



Working together to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Joint annex on the common chapter of the strategic plan 2018-2021  
of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women

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## I. Introduction and context

1. In 2017, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) added a common chapter to their respective strategic plans, 2018-2021 to enhance collaboration, in line with their respective mandates. This unprecedented alignment is anchored in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 of 21 December 2016 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (QCPR) and anticipated the repositioning of the United Nations development system (UNDS) in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2. In 2019, whether it is to accelerate progress on eradicating poverty, addressing climate change, improving adolescent and maternal health, achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, ensuring greater availability and use of disaggregated data for development or contributing to sustaining peace through development work, the four agencies working on the common chapter made notable efforts to strengthen multisectoral approaches and achieve greater synergies to support the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals. As in the previous year, which was the first year of the common chapter, the four agencies continued to use the common chapter to leverage their collective and collaborative advantages and trigger further joint efforts within United Nations country teams (UNCTs) as a whole.

3. As the four New York-based agencies reflect on the implementation of their respective strategic plans to date in the context of their midterm reviews, important shifts have occurred within and outside the United Nations system since their adoption:

- (a) A repositioned UNDS, following General Assembly resolution 72/279, means that new or revamped tools and processes are now in place, with an emphasis on facilitating a more integrated and coherent UN offer. Reform-informed planning instruments such as Common Country Analyses and the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (UNSDCFs), as well as the enhanced role of the resident coordinator at country level, have shifted the focus from the common chapter, as a separate initiative, to the broader implementation of United Nations reforms.
- (b) While the United Nations system, through the Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals, aims to accelerate efforts towards the 2030 Agenda, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which began convulsing the world in the early months of 2020, has exacerbated existing inequalities and vulnerabilities within and between countries. As the situation continues to evolve, it will require United Nations agencies to remain agile and responsive to the emerging needs of the populations they serve, in particular women, children and other groups facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that were left behind even before the pandemic. It also puts the UN development system reforms to a test.

4. This joint annex to the annual results and midterm review reports of UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women highlights collective efforts to date and key results achieved at the midpoint of the strategic plan period of the four agencies working on the common chapter. Additionally, as in 2018, a complementary report on the common Sustainable Development Goal indicators identified to track the contributions of the four agencies to the Goals is included. The full breadth of the agencies' contributions to the 2030 Agenda, including and beyond the common chapter, are included in their respective integrated results and resources frameworks. Relevant QCPR indicators are incorporated in the respective joint QCPR annexes of the agencies' annual results and midterm review reports to monitor how the agencies work together to achieve organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

## **II. Joint programmatic collaboration**

### **A. Strengthened partnerships**

5. During 2019, the four agencies took deliberate steps to strengthen targeted partnerships with each other and beyond, across the United Nations system. These partnerships facilitate joint work to address critical sustainable development, peace and security and human rights challenges.

6. UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women are among the 12 multilateral agencies working together through the Global Action Plan for Healthy Lives and Well-being for All to better support countries to accelerate progress towards the health-related Sustainable Development Goals. The four agencies also worked together to support the Compact for Young People in Humanitarian Action, an inter-agency network that prioritizes the rights of young people in all stages of humanitarian action

7. The United Nations Joint Global Programme on Essential Services for Women and Girls Subject to Violence (a partnership of UNDP, UNFPA, UN-Women, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the World Health Organization (WHO)) provides essential multisectoral services for women and girls who have experienced gender-based violence.

8. UNDP and UN-Women signed a partnership to enhance collaboration in concrete ways under seven areas of work: legal and policy reforms to advance gender equality; gender-based violence; crisis and post-crisis response and early recovery; women's political leadership; mobilizing the private sector to advance gender equality; economic empowerment; and energy. In the context of the memorandum of understanding signed between UNDP and UN-Women in 2019, collaboration grew to 102 country offices from 91 in 2018. Of these offices, 80 per cent partnered on at least one substantive joint project or initiative. The largest areas of collaboration remain advancing legal and policy reforms, women's political participation and economic empowerment. UNDP and UN-Women are also co-conveners of the Global Partnership for Action to Eliminate All Forms of HIV-Related Stigma and Discrimination, together with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and the Global Network of People Living with HIV, with 30 countries being invited to join the Partnership and accelerate action.

9. UNDP and UNICEF deepened their long-standing partnership through a Global Framework for Action across four key areas through which combined efforts can deliver synergistic and more sustainable development outcomes: innovation; youth engagement and empowerment; financing; and climate change and environmental degradation. The partnership includes a focus on the most vulnerable children and youth, who will bear the biggest brunt of environmental and climate impacts, both now and in the future. Specific areas for collaboration include: (a) climate and environmental finance for children, youth and the most vulnerable; (b) inclusive and child-sensitive policy, planning, programming and budgeting for nature-based solutions; and (c) participation of children and youth in climate action and environmental advocacy.

10. UNICEF and UNDP also launched an Innovation Call for Action in August 2019 to identify promising innovative solutions that can leverage the combined value of both organizations for impact and scale – 194 country office proposals were received. In the first phase UNICEF and UNDP cofounded five joint projects with USD 500,000 and committed a further USD 100,000 in seed funding for promising initiatives.

11. Following the request of the Secretary-General to strengthen the global health architecture, UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN-Women, WHO and the World Bank (the H6 Partnership) expanded and deepened collaboration to improve outcomes in sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health and took steps to create regional and country platforms.

