UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE FRAMEWORK
GUIDANCE

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT GROUP

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) unites the
32 UN funds, programmes, specialized agencies, departments,
and offices that play a role in development. The UN Development
Operations Coordination Office is the secretariat of the UNDG,
bringing together the UN development system to promote change
and innovation to deliver together on sustainable development.

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DEFINITIONS

Vulnerable groups

This refers to categories of persons affected by inequalities and discrimination, and is understood to include: children and adolescents, human rights defenders, indigenous peoples, internally displaced persons, refugees, migrants, minorities, peasants, persons deprived of liberty, persons of African descent, persons with albinism, persons with disabilities, persons with HIV/AIDS, stateless persons, the poor, union leaders, survivors of trafficking, women, youth, and other groups of persons identified by UN human rights norms and principles.

United Nations

This refers to all UN entities contributing to operational activities for development in a country.

ACRONYMS

BOS	Business Operations Strategy
CBF	Common Budgetary Framework
CCA	Common Country Analysis
CEB	United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination
GDP	Gross domestic product
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
ISF	Integrated Strategic Framework
MAS	Management and Accountability System
MAPS	Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
OMT	Operations Management Team
RBM	Results-based management
RRP	Refugee Response Plan
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNCG	United Nations Communications Group
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDG	United Nations Development Group
UNDS	United Nations Development System
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

INTRODUCTION

On 25 September 2015, Member States of the United Nations adopted *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at its core. The 2030 Agenda commits all countries and stakeholders[1] to working together to achieve sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection. The United Nations Development System (UNDS) will provide its knowledge, convening power and expertise to Member States in support of implementation through nationally owned, interlinked and transformative results. To do so, the United Nations is committed to delivering across mandates, sectors and institutional boundaries, and to practising more coherent and integrated system-wide strategic planning, implementation and reporting.[2]

This document provides guidance for a new generation of the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) or equivalent planning frameworks that reflect the 2030 Agenda. The UNDAF provides a system-wide overview of key UN activities and functions at country level, in support of national policies, priorities and plans of programme countries, while ensuring coordination, coherence, effectiveness and efficiency for maximum impact. More specifically, UNDAF processes help enhance national ownership by:

● Recognizing, supporting and advocating for effective public policies, and use of national institutions, systems and domestic resources as the primary means of achieving the SDGs;

● Supporting and drawing upon national strategic planning processes as well as monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress towards the SDGs; mobilize support for using globally agreed SDG indicators; identify aggregate progress and progress for groups left behind; and highlight corrective actions required in the context of development cooperation;

● Supporting the stronger capacity of government and other stakeholders, including civil society and non-governmental organizations, at all levels with a view to achieving the SDGs;

● Promoting broader partnerships, including public-private partnerships, to achieve the SDGs;

● Supporting as appropriate technical and scientific cooperation and North-South, South-South and triangular, regional and international cooperation on and access to science, technology, innovation and knowledge-sharing in order to achieve SDGs; and

● Encouraging the engagement and participation of relevant stakeholders and the broader population in national actions to achieve the SDGs, and thereby fostering ownership and leadership of those efforts.

This guidance acknowledges the primacy of prevention, and recognizes the importance of having a whole of UN system approach to sustaining peace and building peace in fragile and conflict-affected settings, in line with United Nations General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. It thus contributes to actions for promoting closer working arrangements across the development, humanitarian and peacebuilding nexus.

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1 Stakeholders comprise governments, including line ministries; social partners, comprising workers' and employers' organizations; the private sector; civil society; non-governmental organizations and other development partners relevant to a given country.
2 See: www.unsceb.org/CEBPublicFiles/Common%20Principles%202030%20 Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development-27%20April%202016.pdf).

FIGURE 1
THE UN'S INTEGRATED COUNTRY-LEVEL RESPONSE TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS

WHAT'S NEW IN THIS GUIDANCE?

This guidance supersedes the 2010 UNDAF guidance.

- It orients UN programming to the 2030 Agenda, and advances the ambition of more coherent programming approaches that bring together development, humanitarian, human rights and peacebuilding agendas.

- It updates the core programming principles that provide the normative foundation for the UNDAF and integrated programming in all country contexts, with leave no one behind as the overarching and unifying principle, underpinned by human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment; sustainability and resilience; and accountability.

- It makes the Common Country Analysis (CCA) a minimum requirement, and highly recommends a shared long-term visioning exercise, the UN Vision 2030.[3] In doing this, it seeks to ensure that UNDAF interventions are informed by an in-depth understanding of national contexts, and positioned in the medium and long-terms.

- It promotes a risk-informed approach to UNDAF design, implementation and monitoring. In particular, it acknowledges the importance of conflict analysis in the CCA in relevant contexts.

- It reaffirms using a theory of change in UNDAF design to develop a clearly articulated results chain, and help define where causality can and cannot be ascribed.

- It supports closer integration of UN normative and operational contributions,[4] and alignment with international standards, as well as stronger linkages between the local, regional and global dimensions of sustainable development agendas, as articulated in the 2030 Agenda.

- It employs the jointly agreed MAPS (Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support) approach in supporting countries to adopt the 2030 Agenda and pursue the achievement of the SDGs in a systematic, evidence-informed and results-focused way.

- It highlights the criticality of reinforcing strategic planning and delivery effectiveness through the Business Operations Strategy (BOS), which ensures that programmatic interventions are supported by high-quality, efficient and expeditious integrated operational arrangements.

- It strengthens effective implementation of the UNDAF through UN system-wide instruments such as the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), including Results Groups, joint work plans and joint programmes.

- It updates the UNDAF annual review process to better inform the UN system and stakeholders on UNDAF implementation, and to make adjustments to the UNDAF, for example, due to changes in the external environment.

- It provides increased opportunities to leverage innovation, and calls for broader engagement of diverse actors to inform CCAs, strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation.

- It promotes greater transparency and accountability in the United Nations' work.

- It emphasizes the role of disaggregated data collection and analysis in support of the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda.

- It introduces the element of financing the UNDAF in the context of the wider development financing landscape at the country level and overall investment in the SDGs.

- It introduces a set of quality criteria (see **Annex 1**) against which UNDAFs can be quality assured, monitored and evaluated.

This guidance comprises two parts. **Part 1** describes the principles and approaches for integrated programming required to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the country level. **Part 2** describes how the United Nations develops and manages UNDAFs. Throughout, there are links to a range of additional related materials including companion guidance on key aspects of UNDAF development, implementation and monitoring. This guidance complements the **SOPs**, a minimum set of actions underpinning effective and impactful implementation of new UNDAFs.[5] The SOPs promote a coherent, integrated approach to programming, finance, budgeting, resource mobilization, leadership, communication and advocacy.

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3 UN Vision 2030 refers to the United Nations' vision in the country until the formal completion of the 2030 Agenda.
4 See Eight case studies on integrating the UN's normative and operational work – commissioned by UNDG.
5 https://undg.org/home/guidance-policies/delivering-as-one/standard-operating-procedures-non-pilots/).

MAPS
A Common Approach to
SDG Implementation

The UNDAF articulates the common and collective responsibilities of the UN system in supporting an integrated approach to sustainable development. In response to Members States' call for more coordinated UN engagement, the UNDG has adopted a common approach for effective and coherent implementation support to the 2030 Agenda, under the acronym MAPS.

MAPS stands for **M**ainstreaming, **A**cceleration and **P**olicy **S**upport

MAINSTREAMING
Helping governments to land and contextualize the agenda at national and local levels, ultimately reflecting the agenda in national plans, strategies and budgets. This means mapping what a country is already doing and where it may need to change direction. It is also about continuing to sensitize national stakeholders about the new agenda.

ACCELERATION
Supporting governments and national stakeholders to target resources at root bottlenecks to sustainable development, paying special attention to synergies and trade-offs across sectors.

POLICY SUPPORT
Providing coordinated and pooled policy support to countries that request it, drawing on the expertise and programmatic experience of each part of the United Nations.

Supporting partnerships, the availability of quality data and analysis, and accountability cut across all three components.

MAPS is a common approach that is applied according to the development context and challenges faced, including in countries in transition or recovering from crisis.

PART 1: PRINCIPLES AND APPROACHES FOR INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING

PRINCIPLES FOR INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING

The 2030 Agenda is universal, integrated, transformative and people-centred. It is grounded in human rights, and focused on the promise to reduce inequalities and leave no one behind. Aligned with the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is applicable and relevant to all countries. As interdependent goals, the SDGs require coherent efforts at all levels by governments, the United Nations and all other stakeholders.

To effectively support national efforts to achieve the transformative ambitions of the 2030 Agenda, the UN system needs to take an integrated approach to programming that combines actions across sectors and involves all relevant stakeholders. This recognizes links among the SDGs and their normative foundations. Towards that end, the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) has identified four integrated programming principles for UNDAFs.

Leave no one behind is at the core, unifying programming and advocacy efforts across all UN agendas. It is underpinned by three other programming principles: **human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment; sustainability and resilience;** and **accountability.** These principles are grounded in the norms and standards that the United Nations is tasked to uphold and promote, and that inform all phases of UN programming at

the country level. They are the foundation for integrated programming in response to national priorities and plans. They hold true for all country contexts and are applied in an integrated manner. Knowing how to meet these norms and standards, consistently and effectively, in policy, advocacy, programming and engagement with national counterparts, is essential for the success of the United Nations on the ground. Companion guidance provides more detailed information and resources on integrated **programming principles**.

1	**LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND**

Leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first is the central promise of the 2030 Agenda. It represents the unequivocal commitment of Member States to address the multidimensional causes of poverty, inequalities and discrimination, and reduce the vulnerabilities of the most marginalized people, including women, refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants, minorities, indigenous peoples, stateless persons, and populations affected by conflict and natural disasters.

As the overarching programming principle for UNDAFs in all country contexts, leaving no one behind requires that the UN system prioritize its programmatic interventions to address the situation of those most marginalized, discriminated against and excluded, and to empower them as active agents of development. Individuals and groups may be at risk of being left behind not only because of their personal vulnerabilities, but also because their distinct and specific entitlements and needs may not be visible, recognized or prioritized by their societies, resulting in their exclusion.

Because of its overarching and unifying nature, the principle of leaving no one behind is a cornerstone for coherence across the development, humanitarian, human rights and peacebuilding agendas. In crisis and conflict settings, it calls for a focus on the protection of people most at risk, including displaced populations and those most likely to be affected by

climate change and natural disasters. The principle can be a key driver of peace, underscoring the importance of addressing inequalities and situations that fuel conflict and hinder return. UNDAFs can also consider the disproportionate impacts of humanitarian and other crises, shocks and changes on the most vulnerable people.

Leave no one behind is elaborated through the other three integrated programming principles:

- **Eliminating inequalities and discrimination (human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment principle):** This principle recognizes that UN programming is guided by international norms and standards that provide the normative basis to address the situation of individuals and groups which are, or at risk of, being left behind not only because of their vulnerabilities but also as a result of entrenched inequalities and discrimination that prevents them from accessing services and resources. The United Nations' contribution to protecting and promoting human rights is both a normative duty, and an operational imperative for ensuring more equitable and sustainable development outcomes.

- **Addressing the root causes of multidimensional poverty and building capacities for resilience (sustainability and resilience principle):** This principle recognizes the need for protecting ecosystems and biodiversity as the "GDPs of the poor," as they provide the bases for livelihoods and employment for many of the poor and those left furthest behind. Sustainability and resilience are key to understanding and addressing the disproportionate impact of crises and disasters on the poor and other groups who are marginalized and discriminated against. Strengthening the capacities of national institutions and communities is the foundation of resilience, and of ensuring that gains are sustainable.

- **Strengthening national systems and processes of accountability to monitor progress and provide remedies (accountability principle):** This principle entails improving the effectiveness of institutions and mechanisms to monitor and track progress in empowering those who are left behind or at risk of falling behind.

Promoting the principle of leaving no one behind can include advocacy and other programmatic interventions, which may be undertaken jointly by the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) or by individual agencies based on their specific mandates. For example, the principle can be expressed by programmatic interventions related to social protection, legal empowerment,

economic opportunities, decent work, environmental health, and access to essential services for population groups who are furthest behind. These groups can be identified and engaged through all stages of the UNDAF process.

2 HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT[6]

A central objective of the 2030 Agenda is to *"realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls."* As applied in UNDAFs, this principle has five elements:

- **Alignment with international standards:[7]** In supporting the alignment of national laws and policies with international standards, UNDAFs are guided by recommendations made to the country by international human rights mechanisms. Thus, UNDAF implementation is linked to reporting and review processes under the SDGs as well as human rights mechanisms.

- **A focus on addressing inequalities and discrimination towards leaving no one behind:** UNDAFs identify existing inequalities and forms of discrimination, and other human rights violations. This process can include data disaggregation that goes beyond gender, geography and age to encompass other forms of discrimination prohibited under international law. UNDAFs demonstrate how they will contribute to achieving both formal and substantive equality. They can aim to address structural barriers; reverse unequal distributions of power, resources and opportunities; and/or challenge discriminatory laws, social norms and stereotypes that perpetuate inequalities and disparities.

