

Annex 20: Management Response

2019-2022 UNCF Evaluation Management Response [South Sudan/22 February 2022]

- 1) The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) in South Sudan welcomes the independent evaluation report of the 2019-2022 UN Cooperation Framework.
- 2) As the evaluation pointed out, the UNCT agrees with the findings that the UNCF focus areas on peacebuilding and governance, food security and local economies, social services and women and youth remain relevant and important to building national capacities and resilience to contribute to the country's recovery process.
- 3) The UNCF focus areas are also consistent with national development priorities of building and consolidating peace and stabilizing the economy with emphasis on building institutions, strengthening human resources and infrastructure; improving service delivery institutions; support governance and economic management system.
- 4) The UNCT also agrees with the findings that conflict and gender sensitive programming underpinned by pre-situational and location specific conflict analysis was adopted by AFPs to provide for the needs and address vulnerabilities of the most vulnerable groups during the UNCF implementation; however, considering the pervasive gender issues and local conflicts, we note that more needs to be done to ensure active, free, and meaningful participation from all stakeholders, and inclusion and empowerment of men, women and mostly the youths as the agent for change.
- 5) The UNCT considers the finding that youth and vulnerable women groups feel frustrated regarding our funding mechanisms and arrangements as not portraying an accurate picture of our engagement. In general, our interventions are based on community needs which are identified with full participation of all stakeholders and delivery mechanisms agreed upon at project onset. We, however, do agree that sometimes the needs on the ground far outstrip our resources which can cause frustrations; but this is precisely why our focus is building national capacities particularly of government at both national and state levels to address these gaps.
- 6) The UNCT agrees that during the UNCF implementation period, there was limited visible coordination and connectedness of actions at the field level in the states, no clear formal mechanism of coordination between the UNCT working groups and external partners like the Government Sector Working Groups (SWGs), and no joint steering committee between the UNCT and the government on UNCF implementation. However, this gap was partly caused due to the delay in the formation of the revitalized transitional government and

revival of the SWGs. The UNCT in the interim has been coordinating with the Ministry of Finance and Planning as the main government interlocutor on development issues and line ministries on sectoral issues.

- 7) The UNCT agrees that limited progress was made on the operationalization of the collective outcomes. No mechanism for joint planning, monitoring, and reporting was put in place by the UNCT and HCT besides agreeing on the two collective outcomes of GBV and food security. Nevertheless, since January 2022, the new DSRSG/RC/HC is spearheading the Triple NEXUS agenda with identification of possible Joint Programme topics (flooding/mitigation/prevention, food security and agriculture, as well as IDP camps and transition to urban planning. Additionally, the DSRSG/RC/HC office has since September 2021 hired a Triple Nexus Advisor to support the UNCT/HCT/UNMISS to roll out the Nexus Approach.
- 8) The UNCT agrees using the excel-based reporting on UNCF implementation by AFPs created room for errors, thereby affecting the reliability, disaggregation, and accuracy of data on outcome and output indicator achievements. As such, in 2022, the UNCT has adopted the online UNINFO platform for UNCF reporting and work planning.
- 9) The UNCT agrees that to some extent, the implementation of the UNCF was hindered by the absence of a joint steering committee to provide oversight and guidance, localized community conflicts and insecurity, COVID-19, flooding and inaccessibility of some locations. We, however, acknowledge that the signing of the revitalized peace agreement in September 2019 and subsequent implementation (albeit slowly and gradually) created some relative stability and safety for positive engagement in the country and UNCF implementation.
- 10) The UNCT agrees that there was no joint funding strategy for the UNCF implementation. AFPs relied mainly on agency specific resource mobilization and to some extent joint funds (SDGs Fund, PBF Fund) to deliver on the UNCF. However, for the new UNSDCF, besides agency specific funding, the UNCT will develop a joint funding and resource mobilization strategy for financing of the UNSDCF implementation. Also, the DSRSG/RC/HC plans to start consultations with development partners on the possibility of setting up a pooled fund for UNSDCF implementation.
- 11) The management response for each recommendation is provided below