12. In 2019, agencies worked together under the leadership of the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNDP and UNICEF to adapt the Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) approach with updated analytical tools, more focus on vertical policy coherence and inclusive dialogue, and broader United Nations participation across pillars.

13. In 2019, the United Nations Legal Identity Agenda reached unprecedented consensus across 14 United Nations agencies, including UNDP and UNICEF, along with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the World Bank, on one common approach to identity management, with operational guidance in the works for UNCTs.

14. The Inter-Agency Task Force on Financing for Development, co-chaired by UN-Women and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, brings together more than 18 United Nations institutional stakeholders, including UNFPA. The group collates gender data and information and advocates for its mainstreaming in the task force's annual report on financing for development. As a result of the coordination leadership and support of UN-Women, gender equality is recognized as a cross-cutting priority in the financing for development agenda and has been integrated into the annual outcome documents of the Economic and Social Council on financing for development (2017, 2018, 2019).

15. A High-Level Task Force on Financing for Gender Equality was established to review United Nations budgets/expenditures across the system. Comprising 14 United Nations entities and departments, including the four agencies working on the common chapter, it analysed available data on the scope of financial investment and assessed human resources and budget allocations for gender equality and women's empowerment. The task force's findings and recommendations, endorsed by the Secretary-General in December 2019, aim to increase coordination, consistency and comparability of data on financing for gender equality across the United Nations system and to galvanize action for increased and targeted financial investments to accelerate progress on gender equality across the 2030 Agenda.

16. UNFPA and UNICEF continue to lead the largest global programme to accelerate the abandonment of female genital mutilation (FGM). Of 17 countries in the programme, 13 have introduced national laws banning FGM, and six have costed national action plans. The UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage reached 3.8 million adolescent girls in 12 countries in 2019, while an independent evaluation validated it as a good example of how joined-up action can provide leverage for collective solutions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

## **B. Collaborative programmes and results**

17. This section reviews the six areas of collaborative advantage included in the common chapter. It presents a select snapshot of high-level agency contributions to progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals in each area, along with highlighting two areas of joint work and results for each area of collaboration.

### ***Eradicating poverty***

18. Poverty eradication and leaving no one behind are integrated into all areas of work for all four agencies working on the common chapter. Joint work under the common chapter aims to enable full integration of the 2030 Agenda, as relevant in each context, in national, subnational and sectoral development plans, policies and investment frameworks, and to support the adoption of substantial, context-responsive and targeted measures designed to benefit the poorest and most disadvantaged groups in society to improve their social and economic status.

19. Driven by their respective SPs and commitment to work together, support from the four agencies working on the common chapter contributed to the following select results for poverty eradication:

- (a) 48 million people obtained better access to basic services;
- (b) 1.2 million households in rural areas and 1.4 million women-headed households obtained access to clean, affordable and sustainable energy;

- (c) 16 countries in West and Central Africa and Eastern and Southern Africa integrated the demographic dividend into their national development plans;
  - (d) The Lisboa+21 Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, which commits to promote, protect and fulfil the human rights of young people, was adopted;
  - (e) 41 legal, regulatory and policy frameworks on decent work for women and 31 on gender-responsive social protection systems were adopted, including 24 and 18, respectively, in 2019;
  - (f) The number of companies signing the Women’s Empowerment Principles increased by over 1,100, including 723 additions in 2019.
20. Two key areas of joint agency work in 2019, advancing strategies to leave no one behind and strengthening social protection systems, are discussed in more detail below.

### ***Strengthening leaving no one behind***

21. Reaching groups in danger of being left behind has been integrated into the work of the four agencies working on the common chapter. In 2019, the four agencies, together with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), WHO and the Development Coordination Office, co-led the United Nations Sustainable Development Group Operational Guide to UNCTs on leaving no one behind, which offers a framework to identify, track and prioritize the furthest behind. The guide was launched in an interim version in April 2019 and was piloted in Cameroon, Nepal and Tunisia to be improved for final publication in 2020. UNDP and UN-Women worked to strengthen the capacities of the regional networks of women living with HIV in Europe and Central Asia and Eastern and Southern Africa. In Guinea-Bissau, UNDP and UNICEF jointly disseminated the results of the first measurement of multidimensional child poverty. In Viet Nam, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN-Women and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), worked with partners and provided policy advice to the Government to develop a master plan for socioeconomic investment and development of the ethnic minority in hard-to-reach areas. In Nepal, the agencies working on the common chapter and WHO promoted the rights of persons with disabilities by supporting the provincial government in forming the Inclusive Disability Coordination Committee to effectively implement disability-inclusive policies, regulations and budgets.

### ***Enhancing social protection initiatives***

22. Strongly linked with approaches to leaving no one behind, the agencies working on the common chapter worked to strengthen integrated approaches to social protection systems that integrate multiple vulnerabilities. Twenty-three joint proposals to the Joint SDG Fund for social protection funding from the agencies working on the common chapter were successful. UNDP, UNICEF, ILO and UNECA collaborated with the African Union on social protection, developing “The State of Social Assistance in Africa” report which yielded new joint initiatives to extend social protection coverage in Africa. Through the joint programme under the Joint SDG Fund in Madagascar, UNFPA, UNICEF ILO and the World Food Programme (WFP) supported the Government in strengthening its social protection system, making it more sensitive to the needs of poorest households and people living with disabilities. In Uzbekistan, ILO, UNDP and UNICEF supported the Government in establishing a state agency for social protection, developing a costed national social protection strategy and integrating services for people with disabilities.

