



UNITED  
NATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT  
GROUP



# UN VISION 2030

INDAF CAMPANTON GUIDANCE

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b><u>3</u></b>
<b>2. THE CONCEPT</b> .....	<b><u>5</u></b>
<b>3. MOVING FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE</b> .....	<b><u>6</u></b>
3.1 Guiding Questions .....	6
3.2 Methodologies .....	7
<b>4. LESSONS LEARNED, TIPS AND GOOD PRACTICE FROM REAL COUNTRY EXAMPLES</b> .....	<b><u>8</u></b>
<b>5. TOOLS AND RESOURCES</b> .....	<b><u>9</u></b>
<b>6. ANNEXES</b> .....	<b><u>10</u></b>

# 1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this companion guidance piece is to provide practical and hands-on technical guidance on developing a UN Vision 2030 as part of the UNDAF process. It should be read as a complement to the 2017 UNDAF Guidance and relates closely to the other seven companion guidance papers on programming principles, the Common Country Analysis (CCA), the theory of change, communications and advocacy, capacity development, monitoring and evaluation, and funding to financing.

The UN Vision 2030 refers to a time horizon up to the formal completion of the 2030 Agenda. The new United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) guidance highly recommends a long-term visioning exercise alongside the CCA ([hyperlink to CCA CGP](#)) to inform UNDAF priorities.

The UN Vision 2030 exercise helps to ensure that UNDAF interventions are grounded in in-depth understanding of the national development context and positioned within a longer term strategic view. Each UN Country Team (UNCT) is expected to identify the normative role of the UN system as well as the role of the UNCT in supporting the country, and to provide added value to the national vision and policy for the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The UN Vision 2030 paper, in two-to-three pages, summarizes the visioning exercise results, reflecting a shared picture of the country's sustainable development challenges and objectives. It also lays out how the CCA and the contributions 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, based on a set of criteria that include equity, comparative advantage and feasibility (for further details, please see the theory of change companion guidance note ([hyperlink to ToC CGP](#))).<sup>1</sup> The UN Vision 2030 paper includes:

---

<sup>1</sup> It is recommended to apply the [MAPS \(Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support\)](#), which provides UN Resident Coordinators and UNCTs with useful insights and practical tools for the UN Vision 2030 exercise.

- The **UN system’s internal and external working assumptions**, considering the country’s plausible long-term development trajectories until 2030
- **The envisaged strategic UN positioning and role** in the country through 2030
- How **the five-year UNDAF fits into the 15-year 2030 Agenda**

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 new developments.

The UN Vision 2030 and the CCA are mutually reinforcing and should be developed in parallel. The CCA’s assessment and analysis inform the trend analysis of the UN Vision 2030 and the definition of the UNDAF strategic priorities, while the UN Vision 2030 situates and orients the CCA’s medium-term assessment and analysis within a longer term perspective. The UN Vision 2030 will guide the development of future UNDAFs and corresponding CCAs.

Building on the CCA and the UN Vision 2030, the UN system develops an overall theory of change that identifies viable development causal linkages, and is used to derive collective key outcomes to which the UN and its partners will contribute in the overall pursuit of national SDG-related targets.

The UN Vision 2030 should fully apply the UNDAF core programming principles (hyperlink to PPs CGP), which are to leave no one behind; human rights, gender equality and women’s empowerment; sustainability and resilience; and accountability. It needs to align the strategic direction of the UNDAF with the vision and principles of the 2030 Agenda, in particular the overarching principle of leaving no one behind.

# 2. THE CONCEPT

The UN Vision 2030 exercise should help the UNCT contextualize its plan with a longer term perspective, aligned with the vision and priorities of the government and other stakeholders, over the full duration of the 2030 Agenda. Hence, building on national capacities and resources is essential. Some countries undertake multiyear vision planning, and UNCTs can then prepare the UN Vision 2030 aligning with national instruments.

UNCTs can undertake this exercise in a flexible manner, from using foresight processes (external support may be required) to simpler exercises such as using “futures wheels” (see Annex II). The UN Vision 2030 exercise should be consultative, collaborative and inclusive, thereby resulting in a truly shared vision that all “own” and subscribe to, including the furthest behind.

Policy coherence across the 2030 Agenda should directly inform the CCA and UN Vision 2030 exercises so that UNDAFs are able to effectively address the interconnected and integrated nature of sustainable development, and link to the conflict prevention/sustaining peace agenda.

