



UNITED NATIONS
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UN Country Results Report

Guidelines for UN Country Teams

Provisional Version

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*The annual UN Country Results Reports are guided by the **2019 United Nations Sustainable Cooperation Framework Guidance**. These guidelines are designed to assist UN Country Teams in producing Reports that are better and timelier, with reduced transaction costs.*

I. Guiding Principles

Thanks to a forward-looking reform, the UN development system now has even greater ambitions and expectations than ever before. Results reporting must reflect these increased ambitions.

The new annual UN Country Results Reports are guided by the 2019 United Nations Sustainable Cooperation Framework Guidance.

To help countries best illustrate the UN's contribution to the advancement of the SDGs, these guidelines replace the previous UNDG One UN Country Results Report template from 2015.

These guidelines are designed to **assist UN Country Teams in producing higher quality and timelier Reports, with reduced transaction costs.**

To that end, annual UN Country Results Reports for 2020 onwards will be guided by the following principles in relation to their content, format, timeline and quality assurance:

- **The primary audience** of this report rests at the country level. The report is shared with and presented to the national Government. It should also be shared with other development stakeholders at the country level.
- The report uses existing **country-specific data points in UN INFO, the Information Management System (IMS), and other platforms** as relevant, that are kept up to date by the Resident Coordinator's Office (RCO) and the UNCT.
- To reduce transaction costs, no separate RC/UNCT annual reporting against the UNCT annual work plan is required. Rather, **the results of this UNCT work plan should be factored into the UN Country Results Report.**
- The UNCT Country Results Report will inform other mandated reports at regional and global levels, including the **annual report of the Chair of the UNSDG to the Economic and Social Council** on the UN Development Coordination Office, which showcases the work of the Resident Coordinator system and the system-wide contribution to the advancement of the SDGs

REPORT CONTENT

Focus on system-wide results and evidence

Speak to the primary target audiences:

The UN Country Results Report are primarily directed to programme Governments, while also informing other national stakeholders and development partners. The onus must remain at country level. For example, programme Governments and other partners might want to know how the UN mobilized partners to mount a strong and swift defense against COVID-19 and the difference it made for the people in that country.

Focus on system-wide results, not process:

The report must demonstrate how the UN is turning the collective promise to leave no-one behind into tangible action for people on the ground. This means focusing on UNCT reporting on “outputs” and “outcomes”, rather than “activities”. Include the results of the whole UN development system, including those entities without a physical presence. Make the necessary linkages between the output and outcome level results.

- **At output level**, reflect on the changes in skills or abilities, or the availability of new products and services that result from the completion of activities within a development intervention, such as capacities built or the production of a policy brief.
- **At the outcome level**, focus on the institutional and behavioral changes in development conditions that occurred between the completion of outputs and the achievement of development goals, for example how capacities built or the policy brief were used and translated into changes in people’s lives.

Example 1: “The UNCT developed a policy brief which informed the design of a national-wide social protection programme, resulting in protection of livelihoods of 12 million (80%) of vulnerable people during the pandemic.”

Example 2: “The UN strengthened government capacity to provide online primary education services to 90% of primary and tertiary schools nationwide, increasing classroom attendance by 3.5 million learners.”

Share transparently:

Transparency is a vital principle, as articulated in the Cooperation Framework and vis-à-vis the socio-economic response plans to COVID-19. In reflecting progress and opportunities, highlight the challenges and lessons on what is working or not working well.

Be data and evidence-based:

Stories and summaries are an important way of communicating about the UN’s work. But we must always back them up with the trend analysis of hard data. Such data has been captured in UN INFO, the UNDSG Information Management System (IMS), the Business Operations Strategy (BOS) platforms and other data points available to the RC/UNCT. These platforms help make reporting easier: for example, UN INFO allows users to easily access data that is continually uploaded, monitored and updated to reflect the status of the Cooperation Framework/UNDAF results framework and of the joint work plans [1]. Easy access to the most recent available data significantly lowers transaction costs.

1. As per Cooperation Framework guidance, it is mandatory to upload the results framework on UN INFO (United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework Guidance – paragraph 90 and 91).

Embody the spirit of partnership:

The UN joins forces with host Governments, as well as with many other stakeholders, such as civil society, academia, parliaments, the private sector, international financial institutions and bilateral and multilateral partners. The task of the UN Country Results Report is to **describe in clear and lively language how these partnerships helped to drive transformative change.**

Showcase better ways of working for the SDGs:

Highlight how the shift towards a new generation of UN Country Teams is taking root at country level. Point to working more and better together, the review of UNCT configuration, efficiencies and a new SDG financing approach, along with strengthened RCOs, are enhancing development results.