### ***Addressing climate change***

23. The focus of common chapter work in this key area is to raise policy and public awareness of climate change and the urgency of a multisectoral response, and to assist countries to make the fastest possible progress towards sustainability and inclusion as they meet their commitments under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

24. Driven by their respective SPs and commitment to work together, support from the four agencies working on the common chapter contributed to the following select results for addressing climate change:

- (a) 28 countries strengthened policies and plans with particular emphasis on disaster risk reduction (DRR) and increasing the climate resilience of social services;
  - (b) Gender-responsive disaster resilience plans and needs assessments in 41 countries covering 181 million people were supported in close cooperation with national Governments;
  - (c) More than 100 countries with enhanced nationally determined contributions by 2020;
  - (d) 2.5 million people accessed early warning systems and climate, or disaster information and 54 countries supported mainstreaming of climate adaptation and DRR in national and local development plans;
  - (e) The Biodiversity Finance Initiative supported 35 countries in developing financial plans to safeguard nature and natural capital, including repurposing nature-impacting subsidies;
  - (f) Support provided for 1.2 million households in rural areas and 1.4 million women-headed households to access clean, affordable and sustainable energy.
25. Two key areas of collaborative work in 2019, advancing resilience and disaster preparedness and DRR, are discussed in more detail below.

### ***Improved resilience and disaster preparedness***

26. Experience has reinforced the need to address community resilience and disaster preparedness in humanitarian work consistently and from the outset in order to build local capacities and ensure that emergency responses contribute to equitable, holistic development in the long term. In the Dominican Republic, UNDP and UNICEF supported the Government to design the National Action Protocol for Social Protection against Climate Shocks, to strengthen the social protection system's emergency preparedness, response and recovery capabilities. In response to the protracted humanitarian crisis in the Blue Nile State of Sudan, UNDP and UNICEF partnered with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to build community resilience through increased access to sustainable livelihoods. In State of Palestine, UNDP and UN-Women led consultations on mainstreaming gender equality in climate change response. In Myanmar, UNDP, UNICEF and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) supported the Shan state government in developing a state-level climate-integrated disaster management plan incorporating the Myanmar Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, UNDP and UNFPA developed a joint programme on mainstreaming women's empowerment and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable in disaster preparedness and response.

### ***Disaster risk reduction***

27. The four agencies working on the common chapter undertook a range of actions to minimize vulnerabilities and disaster risks in order to prevent or to mitigate the adverse impacts of natural hazards and facilitate sustainable development. UNICEF and UN-Women conducted a joint study on gender and age inequalities in disaster risk, showing huge gaps in disaggregated quantitative data at the global level. UNICEF and UNDP worked with FAO, OCHA, WFP, WHO and five observer members in a new joint Capacity for Disaster Reduction Initiative programme for 2019–2022, to improve capacities for risk reduction and support achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In Barbados, UNDP, UNICEF and other development partners raised awareness and built capacity for the implementation of the Antigua and Barbuda Declaration on School Safety in the Caribbean, which encouraged the inclusion of disaster risk management as a cross-cutting priority. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF partnered with FAO and UNESCO to improve local-level DRR capacities in 10 select locations as part of a first-ever effort to institutionalize cross-sectoral DRR coordination in cities and municipalities. In Nepal, UNDP and UNICEF provided technical and financial support to provincial governments to develop a DRR and management policy and strategic action plan in four provinces; roll out a Disaster Management Information System in two provinces; and develop a disaster risk management training module that is being rolled out nationally. In Kenya, UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women finalized a joint programme on devolution that, among other objectives, will work

towards strengthening county-level climate and disaster risk governance to enhance prevention and response efforts to climate-related crises.

### ***Improving adolescent and maternal health***

28. In supporting Member States to achieve the sustainable development targets for health by 2030, the four agencies working on the common chapter have taken multifaceted, integrated and holistic approaches in addressing bottlenecks in health systems, and socioeconomic and cultural barriers to scale up interventions of the UNDS collectively and collaboratively.

29. Driven by their respective SPs and commitment to work together, support from the four agencies working on the common chapter contributed to the following select results for improving adolescent and maternal health:

- (a) 806, 000 girls and women received prevention and/or protection services and care related to FGM;
- (b) 62 million women and young people in 31 priority countries utilized integrated sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services. This includes 33,000 women and young people with disabilities;
- (c) 652 health facilities in eight countries are running on solar energy;
- (d) 74 per cent of live births to adolescent mothers aged 15–19 years were attended by skilled health personnel in 52 high-burden countries;
- (e) 6,696 health facilities in 52 focus countries of the ‘Every Newborn’ Action Plan received water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) support.

30. The joint work of the four agencies in 2019 is discussed in more detail for two key areas: improving universal health coverage and engaging with adolescents and young people.