## **A Vision 2030 exercise provides opportunities for:**

- Adding value to the national vision for the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs by defining the role and positioning of the UNCT and identifying opportunities for its contributions as well as normative role in the national context;
- Strengthening links among the UNDAF, the 2030 Agenda and the SDG targets and indicators, and other international, regional and subregional legal commitments and agreements;
- Effectively balancing and integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental);
- Assessing the broader global and regional context in relation to the country;
- Identifying priority actions, drivers and structural changes needed to accomplish the SDGs as well as longer term assumptions and risks (using the **CCA** ([hyperlink to CCA CGP](#)) as a basis), and unearthing

blind spots and planning for uncertain futures (considering risk, prevention and resilience);

- Formulating collective understanding of the key challenges and shared approaches required, in mission and non-mission settings, across the work of the UN and its partners on sustainable development, humanitarian response, conflict prevention and sustaining peace;
- Engaging national partners in a longer term analysis and definition of priorities, including joining and building on national exercises of this kind;
- Enhancing team-building within the UNCT and technical teams;
- Encouraging synergies with advocacy and communications activities; and
- Building individual and organizational capacities to think systematically about the future and the interconnectedness of the SDGs, as a basis for enabling integrated and transformational development change.

# 3. MOVING FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

## 3.1 GUIDING QUESTIONS

The UNCT should **define the UN's working assumptions in terms of the country's longer term development trajectories**, over the duration of the 2030 Agenda. The internal working assumptions are cross-linked with the logic of the **theory of change** (hyperlink to ToC CGP), in particular for strategic prioritization, based on a set of criteria, including equity, comparative advantage and feasibility. External assumptions are based on the UN Vision 2030 exercise and the CCA.

### Guiding questions:

- Does the UN Vision 2030 provide a structured and comprehensive long-term perspective for the UNDAF process as it defines contributions to the broader 15-year goals of the 2030 Agenda?
  - Does the UN Vision 2030 consider the interconnected and integrated nature of sustainable development and its implications for the UNDAF and CCA processes?
  - Has the visioning exercise considered and assessed the implications of the different development trajectories and the implications associated with social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities and unexpected events/crises, in the possible scenarios for attaining the Agenda 2030 at national and subnational levels?
  - Does the UN Vision 2030 identify key barriers related to environmental sustainability, economic limitations and inequality patterns?
  - Are other developments/emerging issues likely to affect the operating environment, for instance: vulnerability to climate change, disasters caused by natural or man-made hazards, inequality trends, technological revolutions, demographic changes, regional conflicts, marked political and economic changes/transitions, or refugee arrivals/internal displacement or migration patterns?
  - Is the UN system taking a "whole of UN system approach" across the UN pillars—human rights, conflict prevention, and sustaining peace and sustainable development—as well as humanitarian needs to respond to complex challenges?
- Does the UN Vision 2030 take into account the implications of the global and regional context in the country implementation of the SDGs?
  - Does the UN Vision 2030 identify structural changes needed and drivers towards accomplishing the SDGs?
  - Will the role and influence of non-UN actors likely decrease or increase?
  - Does the UN Vision 2030 reflect a shared vision of the country's sustainable development challenges and objectives, and help with the prioritization of actions over the longer term, aligned with the vision and priorities of the government and other stakeholders?
  - Does the UN Vision 2030 include a longer term analysis and priorities, including through joining national exercises proposed by the national partners?

The UNCT should also **outline the UN's contribution in supporting the country's attainment of the 2030 Agenda**, including its means of implementation (i.e., data, monitoring and reporting; policy coherence; allocation, mobilization and leveraging of funds; technical assistance and capacity development) over the 15-year period.

### Guiding questions:

- How can the UN best support the country in attaining its vision of where it should be by 2030?
- Does the UN Vision 2030 assess and outline the role of the UN in the country for the duration of the 2030 Agenda?
- Is the value added of the UNCT incorporated within the projected vision?
- Is the UNCT drawing on capacities and expertise from across the UN system, not just those present at country level?
- Does the UN Vision 2030 identify longer term results areas that the UNCT anticipates will define its primary contribution in supporting attainment of the 2030 Agenda in the country?
- What is the UN's likely evolving role (in scale and scope) and positioning in the country?
- How will the UNCT need to evolve or adapt to respond to evolving needs/demands?

- Are changes expected in the mandate or presence of the UN, e.g., a drawing down of peacekeeping missions?
- Has the UNCT engaged in an on-going national visioning/planning exercise or has it taken into account existing national long-term planning policy documents?
- Does the UN Vision 2030 identify key actors (national, local, international) to involve in the implementation of the Agenda 2030 (see also the theory of change companion guidance (hyperlink ToC CGP))?
- Is the UN Vision 2030 built on the strong ownership of governments and national stakeholders?
- Does the UN Vision 2030 involve a broad range of stakeholders' views, including citizens?
- To what extent have stakeholders been involved in the development of the UN Vision 2030?
- Does the UN Vision 2030 make use of data and information gathered from social networks, citizen consultations and/or other big data sources?