- **Active and meaningful participation by all stakeholders:** The UNDAF explains how the United Nations ensures the full participation of key stakeholders, especially national governments, civil society and the private sector, in its design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. It can elaborate how it will contribute to establishing consistent space and resources for free, informed and empowered participation by civil society, particularly for the most marginalized groups, in national development processes that shape their lives, without fear of reprisal.

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6 For more guidance, see: UNDG Guidance Note on Human Rights for RCs and UNCTs (2015) and A Resource Book for Mainstreaming Gender in UN Common Country Programming at the Country Level (2014).
7 These include all international conventions and instruments.

- **Due diligence, including provision of effective remedies:** The UNDAF supports the establishment of national mechanisms to provide effective judicial and non-judicial remedies to individuals and groups, and offer assistance in accessing them. It can also ensure due diligence and full implementation of normative standards such as the UN's Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights in public-private partnerships.

- **Reduction of gender inequalities by empowering all women and girls:** The CCA includes a rigorous gender analysis that goes beyond age- and sex-disaggregated data to explain immediate, underlying and root causes and differentiated impacts (including through an appreciation of social, legal, political, economic and cultural dynamics that underpin gender inequality). The UNDAF supports and links to the implementation of internationally agreed policy frameworks or conventions, including the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The UNDAF can explain the ways in which the United Nations responds to gender inequalities, and the empowerment and advancement of women and girls, men and boys, depending on the particular situation in each country. Gender equality concerns are fully and consistently reflected in the programme rationale/strategy, and inequalities adequately addressed through clearly defined, gender-specific outcomes and outputs that contribute to relevant gender SDG indicators and targets, where appropriate.

3 SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCE

The 2030 Agenda has the objective of ensuring the lasting protection of the planet and its natural and cultural resources, supporting inclusive and sustained economic growth, ending poverty in all its dimensions and enhancing human well-being. It aims to: increase the resilience of societies and ecosystems to man-made and natural hazards, shocks and stresses; promote multisectoral, integrated approaches that harness the potential, assets and capacities of institutions and communities to enhance human well-being, and reduce risks and vulnerabilities associated with natural hazards, climate change, violence, conflict, political and social instability, or economic volatility; and manage the change and uncertainty of long-term trends.

Increasing the resilience of societies, economies and the natural environment can help countries, communities and the poor to withstand shocks, embrace uncertainty and manage risks. There are strong links as well between sustainability and resilience,

and peace and security. Strengthening the capacities of national institutions and communities is the foundation of resilience, and of ensuring that gains are sustainable. UN support for strengthening national capacities takes place within the national development framework, building on existing capacities, assets and systems, and based on national capacity assessments and strategies.

UNDAFs integrate six elements of sustainability and resilience, which involve:

- Reflecting interconnections and a balanced approach among the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development;

- Integrating economic, environmental and social sustainability and risk management into programming, and strengthening national capacities to address these issues;

- Applying social and environmental standards to prevent adverse impacts on people, including the poor, and the environment; managing risks when impacts cannot be avoided and building resilience;

- Supporting the full integration of environmental issues and social protection in national policies that deal with key development sectors, and ensuring links with emergency, crisis and humanitarian systems;

- Addressing the sustainability and resilience dimensions of development problems, and the interconnections among issues related to the environment, human rights, conflict and vulnerability;

- Ensuring consistency between UNDAF outcomes and objectives in national development policies, budgets and plans.

The sustainability and resilience principle is integrated through each stage of the UNDAF process. All UNDAF interventions seek to reduce risks and build resilience through strengthening national capacities and policy support, and to mainstream sustainability and resilience across programmes. A broad vision of sustainability ensures a balance among social, economic and environmental considerations and resilience.

UNDAFs take into account how the legal, policy and institutional environment as well as economic and social patterns affect the resilience of communities, especially for vulnerable and excluded groups. They specify and support links to the implementation of internationally agreed policy frameworks or conventions ratified by the country with the potential to facilitate integrated implementation of the SDGs. These include the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda,

the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and the Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All. In practical implementation terms, UNDAFs, for example, encompass recognizing the value of ecosystem services, promoting the green/blue economy, fostering sustainable consumption and production patterns, investing in climate change adaptation, reducing disaster risks and extending sustainable energy.

4 ACCOUNTABILITY

The 2030 Agenda includes commitments to greater accountability at global, regional and national levels, and to corresponding mechanisms for implementation and follow-up. The United Nations has committed itself to support these actions, and to help build "effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels" (SDG 16). Based upon this, UNDAFs promote accountable societies, including through:

- Alignment with national priorities and national accountability mechanisms, as well as the provision of priority support to the expansion or further development of those mechanisms to ensure that they include all population groups;

- Strengthening national and local mechanisms, institutions and processes to monitor and report on the progress of SDG implementation for all parts of society, and linking these with international mechanisms, including UN human rights mechanisms;

- Measures to build upon and extend greater transparency, and improved measurement and reporting on results, including through joint assessments with target populations;

- Practising what the United Nations advocates by recognizing the UN system's accountability to the general public of the countries in which it works;

- Enabling active local community engagement and participation in decision-making—particularly of those who are left behind or are at risk of being left behind—whether more broadly in national policy development, implementation, or monitoring and evaluation, or specifically in the UNDAF process;

- Supporting the development and use of transparent and robust data and information for policy formulation, programme design and implementation to manage risks and deliver results through more effective decision-making, both in national policy processes, and the work of the United Nations at the country level.

KEY APPROACHES FOR INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING

Within UNDAFs, the United Nations employs six mutually reinforcing programming approaches to deliver on the unifying principle of leaving no one behind and the other four integrated programming principles (see Figure 1). These programming approaches, described on the following pages, apply to UNDAFs in all country contexts.

1 RESULTS FOCUSED PROGRAMMING

The SDGs and their translation at country level constitute the frame of reference for the formulation of UNDAF strategic priorities, outcomes, the theory of change, and related indicators and targets. Using results-based management, the UN system ensures that resources are directed towards improving conditions for identified populations, particularly those left behind. Results-focused programming is an approach where the allocation of energies and resources is based on clearly articulated and measurable intended results, rather than on planned activities.

A results-focused approach also requires the identification of critical assumptions about the programming environment, and a consideration of relevant risks and management measures. Indicators to monitor progress and measure the achievement of outcomes are identified, with attention given to data, evidence generation, and support for national statistical and information systems. Accountabilities are clearly defined and backed by strong reporting mechanisms.

In line with the UNDG RBM Handbook, UNDAF outcomes represent changes in institutional and behavioural capacities for development. A results-focused programme is oriented by the CCA, which outlines changes required in a country context, and articulated based on the theory of change and the UNDAF results framework (see Part 2). The focus on results should be maintained throughout the entire UNDAF process, including during monitoring and evaluation.

2 CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

The UNDG defines capacity as the ability of people, organizations and society as a whole to manage their affairs successfully. Capacity development is the process of unleashing, strengthening, creating, adapting and maintaining capacity over time. It is a core function of the UNDS and is critical to implement the 2030 Agenda and sustain progress. The 2030 Agenda and the unifying principle of leaving no one behind demands an enhanced approach to capacity development of government and relevant stakeholders, including civil society and non-governmental organizations.

Capacity development support by the United Nations seeks to maximize national ownership and leadership and address capacity at the levels of individuals, organizations and the enabling environment. Individual capacity support focuses on improving individual skills, knowledge and performance through training, experiences, motivation and incentives. Organizational capacity support aims at improving organizational performance through strategies, plans, rules and regulations, partnerships, leadership, organizational politics and power structures. Capacity support for an enabling environment seeks to strengthen policies while ensuring policy coherence to address economic, environmental and social factors such as labour markets, the policy and legislative environment, class structure and cultural aspects.

The CCA includes an assessment and analysis of the capacities of government and relevant stakeholders. It articulates the root causes of the lack of capacity, and explores broad approaches to developing capacities such as through South-South and triangular cooperation. The UNDAF strategic prioritization process enables the United Nations to identify those areas of capacity development where it can have a maximum impact in supporting the achievement of the SDGs. The paths to capacity development (that is, the explanations of why certain results and activities are believed to lead to increased capacity) are articulated in the theory of change, while the goals of capacity development actions (that is, measurable changes in capacity) are laid out in the UNDAF results framework (see Part 2). The companion guidance on capacity development provides more information on the application of this principle.

3 RISK-INFORMED PROGRAMMING

Investing in risk-informed programming entails effective management of risk at every step of the UNDAF process. Risk is viewed from a common UN system-wide perspective, rather than an organization-specific one. Importantly, risk-informed development takes into account "risks to" programming as well as "risks from" programming. While assessing risks to programming, the focus is on those that might impact or facilitate the achievement of the development objectives. The "do no harm" principle addresses risks from programming.

Risk-informed development programming entails a multidimensional approach to managing disaster risks and climate impacts, and to protecting development gains. While applying the principle of "do no harm," it seeks to secure wider social, economic and environmental co-benefits. It recognizes that the achievement of the SDGs will be contingent on nations' and communities' abilities to build resilience to risks of multiple threats, including those related to natural hazards, climate change, conflict, food and water crises, pandemics, displacement, migration and economic shocks, among others. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the SDGs and the Paris Agreement provide an impetus for countries to reverse current risk trends and emission levels, and graduate towards low-carbon, risk-informed development.

Conflict analysis is particularly significant for risk-informed programming in countries prone to natural disasters, experiencing complex emergencies or in conflict or post-conflict situations. This analysis supports responses that address development, humanitarian and peacebuilding challenges. It provides a platform to engage with donors and other development, humanitarian and peacebuilding actors, and can help promote the United Nations as a valued collaborator.

The sustainability of public and private investment depends on sound risk management. UNDAFs should aim to fully embed risk management into development, and systematically encourage public and private investments to be underpinned by an adequate understanding of risks and the connections among them. The application of risk indices (for example, INFORM) can help identify risks and vulnerabilities in humanitarian and disaster settings, and promote resilience building (see: www.inform-index.org).

CCAs reflect the multiple risks that countries face, such as market shocks, natural hazards, social unrest, climate change, epidemics and pandemics, and the risk of conflict or serious human rights violations. Such risks are challenges in themselves, but can also trigger further risks, such as economic loss and political tensions, undermining and reversing progress towards the SDGs. Risk-informed programming also feeds into the consideration of long-term risks in the UN Vision 2030 exercise. It facilitates the determination of an UNDAF's strategic priorities, the development of the theory of change, the definition of outcomes and the creation of joint work plans. UNDAFs should seek to manage risks by avoiding harm, building resilience, and improving national and local preparedness, and position the United Nations to respond when risks materialize.

4 DEVELOPMENT, HUMANITARIAN AND PEACEBUILDING LINKAGES[8]

The 2030 Agenda, the pursuit of the SDGs, the commitment to leave no one behind, and the need to support recovery and durable solutions in situations of conflict or fragility require that UNDAFs demonstrate coherence across development, humanitarian and peacebuilding agendas, underpinned by human rights as the common purpose of the United Nations Charter. CCAs, UNDAFs and related processes should be more connected to humanitarian action and when appropriate to UN peacekeeping operations or special political missions, collectively contributing to longer term development gains.[9]

The United Nations General Assembly and Security Council resolutions in 2016 on sustaining peace[10] emphasized the importance of joint analysis and effective strategic planning across the UN system. These resolutions seek to increase the focus of the UN system on preventing conflicts, so that not only the symptoms, but also the root causes of conflicts are addressed. They call on the United Nations to do more context-specific joint multidimensional conflict and risk analysis. In line with this, the CCA considers multihazard risks, human rights, and humanitarian and peacebuilding dimensions in a holistic way. It should examine existing coping and response capacities, and resilience systems. The UNDG-endorsed Conflict and Development Analysis tool should assist with analyses in conflict-affected countries. The Humanitarian Needs Overview should also be considered a source of information on people's vulnerability for the CCA in crisis contexts.

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8 The term nexus and linkage are used interchangeably.
9 See: General Assembly resolution 71/243, paragraph 24(a).
10 See: General Assembly resolution 70/262 and Security Council resolution 2282 (2016)

A coherent response across the development, humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts in crisis and post-crisis settings requires a shared vision and articulation of collective outcomes by a wide range of partners, including UN and non-UN actors, based on their comparative advantages and over multiple years. Coherent planning and programming is context specific. UN entities strategically plan together activities, interventions and programmes, and who does what, where, how and when, within their mandates and with their comparatives advantages, with the process directly aimed at contributing to reduced needs, vulnerability and risk, thus contributing to achieving sustainable development, including sustainable peace.

At the country level, the United Nations should explore different coherence arrangements based on a range of options depending on the country context, with joint analysis and planning reflected in a common planning framework on one end of the spectrum, and separate planning instruments when operationally necessary on the other end of the spectrum. While humanitarian action may contribute to sustainable development and sustainable peace, the main purpose of humanitarian action will remain to address life-saving needs and alleviate suffering in accordance with humanitarian principles.[11] Analysis and planning should include humanitarian inputs to ensure coherence and complementarity.