### ***Improved universal health coverage***

31. The four agencies working on the common chapter jointly supported the development and implementation of the reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health strategies for improving the quality and coverage of health services. UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN-Women, WHO and the World Bank Group (the H6 Partnership) harnessed their collective strengths and brought increased coherence to support high-burden countries in their efforts to improve the survival, health and well-being of every woman, newborn, child and adolescent. In Kenya, skilled birth attendance in six target counties increased from 33 per cent in 2014 to an average of 65 per cent in 2019, and the percentage of pregnant women who make at least four antenatal visits increased from 36 per cent to an average of 45 per cent. In the Asia and Pacific region, the integrated management of pregnancy and childbirth guidelines and protocol, supported by UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO, were disseminated to all countries, and 196 national- and provincial-level paediatricians were trained as master trainers. UNAIDS, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO worked together to scale up integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights, HIV and sexual and gender based violence services of all people in the Eastern and Southern Africa region, particularly networks of people living with HIV, adolescents and young people, men who have sex with men, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex persons and sex workers.

### ***Engagement with adolescents and young people***

32. The four agencies working on the common chapter have helped to strengthen an integrated health sector response and contribute to effective adolescent and youth health promotion, prevention and care programmes. The joint programme Rapariga Biz Action for Girls and Young Women’s Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN-Women) in Mozambique, enabled more than 900,000 adolescent girls and young women to access safe spaces in the two target provinces in 2019. Over 128,000 girls accessed youth-friendly SRH services including family planning. In Rwanda, UNDP and UNFPA supported the scaling-up of the YouthConnekt initiative. The 2019 YouthConnekt Summit was attended by over 10,000 people representing 92 countries, and by

15 ministers of youth from across the continent, to discuss continental youth empowerment issues, including sexual and reproductive health and rights and prevention of teenage pregnancy. OCHA, UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO collaboratively facilitated availability of health, WASH, SRH and survivor-centred services for prevention, mitigation and response to gender-based violence in drought-affected districts in Pakistan. Joint evidence-based advocacy also led to the investments in youth health by Governments. The joint position paper on teenage pregnancy in the Philippines (UNFPA, UNICEF and WHO), informed the National Teenage Pregnancy Summit convened by the Philippine Government in 2019, focusing on its education, health, protection and development dimensions of youth.

### ***Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls***

33. The common chapter promotes the participation of women in decision-making and helps achieve women's economic empowerment; supports ending violence against women and girls and eliminating harmful practices; promotes the well-being of women and girls in all settings; and involves men and boys in advancing gender equality. Gender equality remains the area with the highest level of collaboration between the four agencies working on the common chapter, including through joint programming.

34. Driven by their respective SPs and commitment to work together, support from the four agencies working on the common chapter contributed to the following select results on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment:

- (a) 118 countries conducted a 25-year review and appraisal of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, including 102 in 2019;
- (b) 266 legislative reform initiatives were undertaken, with about half addressing laws and practices with provisions discriminating against women;
- (c) 3.1 million girls received support from prevention and/protection services and care related to child, early and forced marriage;
- (d) 1.2 million women and girls subject to gender-based violence accessed essential services, including 5,300 disabled women and girls;
- (e) 23.4 million women gained access to basic services, financial services and non-financial assets.

35. Joint efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls and social norms changes for gender equality are illustrated through the examples below.

### ***Eliminating violence against women and girls***

36. The four agencies working on the common chapter have actively joined efforts to strengthen legal frameworks and national systems to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls, leading to key results in 2019. In Liberia, the adoption of the Domestic Violence Bill Law in August 2019 was the key result of years of joint United Nations advocacy in partnership with civil society organizations, through two joint programmes on sexual and gender-based violence and advancing reconciliation through civil engagement and legal reform. In Cambodia, a global joint programme co-managed by UNFPA and UN-Women, in partnership with UNDP, UNODC and WHO, contributed to the Government's commitment to free forensic examinations for rape survivors in 2019, enabling survivors of rape and sexual assault to have easier access to medical treatments and examinations, while also strengthening access to justice for survivors. In Jordan, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF and UN-Women supported building a national system for preventing and responding to gender-based violence, which included the development of standard operating procedures for child protection and the National Clinical Management of Rape Protocol. In the United Republic of Tanzania, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women collaborated to support the Tanzania Police Force with the establishment of Police Gender and Children's Desks along with building the capacities of the police to rapidly identify, prevent and respond to violence against women and children. In the Arab States region, UNDP, UNFPA and UN-Women mobilized youth from across the region to develop a Call to Action to End Violence Against



Women as a youth-focused advocacy tool. This tool and the recommendations therein also fed into regional review of the Beijing+25 process.

### ***Promoting social norm change***

37. UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women are working jointly on addressing social norms to foster transformative change on gender equality and women's empowerment. In Zambia, through community engagement which includes strategic dialogues with traditional leaders, parents and traditional marriage counsellors, the joint programme to end child marriage, implemented by UNFPA and UNICEF, has enabled communities to start questioning sociocultural practices that perpetuate child marriage, contributing to the current decline in the prevalence of child marriage in the country. In Burundi, as part of a joint programme between UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women, a network of 480 men identified as "HeForShe Champions" at the community level are contributing to the transformation of social norms by promoting positive masculinity and attitude change about the sharing of tasks within households. A joint pilot research project in Georgia and South Africa, coordinated by UNDP, UNFPA and UN-Women, sought a better understanding of "bystanderism" in cases of intimate partner violence. Data from the research will be used to mobilize men, women, girls and boys to take a stand against gender-based violence and to play an active part in fostering positive relationships.