Management Response to the evaluation recommendation

Recommendation 1: Ensure continued alignment of the Cooperation framework to national planning frameworks and strategies and pay special attention to emerging issues related to climate change, environment, gender, youth, and private sector			Accepted
Explanation: To ensure national ownership and relevance of the UNSDCF, the UNCT will strive to ensure continued alignment of the CF to the Revised National Development Strategy (R-NDS), Vision 2040, Agenda2030 and pay attention to R-ARCSS priorities. Also, based on the CCA, special attention will be paid to issues of climate change, gender, youth, private sector, and natural resources/environment			
Action to be taken	Responsible entity/ies	Timeframe	Resource implication
a) The 2023-2025 UNSDCF design to be strongly linked to the R-NDS priority areas, SDGs	UNCT/RCO/PMT/M&E WG/ Results Groups /UNSDCF consultant	Jan- Sept 2022	Consultant already hired, RCO/DCO regional
b) Establish a joint UN/Government Steering Committee	DSRSG/RC/HC UNCT/RCO/PMT	Feb- May 2022	Staff time
c) State level consultations on priorities to inform UNSDCF design	DSRSG/ RC/ HC and HoFos	Oct-Nov 2021	Staff time
d) Hire Risk Management specialist and advocate for integration of risk management and risk financing solution for resilience building programming	DSRSG/RC/HC	May – Sept 202	Salary for Risk Management specialist UNDRR consultant
Recommendation 2: Integrate the Nexus Approach in programming and optimize the collective contribution to results by the UN system including getting technical support from regional bodies and Non-Resident Agencies based on their mandates and expertise			Accepted
Explanation: Considering the multi-dimensional vulnerabilities and increasing humanitarian needs exacerbated by the recurrent shocks related to flooding and displacement, to meaningfully engage the population and contribute to the recovery process, it is important that a NEXUS Approach is adopted that simultaneously contributes to building peace and resilience of the population while delivering humanitarian assistance.			
Action to be taken	Responsible entity/ies	Timeframe	Resource implication
a) Agree on collective outcomes for the 2022/2023 HRP/UNCF	DSRSG/RC/HC and UNCT	Jan- Mar 2022	Staff time
b) Harmonie messages and ensure better H-D-P coordination mechanism	DSRSG/RC/HC and UNCT with support from UNCG	Mar- Sept 2022	Staff time
c) Develop joint programmes on agreed emerging issues	UN/ Dev Partner NEXUS Group	May – Oct 2022	Staff time

d) Conduct consultation workshops with stakeholders including government, donors on operationalization and modality of the Nexus Approach	DSRSG/RC/HC and UN/ Dev Partner NEXUS Group	May 2022	Staff time
Recommendation 3: Deepen the New Way of Working and strengthen coherence between UNCF and other key frameworks like PfRR, HRP, Mission Strategic vision, while extending collaboration to new donors on recovery and resilience building		Accepted	
Explanation: Agree that there is need to collaborate more and coordinate better to create synergies and avoid duplication of efforts.			
Action to be taken	Responsible entity/ies	Timeframe	Resource implication
a) Undertake joint analysis to inform programming including updating CCA	UNCT/HCT/UNMISS/RCO/PMT/JPAT/OCHA/Clusters	Mar- Sept 2022	Staff time
b) Agree on locations for pilot area-based programming	UN/ Dev Partner NEXUS Group	May – Oct 2022	Staff time
c) Undertake common premises mapping and analysis of existing common services	UNCT/OMT (Adm Working Group)	Jan -March 2022	
d) Roll out common back office to improve operations and efficiency	DSRSG/RC/HC / UNCT/ OMT	March 2023	Staff time
Recommendation 4: Strengthen and improve the M&E system including supporting the development of a national framework for monitoring and reporting on SDGs		Accepted	
Explanation: Considering the challenges of collecting and consolidating data using the excel-based template that sometimes results in errors, it is important that UNCT adopts the online UNINFO platform for consistency, accuracy, and ease access to UNCF data.			
Action to be taken	Responsible entity/ies	Timeframe	Resource implication
a) Roll the online UNINFO for interactive planning, monitoring, and reporting	RCO/M&E WG/ PMT/RGs	Jan 2022	Staff time
b) Develop M&E framework for the 2023-2025 UNSDCF	M&E WG/ RCO/RGs/M&E WG	Feb- May 2022	Staff time
c) Continuous support the government on SDG monitoring and reporting	M&E WG/ RCO	June 2021- 2025	Staff time
Recommendation 5: Explore opportunities for better collaboration and coordination with IFIs and donors and partnership to promote the development of private sector		Accepted	
Explanation: The role of IFIs and private sector in the recovery process remains important to address the economic challenges including unemployment in the country. UNCT will continue to explore and partner with IFIs and private sector for economic growth and sustainable development.			
Action to be taken	Responsible entity/ies	Timeframe	Resource implication
a) Organize private sector forum workshops	RCO	June 2022	Staff time
b) Strengthen UNCT engagement in the Heads of Cooperation meeting around the UNSDCF, NEXUS Approach and PSEA	DSRSG/RC/HC/UNCT and UN/ Dev Partner NEXUS Group	Continuous	Staff time

