

CHAPTER 4

COOPERATION FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

4.1 COOPERATION FRAMEWORK GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

The Joint Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran – United Nations High Level Steering Committee (HLSC) is the highest governing and decision-making body of the Cooperation Framework. It is co-chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the United Nations Resident Coordinator and is comprised of representatives of government ministries and of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes with operational activities in Iran.

The HLSC will meet once a year, providing strategic oversight to the Cooperation Framework's implementation, while ensuring its continued alignment with the evolving country context, as well as with national, regional and international development processes. It will review progress made in the previous year, while identifying challenges and opportunities in the changing context and to take into account the implementation of the Cooperation Framework through the Joint Work Plans.

The United Nations Country Team is led by the United Nations Resident Coordinator and operates in full coordination with the Government. The United Nations Results Groups will be established for each of the five UNSDCF outcomes to improve internal United Nations coordination and to ensure a coherent United Nations system-wide approach to analysis, planning, and implementation of the United Nations contributions.

4.2. RESOURCING THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

The United Nations System agencies will provide financial and other support to the development and implementation of activities within the UNSDCF, which may include technical support, cash assistance, supplies, commodities and equipment, procurement services, transport, funds for advocacy, research and studies, consultancies, programme development, evaluation, training activities and staff support.

Additional support may include access to United Nations organization-managed global information systems, the network of the United Nations System agencies' country office and specialized information systems, including rosters of consultants and providers of development services, and access to the support provided by the network of United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes.

The United Nations System agencies shall appoint staff and consultants for programme development, programme support and technical assistance as well as for monitoring and evaluation activities.

Subject to annual reviews and progress in the implementation of the programme, the United Nations System agencies' funds are distributed by calendar year and in accordance with the UNSDCF. These budgets will be reviewed and further detailed in the work plans and project documents. By mutual consent between the Government and the United Nations Development System entities, funds not earmarked by donors to United Nations Development System agencies for specific activities may be re-allocated to other programmatically equally worthwhile activities.

In developing a strategy for financing the UNSDCF, the United Nations System in Iran will assess the financial landscape to understand the volume of available funding streams for advancing sustainable development objectives in Iran (e.g. core agency funding, global/ vertical and pooled United Nations Development System funding, and agency-specific thematic funding) as well as to determine any funding gaps based on the costed results of the Cooperation Framework.

The Cooperation Funding Framework, informed by clearly defined outcomes and development directives of the Government, will be the key tool to guide joint resource mobilization. It will have two levels: (a) a multi-year funding framework covering the full duration of the UNSDCF; and (b) annual funding frameworks that will be monitored and updated as part of the Joint Work Plans.

Supported by the financial landscape analysis, the funding frameworks will form the basis of development of the Cooperation Framework Resource Mobilization Strategy, which will help explore and promote innovative sustainable development-related financial instruments that can unlock new sources of finance.

To help achieve development targets and fund activities, establishment of instruments such as a United Nations inter-agency pooled fund (with thematic windows) will be pursued in close consultation, coordination and agreement with the Government and the United Nations Country Team. The financing mechanisms will serve as platforms for strengthening collective action towards quality programming for increased results and impact. The pooled fund specifically among other financing mechanisms can provide a tailored response for integrated support across sectors to address priorities and needs of the Government of Iran. These instruments will draw on the expertise and synergies of the United Nations entities and will enable agencies to have access to additional donor resources and broaden the donor base. They will be complementary to agency-specific resource mobilization efforts and humanitarian appeals.

4.3 DERIVATION OF UNITED NATIONS ENTITY COUNTRY PROGRAMMING INSTRUMENTS FROM THE

COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

United Nations agency/entity programmes have been defined and shaped around the strategic priorities identified and the thrust of the United Nations offer around which the Cooperation Framework has been designed and will correspond with Joint Work Plans. To ensure strong alignment, Country Programme Documents (CPDs) of concerned United Nations entities will take into account the Cooperation Framework priority areas, the overall outcomes, and the intermediate outcomes that contribute to the overall outcomes. United Nations entities without CPDs will derive their entity-specific country programming instruments from the Cooperation Framework planned results.

4.4 JOINT WORK PLANS

The UNSDCF will be nationally executed under the overall coordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Government cooperating entities will implement programme joint activities. The UNSDCF will be made operational through the development of Joint Work Plans (JWPs) developed by the Results Groups and/or agency-specific work plans and project documents as necessary that describe the specific results to be achieved and will form an agreement between the United Nations System agencies and each implementing partner as necessary on the use of resources.

To the extent possible, the United Nations System agencies and the government implementing partners will use the minimum documents necessary, namely the signed UNSDCF and signed joint or agency-specific work plans and project documents, to implement programmatic initiatives. However, as necessary and appropriate, project documents may be prepared using, inter alia, the relevant text from the UNSDCF and joint or agency-specific work plans and/or project documents. It should be noted that in these work plans and project documents cash assistance for travel, stipends, honoraria and other costs shall be set at rates commensurate with those applied in the country, but not higher than those applicable to the United Nations System (as stated in the International Civil Service Commission circulars).

Joint Work Plans will be formulated by the UNSDCF Results Groups in the online UN INFO platform. The Joint Work Plan will ensure greater alignment with national needs and priorities, support country capacities to deliver development results, and ensure transparency and accountability in their implementation.

The Joint Work Plans will be discussed across the UNSDCF Results Groups to ensure coherence and synergy of United Nations Country Team collective programming in the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Joint Work Plans will result from the joint planning exercise with the coordinated engagement and participation of the United Nations Country Team and members of the respective Results Groups. The Joint Work Plans will reflect planned joint programmatic outputs, key activities or sub-outputs delivered jointly or by individual agencies, as well as indicative available resources and funding gaps.

4.5 BUSINESS OPERATIONS STRATEGY

IN SUPPORT OF THE COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

In 2020, the United Nations System in Iran developed and endorsed the first-ever Business Operations Strategy, with the purpose of strengthening United Nations coherence and joint approaches in the country, thereby ensuring both cost-effectiveness and quality of the United Nations operations. The Business Operations Strategy focuses on creating efficiencies in procurement, logistics, administration, finance, ICT, and human resources.

Within the United Nations System in Iran, the inter-agency group of the Operations Management Team is responsible for overseeing the Business Operations Strategy development, implementation, annual work planning and, in doing so, the Operations Management Team will continue to explore and recommend innovative business models and levels of collaboration across United Nations entities, aimed at efficient and effective implementation of the Cooperation Framework and common business operations in Iran.

A second iteration of the Business Operations Strategy will be developed in 2025, in accordance with United Nations guidance, to take account of any new operational demands of the UNSDCF and any new or revised cooperation frameworks, innovative practices or means of operation.