### ***Ensuring greater availability and use of disaggregated data for sustainable development***

38. Joint work under this key area aims to increase the availability of high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data for sustainable development and support the development of national statistical capacities that are vital for monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, as adapted in each country context.

39. Driven by their respective SPs and commitment to work together, support from the four agencies working on the common chapter contributed to the following select results for ensuring greater availability and use of disaggregated data for sustainable development:

- (a) Over 100 countries established intragovernmental Sustainable Development Goal coordination structures, budgets, monitoring and evaluation frameworks and platforms for "whole-of-society" approaches, including support for 35 countries' voluntary national reports;
- (b) Nine countries integrated gender statistics in their national strategies for statistics;
- (c) 89 per cent of countries conducted at least one population and housing census in the last 10 years;
- (d) A concept paper and associated road map for implementation of modernization of the United Nations statistical system was developed at the request of the High-level Committee on Programmes;
- (e) Development of a United Nations data strategy, coordinated by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, which led to a study on the extent to which Sustainable Development Goal indicators are localized, i.e., used in national plans or sectoral strategies.

40. Two key areas of collaborative work in 2019, advancing localization of the Sustainable Development Goals and strengthening availability and use of disaggregated data, are discussed in more detail.

### ***Localization of the Sustainable Development Goals supported by comprehensive and consistent data systems***

41. Successful implementation of the Goals requires their inclusion and mainstreaming into national policies, plans and strategies and the four agencies have continued to support Governments in this critical task. In Morocco, the four agencies, with other United Nations agencies, supported the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development in an analysis of its policies, identifying linkages with targets for the Goals and creating a prioritized list of targets and indicators to monitor the Ministry's contribution. In Thailand, the four agencies worked through the UNCT Sustainable Development Goals Data Results Group to partner with the Government on indicator

definition, data collection and reporting, resulting in the localization of Goal target 1.2 through adoption of the multidimensional child poverty index. In Bhutan, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF supported the development of an integrated data system to collect data on Sustainable Development Goal indicators. The four agencies supported Governments in Goal localization and the establishment of national Goal indicators and baselines through inter-agency MAPS missions in Europe and Central Asia. UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF supported Sao Tome and Principe in strengthening its Integrated Information System on Criminal Statistics and SDG Indicators. UNDP, UNICEF and other United Nations agencies supported the first voluntary national review by the Government of Rwanda. In Pakistan, UNDP and UNFPA worked to develop a national monitoring framework to document national and subnational progress on Sustainable Development Goal indicators, including capacity-building to operationalize the framework.

### *Availability and use of disaggregated data*

42. In line with advancing strategies to leave no one behind, disaggregated data are paramount to inform policy development and targeting. UNICEF and UN-Women co-led two global workshops for national statistics offices and line ministries on collection of disaggregated data beyond household surveys and linking administrative data sets for greater disaggregation. In collaboration with other United Nations agencies and international organizations, the four agencies working on the common chapter conducted the sixth round of Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys in nine countries in West and Central Africa, providing disaggregated data on child- and adolescent-related issues. The four agencies supported an in-depth analysis of the third Demographic and Health Survey for Burundi to provide more relevant disaggregated data, including on youth and adolescents, to inform policies and programmes. In Kiribati, UNFPA and UNICEF supported the Government in conducting a Social Indicators Survey providing information on children and women across a range of Sustainable Development Goal-related indicators. UNDP and UNICEF, along with the World Bank and African Development Bank, provided technical and financial support to analysis by the Government of Zimbabwe of the Poverty Income Consumption and Expenditure Survey, which provides disaggregated data on multidimensional child poverty to support national policymaking. UNFPA and UNICEF worked to strengthen the capacity of the Chinese National Bureau of Statistics to gather disaggregated data on the Sustainable Development Goals and gender equality through the 2020 population census. UNFPA and UNICEF successfully advocated for the inclusion of disability in the 2021 census in Nepal, and UNDP and UNICEF did the same for the 2020 census in Armenia. In Belarus, UNICEF and UN-Women supported the National Statistical Office to develop a gender data visualization portal to strengthen its capacity to communicate and disseminate gender statistics.

### *Peacebuilding and sustaining peace*

43. Peacebuilding and sustaining peace in conflict and post-conflict environments remains a fundamental objective for sustainable development and for building resilience and supporting fragile communities. Joint work under the common chapter aims to promote analysis, dialogue and action in response to humanitarian emergencies and situations of protracted crisis.

44. Driven by their respective SPs and commitment to work together, support from the four agencies working on the common chapter contributed to the following select results on peacebuilding and sustaining peace:

- (a) 5 million people, one third of them women, in 28 crisis-affected countries got a job or a better livelihood;
- (b) Nearly 3 million displaced people in 13 countries benefited from durable solutions in 2019, enabling refugees, internally displaced persons and host communities to maintain life, livelihoods and dignity;
- (c) 59 country offices contributed to peace and social cohesion, primarily through the socioeconomic dimensions of peacebuilding. In 22 of these countries, agencies implemented projects funded by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund;
- (d) 79 per cent of all national action plans on women, peace and security have monitoring frameworks with indicators;

- (e) 965 civil society organizations and networks working to advance gender equality were supported to influence peace processes, including 548 in 2019.

