

2.1. Secondary objective: Strengthen UN peace diplomacy and peacekeeping efforts

Norway works in the UN Security Council to enhance the UN's ability to play a role in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in the region, such as when renewing the mandates for MINUSMA and UNOWAS. Norway will work to ensure that MINUSMA's mandate is optimally tailored to developments in Mali, so that the mission can effectively support the peace process and the implementation of the peace agreement. This involves active support for national dialogue and reconciliation, protection of civilians, stabilisation, and rebuilding of the security sector. Norway will continue its rotation with a military transport aircraft under MINUSMA through 2022, including operation of an affiliated camp and participation of staff officers. It may be appropriate to continue these contributions to the UN beyond 2022 as well. A decision on Norwegian Armed Forces' further activities in Mali will be taken in spring 2022. An extension of the Norwegian-led police team beyond 2022 is under consideration.

Norwegian support for UN regional peace diplomacy and conflict prevention efforts under UNOWAS will be continued via support to the UN Department of Political Affairs in New York. Support to strengthen UNOWAS' capacity to analyse climate-related security risks is provided through the UN Climate Security Mechanism. Norway will continue its active participation in UN Peacebuilding Fund work in the Lake Chad region and the Sahel, and has signed an agreement with the fund to provide NOK 500 million in support for the period 2020–2024. The increase in Norwegian support is to strengthen the fund's conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts, among other places in the Sahel, which is the fund's highest prioritised region. Dialogue with the UN resident coordinators in the Sahel countries will be expanded, with the aim of supporting the UN's overall political role.

2.2. Secondary objective: Promote inclusive political processes with increased participation of women

Gender equality and women's rights are a cross-cutting issue in Norwegian foreign and development policy. Norway will voice its support in international forums for the participation of women in the region's political processes, in keeping with the UN Security Council women, peace and security agenda. Norway will work to promote women's rights and participation in political processes and elections at the local, national and regional levels. Both Mali and Nigeria are priority countries for Norwegian efforts relating to women, peace and security, and we will continue to cooperate with national authorities, UN Women, UNFPA and civil society organisations on capacity building and national action plans. Norway will continue to support the active participation of women in the committee for follow-up of the Algiers peace agreement

and in related forums. We will also support the efforts of UN and regional actors to encourage inclusive peace processes that safeguard the rights of women and men alike. Norway will advocate inclusive processes in the early phases of new dialogue initiatives. This entails preparing the parties for expectations to be met regarding the participation and involvement of women, and establishing contact with relevant women's organisations. Norway will cooperate with the UN Office to the African Union to increase utilisation of the African Network of Women in Conflict Prevention and Peace Mediation (FemWise) in regional processes.

2.3. Secondary objective: Strengthen the capacity of national and regional actors to prevent and resolve conflicts and curtail the emergence of violent, non-state actors

This is closely linked to Norwegian objectives to promote better governance and institution building in the region. National and regional ownership is vital for resolving regional peace and security issues. The Sahel countries must take the lead in conflict management for their own region. Norwegian participation in the Sahel Coalition and the Sahel Alliance will further strengthen cooperation with the G5 Sahel and other international actors. Norway will work to achieve optimal coordination and division of labour. Norway will continue to promote capacity building of the G5 Sahel joint military force and national security forces to ensure that they act in accordance with international human rights and humanitarian law. Norway also seeks to promote closer coordination of international efforts for defence-oriented capacity building in the Sahel and West Africa.

As ECOWAS has demonstrated in the wake of the August 2020 coup in Mali, the African Union and the sub-regional organisations often have a comparative advantage when it comes to political dialogue and mediation. Norway will continue to work to enhance cooperation between the UN, the AU and ECOWAS to ensure a coherent, coordinated response to the challenges in the region. Norway also supports the stabilisation plan of the AU and the Lake Chad Basin Commission for the Lake Chad region. In addition, Norway contributes to capacity building of the police from the ECOWAS region through the Training for Peace programme.[4]

Climate change can have an impact on the underlying causes of conflict and exacerbate existing tensions and competition for natural resources. Norway will contribute analyses of the role of climate as a cause of conflict in the region, at country as well as local level. Norway will help to make research-based knowledge available to regional, national and local authorities and organisations. Norway will also work to strengthen the ability of the UN and regional organisations to conduct climate-related security risk analyses themselves.

2.4. Secondary objective: Promote dialogue as a means of conflict resolution

Peace diplomacy is one of Norway's priorities in its work in the UN Security Council. Norway supports a number of peace and reconciliation initiatives in the Sahel region and will give greater emphasis to dialogue as a means of resolving conflict at the local, national and regional level. One way of achieving this is through continued support for the Danish-Norwegian Sahel Peace and Stability Programme, which promotes dialogue as a means to resolve conflict in the Liptako/Gourma area, where the borders of Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger converge. Norway will continue its cooperation with MINUSMA, think tanks and international organisations that are working on this issue. The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, Promediation and NGOs such as Norwegian Church Aid have lengthy experience in peacebuilding efforts in the region. Further activities to follow up the national inclusive dialogue in Mali may be considered. In addition, cooperation on joint management of scarce resources and climate mitigation measures may be a gateway to establishing dialogue platforms for conflict resolution.