Finally, the UNCT should **define the ways in which the five-year UNDAF fits into the long-term 2030 Agenda**, with the key outcomes of the successive UNDAFs representing logical steps in the longer term results areas that the UNCT anticipates.

#### Guiding questions:

- Based on the comparative advantages of the UN, is there a shared vision and articulation of collective key challenges, objectives and approaches, by a wide range of partners, over multiple years?
- If all the tasks were achieved, would the UN Vision 2030 be realized?
- Based on the previous UNDAF outcomes, has the new UNDAF been built to progressively contribute to the attainment of the 2030 Agenda?
- Does the **CCA** (hyperlink to CCA CGP) reflect an evolution in the country situation, as compared with previous CCAs?
- How will addressing the key challenges contribute to building long-term capacities at country level (see also the capacity development companion guidance (hyperlink CD CGP))?
- Will the immediate, underlying and structural causes as analysed in the CCA have a strong likelihood to increase, decrease or remain the same?
- Does the UN Vision 2030 identify longer term advocacy goals and milestones, and promote a public understanding of those? Is that embedded within the joint communication strategy, as an opportunity for effective communications and advocacy activities? (see also the communication and advocacy companion guidance (hyperlink C&A CGP))

## 3.2 METHODOLOGIES

The UNCT should decide the most feasible approach considering country capacities and resources available. Available methodologies include:

- **Foresight processes** are used to explore the future that people are expecting and a range of plausible alternatives; they inform the development of strategies that are robust across that range of plausible futures. They can generate a range of possible futures and possible strategic options along with understanding of challenges and strategic risks. Foresight exercises can assist in prioritization, aimed at directing the UNCT's support where it is most needed and likely to deliver the greatest improvement over the baseline expected achievement. Foresight exercises usually require outside support or support from colleagues who have been involved in conducting such exercises.
- **Back-casting** is a reverse forecasting technique that starts with a specific future outcome and then works backward to present conditions. For example, this could involve organizing one-day reflections with all UNCT members (and non-resident agencies) dedicated to a discussion around the central question of: Where do we think, as the UN, that the country will/should be in 15 years and what could/should be the contribution of the UN to achieving that? External participants/speakers from across government ministries, academia, the private sector, civil society, youth groups and media should be invited.
- **Scenario analysis** is a way of structuring thinking about the future; it describes a possible future situation, including the path and hypotheses leading to it. The Millennium Institute, for example, released the [Integrated Sustainable Development Goals planning model \(iSDG\)](#). It is a comprehensive simulation tool that generates country-specific development scenarios to show the implications of policy on a country's progress towards the SDGs. It covers all 17 goals, and facilitates a better understanding of the interconnections of the goals and targets, in order to develop synergetic strategies to achieve them.

# 4. LESSONS LEARNED, TIPS AND GOOD PRACTICE FROM REAL COUNTRY EXAMPLES

## GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

Some of the innovative/successful national visioning exercises are:

- [Lao People's Democratic Republic: Futurescaper](#) (a digitalized foresight methodology) engaged all staff of the UNCT, development partners, civil society organizations, the Government and the public to explore development issues and build scenarios around them, including through the use of [crowdsourcing](#).
- [Montenegro](#): For its 2015 UNDAF, Montenegro's UNCT used a light touch foresight process that engaged a wide range of stakeholders (citizens and non-experts). They employed innovative methods that empowered new voices, including through online platforms and [a game](#) in which a colourful board, cards and tokens were used to discuss the future from the perspective of challenges, opportunities, partners, actions and values. They also used back-casting and innovative approaches to think out of the box, unveil blind spots and map uncertainties.
- [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#): Building on the work in [Montenegro](#), the [UNCT in Bosnia and Herzegovina](#) applied strategic foresight as part of its consultation process to build momentum for the SDGs. The team adopted their original game, named the SDG Consultations Tool, through a participatory planning process with 600 people to gauge their positive and negative associations with the past and present, and their visions for the future. As a result, over 80 ideas were generated, and demographic data on priorities, values, actions and institutional suggestions were collected. The accompanying "Postcards from the Future" campaign encouraged people to imagine what the future could or should be.
- [Rwanda](#): [Foresight](#) exercises have been used to plan large-scale development projects as well as to conduct planning in urban and rural areas
- [Sri Lanka](#): UNDP, in cooperation with national government entities, organized a Foresight and Innovations Summit to initiate a national dialogue on foresight as an innovative tool to assist

traditional development planning in achieving sustainable human development and the 2030 Agenda.