In some protracted crises, while respecting the continued need for the neutrality, impartiality and independence of humanitarian action, the United Nations may bring together development and humanitarian support in the UNDAF through the articulation of collective outcomes based on joint analysis and multiyear planning. This approach should also be applied in situations where a humanitarian response is drawing down, and the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) and other humanitarian programmes are being or have been phased out, with residual humanitarian needs addressed in the UNDAF. In situations of protracted displacement, the needs of displaced people will usually be a core element of the planning process in order to support durable solutions.[12]

There are various scenarios where UNDAFs and HRPs will exist side-by-side. For example, in high-intensity conflict situations, where there is a need to guarantee a separate humanitarian space, humanitarian support should not be part of the UNDAF, and the HRP and/or Refugee Response Plan (RRP) should remain separate, albeit well aligned. In these contexts, direct links between the UNDAF and HRP/RRP should be made to ensure complementarity, sequencing of development and humanitarian activities, and compatibility of results frameworks. This can enable, when appropriate, the targeting of the same geographical areas and people affected by crisis and fragility, with a vision and plan for integration over the longer term. It builds on the strength of the UNDAF to achieve long-term results with a view to reducing and mitigating risks; addressing the structural and underlying drivers of inequality, deprivation and

fragility, including in areas affected by humanitarian crises; and helping vulnerable and crisis-affected people become self-reliant and resilient.

In settings where there is an integrated UN presence,[13] whether it is a peacekeeping operation or a special political mission, the mission and the UNCT are required to develop an Integrated Strategic Framework (ISF). This promotes collaboration by reflecting shared objectives and means through which the United Nations will promote peace consolidation. UNDAFs can be designed to serve as the ISF or vice versa. Having both an ISF and UNDAF is not required if one framework can meet the minimum requirements of both. As per the United Nations Policy on Integrated Assessment and Planning, this decision is made by senior UN leadership at the country level. Implementation is facilitated through joint work plans that detail the division of labour between the mission and UN agencies.

5 COHERENT POLICY SUPPORT

The 2030 Agenda demands policy coherence and more integrated approaches, where different actors work together across sectors to deliver sustainable development.[14] The United Nations combines its diverse and complimentary mandates, expertise and technical contributions so that the policy support it provides to national partners is comprehensible, comprehensive and coherent.[15] As identified in the principles of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), it is the UN system's ambition to "work in unity while preserving diversity." The system's diversity and vast range of specialized expertise is a source of great strength and an invaluable asset when leveraged in a coordinated, coherent manner.

Policy coherence ensures consistency across national policy and programmatic frameworks, the legal obligations of States under international law, and their alignment in support of

11 See: General Assembly resolution 46/182.
12 See the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's "Introduction to Humanitarian Action: A brief guide for Resident Coordinators," 2015, available at: http://reliefweb.int/report/world/introduction-humanitarian-action-brief-guide-resident-coordinators; and UNHCR's "Note on the Mandate of the High Commissioner for Refugees and His Office," 2013, available at: www.unhcr.org/526a22cb6.html.
13 An UN Integrated Presence means that there is a multidimensional peacekeeping operation or field-based special political mission deployed alongside an UNCT.
14 See: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review.
15 See the UNDG repository of tools for upstream policy support by the SDGs and their targets.

development efforts. It is about making sure that what is done in one area makes sense alongside what is done in other areas. Policy coherence is crucial for achievement of the SDGs, given their interlinked nature and the constituent elements involved: social, economic and environmental, together with peace, security, human rights and equality. In order to achieve policy coherence across the work of the United Nations at country level, UNDAFs:

- Align to national priorities and plans, national SDG strategies and targets, and internationally agreed policy frameworks defining integrated approaches to sustainable development as well as norms and standards. This provides "vertical policy coherence" between frameworks at different levels, including at national and subnational levels. It requires constant assessment of the national development and policy landscape, and regular engagement with stakeholders and development partners, including the World Bank and other international financial institutions.

- Enhance synergies between intervention areas (horizontal coherence) and their alignment with national development goals. "Horizontal coherence" is promoted through approaches that include Results Groups, joint work plans and pooled funding instruments. These approaches enhance collaboration towards collective outcomes. UNDAFs leverage both specialized sectoral technical assistance and cross-sectoral work.

- Strengthen coherence among development, humanitarian and peacebuilding efforts and human rights mechanisms for the realization and sustainability of peace and development gains.

6 PARTNERSHIPS

The 2030 Agenda underlines the importance of partnerships for results. Inclusive, strategic and mutually beneficial partnerships at global, regional, national and local levels are a prerequisite to achieving the SDGs. The transformative ambitions of the 2030 Agenda imply a shift in roles and responsibilities, and a corresponding shift in the way partnership is understood, facilitated and developed.

The achievement of the SDGs requires the broad engagement of all development and humanitarian actors, including people at large in a given country and other stakeholders. The UNDAF process and its implementation provide a platform for the UN system to leverage its global comparative strengths to convene a wide range of stakeholders. UNDAFs can also lay out ways in which the United Nations can develop innovative approaches to multistakeholder partnerships, and foster new collaborations in line with UN principles, norms and standards. In brokering South-South and triangular cooperation and public-private partnerships, the focus should be on promoting the leadership and full participation of these actors in attaining national goals informed by the SDGs.

Multistakeholder partnerships bring diverse views, rich experiences, and a broad range of capacities and resources to bear, including in conflict-affected states and states in protracted crisis, as well as among displaced populations. Through convening and leveraging different partners throughout the UNDAF process, the United Nations can promote leadership of initiatives by the best-placed partner(s). Advocacy and normative work can advance new and innovative partnerships to leverage resources from a wide range of partners.

Partnerships with non-governmental actors are essential to an efficient and effective UN response, based on the principles of equality, transparency, a results-oriented approach, responsibility and complementarity. This approach to partnership offers tailored solutions that address actual needs rather than "one-size-fits-all" approaches. The United Nations is committed to making and encouraging greater efforts to support and enable national and local actors to provide expertise and good practices, and add capacity and capability. This includes emergency preparedness and response, as referenced, inter alia, by the World Humanitarian Summit.

At the same time, the United Nations approaches partnerships with due care and diligence to uphold and protect its values. A new and expanded approach to partnerships requires a risk-informed approach. Working with partners who do not uphold the values of the United Nations presents reputational, fiduciary and other risks. UN partnership strategies should include risk management measures, including safeguards and due diligence processes.[16]

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16 For risk analysis involving the United Nations working with security forces, see the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on United Nations Support to non-United Nations Security Forces (A/67/775-S/2013/110).

PART 2:
HOW TO DEVELOP AND MANAGE AN UNDAF

In the context of the 2030 Agenda, UNDAFs go beyond the compilation of organization-specific plans. They are based on the ambition of the "One Country, One UN Framework," and built on shared strategic development outcomes, common needs and root cause analysis, risk assessment and management, and monitoring and reporting. The United Nations develops them in an inclusive manner in close collaboration with national governments, civil society and other stakeholders.

Within a given national context, the Resident Coordinator and UNCT are custodians of the application of UNDAF guidance. Certain elements are minimum requirements, representing essential elements without which an UNDAF cannot meet minimum standards required for alignment with the 2030 Agenda and UN support to Member States in their achievement. During the development of the UNDAF roadmap, the UNCT discusses the realistic scope and depth of the minimum requirements achievable for maximum impact, given resources availability and the specific country context. Throughout the UNDAF process, programming principles and approaches are applied under the unifying principle of leaving no one behind.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS OF UNDAFS

At a minimum, the United Nations at country level is required to:

● Develop a **roadmap** for UNDAF preparation with the government and other relevant stakeholders to support national priorities and plans for achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

● Develop a **high-quality, evidence-based CCA**.

● Decide on the **UNDAF strategic priorities, based on the CCA and UN Vision 2030, and supported by an overarching UNDAF theory of change, a corresponding results matrix at the outcome level and the medium-term Common Budgetary Framework (CBF)**. The UNDAF outcomes are the basis for aligning specific organizational programming documents with the UNDAF. The UNDAF outcome indicators, baselines and targets are linked to other intergovernmental reporting processes such as SDG reports and human rights mechanisms.

● Ensure that the **UNDAF and its legal annex are signed by all participating UN organizations and a relevant government representative**.

● Develop **joint work plans, which are signed by participating UN organizations** within the Results Groups to operationalize the UNDAF outcomes.

● Develop and implement **a costed multiyear monitoring and evaluation plan**, ensuring that (a) **annual One UN Country Results Reports** are prepared integrating programme results reports with reports on finance, resource mobilization, operations, communications and advocacy, and leadership, and that (b) **an UNDAF evaluation happens once during the life cycle of the UNDAF, with costs shared among UNCT members** as appropriate.[17] The UNDAF evaluation should be timed to inform the development of the next UNDAF where possible, and synchronized with the BOS and advocacy and communications strategy evaluations. The procedures and timelines of evaluations of agency programmes should be harmonized with the UNDAF evaluation.
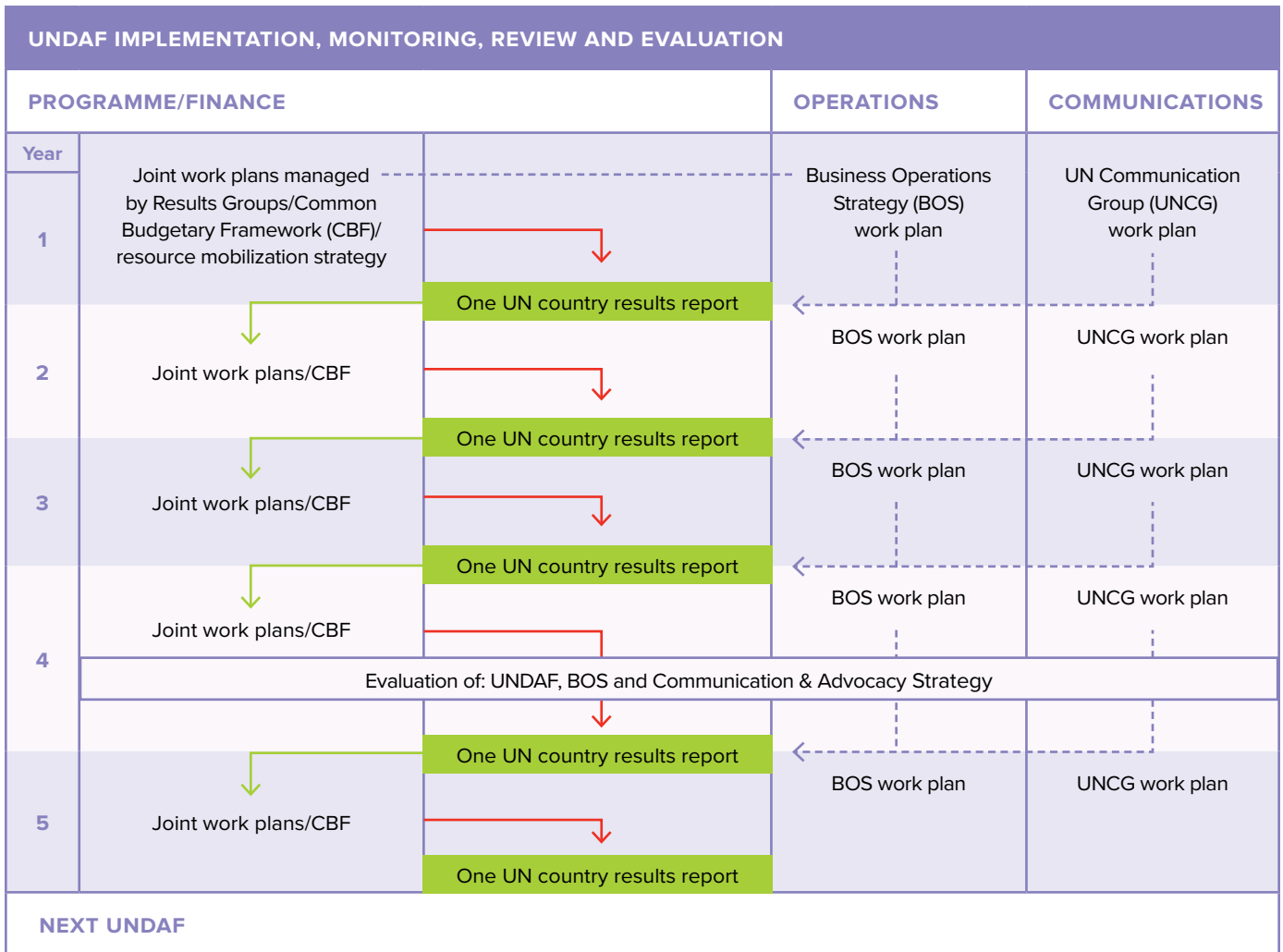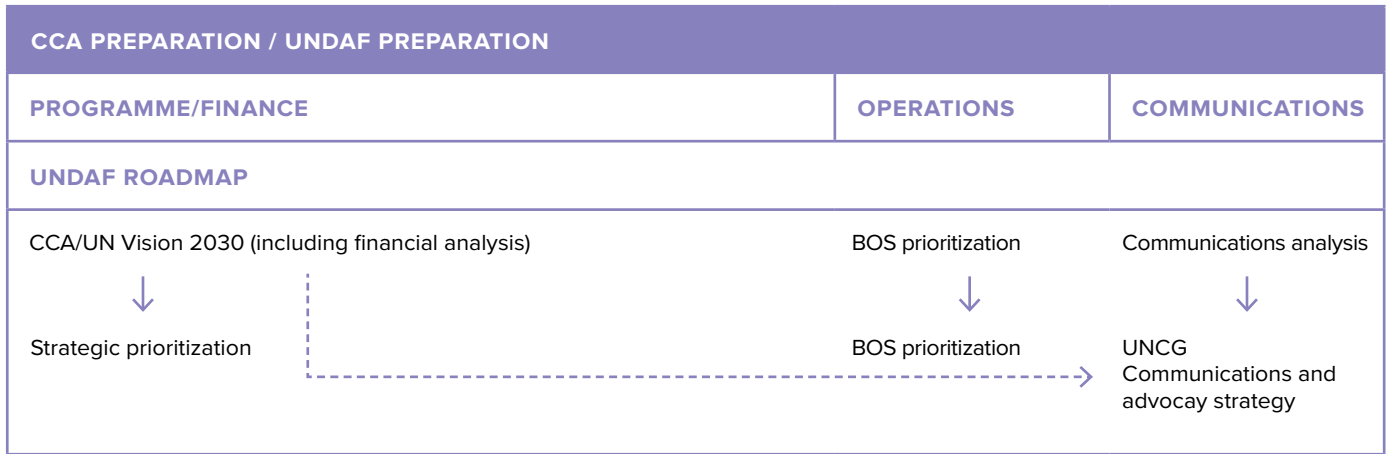