Link results to resources:

The report must include **a financial overview of the budget, resources mobilized and available, as well as expenditures and funding gaps.**



II. UN Country Results Report Template

Report cover/title

- Insert title and subtitle, as relevant
- Specify the country
- Include the year

Foreword by Resident Coordinator

Reflect on how the UN supported the country towards its 2030 aspiration in an evolving country context, as well as how the reforms in the country enabled results.

- This is also the place to acknowledge partnerships with the Government and other key stakeholders.
- This section is to be written after completing the substantive reporting.
- The Resident Coordinator should sign and date the foreword. If relevant, a Government counterpart may co-write or co-sign the foreword, or provide their own foreword.

UN Country Team

Illustrate the overall composition of the UNCT, distinguishing between those entities that have physical presence on the ground and those that have not.

- This should include also those UN entities that joined the UNCT during the reporting year in response to gaps and emerging priorities.

Key development Partners of the UN development system in the country

Illustrate the major development partners supporting the UN's work.

- This will comply with the Funding Compact commitment to enhance the visibility of donors that contribute through better funding mechanisms (such as pooled and thematic funds).
- Some of the major partners may not make a financial contribution to the UN, but their work may synergize with that of the UN.
- For example, a partnership with the World Bank may not necessarily be of a financial nature but could result in greater coverage of vulnerable or marginalized groups in the country.
- Acknowledge key government ministries and the areas of collaboration with the UN as relevant.
- Use creative means to depict this information, such as through logos or a graphic of financial contributions to the UN.



CHAPTER 1

Key developments in the country and regional context (maximum 1 page)

Drawing from updates of the UN Common Country Analysis throughout the year, reflect on:

- Key development trends and emerging issues in the year and their implications for national SDG priorities.
- Major implications of contextual developments for UN development support in the year, including adjustments in UNCT configuration.



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CHAPTER 2

UN development system support to national development priorities through the Cooperation Framework (maximum 19-20 pages)

2.1. Overview of Cooperation Framework Results (maximum 2 to 4 pages)

With reference to the national SDG development plans and priorities for the Cooperation Framework period/year (as appropriate), provide a brief assessment of UNCT's performance on the UN's joint work plans, Cooperation Framework responsiveness to the evolving country situation and priorities. Include a reflection on trends and cumulative results achieved since the beginning of the Cooperation Framework cycle.

Also include a brief assessment of results achieved in the implementation of the COVID-19 socio-economic response plans and/or any other priorities in the future that may require repurposing of the Cooperation Framework.

- Integrate the Guiding Principles throughout the reporting on priorities and outcomes.

Note: This section is best written after the priorities and outcomes section below is completed.

2.2. Cooperation Framework priorities, outcomes and outputs (maximum 6 pages)

Making references/linkages to national development priorities/plans, related regional priorities and other plans such as those related to COVID-19:

Reflect on results achieved and how much was spent, include

- Outputs achieved by the UN under each outcome, with a narrative on indicators, plus photos and graphics. Note that joint workplan outputs contribute to Cooperation Frameworks outcomes.
- SDGs supported (graphics).
- Key challenges (3 bullet points).
- Graphic/logo of UN entities contributing to outcomes.

Reflect on overall progress on the "promise to leave no one behind", include

- Overall national progress in reaching those left behind, including numbers and infographics.
- Efforts and results in building and supporting national statistics offices capacities to move beyond national averages, with a strengthened focus on inclusion and tackling inequalities.
- Any outstanding concerns on the issue of leaving no one behind.

Note: This information should already be available through UN INFO, if is updated at least every two months by the UN Results Groups. These results groups, in turn, derive their reports from UN entity periodic reports (monthly, quarterly, half-yearly). The M&E Group should follow up and ensure regular updating and completeness of progress and results-oriented reporting in UN INFO.

2.3. Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda (maximum 3 pages)

Reflect on major development partnerships that the UN forged that helped advance the SDGs or leveraged financing for the 2030 Agenda in the country. This includes:

- Examples of innovative partnerships in advancing efforts to achieve 2030 Agenda/SDGs.
 - Examples of key partnerships leveraged by the UN for financing SDG achievement.
 - Examples of south-south or triangular partnerships to advance the 2030 Agenda/SDGs.
 - Infographics and results related to UN's support to financing the 2030 Agenda.
- Examples/reflections on how, as a result of UN support:
 - The current government expenditures towards the SDGs have been re-aligned, such as by eliminating fossil-fuel subsidies, being climate-sensitive, or making gender-sensitive budget reforms.
 - Future government expenditures were avoided to free up resources for investment in essential areas, such as through investments in climate action, disaster risk reduction.
 - Financial resources of government were delivered more effectively, for example by strengthening public procurement.
 - Other domestic, international, private and public financial flows of other stakeholders have been re-aligned with the above.