45. Key areas of work during 2018 and 2019 related to strengthening the humanitarian-development-peace nexus as well as enhancing the participation of women, youth and children in conflict and post-conflict settings, are further elaborated below.

#### ***Strengthening the humanitarian-development-peace nexus***

46. The four agencies working on the common chapter were involved in the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration, co-chaired by UNDP. Together with the Peacebuilding Support Office, UNDP and UN-Women co-chair the United Nations Sustainable Development Group Task Team on Transitions and Recovery. The four agencies further worked under the Regional Refugee and Resilience Response Plan for the Syrian crisis that integrates livelihoods with social protection, bridging short-term emergency support with resilience-building, supporting over 850,000 refugees and host communities across five countries. The four agencies have made progress in embedding preparedness, risk mitigation and prevention, including resilience in programmes. In Yemen, where 80 per cent of the population is dependent on humanitarian assistance, UNDP, UNICEF and WHO proposed funding for incentives to preserve or restore critical services and sustain capacities for health, water, sanitation and education. Agencies also collaborated on programmes to sustain peace in conflict and post-conflict settings. In Somalia, UNDP, UNICEF and UN-Women, together with UNODC, the United Nations Office for Project Services and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, continued the joint programme on the rule of law, supporting the establishment of specialized prosecutorial units to promote access to justice for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence. FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, UN-Women and WFP supported border communities in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to address conflict risk mitigation, promote people-to-people dialogue, including women and youth, and foster cooperation on natural resource management.

#### ***Enhancing the role of women, youth and children in crisis prevention, recovery and peacebuilding***

47. The Global Focal Point for the Rule of Law platform, in partnership with OHCHR, UNDP, UNHCR, UNODC, UN-Women, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General and others, further scaled up efforts on gender justice to strengthen justice and security, gender equality and respect for human rights. Agencies worked to enhance women's leadership in crisis prevention and recovery and also targeted efforts ensuring the participation and inclusion of children and youth in peacebuilding processes. UNDP, UNHCR and UN-Women worked in Rakhine State, Myanmar to promote women's livelihoods and economic security by supporting skills development and production capacities in climate-resilient agriculture, as well as through training on women's entrepreneurship and business development skills. In Niger, OHCHR, UNFPA and UNICEF developed youth platforms in 26 municipalities, which include 44 youth peace brigades to promote a culture of peace and to mediate community conflicts, with more than 100 conflicts resolved. In the Western Balkans, UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF are jointly supporting strengthening the capacities of the regional youth cooperation offices, schools and youth organizations and creating opportunities for young change agents from diverse backgrounds.

### **C. Spotlight**

48. The Spotlight Initiative, a global partnership between the European Union and the United Nations to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, a global common chapter accelerator, demonstrated a commitment to the underlying principles of United Nations reform and the realignment of the UNDS, particularly through the role of the resident coordinator in coordinating programme design, implementation and monitoring, as well as through strengthened joint work across recipient United Nations organizations.

49. Building on and amplifying the complementary areas of expertise of the recipient organizations, including UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women, the Spotlight Initiative in 2019 contributed to improved coherence and

collaboration across agencies. As reported in the annual programme report 2019, the joint work contributed to streamlined and more efficient processes and improved the ability of the relevant UNCTs to exchange knowledge, document lessons learned and adapt programming accordingly.

50. Reporting suggests that joint work supported the integration of holistic programming, dismantling silos, deepened partnerships and strengthened national capacities across multiple groups and stakeholders. The report also indicates that the joint work, operationally and programmatically, has supported meaningful engagement with civil society organizations and marginalized communities, upholding the principles of rights-based programming, non-discrimination and leaving no one behind.

51. The Latin American regional programme resulted in the development of effective strategies to mitigate programme challenges. In El Salvador, the Spotlight Initiative led to strengthened collaboration with the justice sector through partnerships with the Supreme Court of Justice on improving women's access to the justice system and by providing specialized services of the Office of the Attorney General of the Republic, in order to update and review the criminal investigation process and the Inter-institutional Protocol for Action on Femicide. The Spotlight Initiative in Mozambique resulted in improving cost efficiency and strengthening the capacities of various sectors to respond to gender-based violence. The Spotlight Initiative was rolled out in the Pacific with the development of three programmes supported by UNDP, UNFPA and UN-Women. A large number of diverse stakeholders have been effectively engaged to support safe and fair migration and to end violence against female migrant workers and trafficking. In Afghanistan, key interventions included the implementation of the National Action Plan on Early and Child Marriages, as well as policy-level engagement.

### **III. Working together**

52. In 2018 and 2019, regions took the initiative to strengthen mechanisms of collaboration further. In the Arab States region, UNDP and UNICEF agreed on strategic directions to encourage country-level cooperation, including on harmonization of joint advocacy on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. In Europe and Central Asia, issue-based coalitions have proven to be formidable platforms for joint work. An issue-based coalition on gender was highlighted as a good practice for United Nations coordination and played a central role in the roll-out of the regional reform process. Led by UNFPA and UNICEF, the Latin America and Caribbean regional offices supported the harmonization of business operations at the country level, resulting in an additional 10 UNCTs with finalized business operations strategies.