In support of the preparation of quality UNDAFs, the following good practices are recommended for the consideration of UNCTs.

GOOD PRACTICES IN UNDAF PREPARATION

● Make links to national plans explicit to ensure UNDAF results respond to national priorities;

● Limit strategic priority areas to no more than five to ensure focus;

● Initiate joint programming (including, where appropriate, with humanitarian and peacebuilding actors based on joint analysis), joint programmes and BOS complementarities alongside UNDAF development;

● Engage business operations colleagues early on to identify cost efficiencies;

● Engage the United Nations Communications Group (UNCG) to find entry points for advocacy and communication at the outcome level (which can involve advocacy, social mobilization or behaviour change);

● Identify multistakeholder partnership strategies to bring in a broad set of national, regional and international partners, and determine the roles of the UN system and partners in achieving results;

● Articulate the way in which the UNDAF sits within the context of the larger national and global resource environment (including investments in the SDGs), thus ensuring realistic financial resources; use historical data as a basis for future resource projections;

● Ensure that all minimum requirements are costed and timelines are clear, including the cost-sharing of the required UNDAF evaluation towards the end of the cycle; and

● Involve the Peer Support Group throughout the process and ensure that the UNDAF adheres to quality criteria (**Annex 1**).

● Share and know the focus and time-tables of organizational programming instruments within the UNCT to ensure transparency and alignment.

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17 UNDAF evaluations are not covered by UNDG cost-sharing mechanisms. See: www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/71/292/Rev.1&referer=/english/&Lang=E.

FIGURE 2
INTEGRATED PROGRAMMING

CCA PREPARATION / UNDAF PREPARATION

PROGRAMME/FINANCE		OPERATIONS	COMMUNICATIONS
UNDAF ROADMAP			
CCA/UN Vision 2030 (including financial analysis) ↓		BOS prioritization ↓	Communications analysis ↓
Strategic prioritization		BOS prioritization	UNCG Communications and advocay strategy

UNDAF IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Year	PROGRAMME/FINANCE		OPERATIONS	COMMUNICATIONS
1	Joint work plans managed by Results Groups/Common Budgetary Framework (CBF)/ resource mobilization strategy		Business Operations Strategy (BOS) work plan	UN Communication Group (UNCG) work plan
		One UN country results report		
2	Joint work plans/CBF		BOS work plan	UNCG work plan
		One UN country results report		
3	Joint work plans/CBF		BOS work plan	UNCG work plan
		One UN country results report		
4	Joint work plans/CBF		BOS work plan	UNCG work plan
	Evaluation of: UNDAF, BOS and Communication & Advocacy Strategy			
		One UN country results report		
5	Joint work plans/CBF		BOS work plan	UNCG work plan
		One UN country results report		
NEXT UNDAF				

→ Review of progress and context   → Update and adjustment

THE ROADMAP FOR AN UNDAF

The roadmap for an UNDAF lays out the process for its development with a timeline and clarity on who does what. The roadmap:

- Supports dialogue and promotes a smooth and transparent planning process within the UNCT as well as with the government, partners and other stakeholders from the inception;

- Outlines the required and agreed steps that lead to the signing of the UNDAF with the Government;

- Identifies key actions and the division of labour among UN organizations;

- Identifies when and from whom support is required, including Regional UNDG Teams, Peer Support Groups and headquarters;

- Outlines how resources will be mobilized for UNDAF preparation, including the diverse expertise available within the UNCT.

The roadmap is developed through a participatory process at the start of the penultimate year of the ending UNDAF. Extensions of UNDAFs can be requested from the Regional

DEVELOPING THE ROADMAP

UNDG Team to ensure better alignment to the national planning cycle or to adapt to other national circumstances, such as the national electoral calendar or a crisis situation.

The United Nations prepares a draft roadmap using the template provided in **Annex 2** through a fully inclusive inter-agency process. This is then shared for consultation with the national government and other national stakeholders. A strategy to engage funding partners in this process can help in financing the UNDAF.

Once the draft roadmap has been developed, the Resident Coordinator on behalf of the UNCT shares it with the Regional UNDG Team and the Peer Support Group to review and agree on required regional support. This can include, but is not limited to, technical expertise on specific thematic areas; training on any step in the development of the UNDAF,

including the application of the integrated programming principles; support to strategic prioritization and assistance with the UNDAF evaluation. The Peer Support Group provides feedback within 15 working days. Once the roadmap is finalized, the Resident Coordinator shares it with national government and other relevant national stakeholders and submits it to the Regional UNDG Team.

COMMON COUNTRY ANALYSIS

WHAT IS A CCA?

The CCA is a required and essential element of every UNDAF process. It is the UN system's independent and mandate-based articulation of the country context, opportunities and challenges, encompassing sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, peace and security, and humanitarian perspectives. It is underpinned by the promise of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind, and the other three programming principles.

The CCA is an objective, impartial assessment (a description of what is happening) and an analysis (a description of why it is happening) of the country situation. It strategically positions the UN system in the country and serves primarily as a programming tool. It also represents a powerful source of information to help the UN system engage with national stakeholders, including to advocate for policy changes and to support the drafting of the national development plan.

The CCA provides the essential evidence base from which the UNDAF theory of change is drawn, and offers grounding and direction for a strategic UNDAF. It drives the identification of needed and achievable changes. While identifying sources for the indicators, targets and baselines of the UNDAF results framework, it also pinpoints gaps in data availability and national statistical capacity.

CCAs are forward looking. They define medium and longer term trends, based on a wide range of data sources, which provide the foundation of the UN Vision 2030 document. The UN Vision 2030 and the CCA are mutually reinforcing and should be developed in parallel. The longer term horizon of the UN Vision 2030 informs the orientation of the CCA, and the assessment and analysis of the CCA informs the trend analysis of the UN Vision 2030. Results Groups later use annual reviews to update the analysis related to their results areas so that joint work plans remain relevant for the planned implementation period.

CCAs help to identify areas for enhanced policy coherence, reflecting the interdependence of the SDGs and issues the country should address. Rather than addressing each issue in an individual way, within its own silo, CCAs combine multiple perspectives in a complementary and coherent manner. They identify national capacity gaps (e.g., analytical, institutional and/or statistical) that can be addressed by coordinated UN support, towards enhanced policy coherence.

In developing the CCA, the UN system uses its convening power to consult and engage with the government and other stakeholders, including the most vulnerable and marginalized people and their organizations, in order to reflect different perspectives. This is considered to be objective UN analysis, and is not a document that requires formal endorsement. The purpose of the CCA is to add value to existing analyses, including that of the government. Preparation of the CCA is also an opportunity to build partnerships with key actors in a given country, which could include international financial institutions, civil society organisations and the private sector.

For countries with UN missions, UN system partners ensure that their assessment and analysis processes and tools employed are complementary, coherent and strategic. The Senior Leadership Forum at the country level is responsible for the coordination and identification of needed analyses.

DEVELOPING A CCA

1. DATA COLLECTION

CCAs include a review of existing assessments, evaluations and analyses by the government, the UN system and other stakeholders. Existing flagship publications, specific assessments and analytical tools, in particular those contributing to the global monitoring of progress on the SDGs, may be useful sources of information. An overview of possible tools and instruments is available in the CCA companion guidance.

Wherever possible, UNCTs develop CCAs in a manner that contributes to strengthening national capacity for assessment and analyses, including through better data generation. Data and analysis from global SDG indicators can be used where available. Data should be disaggregated to the extent possible to show differences in circumstance according to sex, income, age and other factors, as appropriate. Where official data are not available or not adequately disaggregated, the CCA may draw on other sources of information, such as ad hoc surveys, while maintaining data reliability and ensuring key issues are not overlooked, such as the situation of marginalized groups. Gaps in data availability or quality identified during CCA preparation can guide later UN assistance in developing national statistical capacities.

Data can be gathered in partnership with governmental and non-governmental actors, ensuring soundness of methodology and reliability. Since the CCA is updated on a continuous basis, data from future assessments are considered when available. Where the United Nations collects its own data, it acts in a manner consistent with:

- National processes to collect baselines and targets to monitor progress against both nationally defined SDG targets and the global SDG monitoring framework;

- Efforts supporting the longer term capacity of national data systems;

- Use of a variety of data sources, including non-traditional ones such as big data, national surveys and participatory assessments;

- Identification of needs for and investment in disaggregation of data;

- Data protection policies;

- Free and open access to data and documentation across the UN system; and

- Consideration of what data already exist in the public domain, and what data should be publicly available to promote transparency and accountability.

2. ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS

The assessment element of the CCA looks at all areas of the 2030 Agenda. It encompasses the material situation of people in a country, including non-nationals, and the political, policy and legislative environment for achieving the SDGs and other national commitments and obligations under international conventions ratified by the country. It assesses risks for different groups and geographic areas. It also identifies risks, challenges, opportunities, potential trade-offs, national capacities and capacity gaps, policy enablers and limitations, and considers these in the context of the UN system's comparative advantage. Disaggregated data are fundamental to an assessment that presents an accurate picture of a national situation from the perspective of the principle of leaving no one behind. The assessment also examines the financial system in the country in terms of the achievement of the SDGs, focusing primarily on domestic finance.

The analysis element of the CCA identifies the immediate, underlying and root causes of multidimensional poverty, inequalities and discrimination, and the reasons why particular groups are left behind. It also examines gaps in the capacities of duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations and of rights-holders to make their claims. Special emphasis is paid to gender and geographical analysis at the macro-, meso- and micro- levels.[18] Where relevant, a conflict analysis should be undertaken, focusing on underlying and root causes, and identifying potential triggers as part of the early warning and conflict prevention roles of the United Nations.

18 For a comparative summary of different gender analysis frameworks, see the UNDG Resource Book on Mainstreaming Gender in Common Programming at the Country Level (Table 1, p. 17).

The Secretary-General's Human Rights Up Front Initiative supports the United Nations in identifying these risks. The Conflict and Development Analysis Tool plus its companion piece UN Conflict Analysis Practice-Note can also be used for this purpose.

3. COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

Within the CCA, comparative advantage analysis informs the strategic positioning of the UN system's programmes in a country. It allows the identification of specific strengths that members of the UNCT bring individually and collectively in relation to other partners. The analysis considers capacity at the country, regional and headquarters levels.

Comparative advantage includes the mandate to act, the capacity to act and the positioning to act. Comparative advantage analysis does not articulate the status quo, but rather is a forward-looking projection of capacities and positioning at the country level. It is not necessarily based on those activities with which the UN system is most familiar and comfortable, focusing instead on those where the UN system can best add value. The main comparative advantages typically identified include:

- Strengthening national capacities at all levels;

- Supporting monitoring and implementation of international commitments, norms and standards, comprising the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, multilateral environmental agreements, international/regional human rights treaties and agreed international instruments;

- Assisting countries through normative support, as appropriate;

- Acting as a convener of a wide range of national and international partners;

- Providing high-quality technical expertise in specific areas;

- 'Objective monitoring and evaluation of the national development framework;

- Providing impartial policy advice, based on international experience, technical expertise and good practices; and/or

- Providing a neutral space within which sensitive political issues can be addressed and resolved, including support to mediation or peace negotiations.