Note: The data for this section can be obtained from multiple sources, including UN Results Group reports and UN INFO, as well as from government agencies coordinating development partners in the country (e.g. Ministry of Finance/Planning).



2.4. Results of the UN working more and better together: UN coherence, effectiveness and efficiency (maximum 2 pages)

Reflect on how the reform is shaping up in the country with positive results and benefits for the UNCT, the Government and partners. Include reflections on the results brought by the **shift towards increased UN entities' collaboration and coherence in the country**, including:

- Tailored UNCT configuration and how this resulted in more relevant and effective delivery on the Cooperation Framework.
- Derivation of UN entity programmes from the Cooperation Framework or how this was sustained throughout the year with new entrants and benefits to UNCT and Government or other national stakeholders.
- Use of joint work plans, results groups, and other innovations to reduce transaction costs and redundancies.
- Use of regional and global level assets.
- More and better integrated policy advice by the UN to the Government.
- Communicating and advocating Together.
- Implementation of Business Operations Strategy.

2.5. Evaluations and Lessons Learned (*maximum 1 page*)

The evaluation of the Cooperation Framework is mandatory and constitutes an important part of UN accountability to countries for its results and contributions. Briefly reflect on:

- Highlights of the UNDAF/Cooperation Framework evaluation results (outcome/impact levels), key lessons and recommendations.

Note: This is applicable only for the country results reports of the year the evaluation was conducted.

- The UN programming adjustments made in the year through implementing the management response action plans during the year.

Note: This is applicable to all reporting years until all the recommendations are completed.

Note: The draft of the UN Country Results Report should be used as a basis to review UN joint work plans in the mandatory Annual Review meeting with the Government.

2.6. Financial Overview and Resource Mobilization (*maximum 2 pages*)

2.6.1. Financial Overview (*maximum 1 page*)

Detail and disaggregate UNCT expenditures and contributions. UNCTs using UN INFO will be able to autogenerate visuals and infographics for use in the report. Data on UN key activities will be required to be entered into UN INFO by the UNCT in order to generate visuals and infographics.

Financial data should include, at a minimum:

- Total Required (Budgeted) resources, Available resources and Expenditures, annualized.
- Total Required (Budgeted) resources, Available resources and Expenditures by Cooperation Framework strategic priority area.

- Expenditures by funding modality (One Fund, Agency Core Fund, Vertical Funds, etc.).
- Contributions by funding source.

Additionally, and according to context and availability of data, financial data will include:

- Expenditure or budget breakdown between development-related expenditure and humanitarian assistance.
- Budget breakdown by agency.
- Breakdown by core and non-core resources.
- Sub-national breakdown.

System-wide guidance on financial standardization, “the UN Data Cube,” was adopted as a living document to provide a platform for further financial harmonization for HQ-level reporting. The UN Country Results Reports should likewise follow adopted taxonomies for UN entities and use definitions, to the extent possible, when categorizing expenditures (e.g. for development-related and humanitarian assistance). The UN Data Cube is available [here](#).

Note: Use graphics to present financial information succinctly.

2.6.2. Resource mobilization (*maximum 1 page*)

Reflect on:

- Resources available vs. delivered per priority area and vs. overall delivery (data in graphics).
- Overall assessments of quality of funding for the Cooperation Framework’s full cycle.
- Resource mobilization strategy (3-5 bullet points).

Note: Use graphics to present resources mobilization information succinctly.



CHAPTER 3

UNCT key focus for next year (maximum 1 page)

Draw on discussions from the Annual Performance review, where the latest CCA updates were reviewed and key results for the following year were proposed. The final UN Country Results Report should reflect the key results signed off by the national-UN Joint Steering Committee. Reflect on:

- Cycle – starting new cycle or consolidated or winding up the current cycle.
- Direction of key results as well as risks for next year, based on development in country contexts in

current year and expected in next year, e.g. elections, population census, COVID-19 pandemic.

- Expected UNCT configuration changes to achieve results.
- Resource mobilization.

Note: This section should focus on big-ticket results that the UN aims to achieve in relation to the outcome areas. Use infographics to present this information.



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