Recommendation 6: Develop a coherent UNCT funding strategy to streamline resource mobilization for the cooperation framework implementation		Accepted	
Explanation: The UNCT agrees that a funding strategy will help to provide a coherent framework to engage with development partners and reduce competition among AFPs. For the new UNSDCF, besides agency specific funding, the UNCT will develop a joint funding and resource mobilization strategy for financing of the UNSDCF implementation. Also, the DSRSG/RC/HC plans to start consultations with development partners on the possibility of setting up a pooled fund for UNSDCF implementation.			
Action to be taken	Responsible entity/ies	Timeframe	Resource implication
a) Develop 2023-2025 UNSDCF funding strategy	DSRSG/RC/HC/ RCO/PMT/UNCT	Sept – Dec 2022	Staff time
b) Undertake consultations with development partners on the possibility of setting up a pooled fund for UNSDCF implementation	DSRSG/RC/HC/ UNCT	May -dec 2022	Staff time
c) Organize funding drives for the 2023-2025 based on the CF priorities and funding strategy	DSRSG/RC/HC/ UNCT	2023-2025	Staff time
Recommendation 7: Consider striking a balance in the allocation of the RSRTF between the Humanitarian-Development-Peace window.		Partially accepted	
Explanation: striking a balance would seem as if there is competition between H-D-P; however, the UNCT interest is to create synergies between the work on H-D-P to avoid duplication of efforts. This may require joint planning and agreement on common collective outcomes rather than striking a balance in allocation of RSRTF. Nevertheless, considering the limited resources devoted to development delivery, it might be good for the UNCT/DSRSG/RC/HC to create a pooled fund for UNSDCF implementation or create a dedicated window in the RSRTF for development work.			
Action to be taken	Responsible entity/ies	Timeframe	Resource implication
a) Create a dedicated window in RSRTF for development work or create a pooled fund for UNSDCF implementation	DSRSG/RC/HC/ UNCT	2022-2025	Staff time
Recommendation 8: Establish a joint steering committee (JSC) between government, UN, and donors and raise awareness about the UNCF to national and state level stakeholder		Accepted	
Explanation: This is important to ensure that UNSDCF implementation is inclusive, participatory, and transparent and owned by stakeholders with a formal platform for providing oversight and guidance.			
Action to be taken	Responsible entity/ies	Timeframe	Resource implication
a) Establish joint steering committee	UNCT/DSRSG/RC/HC/RCO	Mar- May 2022	Staff time
b) Ensure regular meetings by the JSC as agreed in the TOR	DSRSG/RC/HC/ RCO	2022-2025	Staff time

Recommendation 9: Review the existing UNCT technical architecture/ working groups in the face of changing of context, needs and next UNSDCF (including strengthen coordination and collaboration between the UNCT structures in Juba and state/field level structures for better impact).		Accepted	
Explanation: As the country dynamics has changed since 2018, the UNCT agrees that the Results Groups need to be reflective of these changes and hence the need to review the existing groups for their relevancy and effectiveness to UNSDCF implementation.			
Action to be taken	Responsible entity/ies	Timeframe	Resource implication
a) Establish Results Groups for the 2023-2025 UNSDCF	DSRSG/RC/HC/ UNCT/ RCO	Feb 2022	Staff time
b) Review the relevancy and effectiveness of the different Results groups	DSRSG/RC/HC/ UNCT/ RCO	May 2022	Staff time
Recommendation 10: Strengthen the alignment and coordination of the UNCF Results Groups, Sector Working Groups, humanitarian clusters to avoid duplication and ensure effective utilization of resources		Accepted	
Explanation: Agree as having coherent coordination mechanism is paramount to ensure synergies, avoid duplication and create greater impact on the ground.			
Action to be taken	Responsible entity/ies	Timeframe	Resource implication
a) Support the revival of the SWGs by providing technical and meeting facilities support	RCO/AFPS	Continuous	Staff time
b) Create a platform for sharing information among the Results Groups, SWGs and humanitarian clusters	RCO/OCHA/MoFP	May 2022	Staff time