The assessment of comparative advantage is sometimes informed by internal and external perception surveys, and other innovative tools. See detailed guidance on preparing the CCA.

UN VISION 2030

It is highly recommended that the UN undertakes a visioning exercise alongside the CCA, and that the UN Vision 2030 becomes the precursor for UNDAF prioritization. The UN Vision 2030 builds on the evidence produced by the CCA.

The UN Vision 2030 helps the UN system answer the question: "How does the medium term UNDAF fit into the longer term 2030 Agenda?" It articulates how successive UNDAF results are intended to build on each other to contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in a given country. It makes reference to any existing national 2030 visioning paper.

The UN Vision 2030 is a two- to three-page document that lays out:

● The UN system's working assumptions in terms of longer term development planning over the duration of the 2030 Agenda;

● The evolving role and position of the UN system (including, where appropriate, coherence with an integrated UN mission) for the duration of the 2030 Agenda; and

● The ways in which the CCA and the contribution of successive UNDAFs represent logical steps in the longer term results areas that define the UN system's primary contributions to supporting national attainment of the 2030 Agenda.

Some longer term trends that may extend beyond the horizon of the UNDAF period include inequality trends, opportunities and risks such as demographic change, climate change, gender gaps, regional conflicts, vulnerability to natural disasters, economic transition and growth, technological advancements and migration patterns.

The UN Vision 2030 process also takes into account the fulfilment of and reporting on long-range commitments as well as international and regional conventions and treaties ratified by the country, such as the Paris Agreement, the Universal Periodic Review, the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, and the commitments of the World Humanitarian Summit and the 2016 General Assembly Summit on Large Scale Movements of Refugees and Migrants. It can provide opportunities for effective advocacy and communications activities.

Preparation of the UN Vision 2030 marks the beginning of and seamlessly leads into the identification of the strategic priorities for the subsequent UNDAF. As with the CCA, the development of the UN Vision 2030 is undertaken in a collaborative and consultative manner. The UN system at country level is encouraged to share the UN Vision 2030 with the regional Peer Support Group and Regional UNDG for quality assurance and further guidance. In such cases, the regional team will be expected to provide feedback within two weeks. The UN Vision 2030 is formally revisited and revised every UNDAF cycle, although the UN system may choose to update it at any point based on developments at the country level.

Companion guidance on the UN Vision 2030 provides practical tips and tools for preparation, along with country examples.

DEVELOPING THE UNDAF

Based on evidence provided by the CCA, the UN system ensures the following elements are common to all UNDAF development processes.

- Identification of a limited number of key UNDAF strategic priorities (sometimes called results, areas, pillars or clusters) that are issue-based and framed by the 2030 Agenda, rather than being sector-oriented, and in which the UN system has the capacity and comparative advantage to make an impact through results that can be taken to scale and achieve transformative change;

- Development of an overall theory of change that identifies viable development pathways. The theory of change will be used to derive collective outcomes, outputs and indicators for measuring changes, and articulates the logic and assumptions behind the assertion that those will lead to results.

FORMULATING UNDAF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND THE RESULTS MATRIX

1. STRATEGIC PRIORITIZATION

The strategic priorities of the UNDAF should be primarily drawn from the CCA and the UN Vision 2030. Those selected are envisaged to generate the greatest impacts in contributing to the achievement of the SDGs, in line with national priorities and needs. The identification of strategic priorities and the theory of change associated with them (including UNDAF outcomes) occurs through a transparent and consultative process involving national stakeholders.

Strategic prioritization takes into account national priorities, and gaps in policies and legal frameworks as well as the capacities of state and non-state institutions. It also considers a possible geographic focus, and looks at what other bilateral and multilateral partners are doing, and how the United Nations will work with them to achieve national priorities. The strategic prioritization exercise should be based on a previously agreed and shared UN understanding of the priority areas in the country, including under humanitarian and peacekeeping agendas, where the UN system, based on its comparative advantage, will focus its contribution.

The United Nations engages with the government (including relevant line ministries) and relevant stakeholders in defining shared sustainable development outcomes. To the extent possible, the United Nations considers aligning UNDAF outcomes to nationally defined SDG targets, particularly where progress is lagging and where the United Nations has a comparative advantage. Consultations include senior level meetings with relevant stakeholders and events that lay out broad strategic directions, alongside technical level meetings and events that develop the theory of change with detailed outcomes.

UNDAF OUTCOMES

In line with UNDG RBM Handbook, outcomes represent changes in the institutional and behavioural capacities for development. Outcomes should:

- Make a substantive and measurable contribution to the achievement of the selected priorities of the national development framework and the 2030 Agenda;

- Directly address key issues/development challenges identified by the country analysis;

- Be specific, realistically achievable, sustainable and measurable, ensuring accountability and monitoring;

- Include special measures to address gender inequalities and empower women based on the findings from the CCA; and

- Reflect the contributions of one or more organizations, clearly highlighted in the UNDAF results matrix.

Outputs are changes in skills or the abilities and capacities of individuals or institutions, or the availability of new products and services that result from the completion of a development intervention. Outputs are reflected in annual, biennial or multiyear joint work plans. Results at output level are directly attributable to the UN system and contribute to outcomes. While outputs are not required for the UNDAF, the UN system may choose to develop outputs as part of the outcome theory of change, which underlies work plans.

2. PREPARING A THEORY OF CHANGE

UNDAFs are founded on a clearly articulated, evidence-based theory of change that describes everything that needs to happen for development change to occur. As such, the theory of change allows the UNCT to understand the ways in which the results of the UNDAF results framework relate to one another. It explains the causal relationship between different types and levels of results, and makes explicit both the risks and assumptions that define the relationship. By doing so, it allows the UNCT and its partners to interrogate those assumptions and risks when subsequently developing programmes and projects.

Developing a theory of change is crucial for shaping the strategy for change that underlies the UNDAF, and for making explicit the focus on groups left behind or at risk of being left behind. This exercise in collective thinking helps the UN system and its partners to devise programmes best suited to achieving the desired change based on evidence and learning. The theory of change enables: a better and more agile strategy; more effective communication of it; improved partnership decisions for delivering on the strategy; and broader, deeper and more substantial ownership of it.

UNDAFs have an overall theory of change that shows how it is assumed that UNDAF strategic priorities will support achievement of national priorities and the SDGs, as well as how the outcomes collectively support the achievement of chosen priorities while mutually reinforcing each other. UNCT Results Groups also prepare a theory of change for each UNDAF outcome.

An UNDAF theory of change:

- Is based on analysis and data provided in the CCA;

- Articulates the high-level change the UNCT intends to contribute to in the context of the 2030 Agenda;

- Makes clear why the UNCT believes that lower level results will necessarily result in higher level results;

- Lays out the risks and assumptions that define the relationships among different results;

- Is developed through a consultative process, reflecting the understanding of all relevant stakeholders; and

- Supports continuous learning and improvement from programme design to closure.

See companion guidance on how to prepare the UNDAF theory of change

3. UNDAF RESULTS MATRIX

UNDAF strategic priorities and outcomes are articulated in the UNDAF results matrix (see **Annex 3**). The matrix includes indicators, baselines, targets, means of verification, a list of partners, the medium-term CBF, and, where relevant, links to other UN plans. It makes the division of labour clear within the UN system by identifying roles and responsibilities. To the extent possible, indicators, targets, baselines and means of verification are aligned with the relevant SDG indicators and targets, and are drawn from the data used in the CCA.

UNDAF outcomes can be adapted directly from SDG targets that are lagging behind in areas where the United Nations has a comparative advantage. They are tailored to the national context and drawn from national priorities. The results matrix becomes the basis for monitoring and evaluation of the UNDAF, serving as a key element for ensuring evaluability.

The multiyear CBF is discussed under financing the UNDAF.

REVIEW AND VALIDATION OF THE UNDAF

The UNDAF is prepared in a standard template (see **Annex 4**), which also contains a standard legal clause (**Annex 5**). Prior to finalization, the Resident Coordinator, on behalf of the UN system, shares a draft of the UNDAF, including the results matrix and CBF, with the regional Peer Support Group for review. The group has 15 working days to provide consolidated comments, assessing the UNDAF based on the quality criteria in **Annex 1**. For more details about quality assurance at the regional level, see **Annex 6**.

The UNCT reviews and incorporates comments it considers appropriate into the final draft UNDAF, and provides an explanation to the Peer Support Group on those comments it chooses not to include. In countries with UN missions, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General/ Resident Coordinator shares the draft UNDAF with the inter-agency taskforce to receive feedback within the same timeframe. After incorporating feedback, the UN system provides a new draft to the government, and seeks feedback on it from key stakeholders and other development partners.

SIGNATURE AND LAUNCH OF THE UNDAF

Once the UNDAF is agreed upon, it is signed by the government and all UN entities. Launching the UNDAF simultaneously with the national development plan, where feasible, can increase its visibility. The Resident Coordinator sends the signed UNDAF to all partners and to the Chair of the UNDG. Completed UNDAFs are posted on the UNDG website.

ALIGNMENT OF UN ORGANIZATION PROGRAMME DOCUMENTS

All UN organizations participating in the UNDAF align their programming processes to the UNDAF process to the extent possible. UNDAF strategic priorities, outcomes and joint work plans provide a basis for individual organizational planning instruments. While preparation of such plans will often begin before the final signature of the UNDAF, the final versions of these plans should align with the UNDAF, reflect its specific strategic priorities and outcomes, and make explicit their relationship with the UNDAF.

REGIONAL APPROACHES TO PROGRAMMING

In certain sub-regional contexts, such as those involving small island developing states, the possibility of applying a regional approach to programming may be considered, including through multicountry UNDAFs to ensure coherent, coordinated and, where appropriate, integrated support that reduces duplication and increases impact. This has been done successfully for the Pacific Region (2013-2017 United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the Pacific Sub-region), covering 14 countries, and for the Caribbean (2017-2021 UN Multi-country Sustainable Development Framework in the Caribbean), covering 18 countries. .

FINANCING THE UNDAF

The development impact of the UNDAF will largely depend on the capacity of the UNCT to optimally finance it. It is highly recommended to prepare an UNDAF financing strategy because it ensures that: UN activities are appropriately costed and resourced; UN resources catalyse larger financial flows to implement the 2030 Agenda; and incentives embedded into UN financing mechanisms promote inter-agency collaboration and coherence. (see UNDAF companion guidance on Shifting from Funding to Financing)

COSTING AND RESOURCING UN ACTIVITIES: Substantial over- or under-budgeting of the UNDAF carries reputational risks. It can be construed as a reflection of poor UNCT planning capacity or limited commitment to transparency and accountability. Most likely, it will affect fund mobilization. Accurately budgeted activities will facilitate resource mobilization for activities to be directly implemented by the UN system.

LEVERAGING: UN resources are generally an extremely small proportion of the overall resources required and available for achieving the SDGs. They are used to leverage much larger public and private financial flows for sustainable development. This ambition demands a paradigm shift from funding to financing in the UNDAF. While the former is centred on resource mobilization to close the funding gap for activities directly implemented by UN agencies, the latter aims at leveraging all existing financial flows and instruments to finance the overall development results to which the UN system contributes. The effectiveness of UN resources in catalysing larger financial flows for sustainable development can be measured through leveraging ratios.[19]

INCENTIVIZING COLLABORATION: Money can be either a unifier or a divider. Collective funding mechanisms tend to incentivize collective action, while ad hoc funding can foster competition. Incentives embedded in different financing strategies and mechanisms should be assessed and aligned with the UNDAF's objective to foster UN coherence and collaboration for the 2030 Agenda at the country level.

Accordingly, the UNDAF financing strategy includes four elements:[20]

STEP 1:
Mapping the financial landscape, including international and national, private and public sources of finance
This first step draws on the assessment of existing development finance flows and mechanisms conducted in the CCA. It enables the UNCT to assess its financing comparative advantages, and identify where the UNDAF could play a strategic role to leverage broader financial flows.

STEP 2:
Preparing the Common Budgetary Framework
The multiyear CBF is the consolidated financial framework that reflects agreed costed results of the UNDAF. It lays out the funding gap for the UNDAF and is part of the UNDAF results framework. It shows the best financial estimates for delivery of outputs, planned financial inputs and the funding gap for the entire UNDAF period. It can be operationalized through more detailed annual costed frameworks. The estimated resources column in the UNDAF results matrix consists of an estimation of financial resources, including human capacity, that each UN organization will contribute or mobilize from core (regular) and non-core (other) resources.