3. Norway will respond to humanitarian needs and strengthen efforts to promote inclusive, sustainable development

3.1. Secondary objective: Strengthen coordination between humanitarian efforts, development cooperation and peacebuilding

UN Sustainable Development Goal 17 makes it clear that cooperation and coordination are essential to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To reduce vulnerability and build resilience among individuals and local communities in the Sahel, it is essential to improve coordination between humanitarian actions, long-term development cooperation and peacebuilding. Norway will continue to strengthen the dialogue with UN resident and humanitarian coordinators regarding the need for integrated efforts and coordination, particularly in the partner countries Mali and Niger, as well as Nigeria. This also involves following up approved UN reforms to enable the UN country teams to act on the basis of joint country analyses and plans to a greater degree. The UN Security Council, the UN Peacebuilding Commission, and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) are other forums where Norway will emphasise the importance of stronger coordination of UN activities in the Sahel. Norway will also help to facilitate coordination of broad-based international efforts through its participation in the Sahel Coalition. The importance of an integrated approach will be further highlighted in the Sahel Alliance and in cooperation in the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC), affiliated with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Norway will continue to support efforts by the World Bank and the African Development Bank to address vulnerability and conflict in their development work, and strengthen the link between humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts. Norway encourages integrated educational efforts in countries in crisis through

its support for educational programmes under the Education Cannot Wait fund, which encompasses humanitarian as well as development actors.

3.2. Secondary objective: Strengthen protection for people in need and promote more effective humanitarian aid

Norway will continue to support the important work of humanitarian organisations in the Sahel. Norwegian humanitarian efforts are to be based on the humanitarian principles and respond to acute humanitarian needs. At the same time, we will take a long-term perspective that helps to reduce vulnerability and lay the foundation for more sustainable solutions. Protection of civilians is one of Norway's four main priorities for its work on the UN Security Council. Through cooperation with the UN, the Norwegian organisations with strategic partnership agreements[5] and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, Norway will work to promote greater respect for the humanitarian principles and international humanitarian law by the parties to armed conflict. Norway will work to ensure that humanitarian organisations are given safe and unimpeded access to provide assistance and protection to civilians affected by armed conflict. This includes protection of refugees and internally displaced people. Norway remains steadfast in its commitment to prevent, respond to and protect against sexual and gender-based violence. Norway also supports efforts to reduce the number of illegal small weapons, as well as the safeguarding and destruction of surplus stockpiles. Furthermore, Norway will be at the forefront of efforts to introduce humanitarian exemptions in sanctions regimes and anti-terrorism legislation. Norway will also work proactively to achieve more effective humanitarian aid through increased use of cash transfers for the most vulnerable groups.

3.3. Secondary objective: Strengthen efforts to enable more children and young people, particularly girls, to complete a high-quality education

Education, including vocational training, is essential for achieving growth and development in the Sahel. Norwegian development cooperation therefore gives high priority to support for the educational sector in the Sahel countries. Norwegian support for UNICEF, the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Education Cannot Wait fund, the Global Partnership for Education, and NGOs such as Strømme Foundation, is to provide opportunities for more children, particularly girls, to complete their education and realise good learning outcomes. In Niger, Norway supports the authorities' joint fund for education. Norway will work to enhance protection of education so that more children and young people living in areas affected by conflict and crisis have access to schooling. Norway is committed to continuing the cooperation to follow up the Safe Schools Declaration. In collaboration with civil society organisations, Norway will continue to promote the inclusion of vulnerable groups, including girls and children with disabilities, in education. Measures relating to

education and health must be viewed in conjunction with one another, and Norway will support greater focus on comprehensive sexuality education through UNESCO as part of aid for education. Norway supports the UNFPA and UNICEF global programme to end child marriage, which carries out a significant amount of work in the Sahel. Through NGOs and others, Norway supports greater access to water and better sanitation at schools. In Mali, Norway supports the school meals programme under the World Food Programme (WFP), which enables more children to attend school and benefit from the instruction.

3.4. Secondary objective: Promote access to health services and respect for sexual and reproductive health and rights

Safeguarding sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and increased access to health services are important goals in and of themselves. In the Sahel, efforts in this area will also help to reduce population growth, which in turn will improve the potential for socioeconomic progress. Norway will continue to support UNFPA efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence and provide more girls and women with access to family planning and primary health care services. In Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, Norway supports organisations combating harmful practices and promoting women's rights, in line with Norway's Strategy to Eliminate Harmful Practices (2019–2023). Norway will emphasise the importance of women's rights and SRHR in its talks with authorities and organisations. In its humanitarian response in the Sahel, Norway will work to enhance protection against conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence. Through its support for global health organisations and funds such as the World Health Organization; the Joint UN Programme on HIV and AIDS (UNAIDS); Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM); the Global Financing Facility for Women, Children and Adolescents (GFF); and the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund, Norway provides people with better access to health services. Norway participates in the COVAX vaccine collaboration and the multilateral Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator in order to promote equitable global access to vaccines, diagnostics and treatment.