- [Bahrain](#): A working meeting to review and strengthen the draft Strategic Cooperation Framework for 2016-2020 between the Government and the United Nations discussed the value and main elements of a UN Vision 2030 Note, using forecasting and futures wheels (see Annex II).
- [Albania](#) deployed crowdsourcing to develop the new UNDAF, engaging the public to get their priorities in the design phase.

## TIPS

For an effective UN Vision 2030 exercise:

- Try to engage in on-going national visioning/planning exercises or take into account existing long-term planning documents.
- Focus attention on the assumptions, as these are crucial in defining the causal linkages to a vision, and how they will be validated to inform future pivot points towards that vision.
- Be bold and try out new/innovative methods and tools: e.g., participative foresight, back-casting and scenario analysis, empowering new voices and using online platforms in strategic planning.
- Engage world-class knowledge, facilitators and staff who are open minded and willing to carry out innovative approaches, think out-of-the-box, unveil blind spots and map uncertainties.
- Involve partners from the beginning to have a participatory process; do not forget "human-centred design;" involve citizens and non-citizens.
- Look to and learn from the experiences of others.
- Engage regional Peer Support Groups for guidance, regional examples, technical support, facilitation of milestones and quality assurance (feedback should be provided within 15 working days).

# 5. TOOLS AND RESOURCES

[MAPS \(Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support\)](#)

frames the UN development system's support to UNCT engagement in the implementation of the new agenda, through the UNDAFs

UNDG Blog (2016): [Now is the best time to embrace the futures: SDGs success depends on strategic foresight](#)

UNDG (2016): "[Applying Foresight and Alternatives Futures to the UNDAF](#)"

[UNDP Foresight Manual \(2015\)](#) features a selection of methods and techniques suited for framing development or policy discussions

UNDP (2014): "[Foresight as a Strategic Long-Term Planning Tool for Developing Countries](#)" was developed to support decision makers in developing countries to maximize the strengths and benefits of national foresight programmes.

[#UNDP4Future: The essential foresight reading list](#)  
[UNESCO Anticipation and Foresight Programme](#) aims to strengthen intellectual, ethical and strategic watch functions

[UNEP Foresight Process](#) addresses one of the goals of the UNEP Science Strategy: "anticipating the future."

---

# 6. ANNEXES

## ANNEX I: SUGGESTED UN VISION 2030 OUTLINE/FORMAT

The new UNDAF Guidance highly recommends the development of a short UN Vision document to help the UN system strategically plan for contributing to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in a given country, and indicate how successive UNDAF results can build on each other. The following format can be adapted by UNCTs based on local contexts.

The UN Vision 2030 paper is expected to be brief, a maximum of three pages.

### PROPOSED ANNOTATED OUTLINE:

#### 1. 2030 Agenda and SDG result areas of UN focus in country X

This section articulates plausible long-term priorities, sustainable development goals and indicators for the UN's contributions over the time horizon of completion of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, based on the CCA, the UN strategic planning consultative exercises and process guidance. It demonstrates the ways in which the achievements of successive UNDAF's represent logical steps in the long-term results areas that define the UN system's primary contributions to supporting the national attainment of the 2030 Agenda.

#### 2. Linkages with available national 2030 visioning paper/framework in country X

In this section, the paper makes reference to any existing national 2030 visioning paper and how the UN Vision 2030 contributes towards reaching the national vision.

#### 3. Fulfilment of a range of international and human rights treaties ratified by country X

The UN Vision 2030 process also takes into account the fulfilment of and reporting on long-range commitments and international and regional human rights conventions and other treaties ratified by the country such as the Paris Agreement, Universal Periodic Review, Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk

Reduction 2015-2030, World Humanitarian Summit and the New Urban Agenda, among others. Provide a brief in this section.

#### 4. How the new five-year UNDAF fits into the long-term vision

Describe how the results and strategies in the new five-year UNDAF (period) fits into the long-term trajectory described in Section 1.

#### 5. UN system's working assumptions

This section is to outline both internal and external working assumptions for the UNCT's contributions to longer term results.

#### 6. Role of the UN in the country

Describe the evolving role and position of the UN system in country X, including, where appropriate, coherence with an integrated UN mission for the duration of the 2030 Agenda.

#### 7. Summary of the consultative process to develop the UN Vision 2030

Include briefly the collaborative and consultative process to develop the UN Vision 2030, including quality assurance from the regional Peer Support Group, if any.

#### 8. Date of development/date of revision of the UN Vision 2030

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.