Costing budget requirements can be complex and methodologies can vary. To ensure that estimates are realistic, UNDAF funding gaps make reference to historical funding data. It is highly recommended to not budget an UNDAF at over 130 percent of the expenditure of the previous UNDAF[21] unless this increase can be specifically justified. To the extent possible, harmonized methods of estimating available funds are used by different members of the UN system. Consistency needs to be ensured between the UNDAF financing gap and the figures used in respective organizational planning documents. International Aid Transparency Initiative and CEB data can be used to triangulate the information. Within joint work plans, outputs are costed and funding gaps identified based on resources available.

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19 The leveraging ratio is increasingly becoming the key performance metric for a public sector intervention, similar to the role of the bottom line for the private sector. In the corporate world, the leveraging ratio most commonly refers to the debt-to-equity ratio. However, there is no universally accepted definition of the term when it is applied to a set of public policy instruments used by a national or international development organization to catalyse other public and private investment. The companion guidance on moving from funding to financing distinguishes different types of leveraged finance.

20 The first two elements are recommended to promote a paradigm shift from funding to financing, and to enhance the contribution and relevance of the UN system to implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The third and fourth elements are minimum requirement in order to prioritize, align, coordinate and report on UN fund mobilization efforts.

21 Since the next UNDAF will be planned while the current one is ongoing, it will not be possible to have final numbers in terms of the volume of delivery. These will need to be estimated by combining delivery to date with future projected delivery in the current cycle.

STEP 3:
Developing a Financing Strategy to Address the UNDAF Funding Gap

In line with the UNDAF objectives, the third step assesses opportunities for the UN system to:

- Access additional resources for activities directly implemented by the UN System. These non-core resources to be channeled through the UN system can be both traditional and non-traditional, including foundations, the private sector, emerging donors and innovative financing

- Sequence/blend its core (regular) and non-core (other) funding with international/national concessional/non-concessional public finance (Multilateral Development Bank, National Development Banks, commercial banks, social impact investors, etc.)

- Leverage larger resources, which include all public, private, national and international financial flows. Leveraging resources does not focus on bringing non-core resources into the UN or blending them with UN resources but on catalyzing larger public and private investment to achieve the UNDAF development goal.

STEP 4:
Design the joint resource mobilization strategy

The new UNDAF guidelines require the implementation of joint work plans through Results Groups. Within each result groups, UNCTs should explore opportunities for joint resource mobilization. The joint resource mobilization strategy will provide a common narrative and allocate responsibilities for fund mobilization efforts. It aims to promote synergies, and avoid duplication of efforts, counter-productive competition among organizations and funding gaps. Regular review enables adjustments to take advantage of new or emerging resource mobilization opportunities. Wherever possible, coordination and periodic reviews should take place through existing mechanisms.

It will also consider pooled financing mechanisms to incentivize collective action and system-wide coherence. The United Nations employs collective finance mechanisms (pooled funds) such as joint programmes, trust funds or thematic funding to reduce aid fragmentation, increase the quality (predictability, timeliness and flexibility) of non-core resources, and incentivize advocacy, policy coherence, capacity development and operational coherence. In 2014, the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office estimated that pooled funding mechanisms only need to mobilize between 15 percent and 20 percent of the overall non-core funding portfolio to leverage these comparative advantages. For guidance on pooled funding instruments, please visit http://mptf.undp.org/document/templates.

COORDINATION AND MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

To implement the UNDAF, the UN system establishes and clarifies roles, responsibilities and necessary processes for oversight, coordination, management, partnership arrangements, planning, monitoring and evaluation. In line with the UN commitment to national ownership through strengthening national capacities, these arrangements maximize the use of national systems and available UN competencies and resources, and are grounded in the international norms and standards that the UN system upholds.

Effective implementation requires that all UN members operate in a manner that promotes coherence, ensuring that core programming principles and approaches are fully considered and applied under the unifying principle of leaving no one behind. To this end, the UN system commits adequate resources to UNDAF management arrangements. Organizations need to establish incentives for their staff to consistently contribute to inter-agency mechanisms for delivering on the UNDAF, such as by integrating this expectation in their performance plans.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The UNDG Management and Accountability System (MAS), including the functional Resident Coordinator firewall, provides an overview of the responsibilities and accountabilities of key actors, including in the context of developing and implementing an UNDAF. Key roles are identified for the Resident Coordinator and members of the UNCT (UN Management and Accountability System).

The Resident Coordinator facilitates and oversees the CCA, and the design and implementation of the UNDAF. Where required, the Resident Coordinator may also propose amendments to the UNDAF and the joint work plans if some activities are no longer aligned with the broader strategy of the UNDS to respond to national needs and priorities.

Further details on specific roles, responsibilities and accountabilities are found in the integrated guidance for the SOPs. When feasible, UNDAF design and implementation arrangements align with existing broader national coordination mechanisms to avoid duplicating these mechanisms and to keep transaction costs to a minimum **while ensuring national ownership and leadership**. Figure 3 represents a typical implementation arrangement, although this may differ in countries with UN missions.

The Joint National/UN Steering Committee, co-chaired by the government coordinating entity and the Resident Coordinator, reviews and guides the strategic direction of the UNDAF and the joint work plans, providing high-level oversight and support. Its generic terms of reference (One-Programme Tools & Materials) reflect the spirit of national ownership, although final details are decided by the Resident Coordinator and UNCT depending on local context and in consultation with the government. The steering committee meets at least once per year during the UNDAF annual review to discuss data and evidence collected during monitoring for assessing progress against the indicators, horizon-scanning, updating risk analysis, and assessing performance in forming partnerships, resource mobilization and delivery.
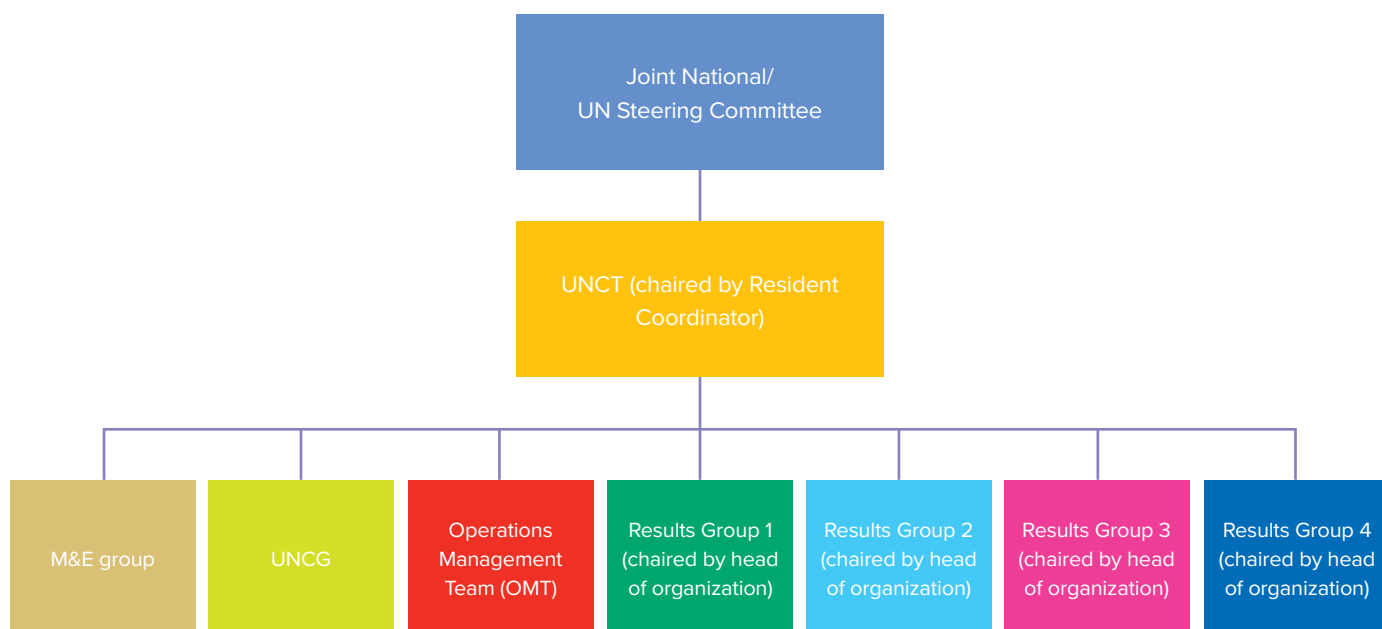
UNDAF Results Groups[22] are an arrangement for the implementation of one or more UNDAF strategic priorities. They are typically internal UN working mechanisms that ensure a coherent UN approach. Results Groups should be aligned to existing nationally led coordination mechanisms whenever possible. Where such mechanisms do not exist, the UN system can promote their creation. Depending on country context, national and international stakeholders may be included in Results Groups (One-Programme Tools & Materials)

JOINT WORK PLANS

Joint work plans are managed by Results Groups and define output-level results, activities and an annual CBF. They enable the UN system to advance coherence, coordinate work around the delivery of the UNDAF outcomes, and support transparency and accountability. Organization-specific work plans complement UNDAF joint work plans, where relevant. In formulating and carrying out joint work plans, Results Group do the following:

- Identify outputs where two or more agencies can complete each other's efforts, including through joint programming, and outline the roles of different members in achieving common results.

- Coordinate and manage the implementation of interventions in a coherent manner, to achieve common results;

- Identify joint communications and advocacy opportunities to achieve common results;

- Ensure that outputs are costed, available resources identified, and the funding gap calculated and reported on;

FIGURE 3
TYPICAL UNDAF DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENT

Joint National/
UN Steering Committee

UNCT (chaired by Resident Coordinator)

M&E group

UNCG

Operations Management Team (OMT)

Results Group 1 (chaired by head of organization)

Results Group 2 (chaired by head of organization)

Results Group 3 (chaired by head of organization)

Results Group 4 (chaired by head of organization)

- Develop and sign joint work plans with relevant UN organizations and whenever possible with the government;

- Periodically review and revise the joint work plans as necessary;

- Prepare inputs for the annual One UN Country Results Report.

In countries with UN missions, implementation can be facilitated through joint work plans overseen by Results Groups with both UN mission and UN agency members. The work plans provide a transparent overview of the activities of UN actors working in the country and create a better division of labour. Activities can either be implemented by the mission alone or jointly with one or more UN entities. In countries with humanitarian operations, humanitarian actors can contribute to joint work plans, and efforts can be made to ensure coherence and complementarity between humanitarian and development actions. For more information, see the SOPs for countries adopting the "Delivering as One" approach, and the companion document One Programme Tools and Materials: Tips and Template for Joint Work Plans (One-Programme Tools & Materials)

JOINT PROGRAMMING AND JOINT PROGRAMMES: MUTUAL REINFORCEMENT

Joint programming is the collective effort through which UN organizations and national partners work together to prepare, implement, monitor and evaluate activities aimed at effectively and efficiently achieving the SDGs and other international commitments, within the framework of the UNDAF and the joint work plans.

Within joint work plans, the United Nations may identify the need for increased joint delivery through the development of one or more joint programme(s). A joint programme is a set of activities contained in a joint work plan and related budgetary framework, involving two or more UN organizations, and intended to achieve results aligned with national priorities as reflected in the UNDAF. Joint programmes can be funded through pooled funds. While the joint programme arrangement is only between UN organizations, other stakeholders can be engaged as implementing partners. UN missions and humanitarian actors are also invited to engage in joint programmes, where appropriate, depending on the country context. Joint programmes can be attractive to funding partners, since the modality provides greater assurance of UN coherence in delivering results.

RESULTS MONITORING, REPORTING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are essential for accountability and learning from the UNDAF. They are the basis on which the UN system assesses and makes transparent its contribution to the achievement of national priorities and the SDGs. They help the United Nations ensure that it is delivering on the commitment to leave no one behind, and that its support is primarily reaching those who are most disadvantaged. Anticipated M&E activities during the UNDAF cycle are laid out in a costed M&E plan.

Monitoring takes place continuously to track progress towards anticipated results, and checks if the theory of change identified at the design stage is still valid or needs to be reviewed. Building on identified data needs and baselines established during the CCA, monitoring helps the UN system and partners to prioritize, learn, make course corrections and communicate these to stakeholders. It incorporates attention to programme and operational bottlenecks.[23]

The UNDAF should be regularly monitored against the programming principles and approaches in each stage of the programming cycle. As part of the annual review process, the One UN Country Results Report, based on existing evidence, demonstrates how the UNDAF:

- Contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the SDGs and recommendations by UN human rights mechanisms;

- Reaches those left furthest behind first, and contributes to the reduction of inequalities and discrimination;

- Is inclusive, participatory and transparent, and enables stakeholders to hold the UN system accountable for results;

- Addresses risks and resilience;

22 The Results Groups contribute to specific UNDAF outcomes through coordinated and collaborative planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.
23 Bottlenecks are blockages that may be related to supply or demand (e.g., knowledge of services, behavioural factors that influence people's ability to access available services), the quality of services, or social values, legislative frameworks, finances or management influencing a sector or area. For more, see the UNDG Guidance on Frequent Monitoring for Equity.