3.5. Secondary objective: Promote more sustainable, climate-resilient and productive food production

The link between climate change and security is a priority area for Norway's work in the UN Security Council. Norway will attach importance to climate change and security in its dialogue with development partners in the Sahel region, particularly on projects involving food security. Norway will work together with the WFP, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), civil society organisations and other partners to strengthen efforts to increase food security, promote climate-resilient, sustainable food systems and reduce the risk

of new famines, in line with the Government's strategy on climate change, hunger and vulnerability. The work of these organisations to prevent the use of starvation as a weapon of war is of great importance as well. In Nigeria, Norwegian humanitarian aid is supplemented by development aid for climate-smart agriculture under the FAO. Applied research programmes, for example through Noragric,[6] Institut d'Economie Rurale, CARE and the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, are intended to promote more productive, nutritious and climate-resilient agriculture in Mali and Niger, and to strengthen natural resource management. Norway also contributes to this via core funding to the multilateral development banks. One example is the African Development Bank's agricultural initiative under the Feed Africa strategy. These measures improve natural resource management and build local resilience to the impacts of climate change.

3.6. Secondary objective: Strengthen efforts to create sustainable, decent jobs

The Sahel has a widespread need for new jobs with sustainable, inclusive and decent working conditions. A greater range of job opportunities and decent work will encourage socioeconomic progress, and will make irregular migration and recruitment to armed groups less attractive to young people. This will also reduce the risk of their falling victim to various forms of forced labour. Norway will continue to promote the creation of sustainable, decent jobs through significant core contributions to the World Bank and the African Development Bank. Both the IDA[7] and the African Development Fund are stepping up their activities in the Sahel. The banks' efforts to promote private sector development and entrepreneurship in the Sahel are particularly targeted towards young people, women, and climate change. Norway also supports the World Bank Group's multi-donor fund for fragile states and the African Development Bank initiative Jobs for Youth in Africa, which have a considerable impact in the Sahel. Norway works to increase access to energy in the Sahel through the African Development Bank's Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (SEFA) and Desert to Power initiative. This is vital for business development and new jobs. Norfund[8] contributes to private sector development through investments in several of the region's countries. The effort to create sustainable, decent jobs is to be viewed in conjunction with the need to promote sustainable food production. Norwegian support for innovation in agriculture and better resource management, for instance through the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture and Institut d'Economie Rural, will help to lay the foundation for more jobs in Mali and Niger.

4. Framework and resources

This strategy sets the framework for long-term, coherent Norwegian efforts in the Sahel region. National authorities in the Sahel must be made accountable and take the lead in order to achieve better development in the region. Constructive cooperation between the host countries and international actors is vital. This applies in particular to policy development and the implementation of various processes relating to governance and reform.

Norwegian organisations active in the Sahel are key partners in these efforts. The Norwegian private sector currently has a very limited presence in the Sahel and Lake Chad region, but Norfund will be able to help to strengthen development of local business and infrastructure where conditions are appropriate.

Internationally, the implementation of programmes and projects will be dependent on cooperation with the UN system, the international financial institutions and other multilateral and regional organisations as well as international NGOs. Norway provides support for the entire Sahel and Lake Chad region through its global, multilateral and regional efforts. Norway gives priority to cooperation with Mali, Niger and Nigeria in its bilateral efforts.

The realisation of planned activities will be contingent on the annual budget allocations in the Storting (Norwegian parliament).

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[1] In this context, the region is defined as the belt of countries in the southwest Sahara lying between the savannah to the south and North Africa to the north; i.e. the G5 Sahel countries of Mauritania, Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Chad, as well as the parts of Nigeria and Cameroon that border Lake Chad.

[2] MINUSMA - Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali.

[3] This figure includes Norwegian multilateral core support to the region, as well as Norway's support for MINUSMA, although not all of that contribution is considered official development assistance (ODA). The OECD/DAC has stated that member countries may report 15 % of expenses for most peacekeeping missions, including MINUSMA, as ODA. The remainder of Norway's contribution to MINUSMA is therefore not formally classified as ODA. Given the importance of engagement in MINUSMA for stability and development in Mali, however, the contribution has been included in the calculations. It is important to emphasise that the sums included apply only to the missions' general operational expenses. Costs of Norwegian civilian and military participation in the missions have not been included.

[4] Established in 1995, the Training for Peace Programme aims to strengthen African civilian and police capacity for peace operations through civil society institutions and North-South-South cooperation.

[5] Strategic Partnership Agreement 2020–2023: Norwegian Refugee Council including NORCAP, Norwegian Red Cross, Norwegian Church Aid, Norwegian People's Aid, Save the Children Norway, and Caritas Norway.
[6] Noragric, Department of International Environment and Development Studies, Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU).
[7] The International Development Association (IDA) is the part of the World Bank that helps the world's poorest countries.
[8] Norfund is the Norwegian Investment Fund for developing countries.

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