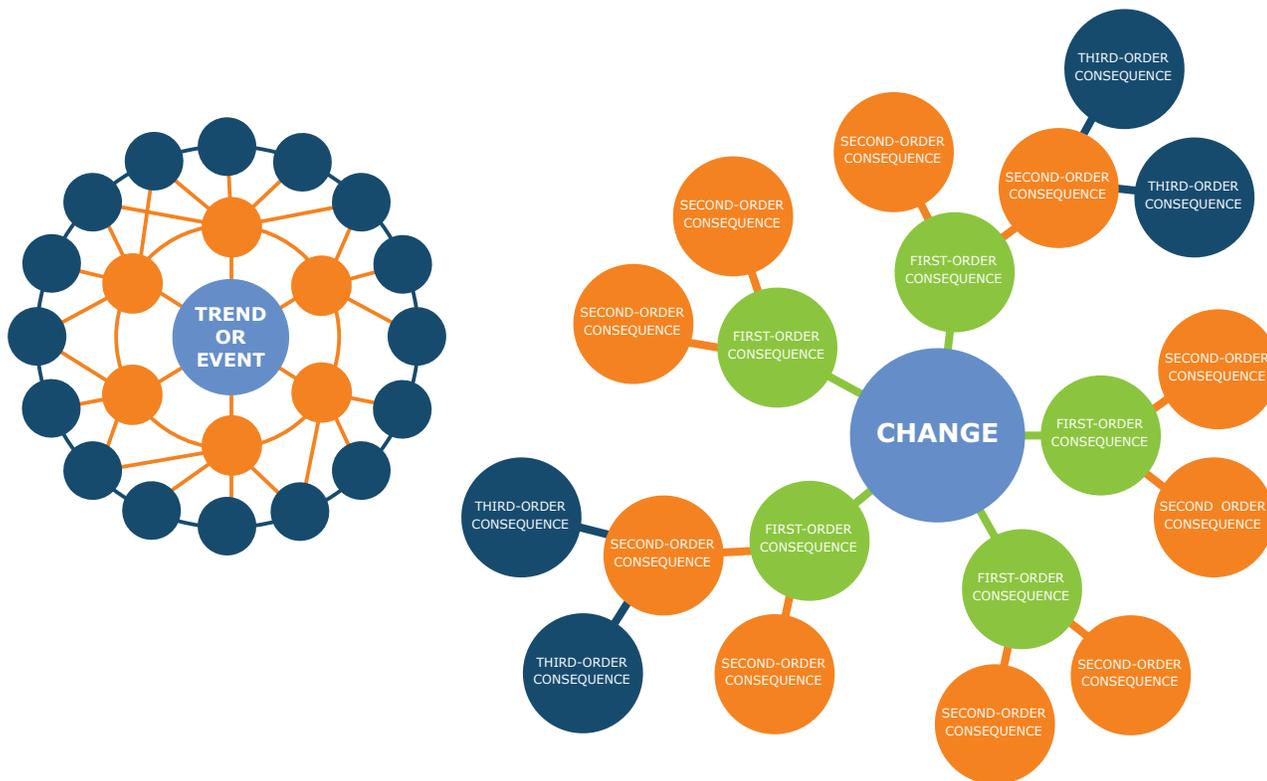
## ANNEX II: FUTURES WHEEL

This is a method for graphic visualization that lays out the direct and indirect consequences of a decision, event or trend:

- **Step 1:** Identify the trend and write it in the centre.
- **Step 2:** Identify the possible direct, first-order consequences of that trend.

- **Step 3:** Identify indirect, second-order consequences:
  - After brainstorming all the possible second-order consequences of each of the first-order (direct) consequences, add them to the diagram and repeat this by identifying the third-order consequences, fourth-order consequences, and so on.
  - It is useful to colour-code each “level” of the wheel; this makes it easier to prioritize and analyse consequences once the brainstorming is complete.
  - Consequences are not necessarily negative.
- **Step 4:** Analyse implications, what are the key assumptions?
- **Step 5:** Identify scenarios
  - Choose one or two series of consequences that seem most plausible as future scenarios
  - Describe the scenario: What’s happening? Who will be most affected by the changes? Who will be in a position to influence the changes?
  - Role for the UN system: What role could UN system agencies play to take advantage of opportunities or prevent/mitigate harm? What can the UN system do in the mid-term (next three-to-five years) to anticipate, and position itself and partners?

**FIGURE 1.**



(The **network diagram** on the left could be applied to a brainstorming exercise of potential future trends or events.)



---

**UNITED  
NATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT  
GROUP**

---

**The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) unites the 31 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 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.**