- Is based on a valid theory of change, whereby assumptions on how UN programmes affect development change are confirmed and revised in light of changes in the context;

- Contributes to developing the capacity of duty-bearers to meet their obligations and rights-holders to claim their rights;

- Enhances coherence between the development, humanitarian, human rights, peace and security, and environmental agendas;

- Contributes to fostering new and effective partnerships between national stakeholders and international actors, including through South-South and triangular cooperation;

- Promotes integrated and coherent policy support to partners;

- Contributes to strengthening national capacities to collect and analyse data for policy-making and reporting.

UNDAF evaluations are external and a minimum requirement of a quality UNDAF process. They are conducted once in the UNDAF life cycle, with timing coordinated among UN entities so that organizational or programme evaluations can contribute to them. UNDAF evaluations assess whether planned UNDAF results were achieved, whether they made a worthwhile and durable contribution to national development processes and delivered on the commitment to leave no one behind, whether this was done in a cost-efficient manner and whether results built on the United Nations' collective comparative advantage (rather than that of individual agencies) in a coherent manner. UNDAF evaluations also assess the extent to which UN interventions contribute to the four UNDAF programming principles.

An UNDAF evaluation supports institutional learning on what works and does not work, where, when and why, and provides information that contributes more broadly to the evidence base for policy approaches backed by the UN system. It serves as the foundation for subsequent UNDAF planning processes. UNDAF evaluations and management responses issued by the UNCT are prepared in line with the UNEG Norms and Standards on Evaluation.

At the country level, an inter-agency M&E group supports the planning and coordination of joint monitoring and evaluation efforts, including the coordination of data collection, provision of coherent M&E advice, capacity strengthening, and sharing of monitoring and evaluation information. In doing so, it draws upon expertise from across the UN system, acknowledging that organization-specific monitoring and evaluation practices will complement the UNDAF monitoring and evaluation work. The M&E support group works closely with the Results Groups and in some cases is an integral part of them. In UN mission settings,

M&E groups work with mission staff to ensure coherence. In humanitarian settings, the groups link as much as possible with humanitarian response monitoring frameworks and systems.

Monitoring and evaluation of the UNDAF contributes to strengthening national data collection systems, including by improving data quality, analysis and use with regards to monitoring progress on national SDG targets, and consistency with global SDG monitoring. Building on and strengthening existing national data and information systems help ensure national ownership as well as sustainability.

Increasingly, the United Nations undertakes joint real-time monitoring activities to support data collection, gauge perceptions from national stakeholders on progress towards UNDAF outcomes, monitor risks and test the continued relevance of the theory of change. A monitoring platform such as DevInfo/ (UNINFO) can support the transparency of data and provide information for reporting. The companion guide on monitoring and evaluation lays out the different steps in detail.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: QUALITY CRITERIA FOR UNDAFS

There are five criteria to assure the quality of UNDAFs during design and implementation: a) relevance and strategic focus, b) principled, c) effective, d) efficient and e) sustainable. These criteria define expectations to be considered in programming, and provide common standards for assessing the quality of UNDAF implementation, based on evidence from monitoring. Evaluations are expected to use the same criteria to independently assess the quality and performance of the UNDAF.

Below, each of the quality criteria is rated on a scale from 1 to 5: A ranking of "5" means that the quality criterion has been fully met; "1" means that it is not reflected at all. This quality ranking should be undertaken as a self-assessment during preparation of the UNDAF as well as during the Peer Support Group appraisal to ensure that criteria are met.

QUALITY CRITERIA	DETAILED DESCRIPTION		RANKING (1-5)
Relevance and strategic focus	1	The UNDAF supports national sustainable development priorities, and supports the localization, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs.	
	2	The UNDAF supports and contributes to internationally agreed sustainable development goals and regional sustainable development priorities.	
	3	The UNDAF priorities are underpinned by a theory of change based on available evidence and disaggregated data, including evaluations from earlier programme cycles.	
	4	The UNDAF addresses immediate, underlying and root causes of poverty and inequalities, fosters inclusiveness, and reduces inequalities and discrimination to ensure no one is left behind.	
	5	The UNDAF builds upon a holistic and objective country assessment of the current situation, evidence of the UN system's comparative advantage, evidence-based approaches and potential future risks.	
	6	The UNDAF adequately considers the likelihood of crisis, instability, conflicts, serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law, and who might be affected.	

QUALITY CRITERIA	DETAILED DESCRIPTION		RANKING (1-5)
Principled	**7**	**Leave no one behind** (a) The UNDAF addresses the promise to leave no one behind and appropriately captures the situation of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, including through measures targeted at reducing inequalities. (b) The UNDAF addresses the needs of groups affected by inequalities and discrimination. (c) Target groups/areas are clearly identified based on evidence, prioritizing marginalized and vulnerable groups, and those considered to have been left behind. (d) The theory of change clearly explains why these groups will be targeted.	
	8	**Human rights, gender equality and women's empowerment** (a) The UNDAF contributes to the realization of human rights and the use of a human rights-based approach. It supports the capacity of both rights-holders and duty-bearers. (b) The UNDAF supports the country to respect, promote and implement its obligations and commitments under international law, including human rights instruments, international labour standards, environmental or climate-related agreements, and the recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review, treaty bodies and other supervisory bodies. (c) The UNDAF addresses inequalities and discrimination. (d) The UNDAF integrates gender dimensions, such as gender-based violence and discrimination, and promotes gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.	
	9	**Sustainability and resilience** (a) The UNDAF is designed to advance social, economic and environmental sustainability; reduce conflict and disaster risks; and build resilience. (b) The UNDAF takes into account political, security and human rights risks, and takes preventive steps. (c) The UNDAF aims to build the resilience of societies and systems through developing capacities, taking into account social and environmental safeguards. (d) The UNDAF promotes environmental dimensions of sustainable development, considers the impact of climate change and other emerging issues at global and country levels, and highlights groups most likely to be affected, including in terms of gender dimensions.	
	10	**Accountability** (a) The UNDAF involves inclusive and participatory consultations with relevant stakeholders (e.g., non-governmental stakeholders, invluding groups affected by inequalities and discrimination) to foster broad ownership of the country programme and meaningful participation. (b) The UNDAF promotes social and political arrangements that strengthen the accountability of all stakeholders. (c) The UNDAF contains clearly articulated results (outcome level), indicators for measuring progress, and budgetary resources that reflect UN contributions based on the system's comparative advantage in the country.	

QUALITY CRITERIA		DETAILED DESCRIPTION	RANKING (1-5)
Effective	11	**Results-focused programming** (a) The UNDAF supports the use of evidence and disaggregated data, including data collection and analysis from national institutions, partners, civil society organizations and marginalized groups. (b) The UNDAF applies a results-based management approach, such as through clear results chains, and has a plan for monitoring and evaluation.	
	12	**Risk-informed programming** (a) The UNDAF identifies risks and defines risk management to ensure timely and effective programme delivery. (b) The UNDAF rigorously assesses and mitigates social and environmental impacts to ensure that the country programme does not cause harm to people and the environment.	
	13	**Development, humanitarian and peace building linkages** The UNDAF demonstrates coherent response across development, humanitarian and peace building agendas, underpinned by human rights, in crisis and post crisis settings: (a) UN joint multi-dimensional conflict and risk analysis was undertaken, where appropriate. (b) The CCA considers multi-hazard risks, human rights, humanitarian and peacebuilding dimensions in a holistic way, as well as existing coping and response capacities and resilience systems. (c) When appropriate for the context, the UNDAF has collective outcomes articulated based on joint analysis and multi-year planning, building on the comparative advantages of a diverse group of partners. (d) In contexts where UNDAFs and HRPs exist side by side, direct links are made between the UNDAF and Humanitarian Response Plans/Refugee Response Plans to ensure complementarity, sequencing of development and humanitarian activities and compatibility of results frameworks	
	14	**Coherent policy support** (a) The UNDAF enhances policy coherence at the country, regional and multilateral levels, leading to action (policies and programmes) that build upon and reinforce each other. (b) The UNDAF promotes issue-based approaches to support joint/inter-agency programming.	
	15	**Partnership** (a) The UNDAF considers the development partnership landscape within countries to tap the full potential of partnerships, including with the private sector. (b) The UNDAF considers the development of transboundary national partnerships at the sub-regional, regional and global levels, including through promoting the use of South-South and triangular cooperation.	

QUALITY CRITERIA		DETAILED DESCRIPTION	RANKING (1-5)
Efficient	16	The UNDAF underpins UN transparency and accountability to the beneficiaries of assistance, including through clear mechanisms for accountability.	
	17	The UNDAF considers available resources and realistic resource mobilization targets, accompanied by a resource mobilization strategy/action plan.	
	18	The UNDAF demonstrates a complementary and coordinated approach by the UNDS, including consideration of joint programming and common positions on situations of concern.	
	19	The UNDAF's proposed/planned programming activities are cost-efficient, providing "value for money."	
	20	The UNDAF adequately explores opportunities for harmonizing joint communications and business operations to support UNDAF programming.	
Sustainable	21	**Capacity development** (a) The UNDAF supports the capacity development of national and subnational institutions, civil society organizations and other stakeholders, including agencies and bodies in charge of statistics and data utilization. (b) The UNDAF provides for the systematic assessment of capacity needs and assets to inform capacity development strategies.	
	22	There are explicit links to national plans to ensure UNDAF results respond to national priorities.	
	23	The UNDAF recognizes different programming contexts and diversity among UNCTs, and considers options for operational modalities accordingly.	
	24	The UNDAF supports and encourages innovation, learning, and knowledge gathering and transfer.	

ANNEX 2: TEMPLATE FOR PREPARING THE UNDAF ROADMAP

Note: This document should be sent to the Regional UNDG Teams, Peer Support Groups and the UNDG Development Operations Coordination Office upon finalization, and when substantial changes are proposed.

COUNTRY	
DATE	

INTRODUCTION
Provide a brief overview of the context in which the new UNDAF will be developed, highlighting recent national developments, existing UNDAF evaluations and reviews, and lessons learned from previous reviews/analysis. Detail how non-programme core elements are going to be incorporated, in particular the BOS and communications. [Recommended length: 2-3 paragraphs.]

ALIGNMENT
(a) ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND GLOBAL PROCESSES AND/OR PRIORITIES
Highlight how the UNDAF formulation process will be aligned with national planning process and/or national development priorities, as well as other national, regional and global processes and/or priorities including the 2030 Agenda. [Recommended length: 1-2 paragraphs.]

(b) ALIGNMENT WITH OTHER UN PILLARS, INCLUDING HUMANITARIAN, HUMAN RIGHTS, UN PEACE OPERATIONS AND PEACEBUILDING
Detail how the CCA/UNDAF will relate to other UN planning frameworks, including the identification of potential joint approaches across UN pillars that can support/enhance country level action and increase coherence. [Recommended length: 1-2 paragraphs.]

(c) ALIGNMENT WITH UN ORGANIZATION PLANNING PROCESSES
Highlight how the CCA/UNDAF process is aligned to other UN organization planning processes, including the preparation of country programme documents or the equivalent, and when they will be submitted to Executive Boards where required. [Recommended length: 1-2 lines maximum per organization.]

EXISTING ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF ANALYSIS GAPS
Identify analysis/data gaps that the CCA will need to address and detail sources for information. [Recommended length: 1-2 paragraphs.]

MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS
Highlight who will be responsible for leading/managing and coordinating the process, as well as providing oversight. Note when other relevant groups such as the OMT, the UNCG and others as relevant will be consulted and involved. [Recommended length: 2-3 paragraphs.]

ENGAGEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY
Provide an overview of relevant stakeholders and partners who should be involved throughout the development of the UNDAF, including when and how they will be engaged. It may be useful to add an annex with the list of all partners who will be consulted, including types of organizations and their constituencies. [Recommended length: 1-2 paragraphs.]

COMMUNICATIONS
Provide an overview of your communications roadmap during UNDAF development, including a media plan to support transparency, accountability, and wider ownership and engagement. [Recommended length: 2-3 paragraphs.]

CAPACITY AND SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS
Provide an overview of training and capacity development needs, and support required from non-resident agencies, and specify if there are any plans to use consultants, what their role will be and what tasks they will undertake. [Recommended length: 2-3 paragraphs.]

RISK MANAGEMENT
Identify and manage any potential risks that could disrupt the planned process of the roadmap and list appropriate mitigation strategies. [Recommended length: 1-2 paragraphs.]

SUMMARY BUDGET
Provide a consolidated overview of the budget as mentioned in the below timeline, and provide details on how the UNCT is planning to finance and share the costs of developing the CCA and UNDAF. [Recommended length: 1-2 paragraphs.]

UNDAF ACTIVITY PLAN
(a) KEY DELIVERABLES
Provide an initial description of the proposed CCA/UNDAF development process, detailing the main agreements on the UNDAF preparation process, and the type of document that will be developed, including the implications of the process as relevant. [Recommended length: 1-2 paragraphs.]