53. The four agencies working on the common chapter engaged in the roll-out of the UNSDCF in all countries commencing their cooperation framework processes in 2019. At headquarters, the four agencies contributed to the development of the UNSDCF guidance and participated in the working groups to develop associated companion guidance. In particular, the Europe and Central Asia regional offices supported the preparation and completion of 12 UNSDCFs in 2019 (and into 2020), where priorities and implementation strategies related to the common chapter were reflected. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the UNCTs included a common paragraph to incorporate the common chapter jointly in new country programme documents.

54. The four agencies have enhanced common approaches to facilitate efficient and accelerated joint delivery against the Sustainable Development Goals by increasing the percentage of country offices adopting common service lines (procurement, finance, information and communication technology, logistics, human resources and common facilities, including common premises). Country offices continue to increase the level of engagement in applying the standard operating procedures; in 2019, 96 per cent of country offices applied at least eight out of the 15 elements. The number of country offices which have performed joint analysis and planning with UNCTs in countries affected by disasters or conflicts, including in mission settings, increased from 14 in 2018 to 33 in 2019 (out of 50 countries). The four agencies have worked together to enhance transparency in accordance with the International Aid Transparency Initiative standards, continuing to achieve a "very strong" rating for the comprehensiveness of their data publication, along with scoring "strong" or "very strong" in relation to timeliness.

55. The four agencies, building on many years of harmonized results-based management efforts, harmonized approaches to the conduct of the midterm reviews of their strategic plans.

#### **IV. Lessons learned and challenges**

56. UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and UN-Women have a long history of partnering together around their common objectives. Evidence indicates that the common chapter has had a positive influence on collaboration among the four agencies and partnerships at country, regional and global levels have been strengthened and deepened through continued efforts to support the 2030 Agenda.

57. An independent survey of country office staff, conducted by the evaluation offices of the four agencies as part of the evaluability assessment of the common chapter, found that 55 to 65 per cent of respondents perceived that the common chapter has had a positive effect on collaboration. Feedback from the regions also noted the strong existing base for collaboration, building from the “Delivering as One” models.

58. The survey also found that 100 per cent of respondents identified the common chapter as a key driver or positive influence in improving collaboration among the four agencies. Reporting from regional offices also confirmed that the common chapter has been guided by the principle of strengthening existing mechanisms of planning, and working together, as well as enhancing multi-stakeholder partnerships.

59. Flexibility in common chapter approaches is seen as a strength with differing models in place across regions, providing opportunities for regions to learn from each other through the exchange of good practices and lessons learned. It has generated incentives to better leverage the collaborative advantages of the four agencies, and beyond, to address cross-border and subregional issues and work across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

60. The common chapter is found to be most effective when anchored in existing regional and country coordination mechanisms. That said, there is an appetite for more formalized roles and responsibilities at the country level to avoid overlapping and missed opportunities, a point which was identified in the common chapter evaluability assessment. Several UNCTs have cited the importance of having a functioning programme management team as key to the success of the common chapter for regular coordination and inter-agency collaboration.

61. At a global level, there had been limited clear agreement among the four agencies with respect to their comparative advantages, roles and responsibilities. Agreements on specific initiatives between agencies at the global level (as outlined in paragraphs 5-16), have facilitated joint work at the regional and country levels.

62. Since 2019, collaboration between the four agencies has naturally come to be more influenced by the repositioning of the UNDS. The development of the UNSDCF, with its emphasis on whole-of-UNCT common analysis and strategic outcomes, has provided even stronger impetus for joint initiatives and for scaling up collaboration efforts to address complex multidimensional development changes. Feedback from the regions is that the common chapter cannot afford to be perceived as working independently of the rest of the United Nations system in country, indicating that there may be a reduced role for it. In this context, regional feedback has indicated that increased communication on the common chapter in relation to United Nations reform is required to address such issues.

63. The global pooled funds such as the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund and the Joint SDG Fund have created important incentives for joint programmes at country level, including among the four agencies working on the common chapter. Overall, however, resource constraints have hindered the uptake of the common chapter, particularly the accelerator initiatives, which have not gained traction. Calls for proposals through the Joint SDG Fund have been very targeted (e.g., social protection) and country-focused; regional or subregional initiatives as envisaged by the accelerator initiatives are not eligible. The lack of specific budget lines for joint work within each agency presents a funding challenge for common chapter work. Additionally, the four agencies working on the common chapter at country level could benefit from clearer guidance and agreements on how to engage in joint resource mobilization.

## **V. Conclusion**

17. The four agencies working on the common chapter have and always will collaborate closely together. However, with increased momentum towards a new way of working at country level through the repositioning of the UNDS, the common chapter, as a separate initiative with specific results attributable to it, is increasingly constrained and moreover may divert scarce resources from the larger UNDS reform effort.

18. The COVID-19 global health crisis and its ongoing socioeconomic impacts will have huge implications for the challenge and ambition of the Sustainable Development Goals as we enter the Decade of Action. The four agencies working on the common chapter are collaboratively engaged to address COVID-19 in programming responses. Under the leadership of the resident coordinator and supported by UNDP in its technical lead role, the United Nations framework for the immediate socioeconomic response to COVID-19 is guiding the immediate focus to support countries to undertake rapid socioeconomic impact analyses and to leverage the programmatic assets of the UNCT to ensure an agile, relevant and effective response.