KEY DELIVERABLE	ACTIVITY/ MILESTONE	20XX J F M A M J J A S O N D	20XX J F M A M J J A S O N D	20XX J F M A M J J A S O N D	RESPONSIBLE	BUDGET	SUPPORT REQUIRED[25]
ROADMAP How will the roadmap be developed? Through a consultative and inclusive process, the UNCT and the national stakeholders should prepare and agree on a roadmap aligned with the national development planning process, and laying out steps and milestones for the UNCT's contribution to the CCA and UNDAF formulation.							
EVALUATION The evaluation of the current UNDAF can be seen as the first step in the formulation of a new UNDAF. UNDAF evaluations are a minimum requirement in the UNDAF process.							
CCA AND UN VISION 2030 A robust, rights-based and integrated CCA is required for every UNDAF formulation process. The CCA should highlight UN support for the national achievement of the 2030 Agenda, and provides an opportunity to have wider national conversations on a national vision 2030. The CCA should determine the UN system's comparative advantage. A good starting point is to identify any existing analysis by the government and UN bodies (including UN human rights mechanisms).							

24 Trainings, workshops and retreats should be added under each of the relevant sections (or where they make most sense as some might be relevant for different steps).

25 The Regional UNDG Teams and Peer Support Groups are available to provide technical support and guidance throughout the process. The latter will formally review and provide feedback on each key document (roadmap, CCA and strategic framework), so this should be captured here. Any external support that may be required should also be reflected.

(b) TIMELINE (cont.)

KEY DELIVERABLE	ACTIVITY/MILESTONE	20XX												20XX												RESPONSIBLE	BUDGET	SUPPORT REQUIRED[25]
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D			
	STRATEGIC PRIORITIZATION AND PLANNING Building on the CCA, strategic planning is meant to identify a limited number of key UN strategic priority areas, in which the UN system has the capacity and the comparative advantage to make a difference in the country. The UN system should: 1) identify and agree on strategic priorities areas, 2) prepare a theory of change, 3) agree on UNDAF outcomes and outputs, 4) develop a results matrix (including a medium-term CBF), 5) develop a narrative section, 6) develop a costed M&E plan and 7) devise a financing strategy. This stage should also indicate when the UNDAF will be signed by the United Nations and the government.																												
	ORGANIZATION-SPECIFIC PROGRAMME DOCUMENTS All organizations are required to align their programming processes with the UNDAF. UNDAF strategic priorities/outcomes are the basis for developing organizational programme documents, as appropriate. Organizations may begin preparation of these documents once the UNDAF outcomes are known to ensure that organizational submission deadlines are respected.																												
	JOINT WORK PLANS AND M&E Joint work plans operationalize the UNDAF by translating its outcomes into concrete, measurable and time-bound outputs and key activities (including an annual budgetary framework). Organization-specific work plans complement UNDAF joint work plans, where relevant.																												

ANNEX 3: TEMPLATE FOR UNDAF RESULTS AND RESOURCES MATRIX

RESULTS	INDICATORS	UN PARTNERS	MEDIUM-TERM COMMON BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK		
			Total (C)	Projected to be available (A)	To be mobilized (B)
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1					
Related national development priority or goal					
Related SDG(s)					
Outcome 1.1	**Indicator: Baseline: Target: Data source**				
Outcome 1.2	**Indicator: Baseline: Target: Data source**				
STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2					
Related national development priority or goal					
Related SDG(s)					
Outcome 2.1	**Indicator: Baseline: Target: Data source**				

NOTES

Resources projected to be available (A):[26] These are funds available from all funding sources and already secured (including under contract) at the time of the CBF preparation. They include both voluntary core/assessed budget funding, as well as non-core/other contributions received in-country, allocated from head¬quarters or regional levels, and/or received through UN inter-agency pooled funds, agency-specific thematic funds or global vertical funds. They include confirmed non-core/other resources, plus all pipeline funds under negotiation between UN organizations and potential contributors.

Resources to be mobilized (funding gap) (B): This is the difference between resources already secured and firmly available, and resources required to implement the UNDAF. This gap should be based both on needs and realistic projections of additional resources that can be mobilized.

Total (C): This is the total estimated cost of implementing the UNDAF. It is the sum of the available resources **(A)** and the resources to be mobilized **(B)**. This total should not exceed 130 percent of the expenditure of the previous UNDAFs unless this increase can be specifically justified

ANNEX 4: UNDAF DOCUMENT TEMPLATE

	A TYPICAL UNDAF DOCUMENT CONTAINS:
1	**Signature page**
2	**Executive summary**
3	**A narrative summary of the UNDAF strategic priority areas**
4	**Risks and assumptions**
5	**Initiatives outside the results matrix**[27]
6	**Overall financing strategy and estimated resource requirements** (This is a summary of the medium-term CBF whereby resources are provided per UNDAF strategic area and outcome, specifying how these are divided among UN agencies, and breaking down between resources that are available and that have to be mobilized.) (Links to Companion Guidance on Funding to Financing)
7	**Implementation arrangements** (These include an organigram and specific roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the joint UN/national steering committee, Results Groups, M&E taskforce, OMT, UNCG, and any other relevant actor, e.g., gender theme groups. Links to non-programmatic work streams should be included.) (Links to SOPs and UNDAF Guidance Section on Coordination and Management Arrangements)
8	**Monitoring and evaluation provisions** (Link to Companion Guidance on Real Time Monitoring)
9	**Communication of results** (Information on how progress will be communicated and transparency advanced, referring to any joint communication strategy. (Link to Companion Guidance on Communication and Advocacy)
10	**UNDAF results matrix**
11	**Legal clauses** (Link to Legal Annex)

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[27] The UNDAF results matrix should contain the majority of the UN system's interventions in a country, all of which should contribute to the achievement of UNDAF strategic priorities in support of national sustainable development goals. When an organization undertakes specific activities that do not fit under any strategic priority, they should be detailed here only under exceptional circumstances. An example is the antimicrobial resistance work of the World Health Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Organization for Animal Health, which is not always possible to integrate under a specific outcome.

ANNEX 5: UNDAF STANDARD LEGAL CLAUSE

See:
https://undg.org/document/undaf-legal-annex/
https://undg.org/document/undaf-legal-annex-faq/

ANNEX 6: QUALITY ASSURANCE AT THE REGIONAL LEVEL

The primary role of the regional UNDG teams is to provide leadership, strategic guidance and support to Resident Coordinators and UNCTs for the achievement of country level results. As outlined in the MAS, the Regional UNDG Teams have four core functions:

● Provision of technical/programme support to Resident Coordinators and UNCTs;

● Quality assurance support and advice on common country programming (e.g., the UNDAF, the Delivering as One process);

● Performance management and oversight of Resident Coordinators and the UNCTs; and

● "Trouble shooting" in complex country situations, dispute resolution, etc.

In line with current institutional arrangements, the main actors involved in providing quality support and advice from the regional level are:

● The **Regional UNDG Team**, composed of the directors of the regional offices of UNDG member agencies, provides policy and strategic advice to UNCTs. Additionally, they are the senior liaisons/focal points where UNCTs can address higher level issues as they arise.

● The inter-agency **Peer Support Group** comprises experienced UN staff delegated by the regional bureaux/offices of UNDG organizations. While the composition of the groups varies among regions, they in general provide strategic and technical support to UNDAF processes.

● The **convening agencies** are members of the Peer Support Group that serve as focal points for one or more UNDAF roll-out countries.

● The **Peer Support Group chairperson** coordinates the group and its members.

Quality assurance services at country level are linked to the main steps in the UNDAF process, as entry points. Quality is assessed against the UNDAF quality criteria (see **Annex 1**). Experience demonstrates that high-quality UNDAF documents depend on the quality of UNDAF roadmaps and CCA exercises, rigorous analysis of UNCT members' comparative advantages, well-planned and executed strategic planning retreats, and synchronized support to UNCTs from the regional and headquarters levels. All of these require early and sustained engagement by the Peer Support Group.

For all steps in the UNDAF process, on behalf of the Regional UNDG Teams, the Peer Support Group will engage to:

● **Provide advice**, based on UNDG guidelines, and global and regional strategic priorities, lessons and good practices, on **how to strengthen UNDAF processes and products**, with a particular focus on priority-setting and policy dialogue;

● **Consolidate and synthesize regional analyses** to support country analysis, strategic planning and a dynamic policy environment at the country level;

● Support data capacity-building, indicator development and evaluation advisory services in connection with on-going UN system-wide efforts on data, including at the global level;

● **Provide concise written feedback to UNCTs** on key programming documents, such as draft CCAs and UNDAFs, pertaining to the strategic direction and content of UNDAF preparations;

- **Support UNCTs to improve continuity in the UNDAF process** by helping to connect major findings and conclusions from one step to the next (for example, supporting UNCTs to consider studies or results from analytical exercises during the CCA and strategic planning steps);

- **Provide and/or facilitate the delivery of technical assistance**, such as through advisory missions or training, including on the three core programming principles;

- **Maintain an inventory of available technical expertise in the region,** with a focus on the programming principles and other thematic issues;

- **Document and disseminate good examples** and lessons learned, share high-quality UNDAFs prepared by roll-out countries, and assist the Regional UNDG Team to gauge the effectiveness of UN reform tools and mechanisms;

- Upon request, **support UNCTs with technical assistance for the annual UNDAF reviews and** during the **implementation** phase of the UNDAF;

- Upon request, provide advice or technical assistance on the **design of UNDAF evaluations**, including through the identification of consultants, and the review of terms of reference and draft evaluations towards ensuring application of UN Evaluation Group guidelines; and

- Provide feedback/advice on the One UN Country Results Report.

The following table describes specific quality assurance activities at country level carried out by Peer Support Group members, per the four main UNDAF steps. This is not an exhaustive list, and actual activities in each region will be tailored to particular country situations and needs.

QUALITY ASSURANCE ACTIVITIES BY PEER SUPPORT GROUPS	
1	**ROADMAP**
	• Support the organization of and participate in UNDAF regional workshops, and participate in country roadmap workshops; offer advice per UNDAF guidelines, and lessons and good practices;
	• Assist UNCTs to assess and prioritize their capacity needs for carrying out the UNDAF process, particularly for strategic priority-setting and in terms of the programming principles;
	• Emphasize the importance of, and advocate for, an objective exercise to identify UNCT comparative advantages with the inclusion of the entire UNDS; and
	• Review the roadmap and provide feedback to the UNCT.
2	**CCA**
	• Provide, if requested and as needed, subject matter/technical expertise drawn from UNDG agencies;
	• Review the strategic direction of the CCA as a basis for providing strategic guidance to the UNCT on substantive and methodological issues, and in terms of identifying the UNCT's comparative advantages and value-added;
	• Monitor and, upon request, participate in country analysis exercises as outlined in UNDAF roadmaps;
	• Participate in and support in-country workshops on the three core programming principles of the UNDAF;
	• Provide comments on the CCA; and
	• Support comparative advantage exercises.

3	**STRATEGIC PLANNING**
	● Provide, if requested and as needed, technical expertise drawn from Peer Support Group/UNDG agencies/experts in undertaking prioritization exercises for the UNDAF;
	● Help to resolve differences in terms of prioritization within the UNCT, and between the UNCT and government;
	● Circulate, coordinate and consolidate inputs from Regional UNDG Teams and provide concise comments on the draft results matrices and UNDAFs, including a review of the application of the programming principles; and
	● Assess the UNDAF by using the quality criteria in **Annex 1**.
4	**MONITORING AND EVALUATION**
	● Monitor the application of the UNDAF M&E plans by inter-agency mechanisms and processes;
	● Participate in annual reviews;
	● Provide comments on UNDAF progress reports; and
	● Participate in UNDAF evaluations.

In line with good practices already being carried out, Peer Support Groups should provide concise feedback to UNCTs on the strategic direction of their UNDAF preparations and the strategic content of their documents, including lessons and advice on ways to identify and position UNCT comparative advantages. This includes specific technical or policy-oriented guidance to ensure analytical consistency and coherence. Every country situation is different, and r**egular feedback from UNCTs is essential** to sustain a dialogue about progress, challenges and potential roadblocks, and to tailor quality assurance activities to specific situations and needs.

Regions enjoy the **flexibility** to organize and structure their available resources and people to best deliver quality assurance services to roll-out countries. In response to unique regional and country situations, the organization, resourcing and specific terms of reference for quality assurance activities and actors will vary. Organizational headquarters must reflect their commitment to quality assurance of the UNDAFs in job descriptions and **performance appraisals** as agreed in the MAS.

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) unites the
32 UN funds, programmes, specialized agencies, departments,
and offices that play a role in development. Since 2008,
the UNDG has been one of the three pillars of the UN System
Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the highest-level
coordination forum of the United Nations system.

At the regional level, six Regional UNDG Teams play a critical
role in driving UNDG priorities by supporting UN Country
Teams with strategic priority setting, analysis and advice.

At the country level, 131 UN Country Teams serving 165 countries
and territories work together to increase the synergies and joint
impact of the UN system.

The UN Development Operations Coordination Office (DOCO)
is the secretariat of the UNDG, bringing together the
UN development system to promote change and innovation
to deliver together on sustainable development.