## ANNEX

### Status of the Common Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Indicators

Data source: The Sustainable Development Goals Report and Statistical Annex (published annually 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019) available at <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/>

#### (a) Poverty eradication and reduction of inequalities

Common SDG Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
SDG 1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line, by sex, age, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)	World: 12.7% (2012) - Employed Population: 9.8% - Employed Adults: 9.3% - Employed Youth: 15.5% - Employed Male: 10.2% - Employed Female: 10.2%	World: 10.9% (2013) - Employed Population: 9.9% - Employed Adults: 9.0% - Employed Youth: 15.1% - Employed Male: 9.8% - Employed Female: 9.9%	World: 10.9% (2013) - Employed Population: 9.2% - Employed Adults: 8.3% - Employed Youth: 14.7% - Employed Male: 9.1% - Employed Female: 9.4%	No update	World: 9.9% (2015) - Employed Population: 8.0% (2018) - Employed Adults: 7.2% (2018) - Employed Youth: 13.5% (2018) - Employed Male: 8.3% (2018) - Employed Female: 7.8% (2018)
<b>Note:</b> Based on the International Poverty Line of US\$1.90/day. Adults refer to persons aged 25 and above; youth refers to those between 15 and 24 inclusive. The numbers are cited from the Statistical Annex of the Secretary-General's Report on the Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Disaggregation by location is not available.					
<b>FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES COMMON CHAPTER INDICATOR</b>					
<b>Corresponding SDG target:</b> 1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day					
SDG 1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work-injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable	Not available	Children <sup>a</sup> : 34.9% Mothers with newborns <sup>b</sup> : 41.1% Older persons <sup>c</sup> : 67.9% Unemployed <sup>d</sup> : 21.8% Persons with severe disability <sup>e</sup> : 27.8% Vulnerable <sup>f</sup> : 24.7%	No update	No update	No update
<b>Note:</b> As published in "The Sustainable Development Goals Report" and in the "Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report of the Secretary-General Supplementary Information", also known as the "Statistical Annex." There was no update in 2017, 2018 and 2019 for this indicator. Social protection for different groups refers to: <sup>a</sup> Proportion of children/households receiving child/family cash benefit. <sup>b</sup> Proportion of mothers with newborns receiving maternity cash benefit. <sup>c</sup> Proportion of population above statutory pensionable age receiving a pension. <sup>d</sup> Proportion of unemployed persons receiving unemployment cash benefits. <sup>e</sup> Proportion of population with severe disabilities collecting disability cash benefits. <sup>f</sup> Proportion of vulnerable population receiving social assistance cash benefit.					
<b>Corresponding SDG target:</b> 1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable					

***(b) Addressing climate change***

Common SDG Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
SDG 1.5.1, 11.5.1, 13.1.1 Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population (disaggregated by sex to the extent possible)	Not published in the SDG report	Not published in the SDG report	Not published in the SDG report	Not published in the SDG report	Deaths/100,000: 1.48 (2018) Missing persons/100,000: 0.50 (2018) Directly affected persons/100,000: 2002.02 (2018)
<b>Note:</b> As published in “The Sustainable Development Goals Report” and in the “Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report of the Secretary-General Supplementary Information”, also known as the “Statistical Annex.”					
<b>Corresponding SDG target:</b> 1.5 By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters 11.5 By 2030, significantly reduce the number of deaths and the number of people affected and substantially decrease the direct economic losses relative to global gross domestic product caused by disasters, including water-related disasters, with a focus on protecting the poor and people in vulnerable situations 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries					

***(c) Improving adolescent and maternal health***

Common SDG Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
SDG 3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population, by sex, age and key populations	World: 0.27 Male: 0.31 Female: 0.28 Adults (15+): 0.37 Children (0-14): 0.08	World: 0.26 Male: 0.27 Female: 0.25 Adults (15+): 0.32 Children (0-14): 0.08	No update	No update	World: 0.25 (2017) Male: 0.26 (2017) Female: 0.24 (2017) Adults (15+): 0.40 (2017) Children (0-14): 0.09 (2017)
<b>Note:</b> As published in “The Sustainable Development Goals Report” for the world aggregated estimate and in the “Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report of the Secretary-General Supplementary Information”, also known as the “Statistical Annex,” for disaggregated estimates. 2015 value for “World” is revised in the 2018 report.					
<b>Corresponding SDG target:</b> 3.3 By 2030, end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, waterborne diseases and other communicable diseases					

***(d) Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls***

Common SDG Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
SDG 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months, by form of violence and age	Not available	19%	No update	No update	17.8% (2017)



**Note:** As published in “The Sustainable Development Goals Report” for the world aggregated estimate and in the “Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals Report of the Secretary-General Supplementary Information”, also known as the “Statistical Annex.” The data is from 2005-2016 and refers to “Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15-49 years subjected to physical or sexual violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months”.

**Corresponding SDG target:** 5.2 Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation

*(e) Ensuring greater availability and use of disaggregated data for sustainable development*

Common SDG Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
SDG 17.18.1 Proportion of sustainable development indicators produced at the national level with full disaggregation when relevant to the target, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics	Not published in SDG Report	Not published in SDG Report	Not published in SDG Report	Not published in SDG Report	Not published in SDG Report

**FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES COMMON INDICATOR (UNFPA, UNICEF, UN-WOMEN)**

**Corresponding SDG target:** 17.18 By 2020, enhance capacity-building support to developing countries, including for least developed countries and small island developing States, to increase significantly the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable data disaggregated by income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts